



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 HandsOn Network, a training and technical assistance provider for the Corporation for National and Community Service.

- [The Resource Center](#)
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Ask Us

Do you have a question about working with volunteers? Send it to HandsOn Network at:

training@handsonnetwork.org

This Month's Question

How can I partner with other community agencies to provide quality service experiences for volunteers?

The Answer Corner

Partnerships with other organizations can greatly expand your work in the community. Partners can provide resources, leverage community assets, open doors in the community, and assist with generating volunteers.

If you are planning a service project at an agency or school, consider ways to deepen the relationship into a true partnership in which both the agency/school and your national service program will benefit.



- **Understand your program's scope and goals.**
 - Think about the goals of your program, the types of projects you are willing to undertake, the impact you want projects to have, and the types of service experiences you want to provide your volunteer.
- **Identify the resources you can offer a partner.**
 - Outline the things you can provide as a partner. Consider specifics such as volunteers, material resources, skill, access to

certain individuals/groups, or visibility.

- **Determine what you need from a partner.**
 - Just as you listed what you can offer a partner, be specific about the things you need *from* a partner.
- **Map the resources available in your community and identify potential partners.**
 - Think about what is valuable in your community and develop strategies for mobilizing these resources. Consider resources such as individuals, institutions, associations, and corporations.
- **Assess potential partners.**
 - Evaluate potential partners in terms of the type of organization, issue area, resources offered and needed, volunteer interest and availability, type of need, and geographic location.
- **Get to know the organization and tour the site.**
 - Understand the organization's mission and vision; identify the clients/students; get to know the staff; and look into current events. Then, tour the facility to get a feel for potential service projects and how volunteer friendly the site will be.
- **Make the decision.**
 - Both organizations should decide if they want to move forward with creating a partnership. If you determine that the community agency/school isn't a good fit for your program at this time, be sure to keep it on file for future opportunities.
- **Formalize the partnership with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).**
 - Sit down with the appropriate people at the partner agency and clarify roles and responsibilities. Develop written documents, such as an MOU, to ensure that both partners understand their commitment and to protect the organizations and volunteers. Your MOU should include roles and responsibilities, expectations, important dates, and functions between the partners.
- **Support the partnership.**
 - As the partnership grows, take steps to support the relations to ensure success. Maintain communication; create and keep a shared vision; create ownership among partners; stop to evaluate; be patient; and have fun!

Portions of this material are adapted from the AmeriCorps Program Start-up Institute curriculum.

Resources

Visit [The Resource Center](#) to learn more about working with volunteers. Find resources such as:

- [Resources on volunteer leveraging](#)
- [Online learning courses](#)
 - [Leveraging Partnerships for Community Impact](#)

Also visit [VolunteerResource.org](#) for great volunteer management resources.

HandsOn Network Training

HandsOn 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.

Join us for our upcoming webinar on **July 29 a 3:00 p.m. Eastern:**

Moving Volunteers from Service to Civic Engagement

Beyond project leadership, volunteers can be encouraged to move up the ladder from service to civic engagement. In this session, you will learn to recognize your program as an avenue to get volunteers engaged in issues education and greater civic roles within their communities. Define civic engagement, explore the dimensions of civic participation, and plan how to apply civic skills.

To register, go to <http://pointsoflight.webex.com>. Click on the "More Services" drop-down menu to access the "Training Center." Then click on the "Upcoming" tab and the name of the session. You will not need a password to register. After registering, you will receive an e-mail with log-in information for the session.

Contact HandsOn Network or visit The Resource Center for more information about our training and technical assistance services.

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