

# Engaging People with Disabilities in Volunteering



Government of South Australia  
Department for Communities  
and Social Inclusion

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In South Australia, it is important that we maintain an inclusive work environment that provides equal opportunities to all.

This fact sheet provides information to help your organisation recruit volunteers with a disability.

## Laying the foundation

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The first step is to assess your volunteer positions by focussing on the skills you need, and what people have to offer. It is important to think about what people can do, rather than what they cannot.

## Recruiting volunteers

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Once you have decided on the skills you need:

- approach disability support organisations
- register your willingness to recruit with Volunteer Resource Centres
- advertise in publications that are targeted at people with disabilities
- display recruitment posters on notice boards.

It is important to involve as many people from your organisation as possible in the recruitment of volunteers to ensure all volunteers, including those with a disability feel welcome and accepted.

## The application form

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A well-constructed application form will help organisations understand potential volunteers and their needs. Here are a few simple steps to help your organisation create a good application form:

- keep the layout simple, and if possible in several forms such as audiotape, Braille, Disc, e-mail and large print
- include a section where the applicant can ask for any additional supports such as parking space, guide dog requirements etc
- have a rigorous privacy policy and include a segment outlining the need for disclosure, as some volunteers may wish to keep this information private.

Volunteer organisations should also be willing to help people fill out their applications if needed.

## The benefits of interviews and meeting applicants face to face

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Conducting interviews with potential volunteers will help you get to know the person and determine their suitability to the role. Here are a few hints to help your organisation conduct a good interview:

- check and confirm any special requirements with applicants before they arrive for the interview
- make sure the interview is held in an accessible room
- extend the interview time for those with speech problems or fatigue to ensure you are able to get through all of the questions
- consider telephone interviews for volunteers with special circumstances.

## Accessibility and additional information

To create an inclusive environment you may need to make spaces accessible, use assistive technology, or even employ a virtual volunteering program.

See below for further information and a list of contacts to help you prepare when engaging people with a disability in volunteering.

<p><b>The Disability Information and Resource Centre, South Australia (DIRC)</b> 195 Gilles Street, Adelaide SA 5000 Telephone: (08) 8236 0555 Country callers: 1300 305 558 Email: <a href="mailto:dirc@dircsa.org.au">dirc@dircsa.org.au</a> <a href="http://www.dircsa.org.au/">http://www.dircsa.org.au/</a></p>	<p><b>Disability SA</b> <a href="http://www.sa.gov.au/subject/Community+support/Disability">www.sa.gov.au/subject/Community+support/Disability</a> NDS - National Disability Services Building 5, 19 Daringa St, Mile End SA 5031 Telephone: (08) 8354 0084 Email: <a href="mailto:ndssa@nds.org.au">ndssa@nds.org.au</a> <a href="http://www.nds.org.au">http:// www.nds.org.au</a></p>
<p><b>Information on Disabilities &amp; Education Awareness Service (IDEAS Inc)</b> Provides a high quality accessible web portal for people with disability and people with age related disability, their families, carers and other supporters to access and search for information that promotes their independence. Telephone: 1800 029 904 <a href="http://www.ideas.org.au">http://www.ideas.org.au</a></p>	<p><b>Royal Society for the Blind of South Australia (RSB)</b> Knapman House, 230 Pirie Street, Adelaide SA 5000 Telephone: (08) 8 8417 5599 (Low Vision and Adaptive Technology Centres Employment Services, Volunteer Services, Child and Youth Services and Online Shop) <a href="http://www.rsb.org.au/">http://www.rsb.org.au/</a></p>
<p><b>Brain Injury Network of SA (BINSAs Inc)</b> 70 Light Square, Adelaide SA 5000 Telephone: (08) 8217 7600 Country callers: 1300 733 049 Email: <a href="mailto:info@binsa.org">info@binsa.org</a> <a href="http://www.binsa.org">http://www.binsa.org</a></p>	<p><b>Better Hearing Australia, Adelaide Branch</b> SACOSS House, 47 King William Road, Unley, SA 5061 Australia Telephone: 08 8268 4189 <a href="http://ilcaustralia.org.au/suppliers/3851">http://ilcaustralia.org.au/suppliers/3851</a> Email: <a href="mailto:admin@betterhearingadelaide.com.au">admin@betterhearingadelaide.com.au</a></p>
<p><b>The Mental Health Resource Centre</b> 1 Richmond Road, Keswick SA 5035 Telephone: (08) 8221 5166</p>	<p><b>Spinal Cord Injuries Australia (SCI Australia)</b> Telephone: 1800 819 775 <a href="http://www.spinalcordinjuries.com.au/">http://www.spinalcordinjuries.com.au/</a></p>