



Skills acquired through
Volunteering in Sport

LEARNING RESOURCES

/// PILLAR 2: VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND DEPLOYMENT

SUB-PILLAR 2.1 Developing volunteer role descriptions



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/// Sub-Pillar 2.1

Developing volunteer role descriptions

a/ DESCRIPTION

This section provides guidance on how to clearly set out the roles you have in mind for volunteers, including the duties and responsibilities, time commitment and skills required. This activity will help you double-check that you have accurately mapped your workforce needs. It is also particularly useful in helping interested individuals to decide whether your volunteering opportunity is something they would like to pursue.

b/ KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS – DID YOU KNOW THAT:

Desk research and volunteer interviews show that:

- Sport volunteers need to have a clear description of what they are expected to do. This makes their volunteering experience more productive and enjoyable.

>> CONTENT AREA 1: IDENTIFYING DIFFERENT VOLUNTEER ROLES: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND SKILLS

Pillar 1, sub-pillar 1 concentrates upon the process of analysing your overall volunteer needs and identifying the gaps across your sport organisation. Building upon this, it is strongly advised to identify in detail the requirements of each role. This is useful in clarifying that all key tasks have been accounted for and will enable you to record the outcomes in writing (see next section). V4V has investigated sport volunteering across a range of categories, including board or committee membership, coaching + instructing, officiating and operational tasks. This means that the number of potential roles that can be filled by volunteers in sport organisations is huge, and each role will differ according to the type of organisation and many other local circumstances.

The best place to start is to think of all the individual jobs that need to be done in order for your sport organisation to function successfully. At this stage, it is might not be the best thing to group them into roles.



Try not to be influenced by precedent; just because somebody has occupied a role previously does not mean that that is the most appropriate way for your organisation to structure its work tasks. In the majority of sports organisations there is work to be done across the range of occupational categories, from governance to technical through to maintenance and other operational tasks. In smaller sport organisations, all of these roles are performed by a tiny number of people. It may be desirable to map the volunteer tasks in your sport organisation in order to be able to expand the volunteer base; however, it can also be an extremely useful activity to help you redistribute responsibilities in a more efficient manner.

If we try to list all of the individual duties that make your organisation run smoothly this could run into the many thousands! It is therefore necessary for us to be sensible about this and to identify the most important duties, perhaps clustering areas of work in a way which makes sense to you and will therefore make sense to newcomers to your sport organisation. For instance, your sport organisation may have financial responsibilities including setting budgets, producing accounts and monitoring cash flow throughout the year. These activities can be grouped together in order to form the basis of a potential role within your volunteer workforce. Do this exercise on all of the main work categories in order to identify the range of meaningful duties and responsibilities to be undertaken by volunteers in your sport organisation.

🕒 **As a guide you can use the V4V classification system:**

- Board or committee member/ governance
- Administration/ management
- Coaching/ training/ instructing/ leading activities
- Officiating (e.g. referee, umpire, judge)
- Organising or helping to run sport events
- Maintaining sport equipment and/ or sport facilities
- Supporting day to day sport organisation activities (e.g. bar, merchandising, transport)

Prepare for surprises as duties come to the fore that are currently 'taken for granted' but require greater attention. As well as listing all of these duties it is also incredibly useful to identify the skills required to perform each of them. Again, this does not have to be a highly complex task, but it is useful to think of the 'soft' skills such as communication and leadership as well as the 'hard', technical skills like budgeting and setting up a playing area that are required in each case. Whilst a task such as this may initially be quite time consuming, it is a worthwhile investment for your sports organisation as you will have a far clearer idea of your volunteer requirements now and into the future.

