

Doing Good Well



Engaging Ad Hoc Volunteers:
A Guide for Non-profit Organisations

© National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre, Singapore, 2008. All rights reserved.

This publication is adapted from *Episodic Volunteering: Organizing and Managing the Short-Term Volunteer Program* by Nancy Macduff, 2004.

This publication may be freely reproduced, transmitted or stored in its entirety provided that the information on this page including the copyright notice is not removed. The publication may not be sold without the publisher's written permission.

The information given in this publication is only a guide. It is not intended as legal advice and does not claim to be comprehensive. It was prepared from information believed to be accurate and reliable at the time it was sourced. However, the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre and/ or its employees do not give any guarantee, representation or warranty as to the reliability, accuracy or completeness of the information, nor accept any responsibility or liability arising in any way (including by reason of negligence) for errors in, or omissions from, the information here.

Published by **National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre**

6 Eu Tong Sen Street #04-88

The Central

Singapore 059817

www.nvpc.org.sg

ISBN: 978-981-05-8735-2

- 02 Foreword**
- 03 Introduction**
 - Why Engage Ad Hoc Volunteers in Your Organisation?
- 05 Types of Ad Hoc Volunteers**
 - What Ad Hoc Volunteers Can Do
 - Barriers to Ad Hoc Volunteering
- 09 Starting a Programme for Ad Hoc Volunteers**
 - Volunteer Management Framework
 - Volunteer Management Practices
- 20 Success Stories**
 - Heartware Network
 - Yayasan MENDAKI
 - PromiseWorks
- 27 Additional Resources**
- 37 References and Acknowledgements**

Ad hoc or episodic volunteering is here to stay. It is a global phenomenon as more and more people lead busy lives. In Singapore, since 2004, more than half of those who volunteer say they volunteer occasionally while the rest do so weekly or monthly¹.

Against such a backdrop, non-profit organisations (NPOs) may find it more and more difficult to recruit – and keep – people who volunteer regularly.

People who lead hectic and busy lives might still want to volunteer. Though they may not volunteer regularly and on a long-term basis, they can still contribute significantly as ad hoc volunteers. When they have a meaningful short-term volunteering experience with you, they might take on more ad hoc projects, and even take to volunteering regularly as they get to know your organisation better. Even if they do not, they might end up being your donors and advocates, if you engage them well.

NPOs which shrink from engaging ad hoc volunteers are missing out on a big pool of talent, while facing the possibility of seeing their number of regular volunteers go down.

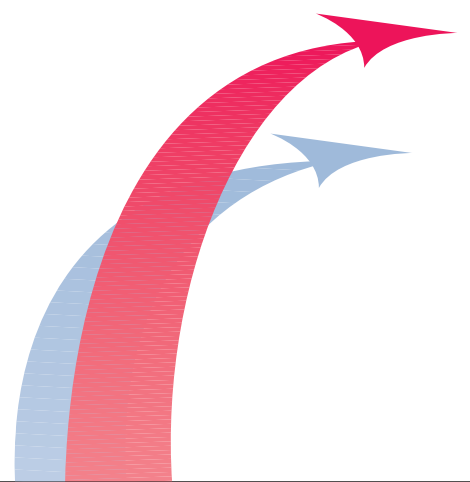
This guide seeks to help NPOs effectively retool volunteer programmes so as to engage ad hoc volunteers in meaningful ways to complement the work of existing regular volunteers, or to develop exciting new areas of volunteer work.

Ad hoc volunteers are here to stay. You will profit from using them well.

Tan Chee Koon (Mrs)
Chief Executive Officer
National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre



1 Introduction



1 | Introduction

More people today prefer to volunteer on an ad hoc basis, rather than take on long-term commitments. Since 2004, more than half of the active volunteers in Singapore do so occasionally while the rest do so weekly or monthly. Hence, programmes that depend entirely on regular volunteers may face a shortage of volunteers.

But organisations that welcome ad hoc volunteers may be able to get more help. Working alongside regular volunteers and staff, ad hoc volunteers help to get more work done, more quickly and effectively.

Why Engage Ad Hoc Volunteers in Your Organisation?



PromiseVWorks

There are many things that ad hoc volunteers can do.

Think of organisations like the Scouts or Girl Guides. Children and parents get involved, sometimes for a long time, as leaders and teachers. But others take on short-term, specific tasks such as helping out at an event. Every parent and child who share their volunteering experience with friends and family may inspire them to volunteer or donate.

Knowing that fewer people are interested in long-term traditional positions makes the tasks of recruiting people for shorter service all the more important. A mix of both regular and ad hoc volunteers helps the organisation to grow the number of volunteers and the types of things volunteers can do, including fundraising.

How it benefits your organisation	How it benefits your volunteers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ An influx of new people interested in furthering your mission■ Tap the skills of specialists such as lawyers, accountants and public relations experts■ Tackle organisational challenges with new thinking■ Do projects or events not possible with short supply of volunteers■ New source of donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Meet people who share their passion■ Serve a need in the community in a way that is compatible with their lifestyle, and family and work responsibilities■ For corporate volunteers, an opportunity to work with colleagues in a new way



2 Types of Ad Hoc Volunteers



2 | Types of Ad Hoc Volunteers

There are three broad categories of ad hoc volunteers:

Temporary volunteers serve for a few hours or up to a day. For example, they may prepare food for the needy, or clean a public park. These individuals do not return.

