



## Guidance for Campaign Organisers

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## About this document

Thank you for choosing to be a Campaign Organiser – you are joining a UK wide team of organising volunteers aiming to effect change on local issues. This is a new role so we are taking time to develop it in the right way. With this role, we are testing a new approach to campaigning with the MS Society and as such this is a pilot phase. It's a really exciting time to be joining the MS Society as a campaigner and we're looking forward to supporting you in campaign success.

Part of your role may include recruiting and supporting local campaigners. This resource provides information on volunteer roles, the MS Society volunteer journey and tools available to you in managing others.

## About campaigning

We aim to bring about changes in policy, practice, levels of understanding and awareness of MS, nationally and locally across the UK.

**Our aim is to empower people affected by MS** to achieve change on issues that affect us.

From autumn 2016, we are running six campaigns pilots across the UK to test how we can support each other to campaign together.

## Staff support

The member of staff supporting your campaign is your first point of contact, for any questions about supporting other volunteers, or advice on your campaign.

## Using the volunteering journey to manage volunteer involvement



### Introduction

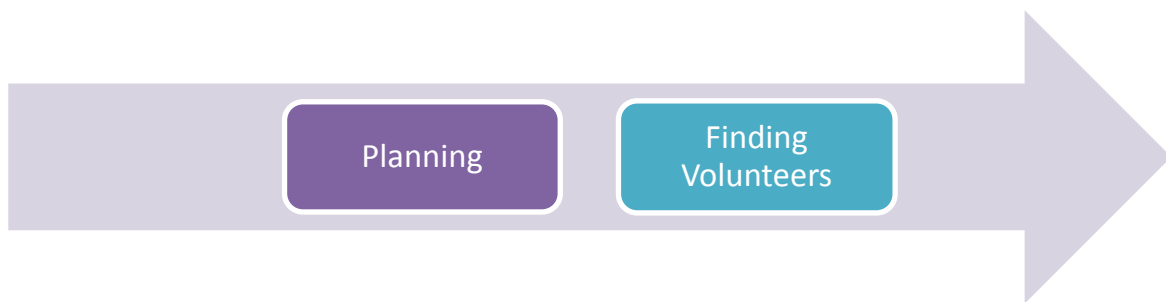
At the MS Society, volunteers deliver 68% of all our activity and are integral to delivering impact on our 2015-19 strategy and goals.

Involving and supporting volunteers to do their best can take time, so we seek to support all Volunteer Managers in ensuring everyone who offers their time has the best possible experience in doing so.

There are nine steps to planning an effective volunteer journey which ensures we offer the best support to volunteers in carrying out their role with us. This in turn ensures we have an excellent offer to the MS community (please note, for our campaigning work, we do not need to observe the fifth step: referencing)

Please see the Volunteer website page for the tools referenced in this resource.

If you have any feedback on this resource or any outstanding queries not covered here please speak to your supporting member of staff.



## Planning

*– making sure there's time planned to find and induct the right people to help you.*

As part of planning your campaign, think about the following:

- the number of people you need and in what particular roles
- what skills and experience will make the campaign powerful
- the time commitment you will be asking of those who get involved
- who you should be involving from the community and, indeed,
- who else might want to get involved.

It's also valuable to plan the timescales involved: working back from when you want to start your campaign activity and by when you need volunteers on board and up to speed. The following stages of the volunteer journey give some timescale suggestions, in general terms. We would suggest a planning phase of three to four months from advertising the role, to recruitment and induction of new volunteers.

