



Developing a Management Strategy to Achieve Optimal Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers for NPOs

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Executive Summary

Problem Statement

How can NPOS develop a volunteer management strategy to ensure a sustainable pipeline of strong candidates and retain capable volunteers?

Issue

Inefficient Program Structure & Operations

Inadequate Efforts to Build Volunteer Network

Insufficient Volunteer Growth Paths

Strategy

Volunteer Matching Program

Volunteer Engagement Program

Volunteer Empowerment Program

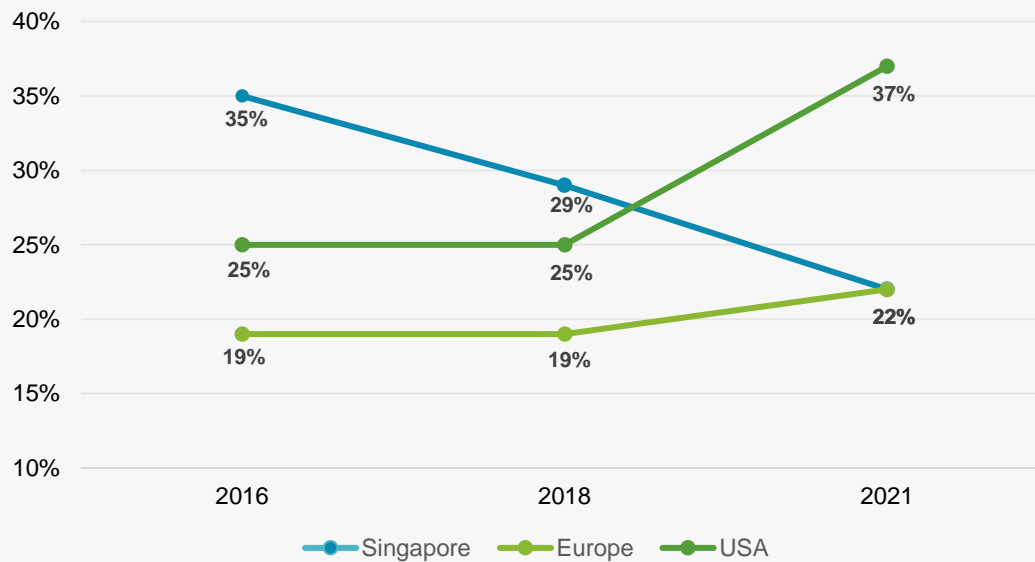
Impact

Improved Volunteer Recruitment

Increased Volunteer Retention

Declining volunteerism rates in Singapore calls for a strategy to recruit and retain more volunteers

Volunteerism Rates in Singapore, Europe, and the USA



- Volunteering rates increased overseas
- Conversely, volunteering rates are **decreasing** in Singapore

NPOs in Singapore face a lack of manpower

Uncertainty in manpower will affect:

- 1 Number of beneficiaries NPOs can help
- 2 Effectiveness of programmes carried out

To obtain the necessary manpower and skills for the operation of an NPO, Singapore NPOs will need to increase recruitment and improve retention of volunteers

Declining volunteering rates are attributed to volunteers' lack of time and volunteers' unmet needs

Reasons for the decrease in volunteer numbers

1



Lack of Skills

Volunteers feel that they do not possess the necessary skills to effectively help the beneficiaries

2



No Personal Growth

Volunteers feel that they are not learning anything valuable from the volunteering activities

3



Lack of Time

41% of volunteers cited an increase in work commitment as the main reason for ending their volunteering activities

