

Non-Monetary Giving Ideas List

Introduction

Giving back doesn't always require financial resources. This guide provides a comprehensive list of non-monetary ways to contribute to causes and communities you care about. These contributions can be equally—or sometimes even more—valuable than monetary donations.

The ideas are organized into categories and include time/skill requirements to help you find opportunities that match your abilities and availability. Remember that even small contributions can make a significant difference in your community.

Contribution Matrix

Use this matrix to find giving opportunities based on your time availability and skill level:

Low Time / Low Skill

Quick contributions that require minimal training or specialized knowledge

- Share social media posts for causes
- Donate clothing or household items
- Sign up for charity email lists
- Use shopping apps that donate percentages
- Participate in walk/run events
- Donate blood
- Collect box tops for schools
- Recycle for environmental causes
- Write encouraging cards for patients
- Participate in crowdsourced research

Low Time / High Skill

Brief contributions using specialized training, education, or talents

- Provide pro bono professional advice
- Create graphics for organizations
- Review grant applications
- Edit website content or materials
- Translate documents
- Provide brief technical support
- Review legal documents
- Lead brief specialized training sessions
- Teach one-time workshops in your area of expertise
- Provide artistic performances

High Time / Low Skill

Ongoing contributions that require commitment but minimal specialized training

- Regular volunteer shifts at food banks
- Participate in community cleanups
- Assist with event setup/breakdown
- Deliver meals to homebound individuals
- Walk dogs at animal shelters
- Staff information tables at events
- Organize donation drives
- Serve as a museum docent
- Provide companionship to elderly individuals
- Help with mailings or administrative tasks

High Time / High Skill

Significant contributions requiring both time commitment and specialized abilities

- Serve on nonprofit boards
- Develop websites or applications
- Provide ongoing professional services
- Mentor others in your field
- Lead ongoing educational programs
- Conduct research or data analysis
- Manage fundraising campaigns
- Coach sports teams
- Develop strategic plans
- Create marketing campaigns

Skill-Based Contributions

Website Design/Development

Time: Medium to High | Skill: High | Value: \$1,000-\$10,000+

Create or enhance a website for a nonprofit organization, improving their online presence and ability to reach supporters.

Best for: Web developers, designers, UX/UI specialists

Examples: Build a new responsive website, improve site navigation, add donation functionality, create a volunteer portal

Impact: Professional websites can dramatically increase donations, volunteer applications, and public awareness—services many small nonprofits cannot afford.

Graphic Design

Time: Low to Medium | Skill: High | Value: \$300-\$3,000+

Create visual materials for nonprofit communications, fundraising, and awareness campaigns.

Best for: Graphic designers, digital artists, marketing specialists

Examples: Design logos, brochures, social media graphics, annual reports, infographics, presentation templates

Impact: Professional visuals improve an organization's credibility and effectiveness in communicating their mission and impact.

Writing and Editing

Time: Low to Medium | Skill: Medium to High | Value: \$200-\$2,000+

Create or improve written content for nonprofits' communications, grants, or educational materials.

Best for: Writers, editors, journalists, content creators

Examples: Draft grant applications, edit newsletters, write blog posts, create social media content, develop educational materials

Impact: Strong writing can help organizations secure funding, engage supporters, and effectively educate their audience.

Photography/Videography

Time: Medium | Skill: Medium to High | Value: \$500-\$5,000+

Document events, create promotional videos, or provide professional imagery for organizational use.

Best for: Photographers, videographers, film students

Examples: Create promotional videos, photograph events, develop testimonial videos, produce virtual tours

Impact: Visual storytelling powerfully conveys an organization's work and impact, increasing engagement and support.

Legal Assistance

Time: Low to High | Skill: High | Value: \$300-\$10,000+

Provide pro bono legal advice or services to nonprofit organizations or their constituents.

Best for: Lawyers, paralegals, law students (with supervision)

Examples: Review contracts, advise on compliance issues, assist with incorporating a nonprofit, help with trademark registrations

Impact: Legal support ensures organizations operate properly and can focus their limited resources on their mission rather than legal fees.

Accounting/Financial Services

Time: Low to Medium | Skill: High | Value: \$500-\$5,000+

Provide financial expertise to help organizations manage their finances effectively.

Best for: Accountants, bookkeepers, financial analysts

Examples: Assist with bookkeeping, prepare tax returns, develop budgets, review financial policies, conduct financial literacy workshops

Impact: Sound financial management is critical for nonprofit sustainability and compliance, and professional guidance can be transformative.

IT Support

Time: Low to Medium | Skill: Medium to High | Value: \$200-\$3,000+

Help organizations set up, maintain, or troubleshoot technology systems.

Best for: IT professionals, computer science students, tech enthusiasts

Examples: Set up networks, provide cybersecurity guidance, install software, troubleshoot issues, train staff on technology

Impact: Reliable technology infrastructure allows organizations to operate efficiently and securely, while reducing costly downtime.

