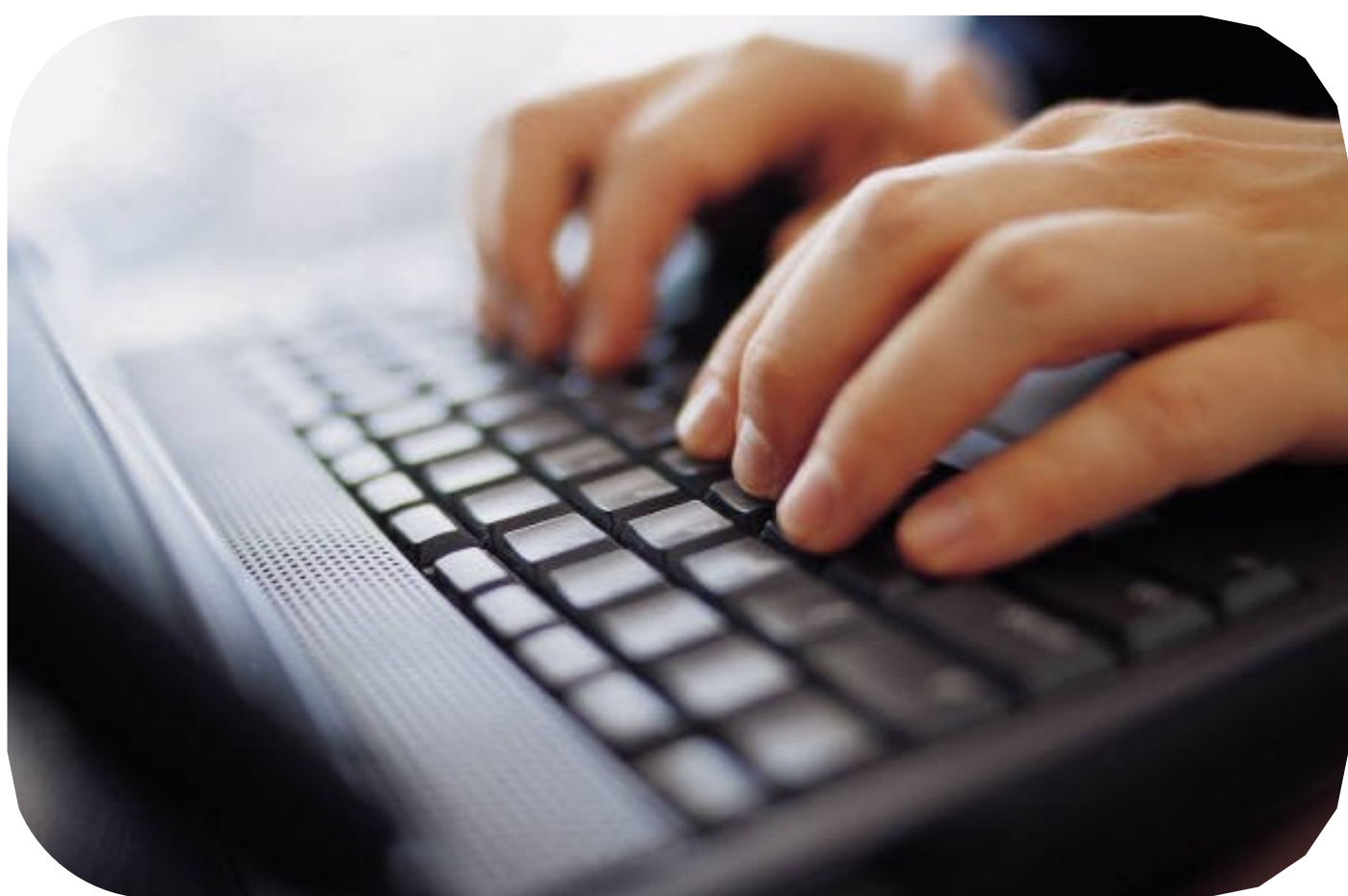


YOUR GUIDE TO Writing Volunteer Opportunities for the Do-It Website



Volunteer Centre
East Sussex

We are the nationally accredited Volunteer Centre for East Sussex, promoting, supporting and developing volunteering across the county.