Occasional volunteers provide service at regular intervals for short periods of time. For example, volunteers who organise an annual fundraising event. Their service may last for just the evening of the event. But the Volunteer Programme Manager (VPM)² can count on them returning year after year. Youth groups frequently have annual fundraising drives. A parent who chairs that event, but is not involved in any other way, would be an occasional volunteer.

Interim volunteers serve on a regular basis for less than six months. Individuals with expertise in law, social welfare or health, for example, may serve on a task force for several months; they are interim volunteers. Volunteers who serve on a committee that meets once a month year-round are not considered to be ad hoc volunteers.

Many activities have a range of volunteer positions. To find out what types of ad hoc volunteers your organisation engages, fill in the form “Type of Volunteering: An Assessment” in the Additional Resources section at the end of this guide (Annex 1).

What Ad Hoc Volunteers Can Do: Examples

1. Services that involve professional or specialised skills



Heartware Network

- Fundraising
- Public and media relations
- Website design
- Legal
- Medical support
- Research
- Training
- Consultancy
- Carpentry
- Plumbing
- Electrical works

2. Services that involve general skills

- Cleaning the homes of elderly
- Bringing elderly/children for an outing
- Ushering
- Road marshals for sports event
- Packing
- General arts and crafts

Barriers to Ad Hoc Volunteering



Heartware Network

Some organisations resist the idea of incorporating ad hoc volunteers in their plans. In other organisations, short-term assignments are provided for volunteers in an informal and unstructured way. Below are common barriers to the development of a programme for ad hoc volunteers.

1. Current volunteers and paid staff may see little value in ad hoc volunteers.

Existing volunteers may expect new volunteers to have to “pay their dues” or have the same level of time commitment. Paid staff may think it is a waste of time training and supervising someone who plans to stay only for a short time.

2. Volunteer Programme Managers may resist redesigning job scope.

Some VPMs may be reluctant to change or update the traditional role that requires volunteers to serve for a year or more. They do not see that some tasks can be broken down into parts or can be performed by a team rather than an individual. Resistance is often due to inexperience or lack of knowledge, not a desire to be difficult.

3. Organisations do not know how to recruit or handle ad hoc volunteers.

They may be unfamiliar with the new phenomenon of ad hoc volunteering. Staff also tend to develop better ties with the people they see regularly. The perception that ad hoc volunteers are somehow different may create a lack of confidence in the ability of the organisation to cope with a “new type” of volunteer.

2 | Types of Ad Hoc Volunteers

4. Resources are focused on the volunteer who stays.

Regular volunteers may be given many hours of training. Their contributions are also recognised at events such as luncheons or dinners. In contrast, little attention is paid to ad hoc volunteers, who may feel their efforts are not appreciated. This may also stop potential ad hoc volunteers from stepping up their involvement.

5. Organisations fear running legal risks.

Some programmes require volunteers to complete costly and time-consuming screening procedures. For example, volunteers at hospitals may have to undergo medical tests before they can start work. Such a cost may seem prohibitive when weighed against the ad hoc volunteer's short-term service. Exempting them from this requirement could put the organisation in a legally tenuous position. But changes to some of these volunteer positions can make them less risky and reduce the need for such intense screening (Graff, 2003).

6. Ad hoc volunteers may face rejection.

Some VPMs avoid formalising a programme for ad hoc volunteers because they want to “protect” these volunteers from possible bad treatment by paid staff and regular volunteers who have served longer.

Reducing barriers

Barriers to ad hoc volunteering may be reduced by organising a formal programme for ad hoc volunteers, with clear lines of authority and responsibility. Engage experienced long-term volunteers to develop the programme and to supervise new short-term volunteers, to gain the former's buy-in.

Find out what barriers your organisation may be facing by completing the form in Annex 2.



3 Starting a Programme for Ad Hoc Volunteers



3 | Starting a Programme for Ad Hoc Volunteers



Yayasan MENDAKI

Traditionally, most volunteer programmes are organised around the long-term, regular volunteer. Recruiting, screening, supervision and recognition processes that were designed for these volunteers may be inappropriate for ad hoc volunteers. For example, an ad hoc volunteer who will be serving food and drinks at a fundraising event for two hours may feel frustrated when asked to complete a long and complicated application form.

It may also be inappropriate to assign to ad hoc volunteers tasks best done by traditional volunteers. Volunteers who wanted ad hoc assignments may resent being given different tasks, or they may find themselves out of their depth. Poor performance will reinforce the bias against involving ad hoc volunteers.

Achieving mission with ad hoc volunteers

The ad hoc volunteer programme is not separate from the overall volunteer programme, but is part of a plan to incorporate different types of people into accomplishing the mission and goals of the organisation.

The growth of short-term or ad hoc volunteering has been helped by companies which encourage their employees to volunteer by giving them paid leave to serve for a day or more in non-profit organisations.

Volunteer Management Framework

Volunteers are more motivated and committed when there is a comprehensive volunteer management framework in place. Such a framework has four stages.

I. Concept stage

- Clearly define vision, mission and goals for volunteers.
- Assess volunteer needs.
- Design a budget for volunteer involvement.

2. Planning stage

- Write job/position descriptions and policies.
- Develop a recruitment plan and procedure for volunteers.
- Design database and record-keeping systems for managing volunteers' information, activities, hours*, etc.
- Identify potential risks faced by volunteers and ensure that these risks are minimised.

