



WHITE PAPER

Volunteers as Fundraisers

How volunteer managers and fundraising teams can better work together to meet fundraising targets.

PREPARED BY



JIGSAW



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This whitepaper aims to delve into the **relationship between volunteering and fundraising**, emphasising the importance of volunteers and their potential to **drive financial support for nonprofits**.

Introduction

Volunteers and fundraising. Arguably the two single most important drivers for nonprofit success and sustainability.

While historically volunteer management and fundraising teams for nonprofits have operated in their silos, times are changing - and for the better!

With more and more organisations vying for financial support, and the cost of living crisis, fundraising is becoming more challenging, forcing teams to think of innovative new ways to reach their fundraising targets.

Therefore, integration with your most passionate supporters is becoming increasingly vital. Fundraisers, say hello to your volunteers!

While nonprofits are acutely aware of how valuable volunteers are from an operational point of view, they're also recognising their potential as fundraisers and donors, given their strong affiliation with their organisation.



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Volunteers as Fundraisers

Why are they important to nonprofits?

Volunteers are individuals who willingly dedicate their time, skills and efforts to support charitable causes without financial compensation. **Their importance lies in their ability to amplify an organisation's impact, extend its reach, and contribute to its overall effectiveness including making a positive impact in the community.**

Volunteers come from diverse backgrounds, encompassing various ages, professions, and skill sets, bringing with them a wealth of experience and knowledge. From students, industry professionals and retirees through to individuals seeking to give back to society, volunteers are the foundations of which many nonprofits and charities are built.



SPOTLIGHT: Peer to Peer Fundraising - Vision Generation Program | 40 Hour Famine

During his time at World Vision, **Carl Young** developed the **Vision Generation Program**, a group of volunteer school captains and youth church attendees who were committed to combating poverty.

These passionate volunteers went on to excellent fundraising success and helped increase the 40 Hour income by 43% in one year.

They became a gateway into new schools and church communities, helping to bypass expensive cold marketing techniques, particular point or idea.

As these peer-to-peer fundraisers matured and remained loyal to the cause, they became face-to-face advocates for Child Sponsorship, helping to recruit around 20,000 new regular monthly donors in one year. Sustainable income worth millions. Of course many of these volunteers also became Child Sponsors themselves.

43%  increase in income in one year

20K  new regular donors per year

The intersection between volunteers and fundraisers

Given the altruistic nature of volunteering, volunteers are also often fantastic fundraisers and donors themselves as we will explore further in this white paper.

36.2% individuals aged between 40-54

are likely to have participated in unpaid voluntary work through an organisation.¹

They are the perfect demographic to be engaging with to ensure your fundraising success.

So how do volunteers actively contribute to fundraising? And what can fundraising teams be doing more proactively to promote this?

Let's dig a little deeper.

Amplifying impact

Volunteers allow nonprofits and charities to raise awareness, deliver services to more people, and address community needs more comprehensively.

Their contributions extend beyond the scope of what paid staff can achieve, allowing organisations to accomplish more with limited resources.

Volunteers also play a pivotal role in amplifying the impact of nonprofit organisations by expanding their reach and influence within a community. **The brand awareness just one volunteer generates by aligning themselves with a charity cannot be underestimated.**

Word of mouth is still an extremely powerful advocate and volunteers play an integral role in promoting the good work of your organisation within the community.

Combine that with the prevalence of volunteering with individuals over the age of 45 and there is a great synergy with the volunteers already expressing interest with your nonprofit and fundraising success.



¹ [Key Volunteering Statistics, Volunteering Australia](#)



SPOTLIGHT: Co Founder and PCFA Volunteer, Shannan Gove, raises \$60k for Prostate Cancer

In 2023, Shannan Gove, Co Founder of Rosterfy sadly lost his father to prostate cancer. With 1 in 5 Australians being diagnosed with the disease every year, Shannan alongside some of his friends decided to raise money and generate awareness for early detection and prevention of prostate cancer by creating a community cycling event - *Tour de Tony*.

