Voice of the Volunteer Survey Communications Plan Guide (with templates)

Developing a Communications Plan

A communications plan outlines what, when, and how you will share information to achieve your goals. A well-structured communications plan is essential for delivering the Voice of the Volunteer Survey, ensuring your volunteer survey reaches as many people as possible and encourages meaningful participation. Thoughtful planning not only increases response rates but also demonstrates to volunteers that their input is valued and acted upon.

Here's a framework to guide your communications:

1 month before launch: Build anticipation

Let your volunteers know the survey is coming. Share why it matters, how their input will make a difference, and when they can expect it. You can also take this opportunity to let your volunteers know that the survey will be anonymous. Use this time to build excitement and reinforce that every voice counts.

Survey launch day: Initial communication

Send out your first official communication announcing that the survey is open. Use multiple channels to reach volunteers wherever they engage. This could be email, online messaging platforms, posters in shared spaces, or your newsletter. Make the message clear, concise, and action-oriented.

During the survey: Ongoing reminders and engagement

Keep the survey visible with periodic reminders. Highlight the closing date, reiterate why participation is important, and consider creative touches. You might use fun visuals, short volunteer testimonials about why participation matters, or visual countdowns.

After survey closes: Share results and next steps

Communication doesn't stop once the survey closes. Analyse the results and share key insights with both volunteers and paid staff. Develop and communicate an action plan showing how feedback will be used to make improvements. This demonstrates accountability, closes the feedback loop, and builds trust for future surveys.

Tips for Survey Communication

Plan and schedule: Map out your communications in advance and stick to the timeline to keep volunteers informed and engaged.

Be clear and concise: Explain why the survey matters, how responses will be used, and ensure your commitment to acting on the feedback is clear.

Consistent core messaging: Keep key details like how to access the survey, closing date, anonymity of responses, and what happens afterward, consistent across all channels, while varying the format and tone.

Get creative with your promotions: Email may be the main channel but think beyond it. What about team meetings, newsletters, posters, or social media? These forums can help reach more volunteers and keep the survey top of mind. Or even consider equipping volunteer ambassadors to help spread the word and promote to their peers.

Highlight next steps: Let volunteers know what will happen once the survey closes and results are analysed; let them know how their input will influence improvements or decisions.

Suggested Timeline for Survey Communications

This timeline assumes email is your primary communication channel, however, tailor it to your volunteer group. Consider other channels that your volunteers engage with most and use them to maximise reach and participation.

Tip: Space survey reminders based on response rates. If participation is high, you can reduce the number of reminders. Response rates vary widely depending on the audience, how engaged they are, and how the survey is delivered.

Timing	Action	Notes
1 month before launch	Coming soon email	Let volunteers know the survey is coming, why it matters, and when it will open. Build anticipation.
Launch/Day 1	Initial email	Provide survey link, explain purpose, and closing date. Use multiple channels: email, newsletters, team messaging, posters.
Mid-point	Reminder email	Thank volunteers who have already participated and encourage those who haven't.
Final week	Reminder email	Emphasise the closing date and the importance of every response.
Two days to close	Urgency reminder email	Highlight last chance to participate. Reinforce key messages.
Closing day	Final day reminder email	Remind volunteers the survey closes today; encourage immediate participation.
1-2 weeks after survey closes	Post-survey follow-up email	Thank you and confirmation of next steps e.g. when to expect results, and how volunteer input will be used.

Tips for Sharing Survey Feedback

Use multiple channels: Reach volunteers wherever they engage - email, online messaging platforms, posters in shared spaces, or your newsletter. Make sure information is accessible and consistent.

Share the raw data: Be transparent and let volunteers and paid staff see the survey results, trends, and overall responses. This builds trust and shows you value their input.

Explain what it tells you: Highlight key takeaways, including successes to celebrate and areas that need improvement. Make the insights easy to understand and relevant to the audience.

Show what's already underway: Outline current initiatives or changes in progress that address the areas for action identified in the survey. This demonstrates responsiveness and accountability.

Invite ongoing feedback: Encourage volunteers to continue sharing thoughts beyond the survey. Feedback loops can include meetings, suggestion boxes, or

Outline next steps: Be clear about what will happen next, including timelines for any actions or improvements. Let volunteers know how their input will shape the future of your volunteering program.

Communication Templates

Coming Soon

Subject: Something exciting is coming your way…

Body:
Hi [first name],

We're launching the Voice of the Volunteer Survey on [insert date]!