Please also see the [Volunteer Involvement Policy](#)

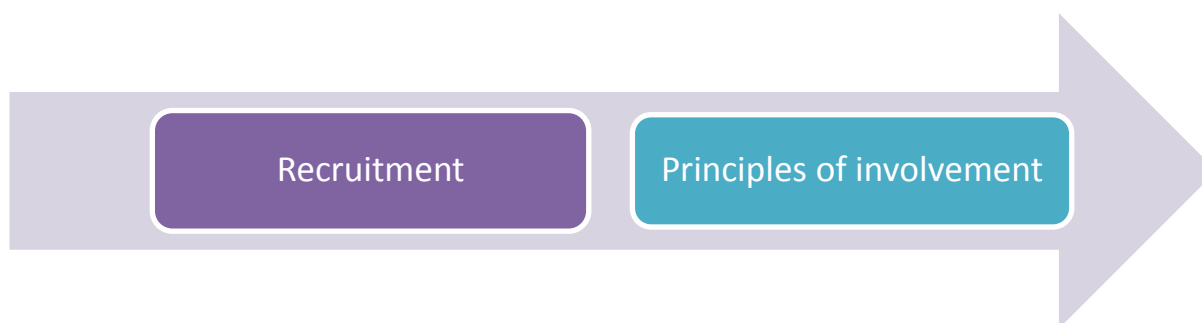
## **Finding volunteers**

*– make sure you find volunteers who are passionate about campaigning.*

It's likely that you will recruit volunteers from existing contacts. This may be by spreading a 'word of mouth' invitation to get involved. It could include people from MS Society groups, any other community groups you are currently working with or the Campaigns Community.

In any advertising, formal or informal, make sure you give an indication of the time commitment involved so that the people have an opportunity to assess whether they can give that time before they apply.

If, however, you want to recruit wider than that, please contact your staff support and/or volunteering team at the MS National Centre. We can promote your volunteer vacancies via our digital channels and external providers.



**These next three steps of the volunteer journey could be conducted in one meeting or over a few meetings. It's up to you how you organise this.**

### **Recruitment**

*– make sure new volunteers have an opportunity to review the role description and have asked any questions they have before they commit to giving their time. This is also your opportunity to ask any questions you have of them.*

Recruitment feels like a formal word but in a volunteering context, this is about following a process that ensures everyone is clear on what is being asked of them. This is so you can be certain you have the right people on board.

### **Application process:**

Even if you know the new volunteers you're bringing into your campaign, all new volunteers have to fill out an application form. This is so we can ensure volunteers' details are correct and that they have seen and signed our data protection statement, which means that as a national charity, we are complying with the law. Your supporting staff member will then arrange for these details to be added to the volunteer database.

As a campaign organiser, it is a requirement that you complete our online data protection training.

If you don't know the volunteer already, it's up to you if you'd like them to include a covering letter with their application so you can assess their suitability before meeting them. This will be dependent on the nature of your campaign and what tactics you want to use.

### **Meeting up:**

When you're approached by a potential volunteer with their application form, it's important to arrange a meeting to discuss the role and their motivations for applying.

To keep up momentum, potential volunteers should be contacted within a week of their application and interviewed within two weeks of that first contact, where possible.

This isn't a formal interview but more of an opportunity for the potential volunteer to decide if the role is for them. It could be conducted on the phone or face to face, this is up to you and them.

You should approach it as a two-way and informal conversation. The potential volunteer may have questions for you so they can assess the organisation is the right fit with their reasons for volunteering.

The aim of the meeting is to be sure:

- the volunteer is clear about the expectations of the role with the MS Society
- you're clear on what their motivations are for applying and what they hope to get out of their experience. This will help you in giving them tasks that they will find fulfilling and fit within the time they are able to give.

To ensure you have the right skills and experience on your campaign and that their experience is a quality one, discuss openly if they can and/or are willing to meet the time commitment required.

- If you both agree to go ahead, then follow the rest of the volunteer journey guidance.
- If you both agree that the role isn't for them, they may still want to volunteer for the MS Society. In this case, forward their application form to your supporting staff member or directly to the volunteering team who can take their application further.

Some informal interview guidance can be provided by your supporting member of staff.



## Principles of involvement

*– make sure you and the volunteer are clear on what is expected of them and what they can expect from you and the MS Society*

### From your side as a recruiter:

During the informal recruitment conversation, and assuming both parties are willing to progress with volunteering in the role, this stage of the journey asks if there are any key considerations that need to be shared at the recruitment stage.

For example, if the role requires an element of public speaking or sharing a personal story online, it's wise to ensure the volunteer is aware of this from the outset. This gives them an opportunity to say if they are comfortable to take on that type of task.

