- ☑ Practical examples
- ☑ Valuable tips
- ☑ Checklists

# CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING

## GUIDEBOOK

**Step by step towards social engagement – The practical guide for socially committed companies**

PHINEO
*act to impact*

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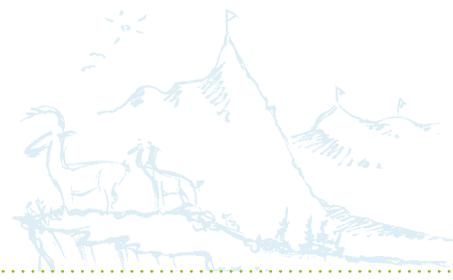
Corporate responsibility can take many forms. For example, companies may donate to charitable causes, develop socially responsible supply chains or even create sustainable business models. But for a number of years, these more general activities have been complemented by a concept called corporate volunteering (CV), which focuses more specifically on companies' employees.

At PHINEO, we've long been convinced of corporate volunteering's enormous potential. Much has changed since 2013, when we published our first *Corporate Volunteering Guidebook*; many companies are today **much more active and strategic** in their commitment. A growing number are recognizing the great value inherent in their employees' volunteer work, for the firms themselves and society alike. At the same time, discussions with partners, especially with nonprofit organizations, show that intermediation and support are still high in demand.

When engaging in corporate volunteering, employees participate in activities that relate to social issues lying outside a company's core area of business. As a result, all actors involved benefit: **Society benefits**, because it gains many more helping hands; **employees benefit**, because they are doing meaningful work, gaining new skills and expanding their perspective; and the company benefits, because it can improve its reputation as it increases employee satisfaction and develops their potential.

But is it really that simple?

A closer look shows that the success of corporate volunteering depends on a number of factors. Companies are often insufficiently strategic when implementing such programs, failing to think through and incorporate the needs and perspectives of various stakeholders.

We aim with this guidebook to provide a full picture of corporate volunteering. We won't hide the pitfalls – but we won't downplay the great opportunities associated with the concept either.

This guidebook offers a wide range of insights into the world of corporate volunteering. It identifies program formats, offers suggestions and provides practical tips for companies that want to shape and support their employees' social engagement effectively. We believe that employees are a company's most valuable asset, and must be supported – in the form of **exciting and meaningful activities** that have a positive impact both on society and the participating volunteers.

In the following sections, we discuss the factors involved with successful corporate volunteering programs, and which measures can help achieve the **greatest possible social impact** with the resources available.

This guidebook is available also in German, in print and as an eBook:

→ *https://www.phineo.org/en/publications*

**Annelie Beller, Nahide Pooya and Paula Berning**

Drawing on over ten years of expertise and collaboration with businesses and nonprofit organizations, this publication provides a step-by-step guide to impactful corporate engagement. Our aim is to inspire organizations around the globe to become part of the exciting world of corporate volunteering.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## A) What is corporate volunteering?

Corporate volunteering (CV) refers to employees' social engagement when their volunteer work, no matter whether it takes place during or outside working hours, is **supported by the company**.

Corporate volunteering is one element of **corporate citizenship (CC)**, or a company's engagement in society. Within the CC framework, it sits alongside *donations and social sponsorship* as an opportunity for civic engagement driven from directly within the company itself (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2018).

Looking beyond the definition itself, corporate volunteering is an important step toward **helping companies see themselves** as active and constructive elements of society. The combination of employees' volunteer work and their company's social responsibility produces positive effects for the company, the society and the individuals taking part in the program. Although social engagement is the primary motivation behind corporate volunteering, companies understandably also have the associated **business case firmly in mind**. To be clear: This business case is both legitimate and desirable, as long as it is balanced with other objectives.

A well-constructed corporate volunteering program generates an **immense amount of added value**. In the following overview, we present the most important aspects to consider.

These elements of added value can also be described as social impact. But what exactly is social impact? We'll address this in more detail in → Step 6.

### Where does corporate volunteering come from?

The concept of corporate volunteering originated in the United States, and spread to western Europe late in the 20th century. In Latin America, the countries of Mexico and Brazil are leaders in the field, while Japan, South Korea and Australia stand out in the Asia-Pacific region. In Africa and the Arab world, the approach is just beginning to gain traction. (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2018)

```
                CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP

   DONATIONS      SOCIAL          CORPORATE
                  SPONSORSHIP     VOLUNTEERING

   DONATIONS      FINANCIAL
   IN KIND        DONATIONS
```
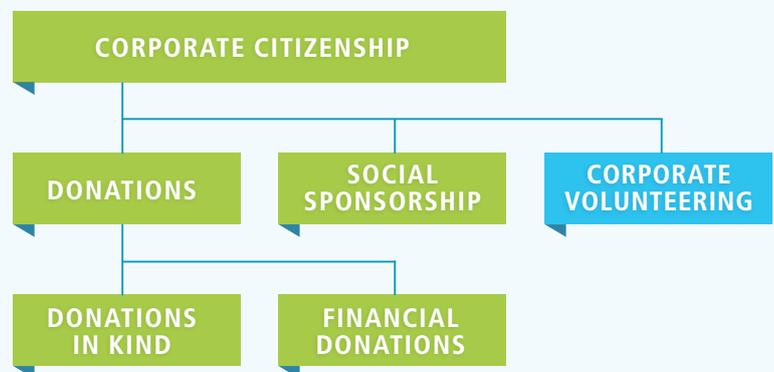
*"The most exciting thing in my research was seeing the degree to which corporate volunteering had spread. I was surprised at how many companies are already implicitly involved in this — they simply don't always advertise it. Particularly among small and medium-sized companies in Germany, it goes without saying that the company car can be used on the weekend for volunteer work, for example."*