This is your chance to share your perspectives and experiences so we can make volunteering with us even better. Your insights help us understand what's working well and where we can improve.

Keep an eye on your inbox; we'll let you know as soon as the survey opens. We'd love for you to participate!

Thank you for helping us shape the future of volunteering here at [your organisation].

Launch/ Day 1

Subject: The Voice of the Volunteer Survey is open - we want to hear from you!

Body:
Hi [first name],

The Voice of the Volunteer Survey is now open!

This survey gives us a better understanding of your volunteering experience. Your insights allow us to:
- Recognise what's working well
- Identify areas where we can improve
- Make volunteering even more rewarding for everyone

Your voice matters. The survey is completely anonymous, and your honest feedback will help us shape how we support and engage volunteers.

This survey will remain open until [insert date], so there's plenty of time to share your thoughts.

Remember, this survey is one of many ways to share your feedback - you can also speak directly with us anytime.

Take the Survey Now [insert link from your organisation's MCD profile]

Thank you for taking the time to help us improve your experience.

Communication Templates

Reminder

Subject: Reminder: Share your voice in the Volunteer Survey

Body:
Hi [first name],

A big thank you to everyone who has already completed the Voice of the Volunteer Survey! Your input is invaluable.

If you haven't had a chance yet, there's still time – the survey will remain open until [insert date].

The more voices we hear from, the more representative the results are of the overall volunteer experience. Your responses help us make volunteering more rewarding and meaningful for everyone. Every voice counts, including yours.

Take the Survey Now [insert link]

Thank you for helping us continue to grow and improve!

volunteering
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Voice of the Volunteer Survey Questions

Below are the questions that volunteers are asked in the survey, with the response type listed next to each.

Questions 1-7 relate to demographic information. These responses are confidential and will not be provided to your organisation. They are used only in aggregate reporting at a state level by Volunteering Queensland.

Prepare: *These questions will ask about how your organisation has planned for volunteer involvement, such as the program design and resource allocation.*

Question 8. Leaders at (organisation name) visibly value and support volunteers. [Scale response]

Question 9. I know who is responsible for supporting me in my volunteer role (e.g., my volunteer manager/contact). [Scale response]

Question 10. Volunteer policies and procedures are easy to understand. [Scale response]

Question 11. I have the time, equipment and technology I need to do my role effectively. [Scale response]

Voice of the Volunteer Survey Questions

Recruit: *These questions help your organisation understand how volunteers got involved in volunteering and how they found the onboarding process.*

Question 12. Why did you choose to start volunteering. [Multi-select response]:
- To help others or give back to those who've helped me
- No one else was doing it
- Civic or community duty
- As part of my religion or faith
- To support or volunteer with family and friends
- Education or government requirement
- To use my skills and experience
- To contribute during a crisis
- To support or learn more about a cause
- Because I have the time and ability to help
- Other [Please specify]

Question 13. How has volunteering benefited you personally or professionally? [Mult-select response]:
- Physical activity
- Mental stimulation
- Enjoyment
- Social status or reward
- Religious or cultural connection
- New skills and experience
- Friendships
- Professional networks
- A sense of purpose
- Social or community connection
- A sense of structure and routine
- Other [Please specify]

Question 14. How did you find out about the volunteering role with (organisation name)? [Multi-select response]:
- I'm a participant/member/user of (organisation name) services
- Family and friends
- Online volunteer recruitment sites (e.g., SEEK Volunteer,)
- Social media
- On (organisation name) website

- Traditional media (e.g., posters, newsletters, radio)
- Referral by a dedicated volunteer referral service like Volunteering Gold Coast
- Referral by another agency (e.g., by a healthcare professional, employer, government agency, or educational institute)
- Open days, info sessions or events, walk-ins
- Other [Please specify]

Question 15. Were you satisfied with the time it took from when you applied for your volunteering role to getting started? [Scale response]

Question 15a. (If disagree or strongly disagree at Question 15) What was unsatisfactory about the timeframe? [Multi-select response]:
- The process took too long.
- Communication during the process was poor or unclear.
- I didn't know what was happening or what to expect.
- There were too many steps or too much paperwork.
- I was waiting on checks or approvals (e.g. reference, police, or Working with Children).
- The organisation was slow to respond or follow up.
- I lost interest or motivation while waiting to start.
- Other (Please specify)

Question 16. I am satisfied with the overall quality of my onboarding experience at (organisation name). [Scale response]