Introduction to Writing Volunteer Opportunities for the Do-It Website

What Volunteer Enquirers Want

The majority of people who contact volunteer centres have already made the decision that they want to volunteer. The experience of staff working in volunteer centres has shown that enquirers tend to be selective and quite discerning about how they want to spend their time volunteering. Very few people approach a volunteer centre and say 'I'll do anything'.

Not surprisingly potential volunteers want to do something worthwhile. Some may want to volunteer primarily for the social benefits, as a means to get out of the home and meet other people. Others may want to find an opportunity that will allow them to take on an appropriate level of responsibility and develop skills that can be transferred to the workplace. Whatever the reason for volunteering, the volunteer will want the organisation to be well organised and to recognise and value the contribution that their volunteering makes.

Most importantly, the volunteer will want to enjoy their role and this is more likely to happen with a bit of planning in advance by the organisation.

Volunteer Centre East Sussex Promotes Your Opportunities

Volunteer Centre East Sussex helps people to find suitable volunteer opportunities in a variety of ways. This includes seeing potential volunteers in face-to-face, emailing enquirers with details of local volunteering opportunities and dealing with telephone enquiries.

Volunteering opportunities throughout East Sussex are stored on a database called V-Base. Volunteer Centre staff use this database to keep track of organisations and the details of their volunteering opportunities. The information stored on V-Base is then used by Volunteer Centre staff to help them match opportunities to the enquirer's needs.



Unless an organisation instructs the Volunteer Centre otherwise, details of their volunteering opportunities are automatically uploaded onto the national volunteering database, Do-It, which contains details of opportunities all over the UK and can be accessed at www.do-it.org.uk. Individuals can then search the Do-It website themselves to find a volunteer opportunity suited to their needs and interests.

Promoting Your Volunteer Opportunities

Follow our 5 tips below to attract the attention of potential volunteers who use the Volunteer Centre's brokerage services throughout East Sussex.

- 1 CHOOSE AN ACCURATE AND INTERESTING TITLE**
Try to be more specific than 'general volunteer'. Even if it is a wide ranging role, a title like 'general volunteer' is not instantly informative or eye-catching and does not sound very exciting. Try to come up with something imaginative where possible, but bear in mind that the role title should convey as closely as possible what the volunteer is actually going to be doing. Remember that in most cases it is the title of the opportunity that prospective volunteers will notice first.
- 2 BE CLEAR AND BRIEF**
Clearly describe the purpose of the role and the main tasks involved, in as few words as possible. If the volunteer is genuinely interested, you will have succeeded in gaining their attention. Avoid long 'wordy' descriptions of the volunteer role, or something so brief that the reader is left with no real idea of what is involved.
- 3 BE SPECIFIC**
Think about the skills or qualifications a volunteer will need to carry out the role. Some volunteer opportunity descriptions state things like 'All you need is enthusiasm'. If this does not genuinely describe what is needed from your volunteer, do not enter this on the form when registering a new volunteer opportunity with your Volunteer Centre. If you need people to have particular knowledge, experience or skills before they start volunteering with you, state this clearly in your role description.
- 4 HIGHLIGHT THE BENEFITS**
Describe the training and support that will be available, whether references will be provided, access to social events, etc.
- 5 KEEP YOUR DETAILS UP TO DATE**
Volunteer Centre staff are available to make changes to your database entries at any time. So if you want to make any amendments or additions, or if you no longer need volunteers for a certain role, contact your Volunteer Centre and ask them to make the changes you require.

MAKE YOUR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES APPEALING!

Bear in mind that potential volunteers, whether they are searching online via the Do-It website, or being guided through V-Base by Volunteer Centre advisers, may be looking at many other volunteer opportunities in addition to those based in your organisation.

Additional resources:

Contact Volunteer Centre East Sussex and ask for an Organisation Registration Pack. This will contain a blank Volunteer Opportunity Registration form, which you can fill in and send back to the Projects Assistant, who will enter your opportunity details on V-Base and upload them onto the Do-It website.