



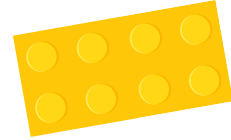
BUILD YOUR OWN PROJECT GUIDE



University of Wolverhampton

Students' Union

BUILD YOUR OWN PROJECT GUIDE



Are you interested in the benefits you can gain through volunteering? Can't quite find the right opportunity that you want based on your interests and skills? Or do you have a cause that you're passionate about and want to do something to support it? Wolves Students' Union can help! With your inspiration and enthusiasm and our support, you can "Build Your Own Project" and manage your own student-led volunteering project!

WHAT IS A STUDENT-LED VOLUNTEERING PROJECT?

A student-led volunteering project is an initiative planned, organised and run voluntarily by a student or group of students in order to benefit others. Your project could be anything : putting together an event for older people, fundraising for a local homelessness charity by putting on a football tournament or gig or raising awareness of an issue such as mental health, bullying or animal welfare. If you have the drive and ideas, we can provide you with the necessary advice and support to make your project a success!

WHY SHOULD I BUILD MY OWN PROJECT?



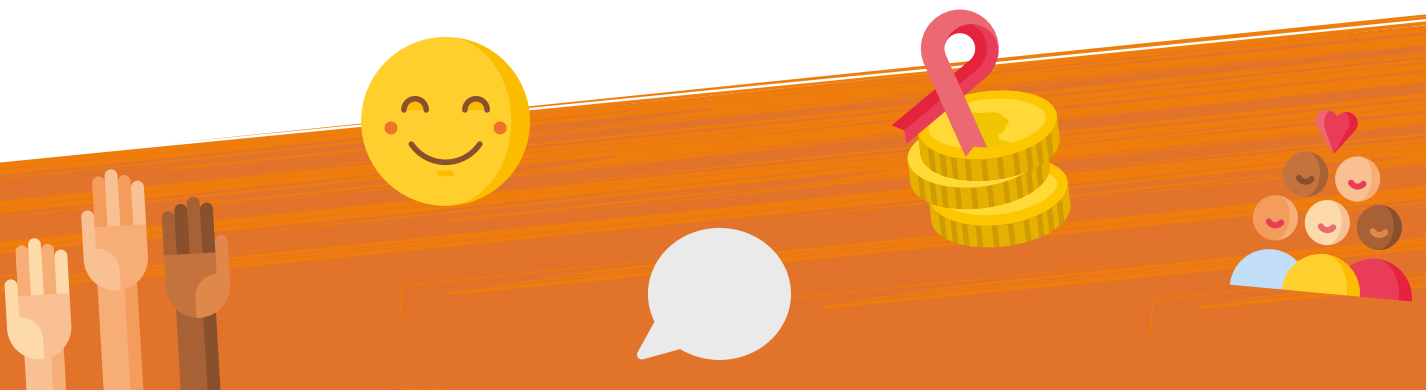
There are a huge number of benefits that you can gain from building your own volunteering project including....

Increasing your employability

The number of people in the UK with a degree is on the rise, meaning that the market for graduate employment is becoming increasingly competitive. A degree is no longer enough to guarantee the job of your dreams and employers are looking for graduates who have gone the extra mile during the course of their studies. Volunteering can help to prove to employers that you are self-motivated, well organised and can see the "bigger picture", putting you a step ahead of the pack in life after university.

Gaining transferable skills

Running your own volunteering project brings with it a wealth of transferable skills which you can evidence when applying for future work or study. Combining the management of your project with your studies and personal commitments develops skills in time management, communication, teamwork and leadership as well as practical skills such as fundraising and risk assessing.



Increasing your well-being

Research by the New Economics Foundation shows strong evidence that giving back to others improves mental health. Individuals who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy and research has shown that committing an act of kindness once a week over a six-week period is associated with an increase in well-being (source – Mind website). Student volunteering is a great way to improve your well-being and feelings of self-worth by giving something back to other people.

Supporting your local community and causes you care about

The Institute for Volunteer Research shows that a huge 95% of student volunteers are primarily motivated by a desire to improve their local community or help people. Your volunteering project could have a great impact locally and make a real difference to peoples' lives or provide a boost to a charity by raising awareness of their fantastic work. Sounds far more satisfying and worthwhile than another evening slumped in front of Love Island!