3. Implementation stage

- Implement a screening procedure to identify suitable volunteers.
- Conduct orientation and training for volunteers.
- Supervise volunteers.
- Have recognition activities for volunteers.

4. Review stage

- Review performance/reasons for exit of volunteers*.
- Assess impact of volunteer programme.

Volunteer Management Practices

1. Assess volunteer needs

Examine the list of tasks currently done by regular volunteers or assess the workload of the staff to see if any of the work can be assigned to ad hoc volunteers. This will help reduce the workload of the staff and regular volunteers so that they can spend more time with clients or in other areas of work.

Secondly, consider how ad hoc volunteers can enhance the work of staff and regular volunteers in new areas.

* Especially for non-temporary ad hoc volunteers



3 | Starting a Programme for Ad Hoc Volunteers

Ad hoc volunteers can help beyond one-off projects

Ad hoc volunteers can help staff and regular volunteers be more effective.

For example, hospice befrienders who work with the terminally ill may appreciate the help of ad hoc volunteers. These volunteers can make trips to the library for patients, thus allowing the regular volunteers to spend more quality time with the patients. Ad hoc volunteers need clearly defined parameters for their tasks and that may mean not seeing the patient except with a paid staff member or a volunteer from the hospice present.

Ad hoc volunteers can also help mentors organise youth camps so that the mentors can spend more time with the youths-at-risk and reduce the time spent on camp logistics.

Ad hoc volunteers can help an editorial team proofread publications such as annual reports.

These examples illustrate how ad hoc volunteers can help not just in one-off, large-scale projects, but also in less obvious but no less helpful ways.

Involve staff members in any needs assessment exercise. This will help any ad hoc volunteers who come on board later to gain acceptance sooner.

In the exercise, assess the quantity and quality of service by ad hoc volunteers in the previous and current year. To assess the quality of the volunteers, talk to staff and volunteers who have worked with them (see Annex 3).

Next, assess the availability of management support and resources. Resources (human and financial) are needed to support all types of volunteers, including ad hoc volunteers.

- Does the management support the work of volunteers and paid staff to establish a programme for ad hoc volunteers? Are there adequate human and financial resources to launch such a programme? Who will lead this project?
- Establishing the programme means promoting continuous-service volunteers to supervisory positions. Who will train them to carry out the management functions? Who will supervise them?

The answers to the above questions should be compiled and provided to anyone interested in the development of the programme. It is also a useful document to provide to a Board of Directors, Advisory Committee or anyone considering support to the programme.

Involve other staff

Get help from staff to start the programme for ad hoc volunteers. Often employees observe the work of volunteers, know where good short-term positions are located, and are put in the position of supervising volunteers. Involving staff members in decision-making that could impact on their jobs will boost morale.

2. Write job descriptions

Existing job descriptions do not always apply to ad hoc volunteers, and should be adapted to suit.

Some ad hoc positions require only brief job descriptions (see Annex 4).

The job description for interim and occasional volunteers should be more detailed than that for the temporary volunteers. It should provide basic information about the duties and the time commitment required. (see Annex 5).

Use the Job Description Resources Form and the Volunteer Request Form to develop new positions (see Annexes 6 and 7).

3. Develop a recruitment plan



PromiseWorks

The needs of ad hoc volunteers are usually different from those of continuous-service volunteers. Using marketing terminology (Kotler and Armstrong, 1996), the **product** (the volunteer position) should be **priced** (cost of doing the tasks for the volunteer eg. financial, emotional and personal) within reach. Then a **promotion** method (eg. brochures, flyers, TV or radio advertisements) is selected to attract those who are the likely “buyers” of the volunteer

“product”. The promotional material is **placed** where it is most easily accessible to the potential volunteer.

There are four ways to recruit ad hoc volunteers (Vineyard, 1984).

■ The one-to-one or “in-person” method:

Ad hoc volunteers who are directly recruited by other volunteers or representatives of the organisation will have a better sense of the organisation’s needs. They get to know people from the organisation, and can ask questions directly.

3 | Starting a Programme for Ad Hoc Volunteers

- **Approach a club or organisation that has prospective volunteers:**
Many clubs and organisations are interested in ad hoc volunteer opportunities for their members. The recruiters can do a presentation to club members to explain the needs, share their own commitment and tell them how they can help.
- **Telephone contact:**
Consider the various types of calls:
 - the recruiters know the people they are calling, who in turn know about the organisation;
 - the recruiters know the people they are calling, who in turn know little or nothing about the organisation;
 - those who receive the calls know about the organisation, but not the recruiters;
 - those who receive the calls know neither the recruiters nor the organisation

As you might expect, the first type of call is most likely to succeed and the last type the least likely.

- **Generic appeal:**
Broadly defined, this would include flyers, print and media advertisements, billboards, brochures, window-displays, posters, and want ads. This is a passive method of recruiting. It is the least personal, and therefore has the least likelihood of success.

By taking the trouble to create and develop recruitment techniques and strategies to woo ad hoc volunteers, in a market where demand is greater than supply, the organisation signals that it respects the volunteers and values the work they are asked to do.

4. Implement a screening procedure to identify suitable volunteers

Screening ad hoc volunteers is similar to screening regular volunteers.

The difference lies in the extent of the scrutiny (Macduff, 1991). For example, anyone working with a vulnerable group, say the elderly, is typically closely screened. This is sensible given the sensitivity of the work. An ad hoc volunteer who is running errands for an elderly person at the request of a regular volunteer may not be required to complete an extensive application, especially if the ad hoc volunteer has contact only with the regular volunteer. Each organisation must decide for itself what level of screening is necessary for each position (Graff, 1999) and review this regularly.

