



## **Tips for Getting the Most out of your Activity Listing:**

It is really important to think of “students” a little differently to make sure you get the most out of your activity listings. What motivates students to volunteer is quite often different to what motivates people in the wider community- ultimately students want to feel they have made a difference to the community and to their own personal development.

When adding an opportunity, you will be asked to indicate the skills a student can develop through your volunteer opportunity. Think about these benefits and write your advert around these.

As you will see when adding a role to our website, we have taken a more results-orientated approach. Studies have shown that when a student is looking to volunteer, they are more interested in the benefits both the organisation and themselves will receive, rather than the specific tasks they will carry out.

Before you add a new activity to our website, please think about:

- The activity name.
- A blurb about your organisation; including the purpose of wanting a volunteer and an idea of tasks they may carry out as part of the activity.
- The benefits they will receive from the volunteer activity.
- The benefits you receive from having them as a volunteer.
- If they will require training as part of the role, who their supervisor will be, and what support you can offer them.
- The application/interview process.
- The logistics – where and when the activity will take place, and, if public transport is required, a bit of guidance on how they will get there.

### **Further tips...**

#### ***Be clear and concise***

Think about the language you use - it needs to be clear and concise - and also ensure the advert isn't too long.

You need to make your opportunity engaging whilst at the same time being completely honest about any potential tasks students will be doing. If a task might not be as exciting as something else, explain why this plays an important role in fulfilling the aims and objectives of your organisation. Also ensure the role title is short and snappy, as this will be the first part of your advert they will see.

### ***Think about the skills students could offer, and what you could offer to the students***

Think about how you can utilise the skills students may already have, and about the courses we offer. A course list can be found on the main website. When a student registers to [www.volunteering.chester.ac.uk](http://www.volunteering.chester.ac.uk) they are asked to indicate their areas of interest. They can also request to receive emails with new roles based on their interests, so it is important to indicate which areas of interest your volunteer role will cover. It is equally important that you are concise with these areas, and select the most appropriate areas of interest (we would recommend no more than 10) so you are appealing to the most suitable volunteers.

The skills volunteers will gain from volunteering are often what motivates them; students are looking for real world experience as well as the opportunity to develop examples of key employability skills.”. When you add your activity, you will be asked to think about the skills that can be gained from volunteering with you. Students are also required to think about these when they are applying for our award schemes.

### ***Be flexible and think about the commitment required***

Do you require volunteers on a regular basis? Or are you offering a one-off or ad hoc role? When adding your activity to the website there is space to put an end date (if your opportunity is ongoing then leave this bit blank).

It is also really important to be flexible when advertising to students. Most students will usually only be available to volunteer from October to early June, as they tend to go home for the summer vacation. We also find that after the Easter break, things tend to slow down due to examinations for our 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students and work placements for our 2<sup>nd</sup> year students. They may also have timetables that change, and many of them will also have part-time jobs. Please bear this in mind when recruiting student volunteers. Flexibility is appreciated, and if there is a more rigid time commitment then please be clear about this from the start.

### ***Think about location***

Many of our students take advantage of opportunities which are in close proximity to where they live, as they are not encouraged to bring cars with them to University. We therefore welcome opportunities which are close to our campuses.

Outside of these areas, opportunities with good public transport links are usually more popular and attractive to our volunteers. When advertising your vacancy, please give specific details of any local bus/rail services if you can, as this may encourage students to volunteer with you.

If you can reimburse travel expenses please make sure you indicate this on your advert.

### ***Logos***

If your organisation has a logo, make sure you add this at the Provider stage. When a student registers to the site they can browse opportunities. Opportunities with a logo (or picture if you don't have a logo) will stand out more.

### ***Social media links***

If you have any Social Media links make sure these are included in the main body of the text. Most students are Social Media "savvy" and this is a great way for them to search for you.

### ***Keep information up to date***

If your opportunity changes in any way, or you no longer require volunteers, please update your information on the website.

### ***Once you have received applications, make sure you keep students engaged in the process***

If students need to complete recruitment processes such as; filling in application forms, attending an interview, or completing training to participate in your volunteering, then please make them aware of the length of time it might take. This helps to manage expectations. You can also talk about the benefits they will gain from the role to keep them engaged.

Regular communication is the key! Make sure you keep in regular contact with a student during the recruitment process.

### ***Keep in contact with us!***

Please note that advertising on the website will not guarantee student volunteers. If you are struggling to attract students, please contact us and we can look at how we could promote your opportunity further.

Make sure you contact a student who has applied to you as soon as possible. The website asks you to contact them within 10 working days where possible.

***IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT US***