



Your *Virtual* Volunteering Guide

Engage your people with a whole new world of volunteer opportunities

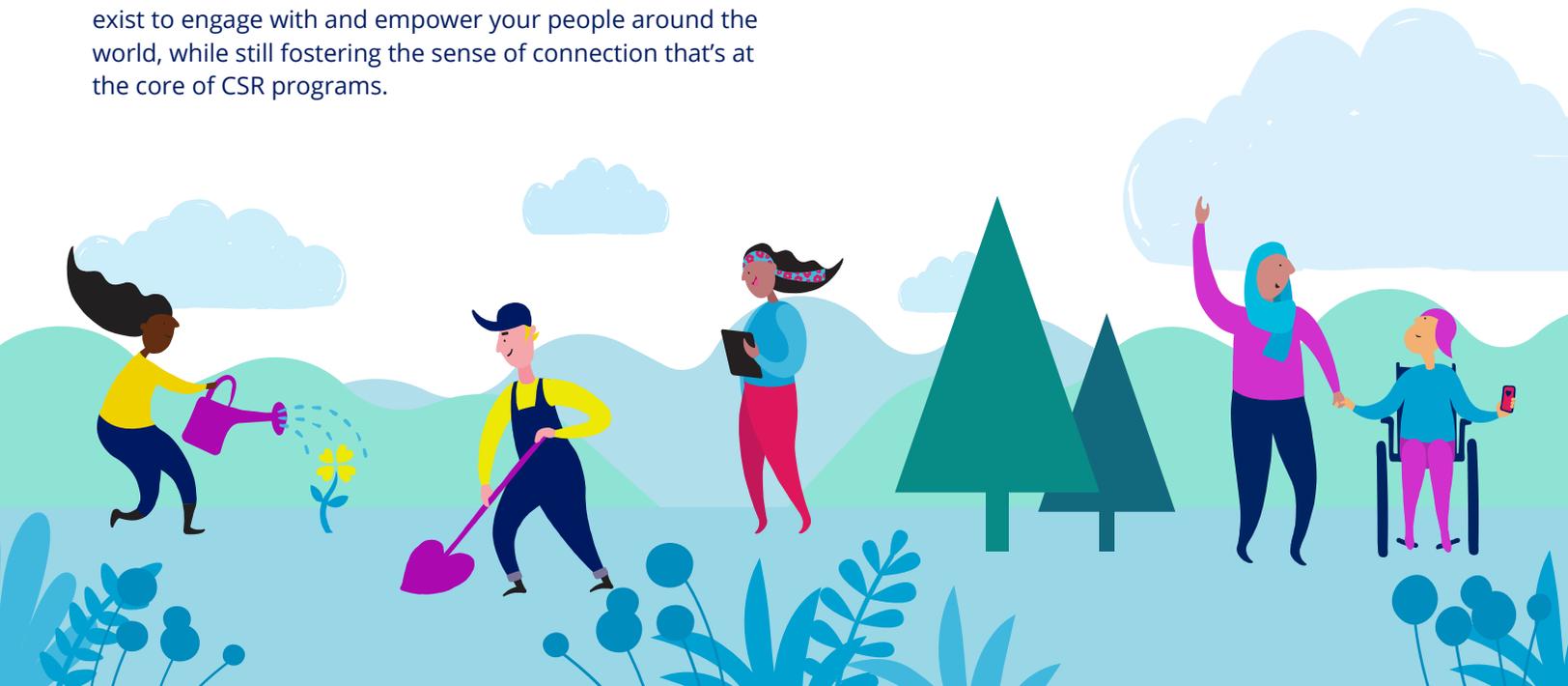
Virtual volunteering was once thought of as something you did at home in front of your computer. That definition has changed over the past few years, as companies seeking to engage their remote teams reimagined their volunteering approach. Virtual volunteering has now expanded to encompass meaningful actions — both big and small — completed not only digitally, but also out in the world.

With remote work here to stay, you may face challenges engaging your employees across the world in your volunteering program. Enter virtual volunteering! It's a unique opportunity to adapt your volunteering approach and usher in a new way of thinking about what it means to volunteer. Countless virtual and remote opportunities exist to engage with and empower your people around the world, while still fostering the sense of connection that's at the core of CSR programs.

*So, how do you get started?
We're here to help!*

In this guide, we cover:

- ✓ Program design and strategy insights for your virtual volunteering program
- ✓ Tips and resources to build your virtual volunteering library
- ✓ Communications templates to help you launch and amplify your efforts and activate your people



Designing Your *Virtual Volunteering Program*

Here are a few key strategies you can use to drive engagement with your people and amplify the impact of your virtual volunteering program. Let's go!

1. Define what virtual volunteering looks like for your company

Virtual volunteering can take many forms, including skills-based, micro-volunteering or small acts of kindness. Think about your teams and people, your industry and business context, and your company culture — what kinds of skills or activities would work well? Consider also working with your nonprofit partners to figure out how your people can help them virtually.



Tip

Benevity's platform makes it simple to set up Acts of Goodness. When creating new opportunities, don't add an end date and select "this opportunity has no location or is remote." There's no need to attach a cause. Just write "Acts of Goodness volunteering" as the shift name and get started!

2. Encourage small Acts of Goodness

Look for ways you can tweak your program guidelines to include and reward small acts of community service. Activities as simple as buying groceries for a senior or walking a single parent's dog while they watch their kids can have a huge impact. You can amplify that impact by allowing your people to track their time and receive volunteer rewards for their kind acts.



Did you know?

Volunteering and donating go hand in hand! Benevity's client data shows that among employees who volunteer,

70%

also give money and their donation amount is twice as much as non-volunteers.

ciena.

Ciena's pandemic pivot

Ciena, a global networking systems, services and software company, used COVID-19 as a catalyst for change. The company pivoted to remove the cap on volunteer hours matching, introduced volunteer time off (VTO) during company time, opened up the definition of volunteering to include acts of kindness and added a 3:1 match for a digital inclusion program to provide connectivity and technology to underserved people.

These decisions contributed to an exponential year-over-year increase in volunteering, with a **95% increase in hours volunteered** and a **367% increase in volunteering rewards** awarded!

Designing Your Virtual Volunteering Program cont'd.

3. Offer more (and more relevant) choice

One of the biggest challenges in engaging your people is providing opportunities that are relevant and easy for them to get involved in. There are a couple of ways you can increase the breadth of volunteer opportunities without increasing your workload:

- Open cause-created content: Allow your nonprofit partners to publish content and opportunities directly to your volunteering program's site.
- Encourage user-generated content: Your people will be more likely to get involved if there are relevant opportunities that mean something to them, so allow them to create their own volunteer opportunities to share with their peers.



Tip

Use Benevity's automated time tracking feature so your people can easily track their time. This feature allows you to seamlessly capture and accurately report on your program's impact and engagement without additional manual work.

How many hours and minutes did you volunteer?

1 30
HOURS MINUTES

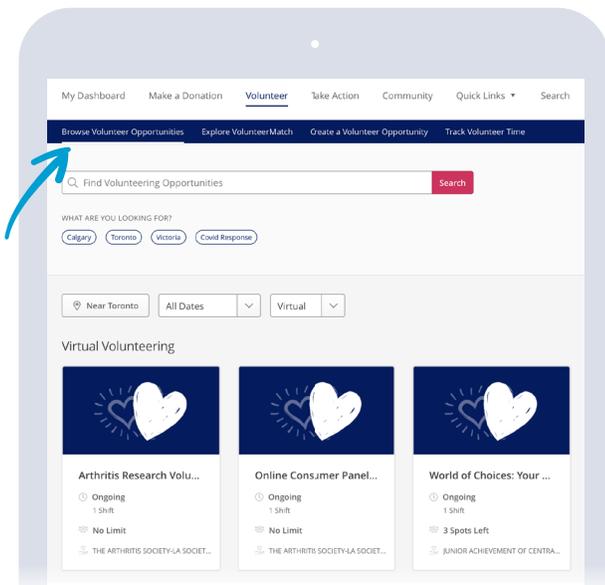
When did you volunteer?
to

Choose your volunteer rewards
 Donation Currency
 No Reward



Tip

Benevity's platform makes it easy to search and discover virtual opportunities! You can find them in the top carousel on the Browse Volunteer Opportunities tab.



Atlassian's take on virtual volunteering

In 2020, Atlassian, a global technology and software company, began offering weekly Do Good Happy Hours. Volunteers met online, participated in a deep dive with a new nonprofit and completed a small activity, such as card-making, calling a senior or coaching students for job interviews.

The lower time commitment and ability for employees in different time zones to participate led to **higher engagement than in-person** volunteering! Based on these results, the team transitioned to quarterly campaigns involving fundraising, global volunteer activation and a virtual global week of good.

Building Your **Virtual Volunteering Library**

Creating your own library of virtual volunteering opportunities that are relevant to your business, people and local communities will help you engage your employees in a meaningful way. And it doesn't have to be a huge job! To help you get started, we've created some templates and resources. We also recommend you tap into the passion, ingenuity and ideas of your people to cocreate virtual ways to help their neighbors, coworkers and communities.

1. Publish your own virtual opportunities

Access our [Virtual Volunteering resource page](#), which houses content kits and community discussion forums so you can learn tips and tricks from your peers on how to build your virtual volunteering program. Download our curated (and growing!) list of virtual volunteering ideas and resources focused on themes of health and well-being, education, civic engagement, disaster relief and many more. Use these ideas to easily create your own virtual volunteering opportunities on your program's site. From helping low-vision individuals with daily tasks to joining forums for racial equity, the options are endless!

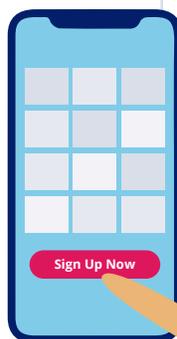
2. Involve your program ambassadors

If your program spans multiple cities or countries, local program ambassadors can help you identify and create relevant opportunities within their communities. Encourage your ambassadors to connect with local nonprofits to see how you can match your people's skills and experiences with the nonprofits' needs through virtual opportunities.



Tip

Benevity's mobile app makes volunteering easy and accessible for your people. They can discover and sign up for opportunities, log volunteer hours and keep track of positive actions in real time. They can even upload and share photos to make their volunteer experience more social! Benevity's app is available to download for free for both iOS and Android.



Tip

Recognize your people for doing good. When you commend your employees with volunteer rewards and in-kind donations, they can donate back to causes they care about and continue spreading Goodness.

3. Cocreate an Acts of Goodness directory with your people

Get your people involved in the creation of your virtual volunteering program by asking them to share ways they're already doing good in their communities. Then compile a list of relevant Acts of Goodness and create virtual events or volunteer opportunities to rally everyone to make a difference together.



Increase participation and create inclusive, accessible programming by working with employee resource groups that are already engaging coworkers. Encourage employees to track their volunteer time and share their progress and results so they can see the collective impact they're making, one small act at a time.

Communications Templates

To ensure that both your people and nonprofit partners are aware of your virtual volunteering opportunities, it's important to communicate, communicate, communicate. Set up a channel for your people to provide input and feedback, whether it's an internal instant messaging channel or another platform. Different communities and nonprofits will have different needs, and your employees may be able to provide important local insights. When you're ready to launch, work closely with your marketing and communications team to help spread the word.

Here are a few communications templates to get you started:

Copy and paste for your own use:



Employee intranet message

Working remotely? We're excited to let you know about changes in our volunteering program that will help you make an impact — through virtual, remote and skills-based volunteer opportunities. Give back and make a difference, from wherever you are, whenever you can.

Check out the opportunities on our giving site:

[Link to news item or giving site login]



Program relaunch email

Subject:

Introducing Our New Virtual Volunteering Program!

Body:

We're living in a new world of remote and hybrid work, where we want to make a difference, but can't always get together to do it. So, we've designed a new program for you to participate in that allows you to make an impact in our communities across the *[globe/country]* through virtual and remote volunteering.

Here are the exciting changes we've made:

[Detail changes here. For example:]

- Check out all the new virtual volunteering opportunities available:
[Link to giving site, news article or direct to a volunteer opportunity]
- You can now be rewarded for small Acts of Goodness you do in your community:
[include hourly/flat rate rewards and examples of Acts of Goodness]
- New nonprofits we're supporting:
[Link to nonprofit profiles or news article]

Communications Templates cont'd.

Invitation to nonprofit partners

Subject:

[Your Company Name] Volunteering Program Updates

Body:

Remote work is here to stay for many of our employees, creating an opportunity for *[your company name]* to shift our volunteering approach. Virtual volunteering has opened the door to a whole new way of thinking about what it means to volunteer.

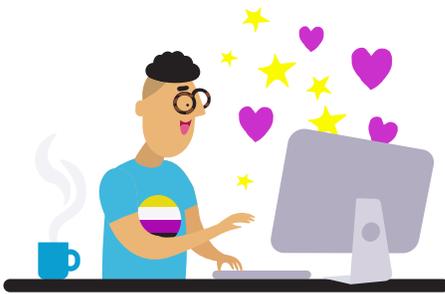
[Your company name] is dedicated to providing continued support to your organization, so you can keep moving the needle on social issues facing our community. So we're reaching out to encourage you to allow us and our people to continue to support you — virtually! We want to get creative and help you from a distance, however we can.

[Information about how your volunteering program is changing, if applicable]

Here's how you can use Benevity's platform to create a virtual volunteering opportunity with *[your company name]*:

1. Register or sign in to your profile on the [Benevity Causes Portal](#).
2. Click the Create New Volunteer Opportunity button.
3. Fill out the required fields marked with a red asterisk.
4. Outline the tasks volunteers will be involved in under the Opportunity Description.
5. Tag the opportunity as #virtual or #remote. This is what we will use to filter volunteer opportunities.
6. Ensure Published is checked and click Save.

Thank you for all you do!



Whether you're starting your volunteering program or you're looking to scale your existing initiatives, Benevity is your *trusted partner* for the journey.

[Book a Demo](#)



Benevity, a certified B Corporation, is a leader in global corporate purpose software, providing the only integrated suite of community investment and employee, customer and nonprofit engagement solutions. Recognized as one of Fortune's Impact 20, Benevity offers cloud solutions that power purpose for many iconic brands in ways that better attract, retain and engage today's diverse workforce, embed social action into their customer experiences and positively impact their communities. With software that is available in 22 languages, Benevity has processed more than \$8 billion in donations and 43 million hours of volunteering time to support 326,000 nonprofits worldwide. The company's solutions have also facilitated 530,000 positive actions and awarded 1.2 million grants worth \$12 billion. For more information, visit [benevity.com](https://www.benevity.com).