Question 16a. (If strongly agree or agree at Question 16) [Multi-select response]
Which aspects made your onboarding a positive experience?
- The onboarding was well-organised, clear, and timely.
- My role, duties, and boundaries were clearly explained.
- Training and information were relevant, practical, and easy to access.
- Safety, risk, and incident procedures were clearly explained.
- I had the resources, equipment, and support I needed.
- I felt welcomed, included, and supported in the team culture.
- I was asked for feedback and communication was clear throughout.
- Other (please specify)

Question 17. My duties were clearly defined and explained when I started. [Scale response]

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Question 18. My volunteer role makes good use of my skills and abilities. [Scale response]

Question 19. When you started your role, did you receive any training, and how useful was it? [Pick-list, single option]
- Yes, it was very useful
- Yes, it was somewhat useful
- Yes, but it wasn't useful
- No, I did not receive any training
- Not applicable / Prefer not to answer

Question 19a (If selected 'yes, it was somewhat useful' or 'yes, but it wasn't useful' at Question 19). [Multi-select response]
- What would have made the training more useful?
- Training content was tailored to my role, tasks, and prior experience.
- Clear explanation of duties, boundaries, expectations, and safety procedures.
- More practical, hands-on training, shadowing, or follow-up check-ins.
- Training delivered at the right time, with appropriate pacing and length.
- Easier access to materials, systems, and online resources.
- Opportunity to ask questions, receive feedback, and know who to contact for support.
- Training was engaging, well-facilitated, and scheduled to suit my availability.
- Other (please specify)

Voice of the Volunteer Survey Questions

Support: *These questions help your organisation figure out how to best develop, communicate with and recognise volunteers.*

Question 20. I receive help for my volunteer role when I need it. [Scale response]

Question 21. I receive meaningful recognition when I do a good job. [Scale response]

Question 21a. (If disagree or strongly disagree at Question 21). [Multi-select response]
- What are some ways you would like to be recognised or appreciated for your contributions?
- Personal acknowledgement from leaders or supervisors (e.g., thank-you, feedback).
- Public recognition within the organisation or community (meetings, events, newsletters, social media).
- Formal awards or certificates (internal or external/community awards).
- Career or development opportunities (leadership roles, advanced volunteer responsibilities, volunteering-to-employment pathways).
- Written references, LinkedIn endorsements, or professional recommendations.
- Financial recognition (honorarium, stipend, or fee waivers/discounts).
- Other (please specify)

Question 22. I get useful feedback about how I am doing in my volunteer role. [Scale response]

Question 23. I have the learning opportunities to progress if I want them. [Scale response]

Question 24. I feel adequately informed about my volunteering role at (organisation name) generally. [Scale response]

Question 25. I feel as if I belong at (organisation name). [Scale response]

Voice of the Volunteer Survey Questions

Evaluate: *These questions are about feedback and evaluation.*

Question 26. I know how to speak up if I have feedback or a complaint and feel supported to do so. [Scale response]

Question 27. I'm satisfied with the amount of flexibility I have in my volunteering schedule. [Scale response]

Question 27a. (If disagree or strongly disagree at Question 27) [Multi-select response] Are there any other ways you'd like to be able to volunteer?
- Ability to volunteer from home (e.g. online volunteering or tasks such as knitting blankets from home)
- More flexible roster or scheduling options
- Micro-volunteering opportunities (e.g. short, defined tasks like monitoring a koala crossing video for 1 hour)
- Ability to volunteer outside of regular business/work hours
- Opportunities to sign up for one-off event roles
- Family-friendly volunteering opportunities (e.g. where children can accompany you or participate)
- Other (please specify)

Question 28. I can see the positive impact of my volunteering on beneficiaries/the community and how it aligns with (organisation name) purpose. [Multi-select response]

Question 29. Overall, to what extent does your volunteering experience at (organisation name) meet your expectations?
- Far below my expectations
- Below my expectations
- Meeting my expectations
- Exceeding my expectations
- Greatly exceeding my expectations

Question 30. I would recommend (organisation name) to my friends and family members. [Scale response]

Question 31. What do you enjoy most about working as a volunteer at (organisation name)? [Free text response]

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Question 32. What one thing would you improve to make (organisation name) better place to volunteer? [Free text response]

Question 33. How long have you been volunteering in your current role with (organisation name)? [Single-select]
- Less than 6 months
- 6–12 months
- 1–3 years
- More than 3 years
- Prefer not to answer