



# eVOLve

technical assistance for  
leveraging volunteers

## Quick Links

Welcome to **eVOLve: technical assistance for leveraging volunteers**. In this electronic technical assistance (eTA) brief, you will find tips and tools to help you leverage volunteers in your community. It is sponsored by Points of Light & Hands On Network, a training and technical assistance provider for the Corporation for National and Community Service.

[The Resource Center](#)

[CNCS](#)

[Points of Light &](#)

[Hands On Network](#)

[Join our Mailing List!](#)

## Ask Us

Do you have a question about working with volunteers? Send it to Points of Light & Hands On Network at:

[training@handsonnetwork.org](mailto:training@handsonnetwork.org)

## This Month's Question

Can you offer some tips for managing volunteer service projects?

## The Answer Corner

Successful service projects exhibit a good balance of logistics, time, and people. As a program or project manager, you will need to balance these three elements effectively in order to provide your volunteers with a great experience and make a true impact in the community.



Here are some tips to help you manage your project:

### Before the Project:

- **Plan your project carefully and thoroughly.** Consider every aspect of your project -- what you want to happen, how you want to engage volunteers, things that could potentially go wrong -- and plan accordingly.
- **Pre-register volunteers.** If volunteers sign up before the project, you will have the opportunity to start motivating them and educating them about the project and the issue area you are addressing. Pre-registration will

also help you plan the logistics of the day.

- **Recruit and/or assign project leaders.** Ask other volunteers to serve as project leaders. They can help with planning and managing most aspects of the project.
- **Communicate, communicate, communicate.** Make sure that your project leaders, community partners, and volunteers have all the information they need to fully participate in the project. Set up meetings, send e-mails, make phone calls, offer orientation sessions, or create other methods of communicating with those involved in the project.
- **Have a "project prep" day.** Along with the project leaders, spend time at the service site and make sure that everything is ready for the volunteers. This may mean distributing materials to each service area, priming items to be painted, setting up a volunteer registration station, or hanging signs.

### At the Project:

- **Arrive early.** Even with a thorough prep day, you and the project leaders should arrive at least an hour early to make a final check and ensure that everything is ready for the volunteers.
- **Start the day with orientation.** Greet and register volunteers; then gather everyone together for a brief orientation. Thank volunteers; discuss the importance of their service to the agency, school, or community; overview the day's agenda; divide volunteers into work groups; motivate everyone with enthusiasm and fun.
- **Manage logistics.** Although you have carefully planned the logistics of the day, as the project manager you should oversee things such as scheduling, facilities, registration, safety, food/beverage, the reflection activities, and project evaluation.
- **Manage time.** You may be bombarded with a hundred details and questions all at once. Don't panic! Project leaders can play a key role in monitoring the progress of the project, and you can ask them to adjust the work accordingly.
- **Manage people.** You will encounter many personalities and motivations for volunteering. As much as possible, get to know your volunteers so that you can match them with tasks that meet their interests and skills. If you encounter a problem with a volunteer, deal with it as soon as possible.
- **Keep volunteers motivated and engaged.** Throughout the project, from registration to evaluation, motivate volunteers by showing them the impact they can have on the community, what they can gain, and future opportunities for service. Additionally, make sure every volunteer has a meaningful role during the service activity.
- **Gather volunteers together at the end of the project.** Take time to lead volunteers in a reflection activity. Additionally, ask them to provide feedback through verbal or written evaluation.
- **Say thanks!** Thank everyone involved in the project -- volunteers, donors, community members, and others who contribute to the effort.

## Resources

Visit [The Resource Center](#) to learn more about planning and managing effective service projects. Find resources such as:

### Effective Practice Briefs:

- [Allaying typical concerns of first-time volunteers](#)
- [Planning the logistics of a volunteer service project](#)
- [Ensuring safety during service projects](#)

## Online Learning Courses:

- [Project Planning](#)
- [On-site Project Management](#)
- [Utilizing Volunteers as Project Leaders](#)

## Tools

- [Project Development Guidebook](#)
- [On-site Project Management Guidebook](#)

## Points of Light & Hands On Network Training

Points of Light & Hands On Network provides training and technical assistance to help national service programs leverage volunteers. From live training and webinars to on-line courses and effective practices, we provide a wide variety of resources for your program.

Want to learn more about this topic? [Join](#) us for free webinars on **January 17** and **January 24** at **2:00 p.m. Eastern**:

### **Developing High-impact Service Projects (January 17)**

A high-impact, well-managed service project will keep volunteers coming back and simultaneously increase your program's capacity to deliver services. In this session, you will learn to assess community needs, select a project, solidify resources, map logistics, and detail the project plan. Explore the steps to developing projects that put volunteers in the middle of the community and result in measurable community impact.

### **Leading Effective Volunteer Projects (January 24)**

A major factor of volunteer attrition is disorganized service experiences that do not provide volunteers with a sense of their accomplishments or impact. As a program or project manager, you will need to balance logistics, time, and people effectively in order to implement a successful, productive service project. In this session, you will explore the various elements of a service project and how they can be managed successfully.

These sessions are related, and you may attend one or both sessions. If you want to participate in both sessions, you must register for both.

Space is limited, so [register](#) today at <http://handsonnetwork.webex.com>! Click on the "Upcoming" tab and then on the "Register" link to the right of the session titles. You do not need a password to register. After registering, you will receive an e-mail with log-in information for the session. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Contact us at [LMantooth@handsonnetwork.org](mailto:LMantooth@handsonnetwork.org) or visit [The Resource Center](#) for more information about our training and technical assistance services.

## Share Your Story

Points of Light & Hands On Network would like to hear your story about engaging volunteers in meaningful service. Your experience with volunteers and the community or any other civic action and service are welcomed. Submit your stories to [LMantooth@handsonnetwork.org](mailto:LMantooth@handsonnetwork.org).

*Submissions are subject to revisions and are not guaranteed to appear in eVOLve.*



POINTS OF LIGHT  
————— & —————  
HANDS ON NETWORK

[Forward email](#)



This email was sent to [lmantooth@handsonnetwork.org](mailto:lmantooth@handsonnetwork.org), by

[lmantooth@handsonnetwork.org](mailto:lmantooth@handsonnetwork.org)

[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with

[SafeUnsubscribe](#)<sup>™</sup> | [Privacy Policy](#).

Points Of Light & Hands On Network | 600 Means St., Suite 210 | Atlanta | GA | 30318

[Email Marketing by](#)

