

## Student Led Projects

Volunteering is any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit others or the environment.

If you like the idea of volunteering you might like to consider running your own volunteering project. This would be a fantastic way to gain and develop a huge range of skills and to use some of the skills and experience you may already have. You don't need to have any previous experience in project planning to do something awesome that will have a positive impact on other people.

### Examples of previous Student Led Projects

- Community I.T Sessions – students wanted to give elderly local residents an opportunity to learn how to use a computer and planned basic I.T sessions where volunteers provided participants with one to one assistance.
- Community Art Sessions – volunteers from the art courses in Carlisle ran free art classes where they invited local people on to campus and taught them different things every week such as photography and how to paint and draw. Although no previous teaching experience they were able to use a number of exercises and activities they had learnt on their courses to help the local residents

### Why create your own student led project?

- The volunteering you'd like to do might not be offered anywhere so this is an opportunity to create something that meets your needs and aspirations.
- You can shape it so that when and how you volunteer fits in with you and your lifestyle, for example you could run your project on a Wednesday afternoon because you know that is when you have the most time available in the week.
- It will make you stand out – wouldn't it be a brilliant example on your CV of something different you've done during your time at Uni?

### Steps to setting up your volunteering project

1. Your ideas – what would you like to do/ what do you want to change?
2. Recruit volunteers who share your ideas/vision (UCSU can help with recruitment)  
Remember that people have different reasons/ motivations for volunteering and it's important to think about these when looking at how you might involve volunteers. For example, if the main motivation for someone is to develop presentation skills then that might be an area that they take responsibility for.
3. Who will your project benefit? Who are you targeting?
4. What do you want to achieve? (Aims)
5. How are you going to achieve this? (Objectives)  
Be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time bound.
6. Write your project plan: All the things that need to get done to make your project a success. Write down who will do what and when they will do it. Some of the activities you might want to include are:
  - Complete Risk Assessment (this will need to be signed off by UCSU before the project can go ahead)

- If your project involves assisting children, young people and/or vulnerable adults on a regular basis then all volunteers will require a DBS check (formerly known as a CRB). DBS checks that have been made as part of a student's course for the University will be sufficient. Project leaders will need to liaise with Kati or Emma (UCSU)
- Choose dates/times for the project to run
- Book venue/room (UCSU can do this on your behalf if you let us know the details)
- Attend UCSU training , such as presentation skills, communication skills and leadership skills (UCSU can run specific training based on your needs so let us know what training you would like)
- Meet with local organisations who you may want to link in with
- How will you get people involved? (leaflet drop, posters in the area, etc)
- What resources do you need?
- Evaluation - how will you measure your projects success? E.g recording participant numbers, questionnaires
- How can you make the project sustainable? When you've left Uni, how will you make sure it continues to run?