



The Referral Process

Here is what happens after you post a volunteer role on our website – through your member login.

Volunteering Waikato – Te Ohu Tuuao o Waikato is the leading volunteer centre for the Waikato, and having a role on our website gets you in front of the thousands of volunteers around our region who visit our website each year.

Posting a role on our website helps to get your call for volunteers in front of as many potential volunteers as possible.

Our website connects interested volunteers directly to you – and here is what happens:

1. You have created a new role or reactivated an old role through your Volunteering Waikato member login in 'Connect', a system designed especially for volunteer centres in Aotearoa.
2. The role comes through to Volunteering Waikato staff for us to accept and publish live to our website.
- If we feel there are any edits needed, we will let you know, or we will make them ourselves. Let us know if you have a preference.
3. The role is published to our website and sits at the top of our 'Current Positions' list.
4. We put all new roles in our bi-weekly newsletter, 'Involved', that goes out to more than 3000 volunteers around the region.
5. Now we wait for referrals to come through!

What is a referral?

6. A 'referral' is a potential volunteer, who has found your role on our website and is registering their interest to apply – it is not a full application, and we are not involved in the rest of your recruitment process, our aim is to get as many decent referrals through to you as possible.
- A referral enters their name, contact number, email address, and town/location, directly to your role.
7. The contact information for a referral will be sent via email to the designated email address you have attached to the role – the referral will also be sent a confirmation email with your contact information.
8. **This is your trigger to get in touch as soon as possible with the referral!**
9. Once a referral has come through, you will need to initiate the rest of your recruitment process. We can offer advice and support on what could work, but many organisations will have an existing process to follow.

Our main suggestion here is, get in touch ASAP! People tend to lose interest if they don't hear from you within a week. If this is not possible for you, make sure you state in your role description when someone can expect to hear from you and how.

10. While you are following a recruitment process for each referral, you can update the status of their application in Connect, for example, if the volunteer has been 'declined' or they are 'awaiting training'. This is helpful to keep track of where all your referrals are at, especially if you don't have your own CRM system and/or have multiple staff with logins. It is also helpful for us to see that the role post is working.
11. Once you've had enough referrals come through or you've placed someone, you can deactivate the role – this takes it down from our website, but you will still see the referrals through your Connect login. Roles can be reactivated at any time, but all referral information will disappear after 6 months for privacy of information.
12. After you've followed your recruitment process, hopefully you've found some great new volunteers for your Kaupapa!

What to do if there's not as many referrals coming through as you'd like:

- **You can check the statistics of your role through Connect.** This shows you how many views, referrals, and placements etc, are coming through each month.
- **If there are a lot of views, but not many referrals** – this can mean that people reading your role either don't understand the role enough or don't feel it suits them. We usually suggest rewriting parts of your role to be as descriptive as possible and we can help with this.
- **If there are not many views at all** – we can advertise your role on social media, in our newsletter again, or put it back to the top of our website page. We can also suggest some edits to make it sound more engaging and enticing.
- **Having a role up on our website is not a guarantee** that you will find volunteers, and there are some roles that may be difficult to fill for several reasons that we can't always predict. If you want to discuss this further, about how to accommodate to the current trends in volunteering, get in touch with your Advisor – we are constantly engaging in research and discussion around the state of volunteering and can offer advice, support, and guidance in this area, specific to your Kaupapa.
- **What to do if the referrals coming through are not suitable for your role:**
This can be a tricky one, and the first step is to define why you don't think they are suitable. Most of the time, there are legitimate reasons why a referral does not suit what you're looking for, such as skills, availability, being able to pass an MOJ check, etc., but sometimes there are unconscious biases we have when all we see is a name and their contact information.
- Our advice here, is to make sure your role is written well and clearly depicts what a volunteer will be doing and what requirements you have for your volunteers. We also suggest having a strong initial contact method and strategy, to ensure that anyone you are processing is a decent candidate. It

can seem like a lot of work to contact each referral individually but having an initial phone/email conversation is a great way to find out if they may be a good fit before you spend more time investing in the recruitment process. If you don't already have a process in place, we can give suggestions here too.

- It's also worth looking at any potential unnecessary barriers we may have in role descriptions or recruitment processes, that could be hindering decent candidates – again, chat to us about what your options are here.
- **Recruitment is about the funnel** – how many initial views of our role we need to funnel down to placed volunteers. Sometimes, for no discernible reason, it just doesn't work out the way we would like it to. We may get 1 referral straight away who fills the role, at other times we may sift through dozens of referrals over weeks, and they just don't work out.
 - The volunteering landscape has been changing a lot over the last few years and at times it can seem like an uphill battle, but this is where the support, guidance, and advice of your Advisor can be vital, in making sure that we are doing everything we can to get as many referrals through as possible.

If you have any questions or thoughts about any of the above, get in touch with your Advisor – we are here to help you.

Thank you so much for your support,

From the Kaimahi at Volunteering Waikato – Te Ohu Tuuao o Waikato

If your organisation is **Hamilton-based**, your Advisor is:
Emma Newman recruitment@volunteeringwaikato.org.nz or 022 082 9039

If your organisation is **Regionally based**, your Advisor is:
Chris Atkinson regional@volunteeringwaikato.org.nz or 022 426 1361

Our office is located at 2 London Street and we are open Monday-Thursday 8:30am – 4:00pm – you can pop in for a chat too!