



Easy, Flexible and Inclusive

Volunteering at the British Heart Foundation



Foreword

As we move into our post pandemic world, never before has there been such an urgent need for volunteers across the UK. Here at the British Heart Foundation (BHF) we recognise the huge propensity of the people of the UK to donate their time to good causes. In all of my time at the BHF I have seen first-hand the incredible work that our volunteers do to support us to raise funds for research into heart and circulatory diseases. It is therefore with absolute delight that I am launching our new Volunteering Strategy for the BHF.

The world of volunteering, and indeed our own lives, have changed significantly over recent years. The value we place on our time has also changed, as has how and where we spend it.

Here at the BHF we recognise all these things and strive to make volunteering easy, flexible, and inclusive to everyone. Whether you have an hour to donate occasionally, are given employer supported volunteer days, are a business wanting to develop your Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda, or if you would love a more regular commitment, we have volunteer opportunities to suit everyone.

Whether you want to help your community, support the BHF cause or you want to help us in our drive to create a more sustainable world, we will welcome you to the BHF.

Wellbeing and safety are at the heart of what we do. Looking after you and your safety is a top priority for us and we will ensure you receive appropriate training and support to carry out your role. We believe in the impact volunteering has in society and on individuals and strive to work with local communities to offer volunteering opportunities that make a difference far beyond our own organisation.

And all of this is underpinned by our absolute commitment to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 'Igniting change', and our values of Brave, Driven, Compassionate and Informed.

Quite simply we want all of our volunteers to have an incredible experience, know that every hour they donate is valued, and truly feel that they are making a difference to the BHF.

We want you to be proud to volunteer at the BHF and be proud to tell people that you play a part in supporting us to fund more than £100m of lifesaving science each year, accelerating the pace of lifesaving discovery.



Linda Fenn.

Linda Fenn, Head of Volunteering

Volunteer experience

We want your volunteer experience to be brilliant however you support us, this is our plan for making the very best of the time you give.



Unlock our full potential

If we want to beat heart and circulatory diseases, the world's biggest killers, we can't afford for anything to hold us back or slow us down. The right opportunities, the right support and the right environment are what we need to progress and be at our best.



To build lasting relationships and support you to achieve your full potential, we will:

- Ensure all volunteers know about the different ways that they can support us
- Support those volunteers who are motivated by career progression to do so
- Ensure that volunteers are aware of opportunities to move to paid employment
- Ensure all teams at the BHF know how to involve volunteers in their work
- Give you access to our learning library via our volunteer platform

To recognise your support, we will:

- Regularly recognise and celebrate volunteers and the teams that support them
- Ensure our volunteers have access to the range of benefits we offer (e.g. health and wellbeing, discounts etc.)
- Showcase our volunteer stories with our entire organisation

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It has been huge for me doing volunteering as part of a work experience programme, it changed my career path completely. I had never had a job and was struggling to get one with my degree, so volunteering opened that door for me, and got my foot in that door.

Ghafoor Hussain, Online Sales & Listings Manager



A safe, healthy and inclusive environment

We need all the talented people we can get – because without the right people, our plans for the future are nothing but words on a page.

To attract and keep the people we need, we must be welcoming, safe, inclusive and a place where everyone's health and wellbeing comes first.



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I started volunteering in the BHF Ealing home store last year. It's been really good for me. I needed something to do to get involved with the local community. I do a variety of roles in the shop, from Gift Aid to working in the warehouse. Since joining, I have felt very welcomed and part of the team and have met many different people – there is a lot of diversity here.

Ali Sirreh, Retail Volunteer, Ealing



To welcome you into a diverse and inclusive community, we will:

- Ensure our volunteer experience always aligns with 'Igniting Change' our BHF Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy
- Make our annual equality, diversity and inclusion data available for you
- Update our digital platforms to embed accessibility tools such as alternative language options and support for volunteers with disabilities, empowering our volunteers to feel part of the BHF

To empower you to look after your health and wellbeing, we will:

- Ensure our volunteers across our different roles are aware of resources provided to look after their health and wellbeing
- Give volunteers access to our health, wellbeing and benefits platform to provide them with advice and support

 **93%** Volunteering has improved my mental health
Volunteer survey – Jan 2022

Free to collaborate and innovate

As the world changes, the challenges we face grow ever more complex.

To respond, we must join forces with people both inside and outside the BHF and embrace bold, fresh thinking. Innovation and collaboration go hand in hand – if we seize both, we'll unlock new solutions.



