

Volunteering

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Workshop Participants: Approximately 15

Summary

Volunteering can be mutually beneficial. Looking at what is preventing people from volunteering and the key factors that would enable them to volunteer.

Barriers identified:

- Students - Younger students have a tendency to need “babysitting” so induction is costly. PhD students can be more interested in getting a paper than meeting Charity needs
- University lacks an entry point – need a brokering service like CUPP at Brighton

	Workshop 1	Workshop 2	Flipchart
The REGION and the City	<p>We need a central brokering service to match (VAS?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University needs a coordinated approach – similar to CUPP (Brighton) • An online database which groups could browse for assets • Awareness raising needed amongst charities • Think beyond work skills (Busman’s holiday) • Charities need to be more creative about how volunteers can be used • Message about staff wellbeing – benefit to organisation • Universal credit (opportunities/needs opening up) • We need whole city region approach in big organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better communication about benefits of volunteering (for individual and charity) – Wellbeing and rooting people in community • A university policy and process on allowing and supporting staff to volunteer • A mechanism to connect volunteers and charities so that the fit is good • Online database where staff can offer services to charities • Charities need to be more explicit about their needs • Brokerage service between University and VCF (CF pilot light) • There are psychological/cultural barriers which get in the way – we need to be better at communicating across sectors • We need a single point of access to university • Better knowledge about sectors • Charities need to learn from volunteers and vice versa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charities have access to data about social change • Knowing what charities want and what people are offering • Online resource/database where people can offer • Knowledge exchange • Specialist skills – understanding local community • What’s stopping me? • Not knowing where to start • Not knowing what would be useful • Feeling that I can contribute • What would make a charity an attractive place to go to? • What actions can the University take? • Employer engagement/sign posting incentive – part of personal development – time • Time to fit around full time job – more evening roles • Cost – travel/food

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More mentoring for volunteers, 'Just left to it in old voluntary capacity • Interagency partnerships • Knowledge, perspectives, experiences, specialisms, professionalism • To understand what goes on – on the ground • For voluntary organisations to see this matter – as an anchor institution • Time – regular commitment a challenge but blocks/intermittent etc. • The right opportunity – fit with my experience, level of engagement (on the ground/organisation management etc.) • Pay the Penny Back
Why do people volunteer?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect to area / community they live in • Making a difference – altruism • Learning and understanding • Applying skills in different format • Doing something different from the day job • Personal development • Sharing skills and knowledge • Gives long lasting sense of well being 		
What kind of things would you want help with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several charities need people for Board of Trustees – need a good skills mix on the Boards • Help with financial management and leadership • Technical Support – building databases etc. • Lots of demand could arise from the introduction of universal credit in Sheffield 		
Key changers or enablers	<p>Brokerage role through VAS to match volunteers with charities and employers. Good to have a single point of access to the University:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several people thought an online database would be good where charities / employers can post what they need help with and volunteers can advertise what they offer • University needs to have a defined policy about staff volunteering • Volunteering is good for an individual's wellbeing – look at through Green Impact scheme • Charities need to think outside the box about how volunteers can help them • Lots of skills in university that can be put to good use, but bear in mind that people sometimes want to do something entirely different from day job 		

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need to change mind-sets – need to lobby bosses and convince them of benefits of volunteering – want a whole city region approach to volunteering• Look at the Cupp scheme already set up at university of Brighton• Need flexibility on both sides from volunteer and charity – charities need to define role clearly• University to keep sending message out to staff that it supports them doing volunteering work – could do through SRDs, brokerage system, pilot light?• Self-awareness, humility from volunteers – not to be patronising (training for volunteers?)• Volunteers can feel that they are entering a different world, can feel a cultural barrier, and can feel a certain expectation when they work at the university. The fear of failure is not helpful especially when they're out of their comfort zone | |
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