Best Practice Guidelines
Te Anga Whaitake

www.volunteeringnz.org.nz

Tūao Aotearoa
Volunteering New Zealand

Volunteer ~ Tūao

Recruit and engage volunteers

Welcome and onboard volunteers

Volunteer support, leadership and management

Train and grow volunteers

Feedback and recognition

Celebrate volunteer impact

Exit volunteers

Tūao Aotearoa – Who we are

Tūao manaaki whanaungatanga e manawaroa ai.

Volunteering of care, of nurturing growth and enduring relationships.

Tūao Aotearoa Volunteering New Zealand is an association of volunteer centres, and national and regional organisations with a commitment to volunteering in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The kaupapa that drives us, Uara/ values:

Manaakitanga: We care, we nurture, we grow.

Whakawhanaungatanga: We build connections, and meaningful and enduring relationships.

Tūao: We inspire by example.

Whaiwhakaaro: We hold ourselves to the highest standard.

Our impact narrative

Our vision is for volunteering to be valued as a vital part of society.

We know almost all community organisations rely on volunteers and volunteering strengthens communities.

So we build the capacity of organisations to better manage volunteers and promote volunteering in all its forms. Which leads to a better experience for volunteers and stronger organisations and communities.

And results in volunteers enriching Aotearoa and a society that values volunteers.

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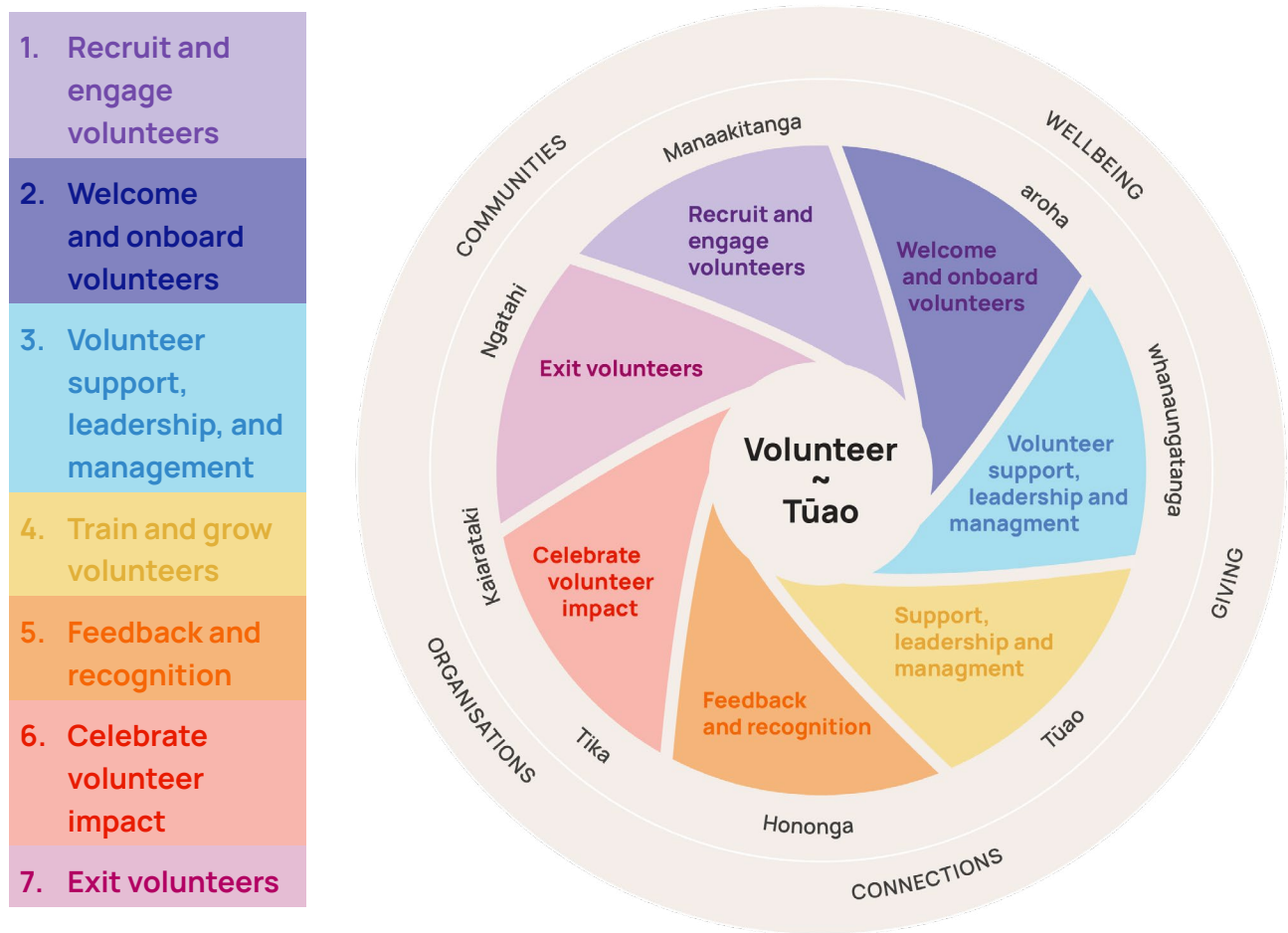| Version	Date	Changes
1.0	30 June 2023	N/A
1.1	29 February 2024	Added ISBN number and Creative Commons licensing information. Text was updated to improve readability. Minor updates were made to the principles for clarity and to reduce duplication.

