

Every year thousands of volunteers participate in pro bono clinics across the network. Volunteers are the backbone of any pro bono clinic. A volunteer recruitment strategy will help you to target your energies effectively when setting up a new clinic, and ongoing recruitment is often integral to maintaining a continuous rota of volunteers. This factsheet sets out some simple and useful tips for recruiting volunteers.

There are two key factors which contribute to successful recruitment of clinic volunteers:

- Enthusiasm for volunteers and pro bono; and
- Belief that what they are doing is valuable.

Most people get into volunteering because they have been actively sought by an organisation, so finding ways to connect with individuals is key.

Plan a recruitment campaign

Successful recruitment depends on targeting those people who are most likely to be interested in the volunteering roles on offer and having the imagination to devise ways of attracting them.

For a recruitment policy or campaign to be successful you will need to think of the following:

- Who are you recruiting?
- How will you find them?
- What will you say to attract them?
- Who will be contacting whom?

LawWorks Volunteer Advertising Service

LawWorks provides a free volunteer advertising service. If your clinic is a part of the LawWorks Clinics Network and needs volunteers, be sure to fill in our online volunteer request form.

If you have not already you will need to register to use our website in order to have access to this form, at:

www.lawworks.org.uk/user/register

To complete the volunteer request form you will need the following information:

- What does your clinic/organisation do?
- What are you looking for volunteers to help with?
- What will the time commitment be?
- What will volunteers get out of this? (For example, details of training, supervision and support available.)
- Person specification - what type of volunteers are you looking for?
- Application process and any deadline

The form is available at

www.lawworks.org.uk/solicitors-and-volunteers/resources/advertise-current-volunteering-opportunities-lawworks

Who are you recruiting?

Who you will be seeking to recruit will depend on the particular role you are attempting to fill. Some potential clinic roles include:

- Advisor
- Caseworker
- Administrative support
- Supervisor
- Co-ordinator

You may be seeking to recruit solicitors or other members of the legal professions such as barristers. Do remember that regulatory arrangements can differ between the professions.

If you are seeking volunteers with professional experience you may be seeking volunteers with specialist knowledge of a particular area of law, or alternatively you may be seeking generalist advisors in which case their professional experience may be less relevant.

Additionally you may have a minimal PQE requirement, particularly if you are recruiting a supervising solicitor for a clinic.

If you are seeking student volunteers there are a variety of roles they may be able to take on. For example, notetaker or scribe, initial intake or triage, reception and admin duties or a 'student director' role (some more roles are set out below).

With students you may again be seeking a certain level of experience, for example your intakes may be limited to 2nd or 3rd year students only, and alternatively participation in some clinics is limited to graduate level students.

You may also have opportunities to include volunteers from other disciplines, perhaps for example marketing or social work students.

Motivations for volunteering

The motivations for getting involved in pro bono are diverse. However having a broad understanding of what motivates people to get involved is an important part of successful volunteering programmes.

People can be motivated to participate in pro bono by:

- The opportunity to use existing skills and experiences or to develop new skills;
- The chance to work for a specific cause or principle like *access to justice*;
- The opportunity to work with a particular group of like-minded people.

If you are seeking to get a firm on board at your clinic then it is helpful to be able to make the business case for pro bono.

Key reasons for a business to engage in pro bono include:

- Increasing staff engagement
- Improving staff retention
- Recruiting excellent staff
- Improving skills
- Providing opportunities for networking
- Enhancing reputation
- Meeting clients' requirements
- Community relations
- Contributing to profit

LawWorks will be publishing a paper shortly on our website detailing the business case for pro bono.

What will you say?

Recruitment messages that simply say 'volunteers wanted' are rarely successful. There are several things you should try to convey in your message:

- Statement of need – why the role is important, what will happen if it isn't done; for new clinics describe the unmet legal need in the community that you're addressing by setting up the clinic.
- Basic details about the commitment, when does the clinic operate, what is the level of commitment, weekly, monthly, twice a year or otherwise?
- The skills and expertise that your clinic is looking for – if searching for lawyers to give advice, do you need specialists or generalists?

- What the work involves
- Benefits to the community – what the work will accomplish, what changes it will make to people's lives
- Reassurance that volunteers will be supported in the clinics by experienced supervisors and staff members.
- Benefits to volunteers – what volunteers will get in return – skills, experience, new friends.
- Innovations at your clinic
- Insurance arrangements where relevant

Advertising for Volunteers

Where to Advertise

A variety of recruitment methods can be used, and it is often good to start looking in the local community of the clinic because local people will have a personal interest in what happens in their area. Some potential options include:

- Contact with local law firms;
- Presentations at local law firms;
- Local law society;
- Local pro bono society;
- Local universities for student volunteers;
- Word of mouth, through existing staff, volunteers, clients, committee members;
- Posters in local shops, supermarkets, libraries, schools, youth clubs, colleges, job centres, post offices, health centres and dentist notice boards;
- Through a volunteer bureaux; or
- Articles/adverts in local press.

- Find a Solicitor or Law Firm (Law Society)

Don't forget to advertise on the LawWorks website (see page 1 of this factsheet).

Additionally, clinics in the LawWorks Clinics Network can provide updates to LawWorks as to whether they are taking on volunteers. This can be advertised through LawWorks' own channels so as to engage a wider pool of potential volunteers.

Volunteers who cannot commit to ongoing participation

If qualified volunteers are not able to commit on a regular basis do you have other activities that they might be able to help with on a more ad hoc basis.

Maintaining a reserve list of volunteers can be a good back up option, where solicitors drop out from a scheduled session at the last minute. Volunteers who are unable to commit on a regular basis, may agree to be placed on a reserve list.

Ways in which volunteers can participate in a legal advice clinic setting

- Provision of legal advice or assistance;
- Reception duties;
- Registering clients for the clinic;
- Provide signposting and referral information to clients;
- Respond to general enquiries;
- Help with monitoring and evaluation (eg conducting surveys) and
- Note-taking

For Further Information

Useful Websites

- www.lawworks.org.uk/solicitors-and-volunteers/get-involved
- www.search4solicitors.com/
- www.do-it.org.uk/
- www.volunteering.org.uk/
- www.csv.org.uk/volunteering
- www.lawsociety.org.uk/find-a-solicitor/

The **LawWorks Clinics Team** provides consultancy and advice to help establish and support free legal advice sessions carried out by volunteer lawyers and students.

Contact us at: clinics@lawworks.org.uk