4

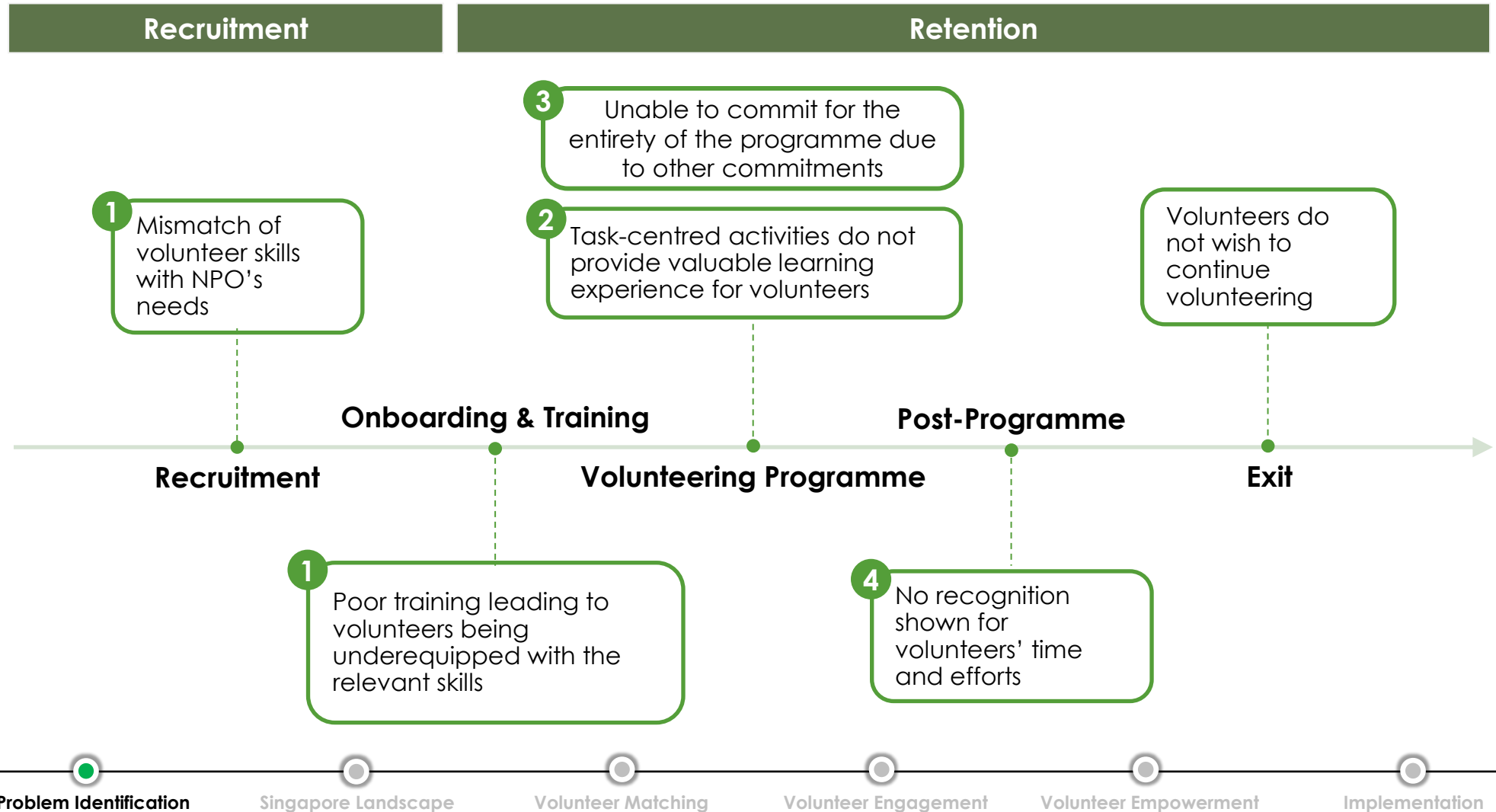


Lack of Recognition

Volunteers feel unappreciated by NPOs for the work that they have contributed

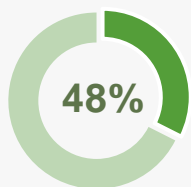
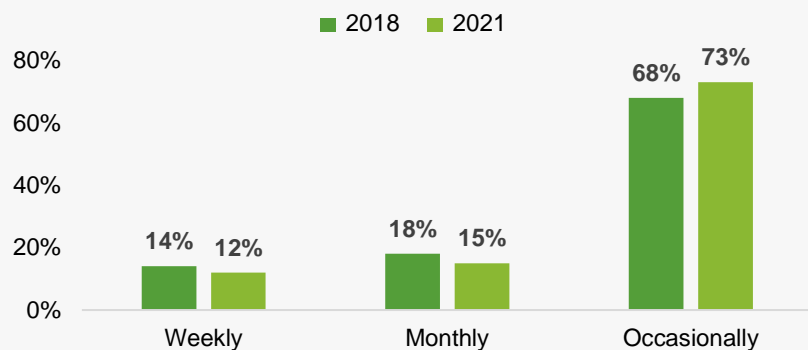
These are key barriers which NPOs need to address to improve recruitment and increase the retention of volunteers