About the Best Practice Guidelines – Te Anga Whaitake

We have designed our Best Practice Guidelines – Te Anga Whaitake to support managing volunteers within volunteer-involving organisations. We have based these guidelines around the volunteer life cycle journey which puts the volunteer at the centre.

There are seven key areas for volunteer best practice (practice areas) based on the volunteer life cycle journey.

This diagram illustrates the volunteer life cycle journey and the range of cultural and organisational factors that impact volunteers.

1. **Recruit and engage volunteers**
2. **Welcome and onboard volunteers**
3. **Volunteer support, leadership, and management**
4. **Train and grow volunteers**
5. **Feedback and recognition**
6. **Celebrate volunteer impact**
7. **Exit volunteers**

Volunteer engagement and management practice sits within the wider context and culture of volunteer-involving organisations.

Our guidelines are aspirational and are designed to help you to lobby for support and resources within your organisation, as well as to define best practice.

Additional resources to support you are available under each practice area: www.volunteeringnz.org.nz/best-practice-guidelines-new. These resources are drawn from national and international volunteer-involving organisations.

Te mana o te kupu

Our promotion and use of kupu Māori within our guidelines acknowledge and celebrate te reo and te ao Māori.

The te reo Māori name for these guidelines was given to us by our Kaitiaki Evelyn Tobin.

She has also helped us identify the words and framing for our volunteer life cycle diagram.

These overarching principles underpin the seven practice areas of our guidelines:

- **Aroha –** volunteers are a taonga, and should be recognised for the generosity of their contribution with aroha.
- **Hononga –** building connections.
- **Kaiarataki –** we are all leaders.
- **Manaakitanga –** volunteers sit at the centre of our work. Everyone plays a part in nurturing and growing volunteers.
- **Ngātahi –** inclusion collaboration and connection of volunteers is vital.
- **Tūao –** volunteers lead by example.
- **Tika –** we do what is right.
- **Whanaungatanga –** we build enduring and reciprocal relationships.

Who are the Best Practice Guidelines for?

These guidelines have been designed as a tool for community organisations involved with volunteers. You may be a volunteer manager, leader, or co-ordinator. They can also be used by board members, managers and volunteers.

