

MS Society Steps to recruiting volunteers

Recruiting and inducting a volunteer has never been so easy

Key



Learning activity



Top tips



Links to information

Before you recruit volunteers



Decide what you need

Look at the three scenarios below, list what you need to decide before you can recruit volunteers:

1. Susan's leaving, we need more volunteers
2. We're doing something new, we need volunteers
3. We're all doing too much, we need help

See our answers at the end of this pack.

Sum up

Before you recruit:

- decide how many volunteers you need
- identify which role(s) you need from our role descriptions
- decide what skills and experience are essential
- agree what information to give to potential volunteers



Our most up-to-date role descriptions are available from the [A-Z: Our volunteer roles](#) on our volunteer website

Our recruitment tools

The tools to help you recruit and induct a new volunteer:

- a role description
- role specifics (a brief)
- an advert
- an application form
- a welcome and induction checklist
- our welcome booklet
- our volunteer website

Role description

Our role descriptions are split into three main areas. When meeting a new volunteer, focus your discussion around these:

- **Tasks** – Agree with a new volunteer which tasks they're interested in. Delete any they are not comfortable doing.
- **Skills and knowledge** – Find out what they're confident they have, and what they might need or want to develop and learn
- **Our commitments** – Discuss what we offer and expect. They're the same for everyone.



You might need to recruit two or even three volunteers to share a role if the tasks are not all agreed by one volunteer.

This discussion will help you decide if the person's right for the role. It'll help the potential volunteer decide if it's the right role for them.

Role specifics – the brief

The brief gives more information about the role. For example, the context, services available, the time commitment, the team, the project, the location.

When using our online recruitment:

Simply fill in a 'new requisition'.

Give information to paint a picture of:

- what your group does
- what services and/or activities you offer
- what the volunteer will be doing
- how the volunteer will contribute to your achievements

When using other methods of recruitment:

Request a template of the brief from your key staff contact.

You'll need to include the following:

- what the role involves locally
- the time commitment the role is likely to take
- what guidance, support and opportunities for development you offer
- anything else you think the potential volunteer should know

The advert

The advert is used to attract potential volunteers and promote your opportunity.

When using our online recruitment - the Volunteering team will create the advert from the information you gave in your 'new requisition'.

Your advert will be automatically posted on key volunteer recruitment websites, including:

- Do-it.org
- Vinspired
- Charity job

When using other methods of recruitment – you'll need to request an advert template from your staff contact and post your advert locally and on your local group's Facebook and Twitter accounts (if you have those).



Your staff contact can organise for your ad to be posted on volunteer recruitment website and the main [MS Society website](#)

Applying for the role

Anyone interested in volunteering with us must fill in an application form.

This form is important because this is where someone agrees for us to use their data. It allows us to get in touch with them and store their personal information.

When using online recruitment:

- the information applicants are asked to fill in will be tailored to the role they're applying for
- Every potential volunteer will be asked to provide their contact details
- For many roles, a supporting statement will also be required.



Applicants will be able to save their details and use them again if they apply for another role. You'll be able to view their application online

When using other methods of recruitment:

- you can download the [application form](#) from the volunteer website
- you can then print it or email it to people interested in volunteering
- you'll need to store the filled in application form during the recruitment process.

Data protection

Remember to keep contact and personal information safely and securely. See [Handling data](#) on the volunteer website for more information.

Welcome and induction checklists

Each role has its specific welcome and induction checklist to:

- welcome and help volunteers settle into what they're doing
- signpost to learning, tools and resources relevant to their role
- discuss at the initial conversation any formal learning and how the volunteer will be supported.

When using online recruitment:

Once you've approved the online application of a potential volunteer, they will automatically be sent a welcome email. It'll include information about their welcome and induction checklist.



Let them know to expect this email. You may want to follow up with a personal email. Or arrange to meet with them to talk about the next steps in their volunteering.

When using other methods of recruitment:

- you can download the most up-to date welcome and induction checklist from the volunteer website.
- simply search for the role-specific checklist
- give, send or email a copy of the checklist to the volunteer you've recruited.

Why meet a potential volunteer

From your perspective:

I'm clear about who/what I'm looking for	Have they got the right qualities, skills, knowledge and experience?
I've explained the role and what we do	Do they seem interested in what they'll be doing?
I've agreed the tasks and responsibilities they will take on	Will they fit well with other people in the group?
We've discussed learning opportunities and their induction	How much of the role do they want to do?
I've told them what support they can expect and who will support them	What's their availability? When can they start?
I've answered their questions	Do they share our values?



Is this the right person for the role?

