

Volunteer Recruitment and Escalation Guide

To make the future we want a reality, we need everyone in this movement. Building a team of people who bring their unique talents and experiences to the table is key to accomplishing our goals. Organizing a campus is hard work, especially in a virtual capacity, and it's nearly impossible (and way less fun) to do alone. A solid team prevents burnout and allows you to get multiple things done at once -- one person could be training volunteers to phone bank while a few others are co-hosting a virtual letter writing event. To build a stellar volunteer team, you need to recruit interested individuals and train them to become leaders.

Volunteer Recruitment Tips

- **Start with a low-lift ask:** Make sure a prospective volunteer's first experience is easy and fun! This way they're more likely to come back.
 - Examples of good first asks:
 - Invite them to a virtual kick-off meeting or watch party
 - Send them a code to download the Reach app and explain how it works
 - Have them help you post on social media/invite people to your event
- **Tell a personal story:** When you're explaining why they should get involved, tell them about a reason you think this work matters.
 - Why are you organizing the youth vote at your school? Take some time to think about this and practice telling a friend about it.
- **Listen to what matters to them:** We know that the political is personal, and students are affected by the decisions that our government makes every day. If someone isn't sure their work will matter, ask them to tell you about what they care about.
 - Young people connect to so many issues. Here are some common ones:
 - Health care
 - Racial equity
 - LGBTQ+ rights
 - Access to abortion
 - Women's rights
 - Student debt and the cost of college
- **Use your "hard ask" skills:** Make sure you're being confident and direct when you ask someone to get involved. Check out the [Hard Ask Guide](#) for more information.

Volunteer Escalation Tips

What does “volunteer escalation” mean?

As an organizer, one of your goals is to train volunteers and build their organizing skills. As you do so, you should gradually give them more responsibility and build them into a leader on your team.

- **Give positive feedback:** If you're hoping to escalate a volunteer to a leadership position, they're probably doing a great job! Make sure you express how much you appreciate their work and talk about why their contributions have been meaningful. Thanking volunteers is incredibly important -- make sure they feel appreciated.
- **Identify their strengths:** Think about what this volunteer has done particularly well. Are they awesome at talking to people online? Do they know exactly how to recruit other volunteers? Do you trust them to lead a virtual event? Identify what leadership role you'd like to ask them to take before approaching them.
- **Make the ask:** Explain what you're looking for in this leadership role and ask them if they would be interested in taking it. Make sure to incorporate the positive feedback in your ask! Tell them why you think they're right for the role and how helpful it will be for your team.
- **Ask for a commitment:** Be clear about what this role will entail. How much time per week would they spend volunteering? What will you depend on them to do?
- **Train them up:** Providing training, tools, and clear goals is an important part of supporting new leadership. Make sure you have a plan to make your new leadership as successful as possible.

Building a Team

Why is having a team important?

- **More fun:** Doing work with people who care about this work always feels good
- **More committed:** It's easier to get people to commit when others are doing the same
- **More effective:** Organizing is hard work! A big, strong team will get more done
- **Shared responsibility:** Working to accomplish shared goals helps with accountability and prevents burnout

Example team roles

- Virtual Phone Bank Lead
- Virtual Letter Writing Lead
- Volunteer Recruitment Lead
- Volunteer Training Lead
- Social Media Lead
- Clubs/Partnerships Lead

Key Questions

1. Are you recruiting general volunteers, or a person for a specific type of task?

- The more specific the ask, the more likely the yes
- Think through the work you need done

2. How do you follow up with new sign ups from an event?

- Remember: If you added and tagged your virtual event attendees in Reach, you can send them a message all at once
- Send a text after the event (that night or the next day at the latest)
 - Thank them for joining
 - Make a hard ask to get them involved
- In your follow-up, refer to the virtual event that they attended in your “why”
 - Example: “After watching the debate, I’m sure you’re as fired up as I am to elect Democrats this November. We’ll be calling voters next week so that people know where and how to vote. Can I count on you to help?”
- No reply? Be persistent!
 - We all forget to reply to texts sometimes. If it’s been a week and you still haven’t heard from one of your sign-ups, send them a quick follow-up with another ask