

# **Cambridge Volunteer Clearinghouse (CVC)**



The mission of Cambridge Volunteer Clearinghouse (CVC) is to strengthen civic life in Cambridge by championing local volunteer opportunities and supporting an effective and inclusive volunteer corps. CVC guides individuals seeking volunteer positions in Cambridge. They offer workshops, individual guidance and updated listings/news, while supporting nonprofit agencies in best utilizing volunteers.

## **Project Description**

The COVID pandemic and subsequent fallout have resulted in a dramatic reduction in the number of individuals volunteering, especially for long-term, in-person work. This crisis in volunteer recruitment and retention is essentially a crisis in service delivery for nonprofit agencies that rely on volunteers to execute programs. However, most information about this crisis is only anecdotal.

The goal of this project will be to measure and quantify the decline in volunteerism in the Cambridge community, and more broadly in other communities. The work will help nonprofits take informed action to counter the trend by adjusting program structure or offering volunteer roles to accommodate permanent changes in volunteer expectations and needs. The HDAG team will begin by designing surveys to investigate volunteerism decline in the local Cambridge community, leveraging statistical inference techniques for proper survey design and implementing qualitative analysis on responses. The websites of other volunteer agencies will be scraped to capture a more granular view of the volunteerism landscape in the Boston community.

The team will then consider more broadly the trends in volunteerism across the US by analyzing large-scale data from AmeriCorps, an independent government agency supporting national service and volunteerism. Longitudinal modeling and trend analysis will be techniques particularly relevant to this endeavor. The team will in particular seek to characterize and quantify the overall reduction in volunteerism due to the pandemic.

**Internal Partners:** Laurie Rothstein (Executive Director at CVC)

**Preferred Coding Languages:** Python

## **Specific Skills**

1. **Survey Design:** design surveys to address key questions and establish causal relationships; qualitative analysis on response data
2. **Scraping:** use of web scraping tools is a portion of the work of this case
3. **Longitudinal Modeling:** research and identify public datasets for trend analysis; analyze trends in volunteerism over the past decade

Expected Technical Difficulty: **Easy/Intermediate**