- **Job descriptions:**
They are the starting point of screening. Having job descriptions in print or online helps potential volunteers see if they are suited to the positions. They can opt out immediately if their expectations do not meet those of the organisation.

■ Applications:

The ad hoc volunteer application form contains only the essentials. At a minimum, obtain a liability waiver and emergency contact information from each volunteer. It may be helpful to store information of ad hoc volunteers separately from the records of regular volunteers.

■ Interviews:

Ad hoc volunteers can be interviewed by trained volunteers or paid staff. Create a standardised interview process and script. It may be necessary to interview applicants in person, especially interim volunteers who have direct contact with clients.

The interview questions for an interim volunteer may be the same as for a continuous-service volunteer. Suppose a tertiary student is giving a semester of service in a hospital setting and will be working on the children's floor. The screening of this volunteer, who will serve for a short period of three to four months, needs to be as rigorous as of someone who volunteers regularly. Some programmes do not let interim volunteers work alone with clients, but pair them with more experienced volunteers or paid staff members. This is a risk management consideration and should be determined on a case-by-case basis.

A screener's work is also made easier by having clearly-defined duties for each volunteer. Suppose a hospital has stringent screening requirements for regular volunteers, including expensive health screening. The organisation may decide then that ad hoc volunteers should have no direct patient contact but may be involved in public education or other kinds of work. In this way, the screening is targeted at the task being performed.

This kind of policy modification reduces the pressure for the extensive screening that would make recruiting ad hoc volunteers impractical (Graff, 1999).

5. Conduct orientation and/or training for volunteers



Heartware Network

The orientation process can help dispel anxiety or confusion (Ilsley and Niemi, 1981). The volunteers need to feel comfortable with their tasks, and that they are a part of the organisation they serve. Orientation needs to send a clear message that ALL volunteers are NEEDED – regardless of the length of service. Sending that message helps the volunteers develop a stronger commitment to complete the assigned tasks and increase the likelihood of high-quality performance.

The ad hoc volunteer is unlikely to have the time to attend lengthy training sessions. Electronic-learning is effective in providing information and training. Besides face-to-face training in the classroom, consider conducting telephone briefings and e-mail lessons, and putting up pointers on the organisation's website.

3 | Starting a Programme for Ad Hoc Volunteers

Ad hoc volunteers need clear and straightforward information – “Do this! Do not do that!” – and they need it quickly.

For example, a volunteer working a four-hour shift at an event might receive the following:

- a brochure on the organisation;
- a brief one-page history of the event;
- a summary of how ad hoc volunteers contribute to the success of the event (numbers participating, money raised, clients served, etc.);
- a copy of the job description or list of tasks;
- the name and phone number or e-mail address of the volunteer’s supervisor.

Depending on the number of volunteers and the size of the event, the supervisor (who may be another volunteer or paid staff) may call each volunteer to review their duties and code of conduct.

Volunteers need to know how they will be evaluated. Share with them the standards of performance for their tasks.

6. Supervise volunteers

The development of a short-term volunteer programme does not end with bringing the recruits through the door.

Supervision of short-term volunteers can be done quite effectively by regular volunteers. An occasional volunteer with several years of experience can oversee the work of a temporary volunteer. The occasional volunteer is likely to report to a staff member of the organisation. Overseeing the work of ad hoc volunteers requires creative thinking from VPMs. It may even require the establishment of “middle management” positions for current traditional volunteers and specialised training.

An ad hoc volunteer programme must also have strategies to sustain and support volunteers during their time of service. Here are some tips for sustaining ad hoc volunteers:

■ The supportive environment

Fisher and Cole (1993) suggest that a “supportive environment” is made up of elements designed to enhance the workers’ ability to perform and be satisfied with that performance. Gidron (1983) says it includes such things as “training, a clear understanding of job assignments, information about standards, expected levels of performance, and instruction on how to do the job”. “Resources necessary to do the job are provided and conditions harmful to performance are corrected” (Gidron, 1983). These conditions help the ad hoc volunteer perform effectively.

- Strategies to provide a “clear understanding” of work expectations might include:
 - **concise instructions, expectations, and tips.** These can be handed out to the volunteers as notes, or posted on the organisation’s website for downloading.
 - **laminated step-by-step guide to carry out task.** It can be placed near where the task is done, and can be re-used year after year.
 - **training by dedicated volunteer or staff member.** This person is responsible for the training of all volunteers assigned to the task.
 - **self-study guide.** It contains directions, FAQs and hypothetical scenarios that will help the volunteer understand the work he’s doing. It can be made available electronically. Make it fun and interesting. Require volunteers to complete it before they begin service. The ad hoc volunteers have no time to develop long-term relationships with supervisors. Direct information is critical.
 - **skill-building workshops for paid staff and volunteers who supervise.**



Yayasan MENDAKI

■ Team building

Ad hoc volunteers want to feel they are part of a group. Create an environment in which volunteers and paid staff work together as a team. To build a team, you need to:

- know and communicate the reasons for working together
- have a personal commitment to team work
- develop strategies to bring about accountability from team members
- understand the skills necessary to build work teams with diverse membership — age, gender, income, motivations, and pay (Fisher and Cole, 1993).

