

Volunteer Centre Islington

**How to volunteer.
Is volunteering right for you?**

A bit about us

Primrose Christie
Volunteer Centre Support Officer

A bit about Volunteer Centre Islington

- Network of Volunteer Centres
- Enable volunteering – we are the experts in volunteering in Islington (VCQA)
- Variety of services
 - Volunteers (drop-in, brokerage, outreach, fairs, appointments)
 - Organisations (volunteering fairs, Volunteer Managers Forum, 1-2-1, VOYA)

What is volunteering?

Any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual.

National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

What do volunteers give?

- Skills
- Time
- Life experience
- Knowledge
- Resources

What do volunteers receive?

Personal development:

- Build confidence and self esteem
- Meet new people and make new friends
- Learn new skills or develop ones such as:
 - Teamwork
 - Problem solving
 - Time management
 - Communication
 - IT and Computer Skills

More personal development

Improve CV:

- Looks good to future employers
- Volunteering can help a job seeker to stand out from other candidates
- Fills gaps between employment
- Learn from colleagues, mentors and peers
- Volunteering can lead to accreditation (like an NVQ) which will help fill your CV

Things to consider...

Time commitment:

- Short-term
- Ongoing
- Depends on the role
- Minimum / maximum commitment

Things to be aware of...

Expenses

- Travel
- Lunch
- All out-of-pocket agreed expenses
- DBS

Benefit of volunteering

- “As a young student striving to enter the workforce, receiving this assistance has boosted my confidence and prepared me to embrace new opportunities with professionalism. Your support means a lot as I take steps toward building my career as a social media manager”.
- “I feel very confident. Noticed this increase in confidence since I started volunteering. Volunteering gave me a better understanding of what it means to be a Community Development worker”.

Volunteer Centre Services

- **VCI's Services for Volunteers**
 - Brokerage drop-in days Monday and Wednesdays (1 – 4pm)
 - One-to-one appointments
 - Online Database roles
 - Quarterly Volunteering Fairs
- **VCI website**
 - vai.org.uk/volunteering/find-volunteering-opportunities/
- **VCI email address**
 - volunteer@vai.org.uk
- **Twitter [@VCIslinton](https://twitter.com/VCIslinton) Instagram [vcislington](https://www.instagram.com/vcislington)**
- More online Information through Do-it.org.uk, Simply Volunteer London, vinspired.com...
- [London Volunteer Centres Directory](#), find details of your nearest volunteer centre.

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www.vai.org.uk/volunteering/

Things to be aware of...

People who get universal credit (UC) are entitled to volunteer. They will be in one of the following work-related activity groups.

- ‘No work-related requirements group’ for people who are unable to work
- ‘Work-focused interview group’ for people who are being prepared for work through regular interviews with a work coach
- ‘Work preparation group’ for people who are in a more intensive work preparation group, but who are not required to actively look for work
- ‘All work-related requirements group’ for people who must do work preparation activities, be looking for work and be available to start a job straight away.

People in the ‘all work-related requirements group’ have to do ‘work search activities’ for as much time per week as they have to be available for work, usually this will be 35 hours per week. **Volunteering counts as a ‘work search activity’** for up to half of this time. This is not a time limit on volunteering, but a limit on how much of the volunteering is seen as work search activity. However, people must leave enough time for the rest of their work search hours, which may limit how much time they can spend volunteering.

This means that:

- if you are required to spend 35 hours a week looking for a full-time job, half of this time (17.5 hours) can be spent volunteering
- if you only volunteer five hours a week, then you will be required to spend 30 hours looking for work
- if you are looking for part-time work, eg 16 hours a week, you can volunteer for up to eight hours and spend the rest of the time looking for work.

NCVO, Volunteering and benefits: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/involving-volunteers/volunteers-and-the-law/volunteering-and-benefits/>

Volunteering opportunities?

- **30+ different areas of interest**
- **30+ different types of activities**

Examples of volunteering include:

- Office work, admin, facilities, finance...
- Creative opportunities
- Hands-on (environmental , DIY)
- Face-to-face (advice & information, befriending)
- Remote volunteering (web content management, befriending)
- Specific setting (hospital, schools)
- Specific group (elderly , children)

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www.vai.org.uk/volunteering/

Active opportunities in Islington:

[Volunteer Centre Islington Platform](#)

Thanks for listening! Any questions?

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