Knowledge Gateway

Practice Guidance and Information

Inclusion in Volunteering – Recruiting and Supporting Dyslexic Volunteers

Top Tips for Recruiting and Supporting Dyslexic Volunteers

These Top Tips were produced by Volunteer Scotland and the National Inclusion in Volunteering Group.

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

At Dyslexia Scotland, 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

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

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/befriendee 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 co loured text on cream paper. There are other options for you to use in our **dyslexia friendly format leaflet**.

Need some more help?
If you would like more help or advice in relation to this guide, please contact us:

www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk
Telephone: **Volunteer Scotland** - 01786 479593
Email: **knowledgegateway@volunteerscotland.org.uk**

Knowledge Gateway

The Knowledge Gateway is created and led by **Volunteer Scotland**

Volunteer Scotland

This is a regularly reviewed resource. If you have any suggested updates, please email Volunteer Scotland at **hello@volunteerscotland.org.uk**