To provide a great, joined up volunteering experience however you support us, we will:

- Embed a culture of volunteering across the BHF, involving all our teams
- Ensure all our teams will have awareness of how volunteering opportunities can bring value to their work
- Create and promote innovative ways to support us to make volunteering easy and flexible

To build relationships with partners, government and external organisations as well as individuals, we will:

- Continue to develop our MyVolunteer (our digital volunteering platform) digital processes to support our partners and suppliers to access volunteering opportunities
- Develop our opportunities to grow volunteering relationships with our partners
- Build effective relationships with governments to be able to influence and contribute to policy development
- Work with governments to unlock opportunities for you to volunteer at the BHF through traditional and developing routes

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We decided to volunteer for the British Heart Foundation as it is a charity that is close to a lot of our team and has impacted our own families. The work they do is outstanding and meeting some of the other volunteers on the day made us realise how important they are and the difference it can make to give up just one day to help such a great cause.

Emma-Jane Giles, Lloyds Team Manager



Take action led by insight

Data. Evidence. Insight. They are the fuel of progress. They help us understand what's working, and what isn't.

We need to embrace insight to steer our focus, inform our decisions and help us make the most of every pound entrusted to us.



99%

Volunteering allows me to help my local community

Volunteer survey – Jan 2022

To listen to you and respond quickly and meaningfully, we will:

- Use volunteer feedback to inform our decision making
- Take the opportunity to use your insights to influence the sector and the wider world
- Gather and respond to feedback and act on it

To continue improving our systems and processes to support you, we will:

- Continue the development of MyVolunteer, including the addition of accessibility tools
- We will provide support to improve digital literacy
- Grow our accessibility tools to enable as many volunteers as possible to benefit from our digital proposition

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I love volunteering with the BHF, meeting all the fantastic people who work and volunteer here, the atmosphere is great, we have lots of fun. The team is so friendly and made me feel so welcome, I just love it.

Emily Wright, Retail Volunteer from Manchester University



Maximise our impact

As people, as teams and as one charity, we are constantly achieving great things. But if the world doesn't know it, those successes won't have the biggest impact they could.

By proudly sharing our successes and celebrating when things go well, we can stay motivated, build our brand and raise even more money for lifesaving science.



To offer you a role that suits you, your aims and motivations, we will:

- Review and publish, using our digital tools, more wide range volunteer opportunities via all our recruitment channels
- Increase knowledge and usability of our MyVolunteer hub to allow greater access to our roles
- Develop skill-sharing volunteering to enable skill-sharing, pro-bono, and role matching
- Provide opportunities for volunteers at all stages of life, including, school leavers and career changers
- We will grow and centralise a library of our volunteer opportunities

To share the impact of your work with you and encourage you to be a voice of the BHF, we will:

- Make sure that you are kept up to date with all the ways that you can volunteer so that you can make a choice about what works best for you
- Keep you up to date with BHF news so you feel informed and able to share information about the work of the BHF
- Provide you with everything you need to be an ambassador for the BHF

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I am extremely proud to be chair of such a hardworking, dedicated and loyal team. We are a small group, and it's hard work but great fun organising events such as golf days and quizzes. We get great support and feedback from our local community.

BHF Pocklington Branch, Fundraising Group



Action Team – volunteering your way

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Had an amazing day! An absolute privilege to be there cheering for all those amazing people! Thank you!



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Great day thank you to all. Was great to see the smiles and motivation from our support. I'm going to sign off now. Until the next event...



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Amazing time volunteering today, feel very proud to be part of the BHF. Well done everyone.



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Had a fantastic time cheering all the runners and meeting so many of you. Thank you!



By 2025...



Over 90% of our volunteers would recommend the BHF as a good place to volunteer



All directorates across the BHF involve volunteers in their work every year



More than 90% of our volunteers report that “people at the BHF are treated fairly irrespective of age, disability, gender , gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation”



More than 90% of volunteers report that they know how to access volunteer benefits to support their health and wellbeing



Our volunteers understand how they can help us in a variety of ways across the BHF



We will have opportunities available for corporate volunteers across the whole retail estate as well as in our Action Team



We have volunteer panels to help us gather insights to inform our work



Volunteering with the BHF will be easier and more accessible, and we will involve people with a range of different backgrounds in our volunteering activities



More than 90% of our volunteers tell us they talk about the work of the BHF



A minimum of 25% of all paid vacancies across the organisation are filled by people who have previously volunteered with us

Our values

Our values express who we are and what we stand for. They are the spirit and culture of our organisation. Through the way we work together, knowing what to expect of each other, our leaders and ourselves, we are able to live our values.



Brave

We speak out.
We are decisive.
We are innovative.



Informed

We are clear.
We are open-minded.
We work together.



Driven

We are focussed.
We are determined.
We keep learning.



Compassionate

We are open & honest.
We respect each other.
We care.

bhf.org.uk



**British Heart
Foundation**