Ad hoc volunteers often have much less experience and knowledge of the organisation’s history. Hence, more experienced volunteers may dismiss their ideas and contribution. The experienced volunteers, who already know one another well, may also unintentionally exclude newcomers in conversation. The supervisor can help the experienced volunteer learn to respect the presence and ideas of the newcomer, and help the newcomers to understand they do not have all the answers.

■ Communication

Supervisors need to monitor and improve the effectiveness of their communication with volunteers. Written communication is vital when working with ad hoc volunteers. Prepare ad hoc volunteers by giving them written material, delivered electronically or via the post, before the volunteers begin their service. Clear verbal communication will help bring the ad hoc volunteers up to mark quickly. Good communication can be learnt in skill-building workshops.

3 | Starting a Programme for Ad Hoc Volunteers

■ Feedback

Feedback is necessary to effective supervision. The organisations need to establish a continuous circle of communication from the volunteer to the supervisor and back again. Volunteers should be given regular feedback of their work, not just when things go wrong. Feedback includes praise, suggestions for improving performance, written outlines to enhance performance, a “thank you” card after the task has been completed, or sharing with others the good work done by ad hoc volunteers.

Self-assessment is a useful technique. Ask the volunteers: “How do you think you are doing with this task?” Or get them to identify the tasks they are managing well, and those they would like help in. In this way the volunteers tell the supervisor where help is needed. An effective supervisor guides the volunteer to learn what they want to learn and interjects in other areas where improvement is needed.

7. Recognise volunteers for their contributions

There are two types of recognition, formal and informal (MacKenzie and Moore, 1993; Macduff, 1996). Formal recognition is characterised by a “system” that is consistent over time. Two different people receiving a named award 10 years apart have the same plaque and meet the same criteria. Such awards are almost always reserved for long-term continuous-service volunteers. There are however, times when an ad hoc volunteer is deserving of a formal award.

■ Formal recognition

Having formal recognition for all ad hoc volunteers is impractical, although some volunteer programmes go the extra mile to present a certificate of participation to anyone who had helped in a big project or event. Temporary volunteers from a company may also be recognised with a “thank-you” letter from the coordinator of the corporate volunteering project.

- Interim volunteers may also receive a certificate of participation. In many cases the opportunity for recognition comes during an exit interview, when the supervisor or VPM can acknowledge the volunteers' contribution on record.

Typically, recognition of the occasional volunteer's work is more in line with that for the continuous-service volunteer. The occasional volunteer returns year after year to work on the same event or project. They may be eligible for named awards or other formal recognition.

■ Informal recognition

Informal recognition includes the small, everyday expressions of gratitude and praise for the volunteers' work. Letting volunteers know the impact or result of their work is an effective recognition tool. As "outsiders", they may not have access to information about the amount raised in a charity auction, or how the children enjoyed a new playground, or the number of new subscriptions got for a symphony season. Providing such "insider" information makes volunteers feel good about their job. One organisation gets ad hoc volunteers to address a postcard when they sign up for a big fundraiser. After the event, the postcards are printed with a thank-you note and the amount raised at the event, and given to the volunteers. It is instant recognition for a job well done.

See Annex 8 for a list of different types of informal recognition.

8. Assess impact of volunteer programme

The last step in managing a programme for ad hoc volunteers is to evaluate the effectiveness of the volunteers' work.

- Ask volunteers to evaluate their experience.
- Seek views of paid staff.
- Measure:
 - the number of ad hoc volunteers per year
 - the number of clients, members, patrons, or others served by ad hoc volunteers
 - the estimated value of the hours put in by ad hoc volunteers
- Discuss the "feelings" of clients, paid staff and continuous-service volunteers about the work of the ad hoc volunteers. This is not scientific, but it can be an early warning sign of possible problems.



4 | Success Stories



HEARTWARE *network*

*Inspiring youths.
Developing community champions.*



Heartware Network

Established in 2000, Heartware Network is a non-profit youth organisation that focuses on developing youth into community champions. It inculcates in young people an attitude of "I can make a difference" through volunteerism. It runs strategic programmes that facilitate mentoring and equip youth to plan, lead and execute community projects, challenging them to work out creative and sustainable community solutions. Heartware Network hones their life skills and sense of enterprise through a journey of self-discovery and service learning.

Heartware Network's main goal is to engage as many youth volunteers in their programmes as possible. Though young people are generally busy with their studies and social commitments, they do have pockets of time and can make good ad hoc volunteers if properly tapped.

Volunteers were successfully mobilised, for instance, at the Chingay Parade 2007 and National Day Parade 2007 during which over 2,000 youth volunteers helped in ushering, crowd control and the overall management of the spectators and performers. Encouragingly, Heartware Network had set out to recruit 600 volunteers but over 2,000 youth responded to the call.

4 | Success Stories

Several factors account for the success of the Heartware ad hoc volunteers.

- **They were properly selected and matched**

Heartware Network took the extra effort to personally interview the volunteers to make sure they have the right qualities to do the job and also to ensure the right 'fit'.

- **They have a clear understanding of their roles**

To ensure they understand the importance of the roles they have to play – no matter how “small” – every volunteer is briefed personally by Raymond Huang, the Founding Chairman of Heartware Network. Potential volunteers are given a clear idea of what is expected of them, especially in terms of commitment, and what may happen if they do not carry their share of the load.