This small fundraiser, run entirely by volunteers, which saw individuals challenge themselves to ride as far as they could in one day, became one of the biggest fundraising drives for PCFA that year. The fundraiser was a huge success with over \$60,000 raised with all funds going directly to Prostate Cancer Australia.

\$60K raised by volunteers

"We're tremendously grateful for your efforts and in awe of what you've achieved."

Anne Savage, CEO, Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

This is just one example of the power of volunteers, who are willing to donate their time and efforts to raise money and generate awareness for a cause that's close to their hearts.



Volunteers as Brand Ambassadors

While some volunteers will go the extra mile and create their own fundraising drives, sometimes simply having a volunteer sing your praises can be just as beneficial to achieving your fundraising targets.

Relying on your existing donors and fundraisers will only get you so far.

If a volunteer has a positive experience with your organisation, they will be more likely to encourage friends and family to support your cause - both in person and via their socials. They can become pathways to new donor prospects.

By sharing compelling stories, videos, and updates about the nonprofit's mission, volunteers help generate online donations and raise awareness - exposing you to an audience you maybe hadn't considered previously.

DONATE **73%** of volunteers donate to nonprofit that they volunteer with ²

Volunteers donate

56% more than those who don't volunteer ³



2. [Global Trends in Giving Report](#)

3. [The Chronicle of Philanthropy, Data Shows Correlation between Volunteerism and Giving](#)



Volunteers as Lifelong Donors

Long term impact of volunteers

Leaving a charitable bequest is an incredibly kind gesture and is usually the result of the individual's strong affiliation with a nonprofit and/or charity close to their heart. This extends to volunteers who may have been volunteering with your nonprofit for a short or long period of time.

Naturally, a volunteer's age makes them a great Gift in Will prospect, especially retired volunteers.

19%  **of wills created in 2022 included a charitable donation** ⁴

There's no denying the impact that volunteers have by donating their time, skills and knowledge to a nonprofit.

With 36.2% of people aged 40-54, 29% of people aged 55-69 and 24.5% of people aged 70 and over participating in unpaid voluntary work, their age and commitment makes them key gifts-in-wills prospects given this is an age when creating or updating wills. ⁵

The connections volunteers make during their service is immeasurable. Having supported your cause on the ground either through active volunteering (making meals, working in a hospital etc), sitting on the board or fundraising, they have likely seen the tangible benefits and

the impact that your nonprofit makes within the community.

It's these experiences that make volunteers more likely to bequeath a charitable donation to your organization to ensure that your hard work continues to benefit those who need it most.

SPOTLIGHT: Volunteer at Peter Mac influenced a million dollar gift

During his time at Peter Mac, Carl Young helped to secure a \$1m gift through a donor's volunteering connection and connection to **the cause.**

"The first \$1m dollar gift to the capital campaign was heavily influenced by the family's involvement with regular volunteering.

They really wanted to help the cancer patients and support the organisation's future strategic objectives. Beyond this donor, many future significant gifts were influenced by volunteer committees and individuals who opened doors to create new pathways and connections. One of the challenges was tracking their time and true value to the organisation"

4. [Herald Sun, More Australians are leaving money and gifts to charities](#)

5. [ABS Data referenced in Key Volunteering Statistics, Volunteering Australia](#)



Benchmarking report on bequests

Analyzing a three-year average of residual estate values, organisations can estimate the potential financial impact of volunteers' bequests. This section demonstrates the significant financial benefits that may arise from cultivating a strong volunteer base.

\$60K Average percentage of an estate* is worth

*In a recent Benchmarking Report (2022), the 3 year residual estate average was \$200k.

\$1.2 M If 100 volunteers leave a 2% bequest

Depending on the financial status of your volunteers

Challenge for your fundraising team. How do you work alongside the volunteering team to establish strong relationships and ongoing affiliations with your nonprofit to encourage them to consider leaving a charitable bequest in their will? Are your communications clear, consistent and integrated to optimise the best long-term outcome for the volunteer and your organisation? Do you educate and empower volunteers to connect and give in multiple ways?





Overcoming barriers to fundraising and volunteering

1 Collaboration

While this is not always the case, nonprofits often have unique teams for fundraising and volunteer management. To ensure synergy between volunteering and fundraising the two teams need to come together and collaborate on recruitment, engagement and retention strategies that drive maximum value in the form of donations.



Tip

At the beginning of the year, set up a meeting with your volunteer management team to discuss how fundraising and volunteer management can work together to not only use volunteers operationally but to drive fundraising success also.

This often includes some form of acknowledgement (i.e tick box, signed contract), which outlines how the nonprofit operates.

As part of their registration process, talk to your volunteer management team about including a reference to receiving comms about fundraising.

While an 'opt out' is always necessary on any email, this will help permit volunteers as a data source to fundraisers.

2 Ensuring Compliance

Collaboration and transparency is key when it comes to managing volunteers as fundraisers.

It is not uncommon for volunteer managers to use a volunteer management solution to help recruit, screen and manage their volunteers.



Tip

Share your comms schedule with the volunteer management team so that they can understand the frequency of your fundraising communications and the type of messaging.

If there is a particularly big volunteer drive happening, maybe reduce fundraising comms and use them during 'down time' when volunteers have the headspace to be more engaged.



3 Creating a centralised system for both teams

If both fundraising and volunteer management teams continue to work in their silos then you run the risk of presenting a clunky program that doesn't deliver return on investment for either party involved.

While you want to ensure both fundraising and volunteer management teams have oversight, you also want to make it simple for you volunteers by having one centralised account for everything volunteer and fundraising related.

Systems like Rosterfy's volunteer management technology integrate seamlessly with nonprofit CRMs including Blackbaud, Raiser's Edge, Hubspot and Salesforce, allowing for the simple migration of data between the two systems.

Furthermore, volunteer management technology has the ability to integrate with your existing fundraising tech stack to ensure that volunteers can now access opportunities, fundraise and donate all from the one platform.

4 Quantifying impact

Without a centralised volunteer management system in place it will be difficult to quantify the success of your combined volunteering and fundraising efforts.

Systems like Rosterfy, allow you to pull important data including volunteer demographics. Volunteer activity and if integrated with a third party fundraising platform, how much money has been raised by an individual or group of volunteers.

With this information you have a clear understanding of the value of your volunteers not only with regards to their service but as fundraisers, which allows for scalability and growth, knowing that your program is delivering results. It allows you to soft-credit volunteers for their direct and indirect financial impact to the organisation, which help you acknowledge their support appropriately.



5 Reward & recognise volunteers

Any good volunteer program calls out and celebrates volunteer achievements - the same applies for volunteers as fundraisers. Share their stories via your newsletters, send them a thank you letter from your CEO. The smallest actions of reward and recognition go a long way in fostering positive relationships for many years to come.

Conclusion

The relationship between volunteering and fundraising can be a dynamic force that, when harnessed effectively, can propel nonprofits and charities toward their fundraising goals and service delivery.

Through improved integration, communication and optimizing strategies, organizations can synergise and cultivate a positive environment where volunteers not only contribute time but also become invaluable partners in driving financial sustainability.





About Rosterfy

Rosterfy is used by the world's leading nonprofits including St Vincent de Paul, Lifeline Australia and British Heart Foundation to streamline and automate volunteer management processes across recruitment, screening, scheduling, training, and more.

Rosterfy's market leading technology helps organisations create an engaging and personalised experience throughout the whole lifecycle of the volunteer journey.

[Visit Rosterfy's website to learn more.](#)

About Jigsaw Fundraising

Jigsaw work to empower and support charities on best practice and ethical fundraising methodologies ranging from Individual and Regular Giving, Major Gifts through to Bequests.

[Visit Jigsaw Fundraising's website to learn more.](#)



Carl Young

Carl Young is an experienced Philanthropy and Fundraising Professional, Board Director, NFP Advocate and a former FIA Fundraiser of the Year and PFRA Chair.

He has a proven track record with over 25 years of sustainable income development in the hospital, healthcare and international aid sectors.



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