Barriers to volunteering causes challenges in recruitment and retention throughout the volunteer journey



To increase volunteering rates, NPOs must adapt to volunteer preferences and make volunteering less time-consuming and more flexible

Frequency of Volunteering



of active volunteers **volunteered less** since Dorson Orange declaration

Insights

- There is an **increasing preference** for **occasional volunteering** due to the lack of time
- Volunteering activities thus need to be **less time-consuming**
- **Fewer individuals** are keen on volunteering due to **health and safety concerns**
- NPOs need to **alleviate these concerns** to increase volunteer numbers

NPOs have to adapt to the changing lifestyles and preferences of the public to increase their pool of volunteers

Volunteer Management Systems need to be adjusted for the changing preferences of volunteers and their needs

Emerging trends and needs in volunteer management

1

Incorporation of Virtual and Hybrid Volunteering

Pivoting towards engaging volunteers through online platforms

2

Leveraging Volunteering Data Management

Providing support for NPOs' strategic planning calls the need for data analysis for impact reporting

3

Matching Volunteers to Suitable Roles

Better alignment of volunteers' skills and interests to roles is needed to reduce turnover rates

4

Increase in Skills-based Volunteering

Increasing number of volunteers are keen to take on more responsibilities and skills-based volunteering

Volunteer Management Systems need to be re-evaluated and evolved to be more robust and efficient whilst adapting to technological advancements and changing volunteering trends



How we can rethink the way we manage volunteers

1

Matching Volunteers

Using a matching algorithm to match volunteer to suitable roles

2

Engaging Volunteers

Building a community between volunteers and NPOs

3

Empowering Volunteers

Developing volunteers' skills and increasing accessibility of volunteering

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By implementing an automated targeted matching algorithm, volunteer recruitment process can be improved

Automated Targeted Matching Algorithm

Description

- **Improper assignment** of volunteers to roles that they lack the necessary skills in
- **Increased retention and engagement** when volunteers are placed in roles that allow them to excel
- **Right talent alignment** can prove to be a **significant performance differentiator**

Case Studies



Prototyping an **AI-enabled Social Broker**

Shows that **experimentation with AI facilitated matching software** has begun



System matches medical students with residency programmes

Attained a **match rate of 87.7%** in 2021

An automated targeted matching algorithm helps NPOs match volunteer applicants to suitable roles

Implementing an Automated Matching Algorithm to NPOs

Key Resources

Manpower

- Software engineers
- UX/UI Designers
- Project Mangers

Financials

- Personnel Costs
- Technology Cost
- Maintenance and Upkeep Costs

Expertise

- Software Development
- Database Management
- Data analysis & interpretation

Execution of Program

Collect information about the organisation's volunteer opportunities & applicant's skills, interest, and availability via an online application form



Pre-processing data: cleans and format the data



Identify and match the applicant's skills and requirements for each position



Rank the best matches based on the level of fit between the applicant's skills and the requirements of the volunteer position

With an automated targeted matching algorithm, volunteer applicants would be matched to roles of their skill level. This can help address problems of recruitment and retention at the same time.

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To increase volunteer retention rates, NPOs should implement engagement-focused Volunteer Management Systems

Engagement-Focused Volunteer Management System

Description

- Shift focus of Volunteer Management from task-focused to **Volunteer Engagement** focused
- Create programmes so volunteers feel a **stronger sense of belonging recognised for their efforts** and **more likely to continue volunteering**

Case Studies



Holds annual Befriender Day for volunteers after understanding their volunteers through an annual online satisfaction survey

▶ **281% growth** in volunteer man-hours



Used social media to promote volunteers' work and featured their stories in the monthly corporate e-newsletter

▶ **10% rise** in overall volunteer satisfaction

Transitioning into an engagement-focused volunteer management approach strengthens volunteer retention for NPOs

