# Writing Volunteer Role Descriptions: Top Tips

# The Importance of Volunteer Role Descriptions

# Making sure volunteers understand the kind of opportunities available to them

# Making sure you understand the scope of their roles

# Allows us to outline a range of interesting opportunities to encourage volunteers to work with us

# First Steps

# Spend some time thinking about the roles you actually want – what does your organisation need right now?

# Think about the volunteering landscape at the moment – what can you offer that will be of interest to a volunteer?

# Inclusive Communication

# Around 1 in 7 people in the UK are neurodiverse (Local Government Association: <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Neurodiversity%20Slides%20200920.pdf> )

# Therefore, we should aim to provide a clear, accessible role description.

# How can we do this?

# Some qualities of accessible language include,

# Active voice (“The dog bit me”) instead of passive voice (“I was bitten by the dog”).

# Eliminating filler phrases such as “I think that” or “Be sure to.”

# Writing out the full names of acronyms, usually at least the first time they appear.

# Using examples and analogies to explain or support complicated ideas.

# Avoiding the use of jargon and slang words that are used only by a particular subgroup, or explaining their definition when they appear.

# 

# This does not mean we should oversimplify or patronise but simply edit and reexamine our language and how we use it e.g.,

# Standardised English: “According to many definitions, a disability is an impairment that may be cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory, or some combination of these.”

# Simple English: “A disability is a condition that a person has which limits them in some way.”

# For volunteer role descriptions, this might involve gathering testimonies from previous volunteers about the role or offer simple scenarios of what the role might look like for the potential volunteer.

# Selling Your Organisation

# It’s great to sell your vision to inspire people to support your work; this might involve gathering examples of previous projects volunteers have helped us to with to highlight the importance of having that extra help.

# Think about the role: does it sound interesting? Would you apply?

# Highlight how you can support the volunteer in a way other organisations might be unable to do e.g., Staff Away Days, Training, a large supply of biscuits.

# Other Tips/Tricks

# Think of a great title for your role – but keep it short.

# Involve the volunteer: use direct address (‘you’) to engage their interest

# Put important information at the start of the opportunity description

# Use short sentences and short paragraphs

# Keep the word count down

# Explain the demographics of your service users: who will volunteers be helping and the difference they make