Marketing/Social Media

Time: Low to High | Skill: Medium to High | Value: \$300-\$5,000+

Help organizations develop and implement marketing strategies to increase awareness and support.

Best for: Marketing professionals, social media managers, communications specialists

Examples: Develop marketing plans, manage social media accounts, create email campaigns, analyze marketing data

Impact: Strategic marketing helps organizations reach more supporters, increase donations, and amplify their message.

Time-Based Contributions

Direct Service Volunteering

Time: Medium to High | Skill: Low to Medium | Value: \$15-\$30/hour

Provide hands-on assistance to organizations serving community needs.

Best for: Anyone with time to commit to regular service

Examples: Sort food at food banks, serve meals at shelters, assist at animal shelters, help at community gardens, staff thrift stores

Impact: Direct service volunteers are the backbone of many nonprofit operations, providing essential labor that enables organizations to serve their communities.

Mentoring

Time: Medium to High | Skill: Medium to High | Value: \$25-\$100+/hour

Provide guidance, support, and expertise to individuals seeking to develop skills or navigate challenges.

Best for: Experienced professionals, educators, or individuals with specific life experience

Examples: Mentor youth, provide career guidance, coach new entrepreneurs, support individuals in recovery

Impact: Mentoring creates meaningful personal connections that can transform lives through sustained guidance and support.

Event Support

Time: Low | Skill: Low to Medium | Value: \$15-\$25/hour

Assist with planning, organizing, and executing fundraisers, awareness events, or community gatherings.

Best for: Anyone with time available, especially those with organizational or hospitality skills

Examples: Set up/clean up events, greet attendees, manage registration tables, coordinate volunteers

Impact: Successful events raise crucial funds and awareness for causes, and reliable volunteer support makes these events possible.

Board/Committee Service

Time: High | Skill: Medium to High | Value: \$1,000-\$10,000+/year

Serve in a leadership capacity to guide organizational governance, strategy, and oversight.

Best for: Professionals with relevant expertise and a strong commitment to an organization's mission

Examples: Join a board of directors, serve on advisory committees, participate in planning committees

Impact: Board and committee members provide critical strategic guidance and oversight that shapes an organization's effectiveness and sustainability.

Teaching/Training

Time: Low to Medium | Skill: Medium to High | Value: \$50-\$200+/hour

Share knowledge and expertise through workshops, classes, or training sessions.

Best for: Educators, subject matter experts, experienced professionals

Examples: Teach classes in your area of expertise, conduct workshops, train staff or volunteers, develop curricula

Impact: Knowledge transfer builds capacity within organizations and communities, creating lasting value beyond the teaching session itself.

Advocacy

Time: Low to High | Skill: Low to Medium | Value: Varies widely

Use your voice and influence to support important causes and create systemic change.

Best for: Anyone passionate about specific issues or causes

Examples: Contact elected officials, attend advocacy days, speak at public meetings, organize awareness campaigns

Impact: Advocacy can create far-reaching change by addressing the root causes of issues through policy and public awareness.

In-Kind Donations

Professional Equipment/Supplies

Time: Low | Skill: Low | Value: Varies widely

Donate new or gently used equipment and supplies that organizations need for their operations.

Best for: Businesses updating equipment, professionals with excess supplies

Examples: Computers, office furniture, medical supplies, art materials, sports equipment, tools

Impact: Equipment donations provide essential resources that might otherwise consume a significant portion of an organization's limited budget.

Space Donation

Time: Low to High | Skill: Low | Value: \$100-\$10,000+

Provide access to physical spaces for meetings, events, storage, or operations.

Best for: Property owners, businesses with available space

Examples: Meeting rooms, event venues, storage areas, office space, land for community gardens

Impact: Space is often one of the largest expenses for nonprofits, and donated space can make programs possible that would otherwise be unaffordable.

Transportation

Time: Low to Medium | Skill: Low to Medium | Value: \$20-\$100+/hour

Provide or coordinate transportation for people, supplies, or materials.

Best for: Anyone with a reliable vehicle and driving skills

Examples: Deliver meals, transport clients to appointments, collect donations, provide airport pickups for nonprofit guests

Impact: Transportation assistance removes a critical barrier for many service recipients and enables the movement of essential supplies and materials.

Specialized Materials

Time: Low | Skill: Low | Value: Varies widely

Donate industry-specific materials that would be expensive for organizations to purchase.

Best for: Businesses with excess inventory, professionals with access to specialized materials

Examples: Building materials, fabric for art projects, seeds/plants for gardens, specialized equipment

Impact: Access to specialized materials can make specific programs possible and significantly extend an organization's resources.

Community and Digital Contributions

Digital Volunteering

Time: Low to Medium | Skill: Low to High | Value: Varies widely

Contribute remotely through online platforms and digital tools.

