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**A quick guide to micro-volunteering**

Micro-volunteering describes a [volunteer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volunteering), or team of volunteers, completing small tasks that make up a larger project.

As a form of [virtual volunteering](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtual_volunteering), the tasks are often distributed and completed online via an internet-connected device, including [smartphones](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smartphones). It typically does not require an application process, screening or training period, takes only minutes or a few hours to complete, and does not require an ongoing, long-term commitment by the volunteer.

**Benefits**

* It offers volunteers flexibility
* It enables people who might usually be excluded from volunteering the opportunity to participate
* Opportunities can be delivered quickly
* Small tasks can cumulatively have a big impact!
* Increases the number of opportunities you can offer to involve volunteers – this can help increase diversity of your volunteer base
* Volunteering can be completed out of office hours

**Consider…**

* What are peoples’ motivations for micro-volunteering?
* People’s lifestyles, circumstances and individual motivations impact on how much, and the way in which, they want to volunteer and this might change over time.
* Micro-volunteering is not always a first step towards more long-term opportunities. Long-term retention may not always be the end goal or a possibility for volunteers or organisations, in fact it may provide opportunities with those with more substantial volunteer roles to reduce the amount of time they give as a volunteer but still be involved and maintain the connection with your organisation.
* Think about how you might keep people informed and updated of what opportunities you have available. Ask volunteers if they want to be kept informed to help you build a relationship.

Micro-volunteering can take place in ‘real-time’, or be virtual. Consider these examples of campaigning and communication activities

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| --- | --- |
| **‘Real-time’** | **Virtual** |
| * Signing a petition * Taking part in a flashmob * Giving a talk to raise awareness * Recording a video * Sending Christmas cards * Manning a stall at a fair * Distributing leaflets in your road | * Signing a petition e.g. www.change.org * Liking a Facebook page * Providing feedback on marketing materials * Writing a blog post * Taking part in a webinar or online discussion * Retweeting a message |

**Keep it simple**

Opportunities should be interesting and meaningful BUT opportunities that can be completed quickly shouldn’t be too complicated and if you are promoting solely online, you should provide clear instructions and some method for asking questions and giving feedback.

**Communication**

Think about how you could encourage communication and feedback amongst your micro-volunteers. There can be little interaction or communication with other volunteers or staff members, especially if tasks are completed online, and that can make it harder for micro-volunteers to see the bigger impact that their contributions are making. This can be a particular issue for people who are used to more traditional volunteering activities. Creating online forums and networks where people can share their stories about volunteering is an option.

**Where to promote these opportunities**

* The Volunteer Centre website
* You can put micro opportunities on [www.do-it.org](http://www.do-it.org)
* Your website
* Social media platforms
* Your supporters
* <http://www.helpfromhome.org/>