Implement Engagement-focused Volunteer Management System to NPOs

Key Resources

Manpower

- Volunteer Managers
- Social Media Managers

Financials

- Allowance for volunteer welfare

Expertise

- Analyze & implement volunteer feedback

Execution of Program



Gather **feedback using VET** to understand how volunteers **want to be engaged**



Take action that best engages volunteers which may include:

- Pairing experienced volunteers with newer volunteers
- Planning get-together sessions
- Sharing volunteers' work on social media



Conduct survey at least once a year to see if **the needs of the volunteer pool has changed**

An engagement-focused volunteer management strategy promotes volunteer work-life happiness and encourages increased commitment towards volunteerism

Problem Identification

Singapore Landscape

Volunteer Matching

Volunteer Engagement

Volunteer Empowerment

Implementation

How we can rethink the way to manage volunteers

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By developing the skillsets of their volunteers, NPOs can create more valuable volunteering opportunities

Skills Expansion and Enhancement

Description

- Creates **more opportunities for skills-based volunteering**, which uses the expertise and knowledge of volunteers to contribute to the NPO
- Volunteers will **sharpen their existing skillset and learn new skills** from the NPO, the community and other volunteers

Case Studies



Launched a **platform** for volunteers, staff and community members to **exchange skills and knowledge**

Volunteer numbers doubled in 2 years

Problem Identification

Singapore Landscape

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Volunteer Engagement

Volunteer Empowerment

Implementation

NPOs need to support their volunteers and members of the community to maximise the impact of volunteers' skills development

Implementing skills development strategy to increase volunteer retention rates

Key Resources

Manpower

- Volunteer Managers
- Community Members
- Volunteers

Training Materials

- Leadership training
- Materials designed by volunteers and the community

Recruitment Platform

- Existing platforms used to reach out to the public

Execution



Provide leadership training for volunteers to lead volunteer programmes and training sessions





Aid volunteers in creating skills sharing session for other volunteers



Have members of the public come in to train volunteers relevant skills in their area of expertise

Volunteers have an increased sense of fulfilment and would continue to volunteer with the NPO for a longer period of time

Skills-based volunteering can also be done virtually, which offers the flexibility of time and location for volunteers

Virtual Volunteering	
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct skills-based volunteering activities, such as tutoring and home-based gardening, over Zoom• Reduces time commitment of volunteering
Case Studies	<div><div><div>①</div><div></div><div>▶</div><div>Shifted tuition classes and other programs to an online mode</div><div>▶</div><div>41% increase in volunteers after 1 year</div></div><div><div>②</div><div></div><div>▶</div><div>Conducted virtual workshops for migrant workers</div><div>▶</div><div>Saw a “considerable increase” in volunteers</div></div></div>

NPOs need to carefully communicate with volunteers and beneficiaries to ensure successful execution of virtual volunteering

Implementing virtual volunteering to increase volunteer retention rates

Key Resources

Manpower

- Volunteer managers
- Volunteers

Materials

- Training for volunteers
- New guidelines

Virtual Platform

- Zoom

Execution



Have a data collection process for information such as reporting volunteer hours and volunteer sign-ups



Train volunteers to conduct activities and communicate with beneficiaries effectively on a virtual platform



Perform monthly check-ins with volunteers and beneficiaries to ensure engagement and effectiveness of virtual sessions