- **They can determine the “scalability” of their ad hoc volunteer work**

To maintain a level of flexibility and relevance to many of the youth's own freedom to commit to projects outside school hours, projects and examinations, programmes are developed as scalable projects that can be enlarged or reduced depending on how many volunteers are recruited. The goal is to have them motivated by their own 'internal altruistic' values. Once that has been tapped, their commitment becomes much more regular and focused.

- **They communicate regularly with Heartware**

Ad hoc volunteers may feel left out of the communication loop of the organisation. Heartware maintains a regular dialogue with their volunteers, and work with them to better juggle their school work and volunteer assignments.

- **They feel empowered**

Ad hoc volunteers can choose their own leaders in the projects, so they have a sense of accountability and empowerment – within perimeters – giving them the opportunity to learn critical life skills.

- **They feel appreciated**

Heartware thanks its volunteers and the schools for their support. Letters of commendation are sent to all the schools, personally recognising each volunteer for the roles he played in various projects. This ensures that all volunteers' efforts are recognised and that they are valued even though they are ad hoc volunteers.

www.heartware.org



Yayasan MENDAKI

To navigate, empower and position the Malay/Muslim community at the forefront of excellence.

Set up in October 1982 by Malay/Muslim community leaders, Yayasan MENDAKI is a self-help group dedicated to the empowerment of children, youths and families from disadvantaged or low-income background through the pursuit of excellence in education. MENDAKI offers a holistic approach to help these families realise their potential. It provides academic assistance to school-going children, and development and enrichment programmes to strengthen family units; it encourages youth to develop a positive attitude and engage them in healthy activities; it assists adults in the community to remain relevant in the workforce.

MENDAKI sees volunteers as critical to its success. Volunteers are individuals and groups that have the fire in the belly to uplift the community. To continue fanning this fire and remain a volunteer-friendly organisation, MENDAKI has been providing many ways to keep the spirit of volunteerism alive.

In 2006, over 2,000 volunteers from informal groups, including students, motorcycle and scooter groups, cyclists and exercise-loving *makciks* — helped spread the message in the heartlands during the “Lebih Sexy katakan Tidak” (It’s Sexier to say No!) campaign. They also helped to organise holiday camps, projects and activities for MENDAKI’s beneficiaries.

4 | Success Stories

In 2007, a group of undergraduates from the Singapore Management University's Malay Language and Culture Club used drama to help build character, confidence and leadership in a group of out-of-school youths. During the year-long engagement, the youths gained insight into a traditional form of Malay culture and picked up new skills in stage and theatre production.

Several factors account for the success of MENDAKI ad hoc volunteers.

- **They can choose from a wide range of activities**

They are given a comprehensive volunteer booklet that lists the wide range of activities open to them. Volunteer Programme Managers present many options during the initial meeting and emphasise how anyone can find a role in MENDAKI's activities. For example, there are opportunities for those who want to mentor at-risk youths, for those who have only a few hours to spare, for "just-in-time" volunteers to help with ushering or filing and data entry; every little bit counts.

- **Their skills and interests are matched appropriately to programmes**

Volunteers are involved in discussing and shaping projects of interest to them. This has been instrumental in spurring creativity and excitement among volunteers to take ownership of projects and ensure project success. For example, MENDAKI has had much success in recruiting volunteers to organise events where the event manager, lighting designer and sound controller are all volunteers.

- **They are trained for their roles**

Volunteers are encouraged to specialise. Depending on the area of specialisation, structured training may be given to equip them with skills to enhance their capability and capacity. For example, a volunteer who chooses to work with out-of-school youths may be given training in mentoring, counselling and leadership development, at basic, intermediate and advanced levels. This way, the volunteer is able to deliver existing programmes and also plan new programmes. Where available, the training provided will be those that are certified so that the training volunteers receive are recognised beyond MENDAKI. This would enable a team of volunteers to run programmes on their own with minimal guidance.

MENDAKI will continue to enhance its efforts to engage volunteers to create opportunities that will inspire different people differently yet lead to one goal — a Community of Excellence.

www.mendaki.org.sg



PromiseWorks

Impact a youth, transform a generation.

PromiseWorks was established in 2000 by a group of friends who saw a lack of emphasis and focus on youth development in Singapore. Mentorship underpins its programmes and activities. It wants to maximise the positive influence of responsible and like-minded mentors, and aims to raise a generation of youth who see beyond materialistic pursuits to develop a passion for life, and virtues such as kindness, goodness and love.

Building on its mission 'to nurture and inspire', PromiseWorks has developed several tiers of mentorship to meet the needs of youths at different levels of maturity. The mentors are working professionals who share with the youth their positive attitudes and life experiences. Programmes are developed with long-term and ad hoc volunteers in mind. Ad hoc volunteers are working professionals who can inspire youth with their achievements. Mentoring skills are taught through a basic training programme for volunteers.

PromiseWorks also provides consulting services to non-profit clients. The services are provided free by volunteers.

4 | Success Stories

Several factors account for the success of the PromiseWorks ad hoc volunteers.

- **They have time flexibility**

Volunteers who take on pro-bono consulting projects can arrange the work to accommodate their own schedule. For example, they could take the weekend to do some research, or spend another weekend brainstorming with the rest of the team. This kind of flexibility helps to attract and retain ad hoc volunteers.

