

BBC VOLUNTEERING GUIDANCE

SUMMARY

Volunteering can bring real benefits to the BBC, its staff and its audiences, and brings to life many aspects of its public purposes.

A. EMPLOYER-SPONSORED VOLUNTEERING (ESV)

Employer sponsored volunteering takes place mainly in work time, so should be value for money for licence fee payers, through increased understanding of hard to reach audiences and/or staff skills development.

PRINCIPLES

- For ESV there should be a clear business benefit to the BBC and its audiences and a mutually beneficial relationship with partner organisations.
- This guidance deals with volunteering in the sense of ‘above and beyond’ the usual working role.
- Volunteering projects will usually be connected to working with and increased understanding of audiences the BBC has determined are hardest to reach, typically BAME, 11- 18s; 18-24s and C2DEs; and/or skills development for the individual.
- Employer sponsored volunteering should be agreed in advance with line managers.
- Individuals are under no obligation to volunteer outside of their agreed working hours.

PRACTICE

Volunteering with hard to reach audiences

- The BBC Department sets up and manages projects with external partners which may include charities, schools, local organisations.
- **School Report** works with 11 – 18 year olds in schools and youth groups across the UK. Volunteering opportunities for School Report Mentors, School Governors and STEM volunteers are advertised on the Careers Hub and managed by the School Report Volunteering Manager. Contact BBC School Report: volunteering@bbc.co.uk

Time commitment

- Volunteering projects typically take 2-4 days including any briefing and training.
- School reading projects & mentoring will typically involve an hour or two on a regular basis, over a sustained period of time.
- For Board membership that is not part of an employee’s job description, but supports the development of relevant skills or experience, a useful rule of thumb is up to 6 days a year in working hours (subject to line manager agreement and depending on the relevance of the role). Additional charitable activity in working time would be taken as leave. BBC guidelines on declaration of personal interests, charity board membership and also Charity Commission guidelines should be taken into account.

Other types of volunteering may also bring benefits to the BBC and its audiences

- **Fundraising** for the BBC's corporate or partner charities (BBC Children in Need, BBC Media Action and Comic Relief) are part of the DNA of the BBC and managers should encourage appropriate participation, as part of 'One BBC'.
- **Team building** activity is part of business as usual in the BBC. There are also occasional requests from local charities (for example, distributing food seasonally) for this type of support. Some charities charge for quality team building activities – the cost would be borne by the participating department.

These types of activities may have limited business benefit in terms of audience understanding and/or skills development.

BBC STAFF VOLUNTEERING OUTSIDE WORK

Individuals volunteering for charities outside work should follow BBC guidelines on declaration of personal interests, board membership and also Charity Commission guidelines. They may wish to include their volunteering experience in their Careers Hub profile.

HEALTH & SAFETY, SAFEGUARDING, INSURANCE

In all cases, if the BBC initiates the project, or it takes place on BBC premises, usual terms and conditions, safeguarding and Health and Safety practices should be observed. Projects that are run by BBC School Report are risk assessed in accordance with BBC requirements. BBC insurance arrangements will apply where there is a formal volunteering arrangement in place, and Health and Safety and Safeguarding procedures have been followed. Charity fundraising, outside the BBC and self-organised, should follow the advice given on the charity's website. The BBC would not accept liability for this.