The Best Practice Guidelines can be used by:

- organisations to identify areas of strength and areas for development
- volunteer managers, leaders, and co-ordinators
- people providing support and advice to boards on strategic volunteer issues
- funders and donors interested in the volunteer capability of organisations that they support
- volunteers to know what good practice looks like.

When reading the guidelines, think about what is appropriate for your organisation. Community organisations are incredibly diverse. Some organisations have paid volunteer managers or co-ordinators, while others have few or no paid staff and board members who get the work done as well as govern.

The guidelines have been designed with small to medium-sized community organisations in mind. But regardless of turnover, number of volunteers and staff, or type of activity, the practice areas apply to all volunteer-involving organisations. What will differ is how you implement the guidance in the practice areas.

Practice area 1
Recruit and engage volunteers

Principles

1. A positive organisational approach to diversity, inclusion and equity is in place.

2. A proactive approach to making volunteering accessible is in place (including removing any barriers to access).

3. Volunteers reflect the communities that their organisations serve.

Why this practice is important

The engagement and recruitment stage is where a connection starts to be built between the volunteer and the organisation. Volunteers want to get enough information and insight to decide whether they want to connect with the organisation and commit to the role being offered. The organisation wants to find out if the volunteer is a good fit for the work that needs doing and with its culture and/or kaupapa. The engagement and recruitment stage is successful when volunteers are placed in roles that match both their needs and those of the organisation.

What volunteers need

- Easy to access information about the role, the organisation and recruitment process
- To have a welcoming and positive recruitment experience
- To feel like they can be their full selves within the organisation
- To have their needs and interests understood (including volunteers with a disability)
- Clarity on what is required to volunteer with the organisation
- A timely, seamless, and engaging recruitment experience

What Good Practice looks like

Provide accessible, clear information about the role, the organisation and recruitment process

- Provide a clear, concise role description outlining: The purpose of the role, its impact, the difference it makes; Expectations about the level of commitment, hours, location, activities involved; and skills and qualifications sought. If possible provide multiple formats of the information e.g. easy-read document, video with captions.

- Provide clear information about the organisation: Its mission and vision, who it serves; the values and culture of the organisation; and the opportunities and unique benefits of volunteering with the organisation e.g. qualifications available and recognition practices

Connect with and build understanding with the volunteer

- Ask what motivates them and what they want to do

- Determine how the applicant wants to volunteer e.g. regular a weekly commitment or project-based?

- What the volunteer's needs are e.g. access, cultural needs

- Understand their family and work life commitments, e.g. childcare/dependents, community and work commitments; social, personal and study commitments.

Be clear about what is required to work with the organisation

- Provide information on organisational rules, codes of conduct, and expectations

- Advise the volunteer on recruitment requirements such as medical screening and vetting and security checks

- Tell the volunteer what skills are required and training provided for role

- Be clear about when people will be expected to volunteer, and if flexibility is available

- Say what costs they might have, such as petrol, and whether/how these costs will be reimbursed

- Make sure goals and expectations are clear to begin with

Provide a positive recruitment experience

- Ensure communication about volunteer opportunities is inclusive and accessible and considers different cultural understandings of volunteering

- Use of a range of channels that encourage those from diverse backgrounds to apply e.g. migrant networks, marae, Volunteer Centre Network, website, community newsletters, and friends and family

- Provide easy to access information on the recruitment process and what to expect

- Have accessible online application processes and systems, with options for those with limited access to technology

- Have an accessible, welcoming and inclusive interview

- Ensure a quick response, acknowledging and following up enquiries

- Initiate vetting and security checks promptly

- Keep a record of enquiries, even if the volunteer is not suitable or unavailable for a role, to advise them of future volunteer roles

- Have a process for volunteers to provide feedback about any concerns in a way that suits them

Practice area 2
Welcome and onboard volunteers

Principles

1. Relationships are at the heart of volunteer engagement and involvement.

2. Volunteers experience a warm welcome and a positive onboarding.

3. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure volunteers are welcomed, trained and inducted appropriately.

