

Q&A from “Volunteering for PMI: Opportunities and Journeys” LI Webinar, 7 July 2026

On average, how much time should a volunteer spend for the volunteer work? What if we are not able to dedicate time as a volunteer due to personal reasons and complete the task in hand?

Amit: anything between 5 to 40 hours a month is good. It depends on the work. Usually, chapters have redundancies with the volunteers to take care of the urgent personal or work commitments

Aija: Indeed, the time commitment varies by engagement and role. VEP postings typically note what to expect timewise. Decide what is the right amount of time for you first.

Me: tasks may vary, maybe a lot of hours just before an event and then are quiet for a while. 40 h a month is a lot. Don't be afraid to ask for help! Maybe you can split your task with somebody or delegate and let others grow.

What skills can I realistically expect to develop in this role?

Fernando: Depends on the role, but most of them will give you a great opportunity to develop your power skills and give you the chance to try yourself in a more controlled environment. For example, if you haven't been a leader at your job, starting this as a volunteer is awesome

Me: you will develop people skills that come in handy everywhere! You can try out ideas in a safe environment. Remember - the chapter has your back, it's a great community. You'll have an international 'family' - try reaching out next time you travel 😊

Would you recommend to update your profile around your volunteering experience and put it out there at volunteering board? Do we have any such volunteering opportunity board by PMI?

Fernando: I have added most of my volunteering history on VEP. You can add manually everything you did and contributed there. It's a good exercise and a great point to take things from when you're building a CV :)

Me: I agree with Fernando - documentation is key and will help you practice for a good job cv.

Aija: Each day there are about 30 volunteer opportunity posts on VEP (<https://volunteer.pmi.org/>) Of course, not all will be a good match for you but it's definitely worth going to VEP regularly. You can search for opportunities and filter based on your interests, location, chapter and/or language. You can also set your interests by ticking boxes in your profile at <https://volunteer.pmi.org/> under My Info & Activity - Volunteer Interests; then when opportunities are posted with relevant tags, you will receive an alert.

If I opt for event volunteer, what kind of events are organised and whether those are virtual or physical?

Amit: The events are virtual as well as in person. Webinars like this or can be in person conferences/seminars.

Me: To my knowledge, all chapters offer both. In Norway we have had 'PMI pub' - a more informal way to build network, share experiences and have fun.

What have you found as key messaging to new volunteers or make members understand the need for them to volunteer? How has your experience been to grow number of volunteers in your chapters?

Fernando: My opinion is that this should come from the members, and not from the board. I mean, people have to understand the opportunity and connect with the value - what they can contribute and what's in for them! - If they don't see value, they won't join or will join and then leave fast,

Me: I believe in the direct ask. Most of us like to be valued. Ask for help with smaller tasks, show how interesting it is to volunteer and suddenly you have a new person on board!

Maria: Please check out the Volunteer Engagement Chapter Toolkit on the Marketing Portal. It contains a lot of useful information on volunteer engagement (including recruitment), messaging, recourses, templates and more.

In all of your experiences spanning decades, what is the biggest change you have noticed in the PMI volunteers and how have they and the volunteer program evolved over the years?

Me: After COVID it has become harder to attract and maintain volunteers is my experience. People want to be with people - that goes for both the ones arranging (volunteers) and the ones attending (members). COVID was very damaging in that aspect. In my experience it has also become bit more 'what's in it for me', because there are so many competing opportunities to get involved in.

One challenge many chapters face is not attracting volunteers but retaining them over the long term. From your experience, what are the most successful strategies you've seen globally for keeping volunteers engaged, motivated, and progressing into future leadership roles?

Fernando: I think one thing many chapters don't do is actually ask people what they expect and see where they fit best, As I said, sometime try once, and if it doesn't work they just leave without saying why or trying something different. So, keeping a close and honest communication loop with volunteers is essential. Stakeholder engagement ;)

I am now affiliated in a chapter and everything seems to have commercial end goal. What to do in such cases?

Me: It's a tough one. We do of course want to succeed in that aspect as well - but to me the community aspect is key. Your opinion matters - challenge the chapter by suggesting events that you believe would benefit the chapter in additional ways.

Are we able to send automated emails from VEP? For example, when an application for a role is received, the VEP sends an acknowledgement email.

Amit: Yes, VEP sends the e-mails

Aija: Indeed, the person with a Recruiter role receives an email every time an application has been submitted.