

VOLUNTEERS' WEEK TOP TIPS



1-7 June

What is Volunteers' Week?

Volunteers' Week is an annual celebration of the fantastic contribution millions of UK volunteers make to our society. It raises the profiles of our inspirational volunteers and encourages others to get involved in volunteering.

The week is led by Volunteering England in partnership with volunteer-development agencies across the UK.

Why should I take part?

Without our fantastic volunteers, we wouldn't be able to give people affected by cancer the support they need. Because whether it's five minutes or five days, the time our volunteers give really does matter – helping us make sure no one faces cancer alone.

So it's important we show them just how grateful we are for their incredible work.

We also want to:

- raise awareness about the time and commitment our volunteers give us, ensuring they feel recognised and are encouraged to keep supporting Macmillan
- recruit new volunteers – Volunteers' Week can be a good time to recruit for your volunteer roles or, if you're holding a thank you event, an added bonus could be that it will show people locally how they can volunteer.

How can I get involved?

It's up to you how much or little you do. You know your volunteers best and it's important to choose a way of thanking them that suits them as individuals.

We also understand that you're busy and need to fit Volunteers' Week into your already busy schedule, so we've tried to give you some ready-made options. To get the ball rolling, we've created resources and materials for you to use, as well as some top tips on thanking volunteers. If you need any additional support, please speak to your local Volunteering Adviser or contact Megan Preston in the Volunteering team on mpreston@macmillan.org.uk or **020 7840 4720**.

Resources and publicity materials

We've come up with some great ideas and materials for you to use to celebrate and spread awareness of Volunteers' Week:

Holding a thank you event

- See our thanking top tips below
- Check out **NCVO's Volunteers' Week pack**

Saying thank you to your volunteers

- Thank you cards – (available on be.macmillan.org.uk from May)
- Thank you certificates – (available on be.macmillan.org.uk from May)
- Resources to help you advertise your thank you event

Recruiting new volunteers

- **Volunteering toolkit** – information and resources to help you recruit new volunteers and thank them

Say it on social media

Post your recruitment and thank you messages on **Twitter** and **Facebook** using **#volunteersweek**. If you have any extra special stories, quotes or photos you would like us to share on the volunteering Facebook and Twitter accounts, email them to volunteeringsocialmedia@macmillan.org.uk

Visit macmillan.org.uk/volunteersweek for further information, advice and recognition ideas.



'As soon as you start volunteering for Macmillan you feel part of the team'
Katie, intern

Top tips on thanking volunteers

Here are some inspired ideas on how to thank and recognise the efforts of your volunteers:

- 1 Just say it. Thank you.** It's an obvious gesture but one that can make someone's day. And if saying it isn't enough, we also have thank you cards and certificates especially for volunteers on **be.Macmillan**
- 2 Show volunteers the difference they make.** For example, events volunteers may appreciate it if you contact them to tell them how much money an event raised in total. For fundraising or office volunteers, why not arrange a visit to a service to show them how we help people affected by cancer?
- 3 Has a fundraising committee reached a significant milestone?** If so, you could create a certificate to mark the occasion via **be.Macmillan**. You could also organise a special plaque to frame and hang on a wall, or you could ask your local newspaper to take a picture of you awarding a plaque or certificate to your fundraising committee.
- 4 Think long-term appreciation –** nominate a volunteer for a Macmillan volunteer award. It could be for long service or because they've done something exceptional. Find out more at the **Macmillan volunteer awards pages**.
- 5 Arrange a meet and greet event for volunteers.** They can meet their peers and swap experiences while feeling special and valued for the time and support they all offer.
- 6 Make time for your volunteer and treat them well.** Make them a cuppa, order them some new stationery from **be.Macmillan**. Small gestures make the difference.
- 7 Recognise your volunteer's potential.** Think about giving your volunteer a new role that will stretch them and challenge their ideas of what they can achieve. Visit **LearnZone** or chat to the Volunteering Team about learning and development resources.
- 8 Give your volunteers any complimentary tickets or goody bags that come your way. Check out our guidance for more information.**
- 9 Communication is key.** Update volunteers on the latest Macmillan policies, procedures or activities, and ask them for their ideas and opinions on the projects you're working on.
- 10 Has your volunteer got an interesting story to tell?** If so, ask them if they'd be happy to be a case study for Macmillan and let us know by emailing us at **volunteermarketing@macmillan.org.uk**
- 11 Shout it from the rooftops.** Make a volunteers' wall of fame in your workplace. Or thank them in a newsletter, making sure you send them a personal copy with a handwritten note.
- 12 Throw a party in their honour.** Blow up some balloons, lay on sandwiches and cakes and raise your glasses to your volunteers' supreme efforts.
- 13 Remember that it's horses for courses.** Some people love lots of public recognition while others may prefer to be thanked in a much quieter way. So keep it relevant and appropriate and it'll be guaranteed to feel special.
- 14 Keep costs down.** If you want gifts for your volunteers, why not ask local businesses if they could donate vouchers, experiences or items? If you're planning an event, try approaching local community halls or function rooms and asking for the venue for free as it's for charity. Many volunteers will feel pleased to be thanked in a way that isn't costing too much for Macmillan. **Check out our guidance for more information.**

While it's important that we give our volunteers the recognition they deserve, we also want you to know that we're here for you too. The Volunteering Team can offer support and guidance in best practice in managing your volunteers, from recruitment to recognition and everything in between.

So get in touch with your local Volunteering Adviser, we look forward to hearing from you.