Why this practice is important

The welcome and onboarding phase helps volunteers understand and feel comfortable with the workings of the organisation. It provides volunteers with background, practical knowledge of the organisation so they see how they can contribute to the organisation's purpose. Understanding the organisation's mission, values and systems for volunteer management enables volunteers to find their place in the organisation and to contribute more productively.

What volunteers need

- To feel welcomed and appreciated for who they are and what they bring
- To understand the organisation's kaupapa (purpose) and ensure it's a good fit for them
- To have clear expectations of the role requirements and the skills and training required
- To communicate their needs and preferences, including any access needs
- To understand how to navigate the organisation, including organisational culture, and how its volunteer systems work
- To feel socially connected with the organisation (whanaungatanga)
- To be assured of confidentiality privacy as appropriate

What Good Practice looks like

Have a good welcome

- Have everything ready for volunteers e.g. paperwork, uniform, materials, and workspace
- Create a welcoming environment for their first day
- Proactively ask them if there is anything they need to feel safe and welcome in the workspace
- Meet them and provide introductions
- Organise a welcome event or mihi whakatau (if appropriate)

Explain the organisation's kaupapa/ purpose

- Provide an overview of the kaupapa/ purpose and values (ngā matapono) of the organisation
- Share the history and strategy of the organisation
- Show how their role contributes to the success of the organisation
- Describe the communities served, the cultures and demographics and programmes/services provided

Clarify the volunteer role and what is required (expectations)

- Confirm their role, what they will be doing, and expectations of them
- Discuss the skills and training required
- Clarify the parameters/opportunities of the role
- Ensure all pre-employment checks are complete
- Work alongside the volunteer and coach them to perform the tasks/activities required

Understand the needs and preferences of the volunteer

- Offer information on multiple roles, if you have them, allowing the volunteer to self-select
- Determine how the volunteer will give their time e.g. regular weekly commitment or project-based
- Discuss how the role fits with the volunteer's other life commitments
- Set up structured check-in times to see how they are progressing i.e. each week for their first month
- Have a review (at the end of their first month) to discuss how the role is going for them and if any additional support or changes are needed

Enable the volunteer to navigate the organisation

- Outline the structure of the organisation, its programmes and how the volunteer contributes
- Introduce the volunteer to the systems of volunteer management e.g. reimbursement of expenses
- Introduce the policies and processes of the organisation
- Provide clear written or graphical steps for processes
- Do a tour of the premises and outline health and safety practices
- Provide a clear process for volunteers to be able to give feedback and to ask for help if they need it, e.g. technical issues

Provide social orientation and connection

- Introduce the organisation leaders and key contacts to the volunteer; provide contact details, bios, and photos
- Outline organisational values
- Introduce organisation's tikanga (protocols) and culture
- Discuss the organisation's diversity and inclusion commitments and expectations of its members
- Allow them to meet other teams within the organisation and make connections with external organisations (if required)
- Assign them a buddy and/or peer who they can go to, to ask for help or clarification
- Connect the volunteer to members of the community being served
- Offer multiple ways for interaction with staff and other volunteers e.g. social media group, social events, training, and while volunteering

Practice area 3
Volunteer support, leadership and management

Principles

1. Volunteering activities are supported by appropriate leadership and resourcing.

2. Volunteer programmes are managed by supported and resourced volunteer managers.

3. People with responsibility for volunteers have sufficient resources and training to effectively do their job.

Why this practice is important

Good leadership creates a motivating environment and a great volunteer experience so volunteers are able and willing to do their best work. These all keep volunteers connected with their organisation.

Volunteers provide their time in exchange for the opportunity to make a difference within their community. Volunteers are not a free resource – they need support, leadership, and management to contribute effectively to an organisation. Volunteer managers should make the process of volunteering as easy as possible by removing barriers to access, enabling organisations to deliver services to their communities and fulfil their purpose or kaupapa.