- **They have a clear working relationship**

At the first meeting, volunteers are told the commitment required and the long-term benefits of their mentoring. The organisation's expectations are also outlined clearly at that stage. If the volunteers cannot meet the time commitment for one project, they can be assigned to other projects that are more suitable. For example, mentors are expected to commit to giving a year of service. Volunteers who cannot make that commitment can help instead to organise youth projects to support the mentoring programme.

- **They benefit greatly from the training provided**

The training programme focuses not just on transferring skills, but is also motivational and aims to bring community spirit to the volunteers' lives. PromiseWorks also hosts a one-day intensive training camp that combines teaching and interactive sessions, which guides the volunteers to examine their own lives as well as their professional and life goals, attitudes, obstacles and stumbling blocks.

- **They are in constant contact with the VPM**

The VPM maintains constant contact with ad hoc volunteers to ensure that any potential unhappiness or misunderstanding is handled promptly and properly.

- **They “feel good” doing meaningful work**

The ad hoc volunteers feel good as they have made a positive impact in people's lives. This makes volunteering worthwhile, even if on an ad hoc basis.

www.promiseworks.org

Annex I Type of Volunteering: An Assessment

In the column labeled “event or activity”, list the tasks or services provided by volunteers. Then, in the columns to the right, indicate the types of volunteers.

Example: Dog and Cat Lovers of Singapore³

Event or Activity	Continuous Service	Temporary	Occasional	Interim
Pet rescue	Volunteers serve one day per month			Veterinary students do 3-month stint
Pet grooming including bathing, trimming, brushing	For specially trained volunteers			Serve as assistant to regular volunteers
Fundraising auction of art featuring pets	Year-long committee members who plan event	Serve beverage and food, usher	Cashiers	Marketing adviser

³ Not a real organisation; for illustration only.

Annex 2 Barriers Assessment

Potential Barriers to Organising a Programme for Ad Hoc Volunteers	The Situation in Our Organisation
1. Current volunteers and paid staff see little value in the use of episodic volunteers	
2. There has been little use of short-term volunteers in the past	
3. Allegiance to volunteer positions/tasks as they are currently designed is strong	
4. Energy and resources are focused on the volunteer who stays	
5. Legal liabilities may be a barrier	
6. Short-term volunteers may be ostracised by regular volunteers or even paid staff	
7. Others	

Annex 3 Volunteer Needs Assessment

We are assessing the current and future potential involvement of ad hoc volunteers as more and more people want to volunteer in this way.

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey and return to:
_____ (name and contact details) by _____ (date).

Thank you for your help on this important project.

If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Types of Ad Hoc Volunteers

- **Temporary**

Volunteer who serves for a few hours or up to a day. *(Give examples from your organisation)*

- **Interim**

Volunteer who serves regularly for less than six months. An example is an intern or someone doing community service work. *(Give examples from your organisation)*

- **Occasional**

Volunteer who serves at regular intervals for short periods of time. An example is the person who helps each year at the fun run, but has no other involvement with the organisation. *(Give examples from your organisation)*

1. Based on the definitions above, please list the different types of ad hoc positions you had in the previous year *(insert additional lines if necessary)*.

Type of Volunteer	Volunteer Position/ Description	No. of Volunteers
Temporary		
Temporary		
Interim		
Interim		
Occasional		
Occasional		

Additional Resources

2. Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper:
 - a. Was it easy to recruit ad hoc volunteers?
 - b. Were there challenges in training them?
 - c. What did the ad hoc volunteers accomplish?
 - d. What problems arose while the volunteers were serving?
For example, were there “no shows”? Generally, was the quality of their work different from that of regular volunteers?
 - e. What barriers, if any, do you face in engaging ad hoc volunteers?
3. What other ways could ad hoc volunteers serve in future?

Type of Volunteer	Volunteer Position/ Description	No. of Volunteers
Temporary		
Temporary		
Interim		
Interim		
Occasional		
Occasional		

Annex 4 Samples of Job Description for Temporary Volunteers

Volunteers needed for a charity auction:

1. Bid runner

In a silent auction, a bid runner takes the bids to the announcer after bidding is closed. Transmitting accurate information is essential. Must be mobile and energetic, with lots of stamina.

2. Product runner

A product runner stands near the front of the room during the live auction and delivers merchandise or certificates to highest bidder as designated by the auctioneer.

3. Table arranger

A table arranger arrives six hours before the auction to set up the auction table and auction material for patrons to view. Involves heavy lifting and moving large objects.

4. Clean up

Volunteer stays for two to three hours after the auction to assist in packing auction-related supplies for return to the organisation's office. Must be prepared to get dirty. Expect heavy lifting, and moving tables and chairs.

Volunteers needed for a footrace:

1. Route marshal

Guide runners along the route by raising a red flag to show the way. Must be mobile and have lots of stamina.

2. Drinks station crew

Hand out drinks to the runners safely and with minimal disruption to their race.

3. Baggage crew

Assist in the smooth, orderly deposit and return of runners' personal belongings before and after the race.

Annex 5 Sample of Job Description for Occasional/ Interim Volunteers

Position Title: *Hospice Aide*

Supervisor: *Befriender*

Description of Duties

Run errands for hospice client at the direction of the befriender; includes but is not limited to: video pick-up and delivery, mail service, grocery shopping.

Qualifications

Must be at least 18 years old and, have a valid driver's license and insurance; must have a reliable vehicle, an interest in the work of the hospice, patience, sensitivity to the needs of those who are terminally ill.

Time Required

Two hours per week for a minimum of two months.

