

How to make volunteering work for you (at any stage of your career)

Keen to make a difference through volunteering, but too busy to make the commitment? You may be surprised at how much you can help, regardless of how little time you have on offer.

Recent research conducted for SEEK shows people like to volunteer, and it's not just because it can help progress your career or fill in some downtime between gigs – in fact, most people are motivated by altruistic reasons. Key stats from the study show the aspects of volunteering considered most valuable include:

- Being involved in a good cause (32%)
- Feeling helpful (31%)
- Opportunity to make a difference (30%)
- Being part of a community (26%)
- Feeling fulfilled (20%)
- Having a sense of purpose (18%): [\[1\]](#)

Studies also show that while many people would like to volunteer, time is a barrier – in fact, a significant proportion of respondents considering volunteering in the future state that work commitments and family commitments are likely to hold them back (36% and 34% respectively.)[\[2\]](#)

What many people don't realise is that there are ways you can give back even when you're time poor. We explore all the options you might not have considered.

Volunteer smarter, not harder

"We are seeing more and more creative, flexible ways that community organisations are building their volunteer opportunities," says Rebecca Miller, Head of SEEK

Volunteer.

For example; as well as on-site positions, Rebecca says you can find volunteer projects that allow you to work virtually from the comfort of your own home.

Where to find a role to suit your lifestyle

Not sure how to find something to suit your skill set, level of experience and amount of time on offer? Here's our top suggestions:

- **Students or people new to the workforce.** Look for skilled [volunteering roles](#) to build your skills, networks, and confidence – just ensure you structure your volunteer hours so they don't eat into study time too much. If you contact organisations you're interested in to see if they need any help in their office, you may just score yourself an industry relevant mentor.
- **Part-time workers.** Ideally suited to longer term, [fixed ongoing positions](#) for a day or two a fortnight, you can offer consistency which allows a company to better plan and utilise the time you do have. Take care not to overestimate how much time you have to give – it's better to be realistic than to make promises you can't keep
- **Time poor / full-time workers.** Look into employee volunteering programs to see if you can give up some time during work hours. You might be able to volunteer for a day or even just a [couple of hours](#) in a brainstorming session offering your expertise and advice. This can also save you the hassle of organising your own opportunity, plus it's a great way to network with like-minded people across your organisation.
- **Constant travellers or serial relocators.** [Volunteering remotely](#) has never been easier, and many organisations are looking for people with the right skills, regardless of whether they're available face to face. You can contribute immensely to an organisation from the comfort of your own home or wherever you happen to be in the world - all you need is a computer
- **Juggling work and raising a family or a busy social calendar.** Have you ever considered doing [volunteer work as a family](#) or with a [group of friends](#)? It can be a great way to give back to an organisation while also spending quality time with your loved ones.
- **Currently seeking work.** If you're currently in the market for a new role, it might be worth exploring one of many short-term volunteer opportunities available to you. Whether that be a [full day](#) or a couple of hours that can fit around your other commitments. As well as getting that euphoric feeling that comes from giving back, it can also be a way to help you discover something you're passionate about, [build your skills](#), develop new networks, stay motivated and boost your resume.

Whatever your situation, the flexibility now available for people who want to volunteer means it doesn't have to be out of your reach. Just take a realistic look at the time you have and when you're available and there's sure to be an opportunity that can work for you.

Visit [SEEK Volunteer](#) to explore the largest directory of diverse volunteer opportunities available to you.

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[1] Source: Independent research conducted by Perspicacious on behalf of SEEK. Interviewing 4800 Australians annually. Published May 2018.

[2] Source: State of volunteering in Australia. PWC April 2016