What volunteers need

- To have their needs and preferences understood
- To be supported to fulfil and grow in their roles
- To be kept engaged and feel part of the organisation
- To have the support of knowledgeable, skilful, and confident volunteer managers
- To know they are making a meaningful contribution

What Good Practice looks like

Understand the volunteer's preferences

- Determine whether the volunteer wants social interaction as part of a group or is happy working alone or with a partner
- Understand what they want to gain from volunteering early in their role
- Find out what they want to learn and the skills they want to develop
- Maintain regular contact to find out how they are getting on

Support volunteers to be fulfilled and grow in their roles

- Create an environment which ensures volunteer's wellbeing is supported

- Check-in with them to ensure the volunteering is working for them and whether there are changes to expectations – has anything changed since they started?

- Identify and deliver pastoral care needs e.g. provide emotional support

- Ensure cultural and emotional wellbeing of volunteers e.g. address the fear of fitting in culturally

- Involve volunteers wherever possible in decisions that affect them – seek their input and suggestions

- Keep engaging with volunteers, ensuring they are happy, coping and adding value – addressing any issues on performance and coaching them on how to perform their role

- Understand and communicate the volunteer role. How it will begin, progress and how and when it will finish?

- Empower volunteers to be proactive in areas relevant to their work

- Address any big concerns about the role at the start e.g. who will I hand over to? What will happen with the work I've contributed so much to?

- Address behaviour that is unacceptable or when tasks are not being completed as agreed

- Have systems in place so that volunteers can raise concerns they may have

Organisation leaders should ensure volunteer managers have the knowledge, skills, and support to manage volunteers well

- Ensure volunteer managers are trained and skilled in supporting and mentoring new volunteers

- Ensure volunteer leaders know what the existing volunteer management processes are

- Manaakitanga! Everyone plays a part in nurturing and growing volunteers

- Ensure the organisation's staff value volunteers, know about volunteer's needs, and understand and are knowledgeable about the volunteer roles and what's involved/ expected.

Managing volunteers remotely

- Communicate regularly and frequently, matching communication to the volunteer and situation

- Provide speedy responses

- Ensure that volunteers are kept informed of what is happening across the organisation and of any changes

Practice area 4
Train and grow volunteers

Principles

1. Volunteering activities require training and appropriate resourcing by the organisation.

2. Volunteers are empowered to work independently, grow, make their own decisions, and resolve issues relating to their work.

Why this practice is important

Training is the process of providing volunteers with the ability to perform successfully in their role. It provides minimum competencies that all volunteers are expected to obtain. Training gives volunteers the opportunity to grow and fulfill their aspirations. Growth and development are motivators for many volunteers, strengthening their engagement with their work and the organisation.

What volunteers need

- To have training that aligns with their aspirations and needs as individuals and that increases their satisfaction with volunteering
- To have training delivered in a way that meets their needs
- To have well-structured training, aligned to the role
- To know there are systems, technology, and spaces to facilitate high-quality training, and to have a record of their training
- To be supported as they grow and develop

What Good Practice looks like

Training aligns to the aspiration and needs of volunteers as individuals

- Get to know your volunteers and regularly ask them if there is any training they feel they need
- Meet the volunteer where they are at, recognising the skills and knowledge they bring and that they may not need training
- When you encounter difficulties:
  - Spend as much time as required to train the volunteer in the best practice of the role they have taken on
  - Ensure additional training isn't seen as a punishment or volunteer 'blamed'
  - Ensure there is an internal referral process when someone doesn't meet the criteria

Training is provided in a way that meets the needs of the volunteer

- Ensure training is relevant to the role so that people's time, mana and what they bring to the role are valued
- Provide an environment with a warm, welcoming, inclusive atmosphere
- Provide peer and psychological support
- Ensure information is accessible for everyone e.g. provide in different languages and formats
- Provide links/networks with other service providers e.g. English language courses or interpreters
- Ensure a range of options are available e.g. peer mentoring, online learning