Best for: Anyone with internet access, especially those with limited mobility or time constraints

Examples: Participate in citizen science projects, transcribe historical documents, caption videos, translate content, moderate online forums

Impact: Digital volunteering allows for flexible participation and can connect volunteers with causes around the world.

Awareness Raising

Time: Low | Skill: Low to Medium | Value: Varies widely

Use your networks and platforms to increase awareness about important causes and organizations.

Best for: Anyone with social networks, especially those with large or engaged followings

Examples: Share content on social media, host information sessions, engage in awareness campaigns, wear promotional items

Impact: Awareness-raising extends an organization's reach, helping them connect with potential supporters, volunteers, and donors.

Peer-to-Peer Support

Time: Medium to High | Skill: Medium | Value: \$25-\$75+/hour

Provide direct support to others based on shared experiences or backgrounds.

Best for: Individuals with relevant lived experience who can support others facing similar challenges

Examples: Lead support groups, provide recovery coaching, offer new parent support, assist recent immigrants

Impact: Peer support provides authentic connection and understanding that can be uniquely effective in supporting individuals through challenges.

Community Organizing

Time: High | Skill: Medium to High | Value: \$20-\$50+/hour

Mobilize groups of people to address community needs or create positive change.

Best for: Natural connectors with strong community relationships and organizational skills

Examples: Organize neighborhood cleanups, coordinate mutual aid networks, develop community gardens, create tool-sharing programs

Impact: Community organizing builds local capacity and creates sustainable solutions that may not require ongoing nonprofit intervention.

Youth-Friendly Contributions

These opportunities are particularly accessible for high school and college students:

Social Media Management

Time: Low to Medium | Skill: Medium | Value: \$20-\$50+/hour

Help organizations maintain an active and engaging social media presence.

Best for: Social media-savvy youth with strong communication skills

Examples: Create and schedule posts, respond to comments, develop content calendars, create graphics

Impact: Many smaller nonprofits lack the capacity for consistent social media engagement, and youth volunteers often bring valuable digital native perspectives.

Peer Tutoring

Time: Medium | Skill: Medium | Value: \$15-\$40+/hour

Provide academic assistance to other students in subjects where you excel.

Best for: Students with strong academic performance and teaching ability

Examples: Tutor younger students, assist with homework help programs, provide SAT/ACT prep

Impact: Peer tutoring can be especially effective because student tutors often relate well to their peers and understand their challenges.

Event Photography/Videography

Time: Low | Skill: Medium | Value: \$100-\$500+ per event

Document events for organizations to use in their communications and marketing.

Best for: Students with photography or video skills and equipment

Examples: Photograph fundraising events, create highlight reels, document program activities

Impact: High-quality visual content helps organizations tell their story effectively, and students can build their portfolios while contributing.

Specialized Volunteering

Time: Medium | Skill: Low to Medium | Value: \$15-\$25+/hour

Volunteer for roles that match your interests, skills, or career aspirations.

Best for: Students exploring potential career paths or developing specific skills

Examples: Coach youth sports, assist with art classes, help with environmental monitoring, support animal care

Impact: Specialized volunteering provides targeted support for specific programs while allowing young people to develop skills and explore interests.

Awareness Campaigns

Time: Low to Medium | Skill: Low to Medium | Value: Varies widely

Organize or participate in efforts to educate peers and communities about important issues.

Best for: Students passionate about specific causes with strong communication skills

Examples: Create educational social media campaigns, organize awareness events at school, develop informational materials

Impact: Youth-led awareness efforts can be particularly effective at reaching other young people and shifting cultural norms.

Getting Started with Non-Monetary Giving

Step 1: Identify Your Resources

Take inventory of what you have to offer:

- Skills and talents
- Knowledge and expertise
- Available time
- Physical items you could donate
- Space or equipment you could share
- Networks and connections

Step 2: Clarify Your Interests

Consider causes that matter to you personally:

- What issues are you passionate about?
- What communities do you care about most?
- What kind of impact do you want to make?
- How do you enjoy contributing?

Step 3: Research Opportunities

Find organizations that could benefit from your contributions:

- Search volunteer matching websites like VolunteerMatch.org
- Contact local nonprofits in your areas of interest
- Ask schools, religious organizations, or community centers about needs
- Check with professional associations about pro bono opportunities
- Look for virtual volunteering platforms for remote options

Step 4: Start Small and Build

Begin with manageable commitments and expand as you're able:

- Try one-time or short-term opportunities to explore different ways of giving
- Be realistic about your availability and capacity
- Communicate clearly about what you can offer
- Ask for feedback to improve your contributions
- Look for ways to increase your impact over time

Step 5: Track and Reflect

Document your contributions and consider their impact:

- Keep a record of your volunteer hours, skills contributed, and in-kind donations
- Request documentation from organizations for scholarship or resume purposes
- Reflect on what you're learning and how you're growing through giving
- Assess which types of giving feel most meaningful and impactful to you
- Adjust your giving strategy based on your experiences