Training

A 30-minute orientation conducted by volunteer programme manager; training as needed by befriender.

Annex 6 Job Description Resources Form

Sample of Job Description Revision to Incorporate Ad Hoc Service

	Continuous Service	Ad Hoc
Title	Youth Group Leader	Youth Group Leader
Supervisor	Club Coordinator	Club Coordinator
Purpose of the Task	To lead children aged five to eight in educational and recreational activities to enhance their self-esteem, mental and physical development. Group size: 5-15.	
Major Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Weekly meeting with youth ■ Plan educational/recreational activities ■ Attend leader training meeting once per quarter ■ Participate in special projects like product sales and day camping; provide reports to office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Meeting twice per month ■ Responsible for continuous service work, for one month of meetings per year
Minimum Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must be 18 years old or above ■ Complete application ■ Provide references 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must be 18 years old or above ■ Complete application, which is a shorter version of the form for continuous-service volunteers
Time Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2-6 hours weekly for club meetings ■ 2-4 hours per quarter for training ■ 6-20 hours per year for special projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 4-6 hours per month; once a year
Training Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Orientation ■ Monthly training meeting ■ Special event training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Orientation videotape and worksheet

Additional Resources

An Example: Fundraising for the Arts Group⁴

	Continuous Service	Ad Hoc
Title	Fundraising committee member	Handicraft annual sale helper
Supervisor	Fundraising staff	Fundraising staff
Purpose of the Task	To plan a series of events to raise funds for the organisation	To make handicrafts for sale
Major Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Attend monthly meeting ■ Plan yearly gala charity dinner and at least two more fundraising events ■ Increase donor pool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make variety of handicrafts for sale over six weekends
Minimum Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A wide social network ■ Resourceful ■ Event management skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interest in handicraft
Time Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 3-4 hours monthly for committee meeting ■ 6 months for planning and execution of each fundraising event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 3-hour session for 6 Saturdays
Training Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Briefing

Annex 7 Volunteer Request Form: A Sample

Please help us identify volunteer opportunities by completing the following form and delivering the completed copy to _____.

Date: _____ Phone: _____

1. Name of person making request: _____
2. Department or Division: _____

Programme/ Project Name	Youth Programme			
Brief Description of Position/Task	Mentoring	Tuition	Organise outings quarterly	Soccer Coach
Skills Needed	Mentoring skills	Ability to teach 'O' Level English & Maths	Event management skills	Ability to coach a team of 20 youths
Type of Volunteers	Regular	Regular	Ad Hoc	Ad Hoc
Number of Volunteers Needed	10	5	5	1
Time Needed (including frequency & duration)	Bi-monthly, two hours each time	Every Wednesday, 7pm-10pm	Monthly, three hours each time	Weekly, three hours each time for five months
Start Date	Dec 2007	Jan 2008	Jan 2007	Dec 2007
Where Will the Volunteer Work?	Off-site where the youth can meet	Our centre	Our centre/ off-site	School field
Any Other Requirements?	NA	NA	NA	Coaching qualifications

Annex 8 Informal Volunteer Rewards & Recognition: Some Ideas

- A sincere “thank you”
- A certificate acknowledging volunteer’s contribution
- An article about a volunteer in your monthly newsletter
- Ask his opinion; and really listen to the answers
- Have a cup of tea with him
- Send “thank you” notes for jobs especially well done
- Get clients to plan a special “thank you”
- Share information with him about the agency
- Trust him with pertinent information that will help him do a better job
- Let him make decisions
- Try to work around his personal schedule
- Set up volunteer teams (people seem to work better with a friend)
- Help paid staff understand how important volunteers are; let them help in the recognition process

References

- Fisher, James C., and Kathleen M. Cole. (1993). *Leadership and Management of Volunteer Programs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gidron, Benjamin. (1983). *Sources of Satisfaction Among Service Volunteers*. *Journal of Voluntary Action Research*, January-March 12(1) 20-35.
- Graff, Linda. (1999). *Beyond Police Checks*. Canada: Linda Graff and Associates, Inc.
- Graff, Linda. (2003). *Better Safe. Risk Management in Volunteer Programs & Community Service*. Canada: Linda Graff and Associates, Inc.
- Ilisley, Paul J., and John A. Niemi. (1981). *Recruiting and Training Volunteers*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Kotler, P., and Armstrong G. (1996). *Principles of Marketing*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall
- Macduff, Nancy. (1991). *Episodic Volunteering*. Washington: MBA Publishing.
- Macduff, Nancy. (1996). *Recruiting and Retention: A Marketing Approach*. Washington: MBA Publishing.
- Macduff, Nancy. (2004). *Episodic Volunteering: Organizing and Managing the Short-Term Volunteer Program*. Washington: MBA Publishing.
- MacKenzie, Marilyn., and Gail Moore. (1993). *The Volunteer Development Toolbox*. Illinois: Heritage Arts Publishing.
- National Volunteer Centre. (1989). *National Volunteer Center and JC Penney Study on Volunteer Activities*. Virginia.
- Vineyard, Sue. (1984). *Marketing Magic for Volunteer Programs*. Illinois: Heritage Arts.

Acknowledgements

National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) acknowledges the help of the following organisations and is grateful for the photographs they have provided for this guide:

- Heartware Network
- Yayasan MENDAKI
- PromiseWorks



6 Eu Tong Sen Street #04-88
The Central, Singapore 059817
T: 6550 9595 F: 6221 0625
www.nvpc.org.sg