Training is well structured and aligned to the role

- Ensure the training function is resourced and the organisation invests in their volunteers' development
- Ensure training is linked to role descriptions and the work the volunteer does
- Have clear selection criteria for the training with skills assessments
- Have a volunteer training agreement
- Ensure volunteers receive training in the systems and technology they need for their work
- Adapt the training to different learning styles and offer flexible options for learning what they need to know at a pace they are comfortable with
- Make training fun, e.g. use comprehension quizzes to gauge learning/understanding
- Have feedback loops for volunteers to comment on the role and training experience
- Evaluate the training, and ask for volunteer feedback

Have systems, technology, and spaces to facilitate high-quality training

- Have a system for recording and managing training that can keep a track of who has done what e.g. Who has a first aid certificate? When does accreditation expire?
- Use technology to reduce time for learning and administration
- Adopt and use different technology spaces to collaborate and share ideas (e.g. Mural)
- Ensure technology for training is accessible for everyone or provide alternatives
- Ensure spaces are appropriate for the work to be done i.e. enough space, ability to socially distance, physically accessible

Ensure training is an ongoing process that supports the growth of the volunteer

- Have debrief conversations after training
- Review the fit of person with the role. Does it still work for them and the organisation? If not, consider alternative roles
- Discuss future opportunities with the volunteer. What do they want to do next in their volunteer role or beyond?
- Hold skills assessments and competency assessments. Check in on job practices and assessment for additional development
- Connect volunteer(s) with a buddy/network for ongoing support
- Enable participants on training courses to stay connected if they want to

Practice area 5
Feedback and recognition

Principles

1. Volunteers can give and receive feedback and receive recognition appropriate to their unique self.

2. The value and impact of volunteer contributions are understood and acknowledged within the organisation and communicated to the volunteer.

3. Contributions of volunteers are acknowledged using a range of recognition tools and activities that reflect the needs of the volunteer.

Why this practice is important

Feedback provides individuals with an opportunity for self-assessment and reflection. Meaningful feedback increases self-esteem and motivates volunteers. Volunteer recognition acknowledges accomplishments, reinforces efforts and is a sign of appreciation.

What volunteers need

- To know the processes used to recognise volunteers
- To have a range of methods/ options to be recognised
- To communicate their needs and feedback preferences
- To have feedback and recognition tailored to the individual
- To have a broad range of feedback options to match their preferences

What Good Practice looks like

Well communicated processes for recognising volunteers

- Ensure there is a process to acknowledge volunteers in a meaningful way e.g. a letter from the CEO or manager to thank them for their service
- Ensure there is a well-articulated 'benefits' package, matching rewards to the volunteers, motivations, and desires
- Clearly explain recognition and appreciation practices and what's available to new volunteers
- Have a regular review cycle for recognition and appreciation practices – to ensure continuous improvement
- Have easily accessible information explaining the organisation's recognition and appreciation practices

- Have resources for whānau and employers to help them understand the impact of the volunteer's contribution
- Have a volunteer management system that captures contributions and achievement. This can be online, a database or a spreadsheet
- Provide training for paid staff /volunteer managers on how to recognise and appreciate volunteers, as an expected part of their role

Have a wide range of methods to recognise volunteers

- Say thank you or give other informal, timely recognition
- Recognise the lived experience of the volunteer – the whole person
- Record their accomplishments, and impact on the organisation and community as well as the hours contributed
- Acknowledge the contribution of the volunteer(s) at regular informal/social events where everyone from organisation is present (check they wish to be publicly acknowledged)
- Link the volunteer's contribution and achievements to the organisation plan, showing how the volunteer fits into the plan to achieve the mission
- Have Service Recognition for volunteers who like to be recognised for their service
- Seek volunteers' opinions and involve them in reviewing policies/protocols
- Balance tangible and intangible rewards, and formal and informal recognition e.g., recommendation letters and Record of service presented at an event, profiling on social media, LinkedIn recommendation etc.