From the potential volunteer's perspective:



The meeting can take place face-to-face, over the phone or virtually (e.g. Skype)



Ideally two people from the group should meet the potential volunteer together



Download our guides on [Preparing to meet a potential volunteer](#), [Agreeing the role](#) and [Meeting questions template](#) at [Recruiting volunteers](#) on the volunteer website

Next steps

Let the person applying for the role know as soon as possible whether they've been successful or not. You should contact them within a week of meeting them.

When someone's been unsuccessful

When using online recruitment - you'll need to:

- update their records
- select the email which will be sent to them automatically
- if you know of other opportunities which would suit them, put them in touch

When using other methods of recruitment - you'll need to:

- get in touch to let them know they haven't been successful
- if you know of other opportunities which would suit them, put them in touch with the person recruiting
- if not, suggest they check our other volunteering opportunities

- if they'd like to speak to someone about volunteering, suggest they contact the Supporter Care team
- destroy their application form



See other [volunteering opportunities](#) available on the main MS Society website

When someone's been successful

When using online recruitment - you'll need to:

- update their records
- select the welcome email which will be sent to them automatically
- organise their welcome and induction



Once you've approved a potential volunteer, the Supporter Care Team will automatically be notified

When using other methods of recruitment - you'll need to:

- get in touch to let them know they've been successful
- give or send them a welcome booklet
- email or post their application form to the Supporter Care Team
- destroy their application form
- organise their welcome and induction



See our guide on [Welcoming and inducting volunteers](#)

Welcoming and inducting volunteers



Welcome to the MS Society

Our Welcome booklet is for all new volunteers.

Introduce them to their role

Give, send or email the volunteer their welcome and induction checklist.



Find the welcome booklet and access the checklists at [Welcome](#) on our volunteer website

Welcome and induction checklists

Depending on the role and the volunteer's availability, the checklist could take up to six months to complete:

- Allow time for the volunteer to complete their checklist
- Ask them if they have any questions
- It's up to them to manage their learning. But they should feel supported by you

The checklist has the following sections:

- **Welcome (for all)** - to find out more about us
- **My mandatory learning (for all)** - what a volunteer must know before they start
- **Induction to my role (higher risk/longer-term roles)** - any face-to-face induction and activities
- **Learn as you go (higher risk/longer-term roles)** - additional tools and resources as volunteer is more experienced.

Sources of support

- For support with recruitment, contact your key contact
- If you'd like to use online recruitment in future, contact volunteering@mssociety.org.uk to register your interest
- If you're using online recruitment, contact our provider Reach for technical support on 01527 574 408 or support@reach-ats.com. If you're logged on, you can also 'raise a ticket' which will send an enquiry to Reach. Click on Help> Contact Support



A list of [staff contacts](#) is available. The [Supporter Care Team](#) can also help with general enquiries about volunteering



Read the next guides and presentations as part of this series:

2. [Preparing to meet a potential volunteer](#)
 - 2.1. [Meeting questions template](#)
3. [Agreeing the role](#)
4. [Welcoming and inducting volunteers](#)

Answers to scenarios on page 1

1. Susan's leaving, we need more volunteers
 - Should the new volunteer(s) have the same responsibilities?
 - Does this role still meet our needs/the needs of people with MS locally?
 - Do I need more than one person?
 - What is the time commitment?
 - What role(s) do I choose?
 - What do I need them to know about us?
 - When do I need them to start (ideally)?
 - What else do I need to think about?

2. We're doing something new, we need volunteers
 - How many volunteers do we need?
 - What do we need them to do?
 - What role(s) do I choose?
 - What is the time commitment?
 - What do I need them to know about us?
 - When do I need them to start (ideally)?
 - What else do I need to think about?

3. We're all doing too much, we need help
 - What are the tasks or responsibilities we don't want to take on anymore?
 - Do I need more than one person?
 - What role(s) do I choose?
 - What is the time commitment?
 - When do I need them to start (ideally)?
 - What do I need them to know about us?
 - What else do I need to think?

Was this useful? We'd love to hear from you either way. Please email your comments at volunteering@mssociety.org.uk

Links to resources

Resource	Link
A-Z: Our volunteer roles	https://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/a-z-volunteer-roles
Handling data	https://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/handling-data
Recruiting volunteers	https://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/recruiting-volunteers
Staff contacts/support	https://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/volunteering-with-us/staff-support
Supporter Care Team	https://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/supporter-care-team
Volunteer application form	https://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/resources/volunteer-application-form
Volunteer website	https://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk
Volunteering opportunities	https://www.mssociety.org.uk/volunteering-opportunities
Welcome page and video	https://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/welcome

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