It is also an opportunity to ensure that the volunteer understands that they are volunteering on behalf of the MS Society and as such there are some expectations on how they represent the MS Society.

The Code of Conduct is included in their application pack and it is a good idea to ensure that the volunteer is aware of this and willing to sign up to it.

This is also the point at which you should ask if volunteers need any particular support in carrying out their role and for you to agree the level of interaction you'll have with them. It may be that you'll be campaigning closely together or that the role the volunteer is taking on will operate on their own.

This is the point at which to also:

- set a date for an initial role review after three months
- signpost them to the induction resources. It's important that they can work through these in the first few weeks before getting started

- the process for claiming expenses
- any key campaign dates they should put in their diaries.

**Top tip** - make sure you are prepared before any recruitment conversations with all the information you need to impart.

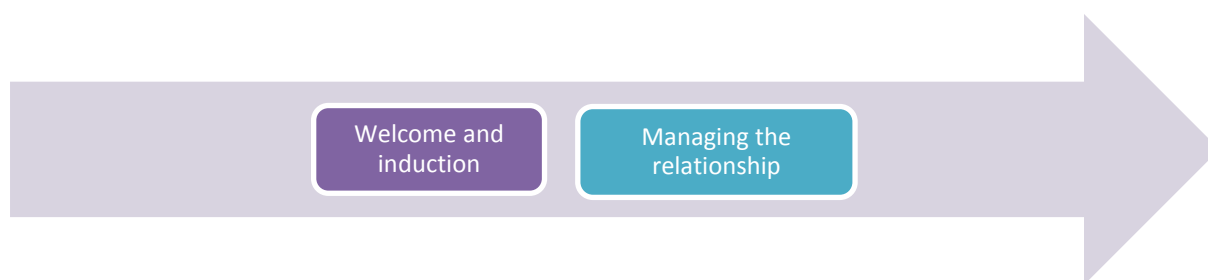
### **From the volunteer side:**

Ask the prospective volunteers to share their aspirations and motivations in applying for the volunteer role. It could be that they are looking to develop a career in campaigns and this volunteering opportunity would help them take that step and in turn, their energy to develop skills will positively impact your campaign.

It may be that they have a strong personal reason for wanting to campaign for change or that they have key considerations in how they would like to, or need to, carry out their role. For example, ensuring any access requirements are met or support provided to carry out some tasks.

There may also be some tasks or tactics they would not like to do. You as Campaign Organiser could agree to find another volunteer to cover those tasks and share the role. You should use the role description as a way to record this information and suggest you follow up with a note to confirm what was agreed (this isn't a formal process that should be signed, it's about ensuring you and the volunteer are clear on expectations both ways). Their personal role description should also form the basis for role reviews in the future.

However, if you feel the needs of the campaign won't be covered by what is deleted from the volunteer's personal role description, you can once again signpost them to other volunteering opportunities with the MS Society.



**After agreeing the involvement of a new volunteer, signpost them to the support available and agree when you would like them to have completed the resources.**

### **Welcome and Induction**

*– make sure that any new volunteers have the opportunity to learn about the whole organisation, what our aims are and the way we describe our work and MS. This aims to ensure volunteers are supported in doing their role from the outset. This approach is proven to aid the retention of volunteers.*

#### **Welcome:**

All volunteers new to the MS Society should be signposted to our welcome and induction materials. We recommend you send a welcome email within a few days of meeting up to start them off in the role, which includes the links provided in the appendices to this resource.

In this email, you should include all the pertinent information included in the induction checklist and anything relevant to your campaign.

This also includes the video on the 2015-19 Strategy and goals, which is available on the volunteer website. There are a number of learning and development links to welcome and induct a new local campaigner which can be found on our website.

It's up to you whether you would like to follow up on whether they have done this or not. It might be an informal 'what did you think?' asked the next time you see them or something more official.

If you've recruited a group of volunteers, you may choose to run a face to face event to welcome them and provide an opportunity for them to meet each other.