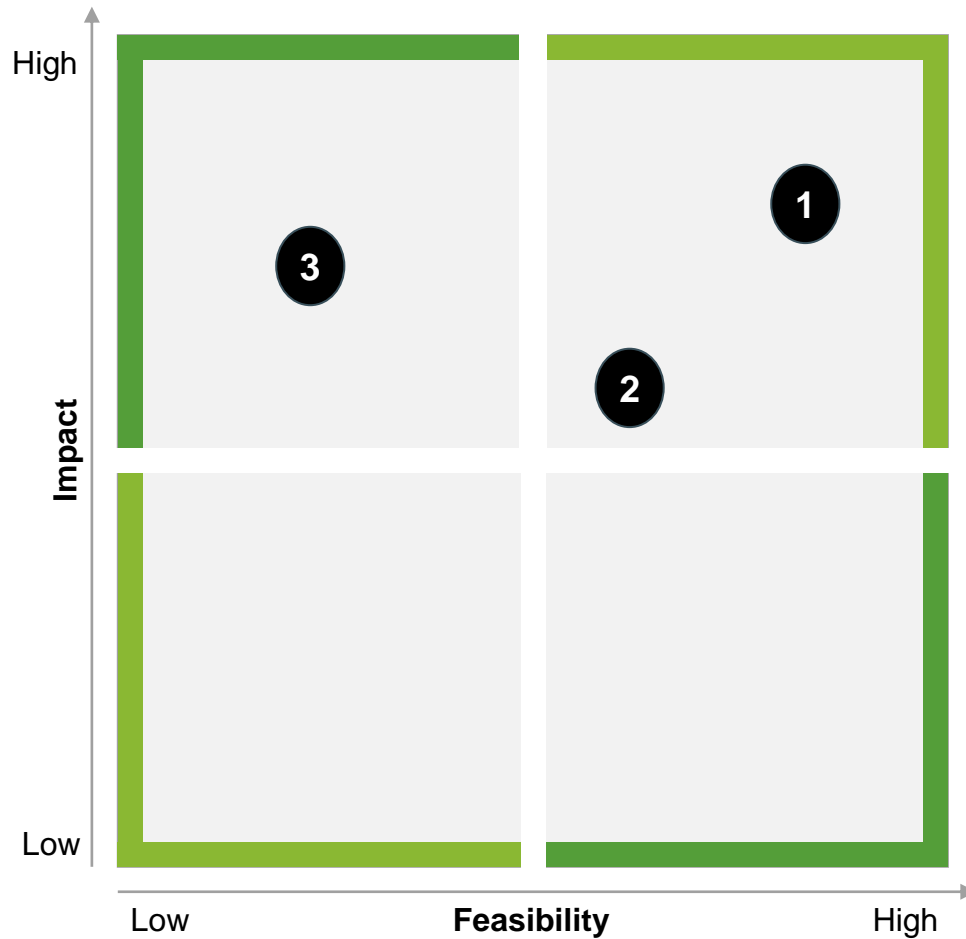
Volunteering is better integrated into the lifestyles of volunteers and allows volunteers to continue volunteering

The success of proposed recommendations depends on NPO’s capacity and willingness to invest into the organisation

	Resources to Source	Resources Readily Available
1 Volunteer Matching Program	AI Matching Program Human Capital Management	Online Recruitment Platform
2 Volunteer Engagement Program	Skilled volunteer managers Social Media Manager	VET VMFS
3 Volunteer Empowerment Program	Enrichment Educators Development Expertise	Online Meeting Platform Introductory Training Materials

NPOs have to invest time and capital to acquire additional resources that they do not already own

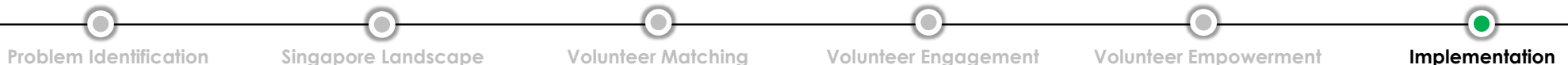
Volunteer Engagement should be prioritised before the implementation of other programs to increase the success of new programs



Prioritization of Program Implementation

- 1 Volunteer Engagement Program
- 2 Volunteer Empowerment Program
- 3 Volunteer Matching Program

- + Engaging volunteers elevates volunteer retention which ensures longevity of volunteerism
- + Increases the effectiveness of other introduced programs



Implementation timeline will outline the recommendations' milestone

Recommendations	Year 1				Year 2
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Automated Targeted Matching Algorithm			Source and train the algorithm		Launch algorithm Review and Improve
Engagement-Focused VMS	Send out survey	Plan and execute engagement activity/activities		Get feedback and improve activities	Send out survey
Skills Development		Prepare leadership training materials	Train volunteers	Review and improve	Recruit enrichment educators
Virtual Volunteering			Prepare data collection process	Prepare training materials	Inform beneficiaries Train volunteers
					Conduct activities and gather feedback





Thank You

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