

## DYSLEXIA SCOTLAND

We encourage and enable people with dyslexia, regardless of their age and abilities, to reach their potential.

Our mission is to inspire and enable everyone to reach their full potential. To make that happen, we have set four clear goals:

1. provide and promote high quality services to people with dyslexia
2. influence and achieve change at a national and local level
3. give dyslexic people an effective individual and collective voice
4. support our network of branches, members and partners

The following Top Tips have been created for you to think about the important things which need to be considered to ensure a positive experience for all recruiting and supporting dyslexic volunteers.

## TOP TIPS FOR RECRUITING AND SUPPORTING DYSLEXIC VOLUNTEERS

These Top Tips were produced by Dyslexia Scotland

By reflecting on the following we would hope that these points would help you make your volunteering offer more inclusive to dyslexic volunteers:

1. **Application form completion** - either online or on paper. This can be a barrier at the recruitment stage, but also during the volunteering role, e.g. expenses forms, reporting forms etc. Offer assistance if they seem to be finding form completion difficult. We often ask volunteers to come in and meet with us and we complete the application/registration form with them while we chat. We also often ask volunteers to detail their expenses via email alongside photos of receipts, if the form is difficult for them to complete.
2. **Directions and finding places** - many dyslexic people are visual learners. We suggest providing clear, visual directions to your location. We have created a [short film](#) showing how to get to our office from local landmarks. Google Streetview is a great tool.
3. **Self-confidence and self-esteem** - this can impact on many dyslexic people due to their early learning experiences. When volunteers start in their role, they may need extra reassurance that they are doing ok in their role.
4. **Organisation and time management** - having clear visual procedures for volunteers to follow can be very helpful, alongside any time management strategies, e.g. meeting a client/befriender at a particular time.
5. **Ask new volunteers what might help them in their role** - all dyslexic people have different challenges and tailoring any support to the individual, can ensure that they do well in their role.
6. **Dyslexic strengths** - dyslexic people have many strengths such as creativity, visual thinking skills, excellent verbal/social skills and problem-solving skills. Encourage dyslexic volunteers to use these skills while volunteering for your organisation and remind them to capture their volunteering achievements in their CVs or job applications.
7. **Dyslexia-friendly formats** – consider using dyslexia-friendly formats when developing recruitment and other information materials. As an organisation, we mainly use century gothic font at font size 12 with navy coloured text on cream paper. There are other options for you to use in our [dyslexia friendly format leaflet](#).

For more information, please see:

[www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk)  
[National Inclusion Group page](#)

# What is Dyslexia?

### Dyslexia - the facts

- It's a learning difference that is common
- 1 in 10 children\* in the UK have dyslexia
- The brain simply works in a different way
- There are a lot of positives about dyslexia
- It is not about how clever you are

\*Estimate from Dyslexia Scotland

### Strengths and challenges

Dyslexia has many strengths that we should celebrate!

#### Strengths

- Big picture thinking
- Creativity
- People skills
- Problem solving

#### Challenges

- Reading
- Time management
- Remembering things
- Writing

### Let's be careful with the way we talk about dyslexia

We should stop using words like "cure" or "fix"...

...because dyslexia is NOT an illness!

Words we like:	Please avoid:
Identify ✓	Diagnose ✗
Strategies ✓	Cure ✗
Signs ✓	Symptoms ✗
Learning difference ✓	Condition ✗
Support ✓	Treat ✗

### Focus on the positives!

"You have magical brains, they just process differently. Don't feel like you should be held back by it."

Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrice