

NHS Volunteering find and apply service Recruiter engagement event September 2025

Jack McCluskey & Sharon Battersby
Stakeholder Engagement Leads (NHSBSA)
nhsvolunteeringengagement@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

Agenda

- Welcome
- Recently on NHS Volunteering
- User research findings (volunteers)
- Over to you
- Thanks and close

Latest news

NHS Volunteering news

- Recent releases:
 - Maximum number of locations (10)
 - Recommendations from the DAC audit
 - [What's New in WCAG 2.2 | Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\) | W3C](#)
 - Bug fixes (logo and case for organisation names)
- Ministerial announcement
 - [The NHS needs you: Strengthening's volunteer army to play board games with patients](#)
(inews)

User research insights: Volunteers

Katharine Johnson
Lead User Researcher

How we do research with users

We want to make sure we're continually improving the service for all our users

- Speaking to those who use our service to identifying any challenges they face
- Observing them using the service to identify what doesn't work as expected
- Gathering feedback through surveys so we can understand how many people experience a problem
- Showing new ideas to them for feedback before making changes to the service

We've spoken to 24
volunteers over the
last 6 months

We've spoken to 9
volunteer recruiters
over the last 6
months

Insights about the NHS Volunteering Service

**Users feel the service
needs to be more
engaging, especially the
homepage**

*'It shouldn't feel like this, it
should be friendlier and
more inviting given the
topic.'*

They said, we did

Based on the feedback we've received from users, we are making the following improvements to our service:

- Updating the homepage to be more engaging by including images
- Looking to add additional content into the service to give more context to what volunteering in the NHS is like

We think this will:

- Help users engage with the website better and find useful content which accurately reflects what volunteering within the health sector is like

**When Trust website links
present no volunteering
opportunities, users think
the service is 'out of date'**

*'There was a link and
when I opened it, it was
not working (no roles). I
feel like the link was
expired.'*

They said, we did

Based on the feedback we've received from users, we are making the following improvements to our service:

- Remove the Trust website links from the search results, so only roles which are directly posted onto NHSV will appear

We think this will:

- Allow users to easily find a live volunteering role using the service
- Greater prominence to roles which are being posted onto the service by organisations

Users struggle to find remote roles which they can do from home

'There was no role available in my local area, but I could do something remote.'

They said, we did

Based on the feedback we've received from users, we are making the following improvements to our service:

- Introducing a **'from home'** filter option, which allows users to easily find remote roles

We think this will:

- Make it easier for users to find roles which they can do remotely, especially when there are no roles in their local area available
- Support those who are unable to travel to find a volunteering opportunity

Users feel that parts of the application process feel like a job application

'When it asks what would make you good and what experience do you bring, it feels a bit like an interview question.'

They said, we did

Based on the feedback we've received from users, we are making the following improvements to our service:

- Making content changes to the NHSV application form, so it reads more user friendly and is less intimidating to those applying to volunteer

We think this will:

- Encourage users to tell us about any relevant skills or experience they have when applying for a volunteering role
- Not be deterred if they don't have any experience directly related to the opportunity

**Users generally find the
NHS Volunteering
application form easy to
complete**

*'The form was easy to
fill in. Not
complicated.'*

**Insights about what happens post-
application**

**Users expect an
application process
which differs from that
of paid staff**

*'It was very much like I
was applying for a
paid role.'*

Users struggle to complete application forms which are not accessible online

'The issue is I had to download the form to my laptop.'

**Consistent
communication
throughout the post-
application process is
important**

*'Felt like I was having
to chase the whole
time.'*

**Unsuccessful applicants
who are not informed the
outcome of their
application have a poor
experience**

*'It's been 4 weeks now
and they didn't
contact me back.'*

Users are surprised by how long it takes to start a volunteering role after applying

'I would expect to start quite quickly. Usually you start straightaway, they're keen for you to start as soon as you can.'

Over to you

Challenges, questions, suggestions

- Lots of knowledge and experience in the room
- Cross section of organisations across NHS and VCSE sector
- Opportunity to pool knowledge, ask questions etc.

Help support us with our research

We're always looking for people to carry out research with, especially those who have used the NHS Volunteering service to find a volunteering opportunity.

- The link will allow individuals to sign up to our volunteering research panel
- They will be contacted and provided information about what the research entails
- They can decide whether they want to take part or not
- They will be compensated for their time

https://online1.snapsurveys.com/NHSVolunteering_Research_SignUp

Help and guidance



Knowledge base:

<https://nhsbsa-live.powerappsportals.com/knowledgebase/category/?articlecategory=NHS%20Volunteering&id=CAT-05626&parentid=>



Help and support for recruiters:

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/help-and-support-recruiters



Help and support for volunteers:

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/help-and-support-volunteers



NHS Volunteering website:

<https://volunteering.england.nhs.uk/volunteer>

Thank you

nhsvolunteeringengagement@nhsbsa.nhs.uk



www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk



[@NHSBSA](https://twitter.com/NHSBSA)



NHS Business Services Authority