



TOP TIPS - How to create a culture of diversity and inclusion within your volunteering programme

The charity sector supports a diverse range of communities, people and causes. But reflecting such diversity in its volunteer pools and personnel is not always easy. With this short document, we hope to provide a starting point for your organisation to start reflecting, planning and acting differently. For further resources, blogs and debates you may consider exploring this website

<https://www.thinknpc.org/themes/discover-ideas-and-approaches/diversity-and-inclusion>

Why is it important?

By reflecting the variety of communities in your local area and community you will attract more people to your organisation. By growing and diversifying your volunteer pool, you will be more effective in the delivery of your services. Consider it an investment with high return.

Inclusive Approach

- Move away from “BAME”, one size fits all, and move towards “culturally diverse”. Explore the different cultures, religions and faith groups within your community.
- Look at your volunteer base and at their diversity forms and see who isn’t represented, choose which groups are your priorities and develop an action plan to engage them. Aim to be as specific as possible within each culture.
- Consider creating diversity sub-groups within your organisation to review your volunteer base to make sure it is diverse.

Inclusive Language

- Ensure your language is inclusive: instead of using the word “volunteer” you could use the word “support” or “help”. Tailor both your vocabulary and format to suit the community you want to attract and reflect this in your messages, marketing and communications and, especially, when advertising volunteering roles.



- Consider explaining the benefits of volunteering in a variety of ways that are relevant to that specific community
- Consider having your advert available in different languages

Inclusive Recruitment

- Allow individuals to apply for roles in indifferent ways (print out, email, online).
- Provide help to complete applications forms and any other form you might have as part of teh induction process.
- Recruit your volunteers on multiple platforms and communications channels (not only online).
- Think about advertising your roles across the city If asking for references is essential, explore how you can support individuals obtaining them.
- Engage with community champions/connectors in local areas to reach to different people who can advocate for your organisation/service.
- Take the time to talk to communities about volunteering opportunities

Inclusive Volunteering Programme

- Remove barriers to volunteering. Don't assume, ask genuine questions to your volunteers with regards to what they would need in order to fulfil your volunteering role. Consider providing travel expenses or run a bus service; offering childcare support; counselling support etc.
- Think about what times of the day your volunteering roles are available in relation to the group of people you want to attract.
- Consider diversifying your volunteering roles in order to suit people of all capabilities. Consider creating youth and/or remote versions of your volunteer roles. Or consider offering micro-volunteering opportunities to allow individuals to dip in and out of volunteering. Buddying up volunteers to support one another Create easy read versions of documents, images of volunteering tasks.



- Consider volunteer reward systems to increase engagement and volunteer retention.
- Build in one-to-one support with volunteers

Policies and Procedures

- Ensure the DBS checks levels you require are appropriate to each volunteering role. Be aware of creating a barrier for skills & time rich communities such as refugees and asylum seekers.
- Engage in training and development opportunities on inclusive culture
Check up your policies are up to date & set up regular reviews
- Have an external organisation audit your process
- Ask Leeds Volunteer Managers Network for information & resources to support your organisation reflect an inclusive culture from top to bottom