

# Creating Sustainability Through the Power of Volunteers

For Funders

## Did You Know?

**Volunteers are vital to meeting the needs of our communities.**

Millions of people nationwide have the energy and desire to help, and research shows that organizations embracing strategic volunteer engagement (SVE) are significantly more adaptable, sustainable and capable of going to scale.

*(Source: TCC Group, Positive Deviants' in Volunteerism and Service: Research summary)*

***“Effective volunteer engagement has been shown to reap up to a \$6 return on every dollar invested, when considering the financial value of volunteer involvement.”***

*(Source: Points of Light Blog, [Where Should Nonprofits Use Volunteers? Everywhere.](#))*

**Yet, only a small percentage of organizations are prepared to integrate volunteers strategically.**

- Volunteer engagement professionals frequently are not considered essential leadership team members
- Operations tend to be isolated from other organizational functions
- Volunteer engagement is not considered a funding priority.

**That's why advancing volunteer engagement is essential.**

*Turn the page and learn how you can make a difference.*



*We're driving the conversation and encouraging support for organization-wide engagement strategies.*

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## Invest in Impact!

# Steps to help build grantees' capacity to achieve mission:

**Encourage** grantees to include a budget line item to fund a volunteer engagement professional (VEP), volunteer resources management technology and software and volunteer engagement training and coaching for staff.

**Ask** potential grantees about volunteer engagement successes and challenges during site visits and in grant applications and evaluations. Ask about capacity:

- How does the organization determine the best way to involve volunteers in meeting its mission?
- Does the organization have a dedicated, qualified VEP?
- Do staff members work closely with volunteers? If so, what type of staff training is provided?
- How are volunteers trained for their roles and about the organization as a whole?
- How are volunteers recognized for their contributions?
- How does the organization track and communicate volunteer impact?
- How do volunteers support project goals and drive organizational impact?

**Convene** other grant makers and nonprofits for dialogue about volunteer engagement strategies and best practices. Explore how you can enhance your grantees' volunteer engagement strategies.

**Highlight** the advantages of a strong culture of volunteer engagement to executive leadership and boards. Share data and research demonstrating how strategic volunteer engagement enhances organizational sustainability and strengthens communities.

**Support** grantee organizations in becoming a certified Service Enterprise or fund their VEP in becoming a Certified Volunteer Administrator. Provide scholarships for professional development, training and networking opportunities for staff and volunteer leaders.