### **Role-based induction:**

Role-based induction resources are available on the volunteer website and are a combination of written materials and interactive resources (see appendices)

It is up to you how you deliver this information to your volunteers; again you may choose to organise a face to face event, have a phone conversation or be happy to leave a volunteer to self-direct their experience through the materials. If the latter, make sure that your volunteers know where to go for support if they have any questions, that you follow up after an agreed period (recommend 3 months) to ensure they've completed the necessary elements and ask if they need any further guidance and support.

A checklist is available which sets out the core learning content for all volunteers taking part in a pilot. This also acts as a checklist to help monitor volunteers' progress through induction/settling in period.

It is recommended you print this checklist for the discussion you and a volunteer have in agreeing the role and principles of involvement. They can then use this as a tool to track their learning or any further questions they may have.

If you have any feedback about these resources or require any help, please contact your support staff member.

## **Managing the relationship**

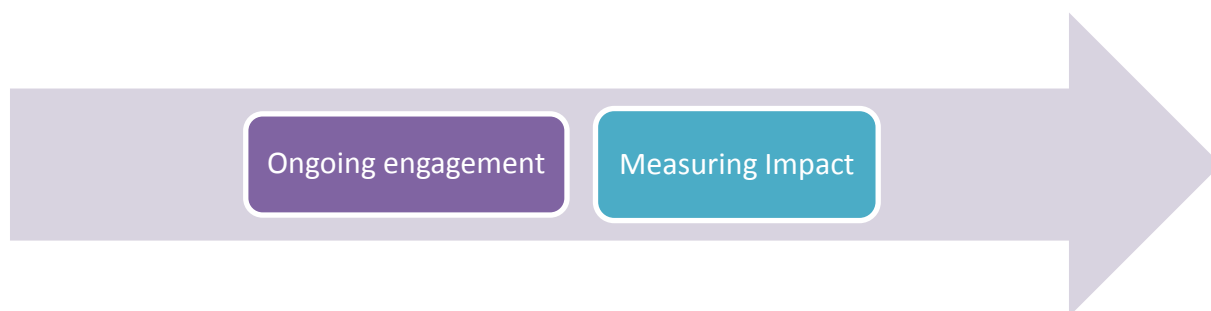
*– keep in touch with volunteers and make sure they have all they need. In some cases, regular role reviews might be beneficial for both of you.*

How you do this will depend on the nature of your campaign tactics and what interactions you have planned with your team.

Although you'll have had regular contact with your volunteers, it's useful to set some specific time aside to have an informal two-way discussion to determine if the volunteer is happy in role, and for you to determine that the activities are being carried out as per role description. You may also identify further support or learning needs that the volunteer would like to address.

As previously suggested though, you should plan to return to the role description and notes made at the informal interview stage to form the basis of the review.

The first 'review' should be planned for after three months and would have been agreed at the initial informal interview. Your aim in this meeting is to 'check in', making sure you are both happy with how the campaign is going, what time commitment it is taking and whether any further support would be helpful.



## Ongoing Engagement

*– ensure volunteers are connected to the wider organisation.. There may be update emails that are sent from the MS National Centre or communications that you should, as their organiser, ensure they have read and understood. This is also about you listening to their feedback and asking whether they have any new aspirations in their reasons for volunteering with us.*

Campaign volunteers at the MS Society are recognised as 'fixed term volunteers' in that the role they receive is linked to the campaign issue. Fixed term volunteering is defined as 'up to a year' but in this pilot stage it may run for longer – e.g. from September 2016 to December 2017.

Although you'll have had contact with the volunteers throughout the campaign, volunteers may benefit from a final role review and exit interview to celebrate campaign success and/or discuss any learning for future.

This is also the opportunity to hear how they have found their experience of volunteering at the MS Society, if you have any feedback for them, to thank them for their contribution and ask if they would like to continue doing so in another role.

**Recognition:**

Although you will no doubt have thanked them informally throughout the campaign, you may also wish to organise a more formal thank you.

The volunteering team can provide thank you cards or you can apply for a certificate or a shining star to present to the volunteer(s). Or you may just want to throw a volunteer celebration locally.

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