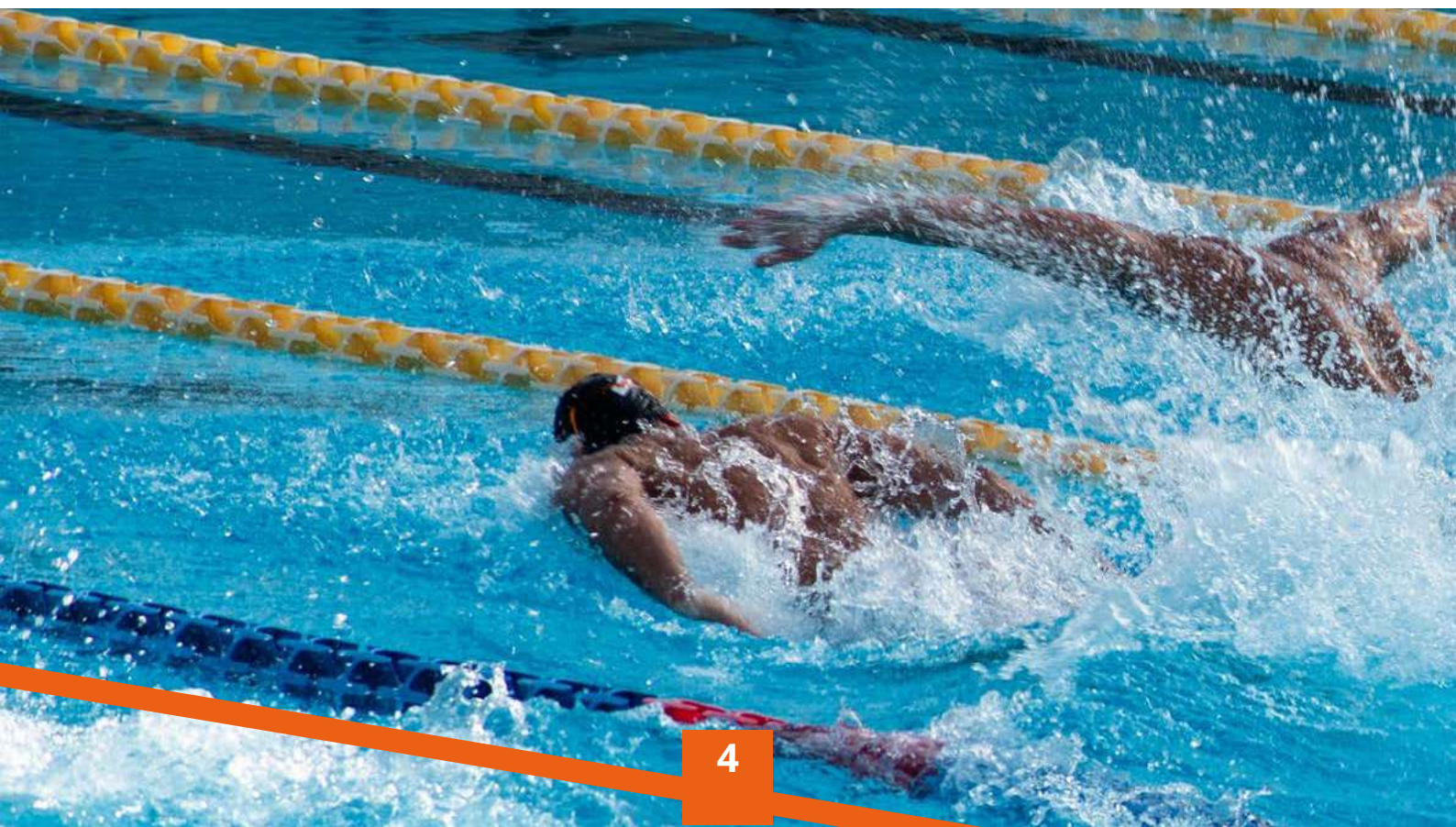
>> CONTENT AREA 2: DEVELOPING ROLE DESCRIPTORS THAT ARE TRANSPARENT AND ATTRACTIVE

Building upon content area 1 within this sub-pillar, once the main duties and associated skills have been identified and recorded it is now possible to group duties together to form volunteer role descriptors. As highlighted in content area 1, this exercise is best conducted without too many preconceptions so that you can find the best configuration of tasks and therefore the 'ideal' make-up of your volunteer workforce. This can serve the dual purpose of getting the best from your existing volunteer base and allowing you to develop exciting roles for the recruitment of new volunteers. You can generate as many role descriptors as you like, and in many sport organisations numerous roles will be taken on by certain individuals, either because this makes the most sense or because of the limited number of volunteers available at that time.

Make your role descriptors as clear and dynamic as you can; for every task there is someone out there that finds it exciting and interesting even if others do not. Itemise duties in meaningful clusters, thinking about how you can run your organisation more efficiently and effectively if all of these roles are fulfilled.

Through your board/ committee all other communication channels, talk to existing members of your sport organisation about their existing roles and how clear they are. This may lead to some redistribution of responsibilities, leaving you with a more motivated current workforce and the opportunity to plan for any identified gaps to be filled. You can base your role descriptors around the typical job description-person specification format that is used by many employers across Europe. This means that you will have created a full profile of each available role, making it easier to communicate your requirements when publicising volunteer vacancies.

This exercise also gives you the opportunity to identify lines of responsibility within your sport organisation: in each role descriptor you can state to whom the role holder will report. The amount of detail you need to provide will vary greatly according to the size of your organisation and the range of volunteer roles identified. If you have a large governance structure with your board or committee sitting at the top, then it is extremely helpful to clearly state to all stakeholders who is responsible for what and to whom.



👉 Here is a simple format that you may wish to adopt in your organisation:

XXX SPORT CLUB

VOLUNTEER ROLE IN THE YYY CATEGORY*

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE:

(Eg Under 15s basketball Head Coach)

RESPONSIBLE FOR:

(Eg The under 15s coaching team and officials, assisting the Safeguarding Officer to ensure player welfare, etc.)

RESPONSIBLE TO:

(Eg The Head Basketball Coach and the Safeguarding Officer.)

PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- etc.

KEY SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

(Eg Level Z accredited coaching certificate, leadership, teamwork, team-building, planning and organisation.)

*Using the V4V classification system shown in content area 1 of this sub-pillar.

Developing and maintaining a library of role descriptors in a consistent format will create a fantastic resource for your sport organisation – **give it a try!**





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VOLUNTEER

V4V PARTNERSHIP:



Coordinator



www.v4v-sport.eu



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