Understand the needs and feedback preferences of the individual

- Understand how the volunteer prefers to be recognised
- Work with the volunteer on what motivates them and recognise them in that manner
- Tailor the feedback and recognition to the individual
- Regularly check in with the volunteer to support them and deal with any issues
- Ensure feedback to volunteers with a disability isn't patronising

Have a broad range of feedback options to match the preferences of the volunteer

- Know when and how to say a simple thank you
- Use the inspiring connections the organisation could have in the community - e.g. with council, "important people" or other mentors in the community
- Provide collective recognition of the volunteer's group
- Provide ongoing training and development opportunities
- Acknowledge the contribution of the volunteer(s) at regular informal and social events where everyone from organisation is present
- Use performance appraisals to give two-way feedback
- Offer more than one way for the volunteer to give feedback e.g. verbal, online survey method
- Put volunteers forward for community awards
- Provide opportunities for growth, e.g. opportunities to mentor or coach the newer volunteers

Practice area 6
Celebrate volunteer impact

Principles

1. Volunteer contribution and impact are acknowledged and celebrated in ways that are meaningful to the volunteer.

2. Organisations recognise the role of volunteers and their contribution and impact.

Why this practice is important

Volunteer impact is a way to measure the effect that your volunteers have on their community and organisation they serve. Celebrating volunteer impact shows volunteers how their efforts make a meaningful difference. It motivates volunteers to be their best and supports retention.

Volunteer impact data helps to put numerical values on the effectiveness of your volunteers' time and efforts, and it demonstrates the value of the work of volunteers, assisting with applications for funding.

What volunteers need

- To see the impact of their work inside and outside the organisation
- To know the value of the work of volunteers is measured and reported on

What Good Practice looks like

Ensure the impact of the work of volunteers is visible inside and outside the organisation

- Ensure volunteer impact is a core part of Board reporting
- Ensure volunteer impact is highlighted and evaluated in the Annual Report
- Ensure senior managers are aware of and communicate the value and impact of volunteers
- Celebrate the contribution and impact of individual volunteers
- Profile volunteers and the impact of their work in newsletters
- Have testimonials and "A day in the life of a volunteer" on the organisation's website
- Use social media to show video interviews with volunteers talking about their work and motivation to increase the visibility of volunteers and engage the community
- Invite volunteers to present and share their stories at external events e.g. webinars, community meetings

Ensure the value of the work of volunteers is measured and reported on

- Ensure the value of volunteers' work is measured and included in the organisation's accounts and annual report
- Budget for the cost of managing volunteers
- Advocate for the budget and costs for managing, training, recognising, supporting, and retaining volunteers to be viewed as an investment
- Have a fair and robust volunteer reimbursement policy
- Ensure the organisation recognises the return on investment in training and the growth of volunteer

Practice area 7
Exit volunteers

Principles

1. Volunteering is a choice, and a volunteer may leave at a time that suits them.

2. Exiting is an important part of the volunteer life cycle journey and relationships can be maintained even when the volunteer leaves the organisation.

Why this practice is important

Exiting is a stage in the volunteer life cycle journey. Well managed, it is an opportunity to celebrate service and achievements and open the way for the volunteer to stay involved with the organisation.

