

MANAGING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS: GOOD PRACTICE TIPS



Key points

- Your small charity should treat its staff and volunteers with respect, and have a positive organisational attitude to its people.
- Your recruitment strategy will be shaped by whether you need staff or volunteers, the number of people your charity requires, and the task at hand. Ensure you have adequate pre-engagement checks in place.
- Ongoing staff and volunteer management occurs through planning, processes/procedures and the right attitude.
- Handovers and inductions play a vital role in having new arrivals feel welcome and become quickly productive.

Key regulators and the ACNC's role

The ACNC is often not the key regulator in areas concerning staff and volunteer management.

While we have an interest in ensuring charities are run well and adhere to ACNC Governance Standards, other regulators set the tone – and the law – in this area.

Some might be specific to the state and territory that you operate in – WorkSafe and SafeWork for example. Fair Work and the Fair Work Ombudsman are Federal regulators in this space.

Ultimately, your charity must follow the laws of the land, be they Federal, state or territory or even local council regulations.

A positive attitude

Your charity should have a positive organisational attitude to its volunteers or staff. Treat them well, value their contributions, respect them and make them feel welcome.

Often the easiest thing you can do as a small charity is to simply say thanks – and there are plenty of ways you can do this effectively.



Publicly express your appreciation, as well as thanking volunteers and staff privately. Show your appreciation in your annual report, on your website or even with a small function or get-together at the end of the year.

Recognising the contribution people make to your charity helps foster a positive relationship.

Staff and volunteer recruitment

How your charity goes about recruiting staff or volunteers will of course depend on the task at hand, and the number of people required.

Sometimes it might just mean getting the word out to supporters, and at other times you may need to undertake a formal recruitment process for a new staff member.

Either way, your charity will need two things before it recruits – a solid recruitment policy and a staff or volunteer management policy.

Your recruitment policy doesn't have to be anything more than a clear set of steps governing how you will recruit new staff or volunteers, including who in your organisation makes the decisions. It can also look at how your charity:

- Asks or advertises for volunteers or staff
- Screens potential recruits before engaging them, including relevant reference checks
- Complies with relevant laws and general good practice, including anti-discrimination measures and the like
- Ensures it has a volunteer agreement or terms of employment document for incoming staff

Your staff or volunteer management policy should include:

- Role or position descriptions
- The duties your new recruits are expected to fulfil
- Your charity's expectations on staff and volunteer behaviour
- To whom in the organisation staff and volunteers report
- An outline of your charity's induction or handover processes

There are several useful policy documents freely available online which cover both the recruitment and management of staff and volunteers.



Ongoing staff and volunteer management

The first key step in your charity's successful management of staff and volunteers is simply being aware of its importance, and then getting the small things right.

- Develop a positive, welcoming culture at your charity
- Say thanks – and mean it
- Keep them motivated and interested – for example, through new responsibilities or opportunities to learn
- Ensure there are ways staff and volunteers can provide feedback, or channels through which they can access help and support.

If you have staff or volunteers leave your charity, sit down with them to gain some feedback by conducting an exit interview. And ensure you tie up any loose ends with the volunteer or staff member who is leaving:

- Is their pay and documentation up-to-date?
- Have they returned any charity equipment they might have been using.
- Have you removed or passed on access to charity information like bank account details, social media passwords or ACNC Charity Portal log-ins?

Handovers and inductions

Practical handover and induction processes are also part of successful staff and volunteer management.

Additional resources focusing on handovers and inductions for small charities are included in our Small Charity Library. We also staged a webinar in 2018 which looked at how smaller charities can manage their staff and volunteers - visit [acnc.gov.au/webinars](https://www.acnc.gov.au/webinars).

More information

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[acnc.gov.au/smallcharities](https://www.acnc.gov.au/smallcharities)