

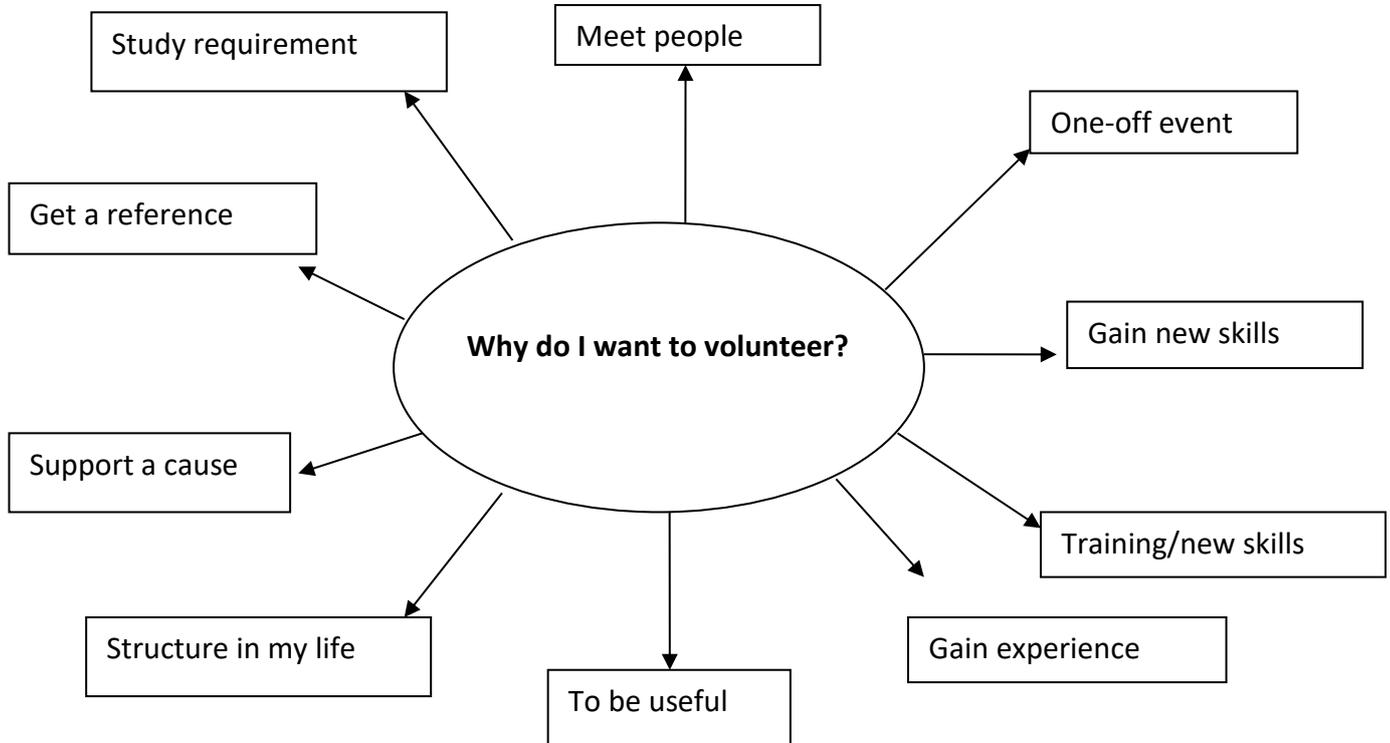
Helping volunteers to decide...

The Volunteer Centre holds hundreds of different volunteering opportunities. Giving some thought to the following areas before you start looking can help you find the opportunity that is right for you.

1. Why Volunteer?

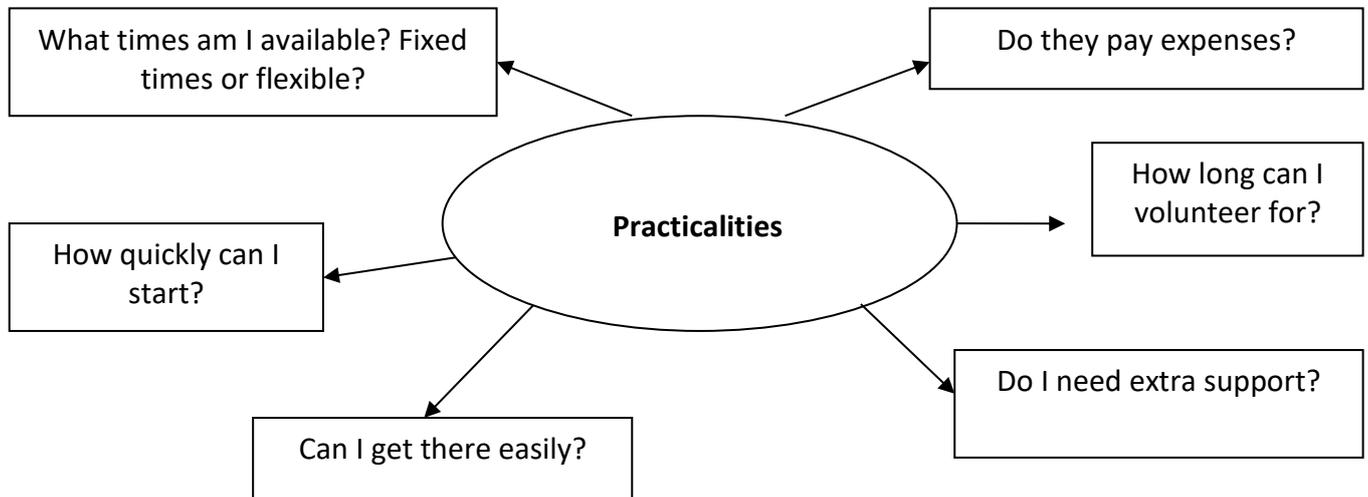
It is important to think about why you are volunteering and what you would like to achieve. This can help you decide which opportunities are for you and which aren't.

It can also help you ask the right questions when you speak to an organisation e.g. if you want to meet new people you will need to ask whether you will be volunteering with other people – you don't want to end up in an office by yourself!



2. Practicalities

If the practicalities of the opportunity don't match your circumstances you are unlikely to stick with it. To avoid disappointment, consider the following...



3. Questions and Concerns

As part of the recruitment process organisations will ask various questions before to find out whether someone is suitable for the role. This may include questions about;

- Experience
- Skills
- Why you want to volunteer
- Health
- Extra support requirements e.g. English as a second language

Organisations will also usually ask for references and, dependent on the role, may ask whether you have any unspent criminal convictions and may carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service Bureau (DBS) check.

Volunteers often have concerns about the above and sometimes it may influence the kind of volunteering you chose to do or who you do it for e.g. not all organisations are able to provide one-to-one support for volunteers even if they would like to as they do not have the staff.

Please do ask us if you have concerns about any of the above. It is important to be honest when addressing these questions as they are designed to help match you to the most suitable role. A good match is more likely to mean a good volunteering experience - something both you and the organisation would like!

4. Getting Started

Volunteering can be a wonderful and rewarding experience but getting started sometimes means forms, paperwork, interview time, phone calls, training, etc. All in all this requires energy being invested by both you and the organisation. So...

- **Start small.** Chose 2-3 opportunities and investigate them fully. Don't over commit to too many interviews.
- **Time is precious.** If you can't make an interview then please do let the organisation know as soon as you can.
- **Ask questions!** When you ring an organisation have ready the things you would like to know. Your answers to the above will be helpful here. This telephone call can help both you and the organisation decide whether you wish to proceed further with recruitment.