What volunteers need

- To know they can leave the organisation and will be supported to do this
- To know their succession will be proactively managed
- To have skilled volunteer managers to assist with the transition
- To be kept connected with the organisation if they wish
- If they are asked to leave, that there are good processes in place

What Good Practice looks like

Recognise that exiting is a stage in the volunteer life cycle journey and have policies and practices to manage this

- Map out the volunteer life cycle journey from beginning to end in an induction manual or process
- Provide for volunteers who wish or need to (for health or other reasons) take a break from volunteering, and allow them to reconnect
- Provide information on exiting practices and expectations
- Follow agreed exit processes
- Ask long-serving volunteers when they leave or retire how they would like to be farewelled
- Hold a farewell celebration or poroporoaki to acknowledge their contribution
- Thank and recognise those who have supported the volunteer through their service e.g. partner / whānau

Succession is proactively managed

- Hold succession discussions regularly
- Plan succession for roles where volunteers have a set period to be in a role (e.g. Governance Board)
- Explore and provide new opportunities if a volunteer says they are thinking of leaving
- Plan and coordinate the handover to enable the retention of institutional knowledge and skills

Volunteer managers are skilled in assisting with the transition

- Ensure lack of discrimination when working with volunteers with a disability
- Work with people to discuss their transition out of the organisation and what this might look like
- Have an off-boarding policy with clear guidelines e.g. for returning equipment, keys etc.
- Communicate the exit process and what will happen and why (positively framed)
- Celebrate the contribution of the volunteer and provide feedback and recognition
- Provide a record of service/certificate or reference and be available for referee checks
- Conduct an exit interview or have an online survey and use this feedback to improve the organisation practice
- Identify the role that the departing volunteer might want to have and what that might entail e.g. unofficial ambassador
- Ask the volunteer if and how they'd like to stay in touch with your organisation

Keep those leaving connected with the organisation

- Have a path for re-entering the organisation or to become donors, or members
- Offer referrals inter-organisation wide
- Offer ways to keep connected, e.g. to be a supporter or legacy group or sign up to newsletter, check in after 3-6 months?
- Invite the volunteer to join an alumni group to stay in touch with the organisation e.g. Facebook group
- Invite volunteers to follow organisation's social networks

When the organisation is exiting the volunteer

- Use the code of conduct as a mechanism for addressing performance issues
- Follow good HR practice: Document, talk and explain, opportunity to comment
- Hold a meeting: Take role description, evidence of incidents, a support person, don't go in on your own. Make it as safe as possible.
- Ask what else could the organisation do to support the volunteer?
- Plan and coordinate the handover to enable the retention of institutional knowledge and skills
- Arrange a handover of tools, equipment access cards/keys and ensure IT access is closed off
- Ask the volunteer to complete an online survey to suggest how to improve the volunteer experience
- Acknowledge and thank the volunteer for their time and service

Appendix 1: The development of the guidelines

Development and design process

The guidelines were developed by Volunteering New Zealand | Tūao Aotearoa in collaboration with the community sector. The project and design process was an iterative co-design process which drew on the experience and wisdom of volunteers and sector leaders across Aotearoa, with open invitations for participation at multiple stages.

Steps in the process included:

- An initial research report identified relevant practice areas, and key recommendations for revised guidelines

- Reviewing practice frameworks and international examples of existing best practice and resources

- Volunteer Managers' survey with over 400 respondents from a huge range of organisations across the motu

- An advisory group supported our process and development of the guidelines

- Testing the proposed key practice areas, including by survey and with leaders from the Volunteer Centre Network

- Over 50 people participated across seven co-design workshops for each practice areas

- Each co-design workshop identified what volunteers need, key principles, and what good practice looks like

- The guidelines were then drafted and extensively peer reviewed

- Volunteering New Zealand's Ohu Tikanga and Kaitiaki Evelyn Tobin provided guidance throughout the development process

The volunteer life cycle journey

The volunteer life cycle journey provides a way to map each volunteer's journey through an organisation. This journey is not linear – there are cycles within the life cycle journey.

Questions for review

Do your volunteers currently experience a similar life cycle journey? If not, what is missing?

Is there a particular stage in the life cycle journey where you currently lose volunteers, instead of having them progress?

Which stage of the life cycle journey do you feel most confident about?

Which stage(s) do you need to focus on to improve your volunteer experience?

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For resources to help implement the guidelines see:
www.volunteeringnz.org.nz/best-practice-resource-hub/