Making friends, having fun

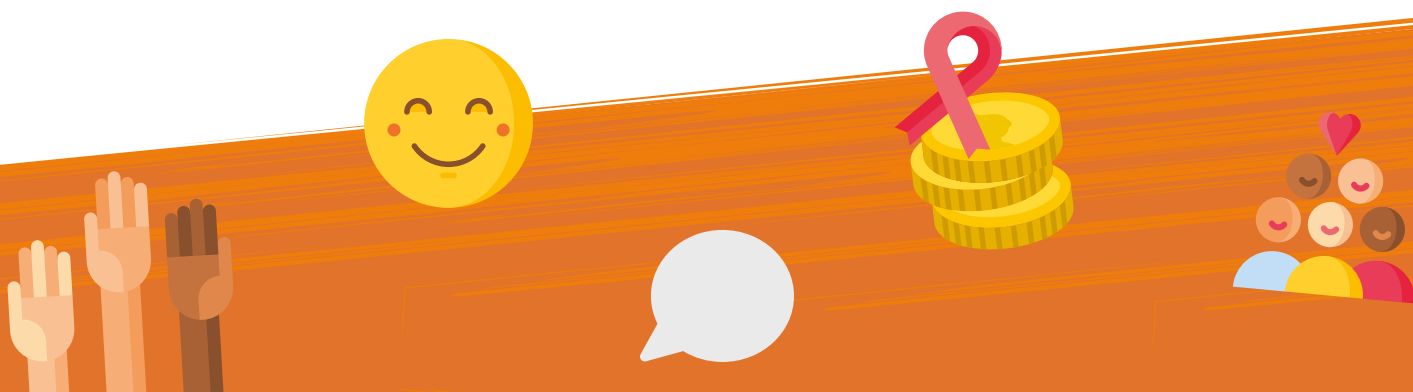
Volunteering brings you into contact with a whole new social circle filled with motivated and like-minded people. As well as making new friends through your project, you will have an enjoyable and memorable experience as this is YOUR project, based on your interests and passions.

WHERE DO I START IN SETTING UP MY OWN PROJECT?

When you start to consider setting up your own volunteering project, it is worth considering the following questions:

- What am I passionate about?
- Who do I want to help?
- Is there a need for my project either within the local community or the charity or organisation that I am hoping to support?
- What objectives do I want to achieve and how will I do this? Are my objectives realistic?
- Do I have enough time to undertake this project?
- What would encourage other students to get involved with this project?

You may have a totally new and original idea based on a need that you see in your local community or within a charity that you already volunteer for. Or maybe there's a national campaign which you would like to see run on campus, or you would like to replicate a successful volunteering project that you have seen run elsewhere. The first step would be to get in contact with Wolves Students' Union's volunteering and training coordinator to discuss your ideas.



Please note that we cannot support projects that are intended to provide volunteering hours in fulfilment of the requirements of a module of study. For expert advice and support concerning placements for your module, please speak to university members of staff at The Workplace.

What else do I need to consider?

There are a number of practical considerations to think about when developing your own project.

They include:

- Dates and times of the project
- Locations where the project will take place
- Administration of the project
- Costs of the project and potential sources of funding
- Resources including equipment and other student volunteers
- Promoting the project to potential volunteers and others
- Accessibility of the project
- Risk assessing the project
- Any legal requirements eg fundraising guidelines, health and safety



This may seem like a long and complicated list but don't worry! Experienced staff from the Students' Union will go through these with you in an initial meeting and help you stay on track in subsequent project planning meetings.

How will I be supported?

Building your own project won't result in you being left stranded without any guidance or support. Although this is very much your project with you leading on the planning and delivery, staff members from Wolves Students' Union who specialise in volunteering, marketing and events production will be available to support and advise you every step of the way. We can:

- Offer project and event management advice
- Advise on which community organisations or university departments you will need to work with
- Assist in the recruitment of student volunteers
- Book venue space within the Students' Union for your project
- Advise on sources of funding available
- Support you with your marketing including promoting your project through Wolves Students' Union's social media streams
- Advise on any legal requirements including risk assessments and fundraising guidelines
- Offer honest and impartial feedback on the viability of your project and suggestions on how your ideas can be developed and implemented.



I want to get started! What do I do now?

- Complete the project application form
(this is not a guarantee that your project will go ahead!)
If you need any help with completing it, please contact the volunteering and training coordinator at the Students' Union
- Come and have a face to face meeting with staff at the Students Union to discuss your idea.
- Put together your project plan with a timescale on when you are going to deliver the activities or events. Remember to be realistic about how much time will be needed to plan and promote your project.
- Put your plans into action! We will be with you every step of the way to advise and support this is your project and you will be your own "boss", responsible for its delivery – we won't run it for you!
- Look back with pride and satisfaction on what you have achieved! Your project will not have only supported communities and causes but your hard work will inspire other students to get involved with volunteering and benefit from its considerable personal and professional rewards

For more information and to apply visit **www.wolvesunion.org**
or email the Volunteer and Training Coordinator,
Bee Johnson, at **b.johnson5@wlw.ac.uk**