Prof. Dr. Michael Knappstein, Kienbaum Institut, @ ISM für Leadership & Transformation

## B)  Added value through corporate volunteering

### Companies

☑ Strengthens employees' loyalty, motivation and productivity: A majority of millennials and young employees find company-initiated volunteer activities to be important (Cone Communications, 2016)

☑ Enables communication that spans across teams, departments and hierarchies, and thus significantly improves a company's corporate culture (Beyond Philanthropy & Universität Mannheim, 2018)

☑ Increases the company's appeal as an employer, and has a positive effect on employer branding. A majority of German university graduates rate corporate volunteering as being very important in their selection of potential employers. (Bustamante & Brenninger, 2013)

☑ Improves the visibility of the company's social engagement initiatives, enhances its reputation and supports its public-relations work

☑ Helps to build local networks. (UPJ, 2018)

☑ Supports the development of a culture of engagement and promotes a positive attitude toward the workplace among employees. (Gilroy et al., 2019)

☑ Can serve as a source of innovation if it is closely tied to the company's core business

### Society

☑ Is a useful way of showing social engagement, while also fulfilling the SDGs ( → p. 17 )

☑ Makes people more aware of social and environmental challenges

☑ Increases interactions between the private and nonprofit sectors

☑ Promotes a culture of social engagement in society

☑ Reduces costs for civil society due to the contribution of private sector resources. (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2018)

☑ Shows that partnerships and cooperation can genuinely achieve sustainable social impact



### Employees

☑ Promotes personal development and the acquisition of new skills. A significant share of executives at U.S. companies confirm that skills-based volunteering is a good way to develop potential future company leaders. Employees can strengthen their job-related skills and basic everyday competences (Covestro, 2018)

☑ Contributes to the formation of social networks (team building) (London Benchmarking Group, 2019)

☑ Offers a meaningful and challenging change of pace

☑ Inspires employees to become socially engaged on their own, or to continue such activities with the company (UPJ, 2018)

☑ Improves employees' understanding of social contexts and groups of people with which they are unfamiliar, while also fostering new attitudes and behaviors

☑ Reduces stress (Knappstein, 2019)

### Nonprofit-Organizations (NPO)

☑ Provides nonprofits with additional resources and access to skills. Many companies confirm that they use corporate volunteering to transfer know-how to nonprofit organizations (UPJ, 2018)

☑ Leads to greater professionalization in the nonprofit sector compared to companies, nonprofits spend only a small share of their organizational budgets on overhead, and therefore often rely on additional funding or support

☑ Generates visibility for the nonprofit's core issues

☑ Creates new networks and contacts

# CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING

## 89%

of corporates in 2020 in the US offered paid-release time volunteer programs or flexible scheduling. (CECP, 2020)

**65**% of companies in Europe and Latin America value the benefits of corporate volunteering on the well-being and commitment of their employees. Also, during the Covid-19 pandemic, **63**% of companies have seen an increase in employee participation and more than **80**% have adapted their programs to digital formats.
(Voluntare, 2020)

**19**% ↗ **47**% Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, virtual volunteering offered to international employees increased from **19**% of U.S. companies in 2018 to **47**% in 2020.
(CECP, 2021)

**89**% of U.S. employees believe that companies who sponsor volunteering activities offer a better overall working environment than those who do not.
(Deloitte, 2017)

**82**% of companies in countries like Germany use corporate volunteering programs to pursue strategic business goals.
(UPJ, 2018)

**C) 8 steps to successful corporate volunteering**

1 Planning corporate volunteering

2 Setting social impact objectives

3 Developing a CV strategy

4 Finding the right partner

CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING

8 Communicating the social impact

7 Learning and improving

6 Evaluating the social impact

5 Shaping impact-oriented partnerships

This guidebook is intended for small, medium-sized and large companies that want to make an effective social contribution, no matter what their sector, origin or legal form.

Most especially, we would like to reach people responsible for making **corporate volunteering budget decisions**, along with people who manage CV programs and ensure they work – thus, **decision-makers, company executives and project managers**.

Of course, there are no blueprints for good corporate volunteering, but we can identify some fundamental rules that help all companies achieve greater social impact – regardless of their size or budget. We will explain these basic rules in the following sections.

## EXAMPLE

For illustration purposes, we'll follow along with a company called BricksForImpact The fictional firm manufactures construction materials, is headquartered in Greenville, and employs around 2,000 people, some of whom travel around the entire country as salespeople. Previously, BricksForImpact has carried out occasional action days, or so-called social days. However, the company does not yet have a robust Corporate volunteering strategy. Olivia Foster, the firm's head of human resources, has been assigned to develop a strategy of this kind. Several other individual departments, including the communications and sustainability units, are helping her with this task.

# STEP 1 – Design a corporate volunteering plan

To be successful, a CV program must reflect the motivations and expectations of those who are to create and implement it. Or, put differently: Strategic corporate volunteering requires clear goals, careful planning, authenticity and the willingness to change perspectives as needed. Only then will the company's engagement be taken seriously both internally and externally and be able to have a correspondingly positive effect.

Given this, the more strategically you approach the topic, and the more clarity that you and all participants together bring to the subject, the sooner you can realize the elements of added value mentioned above. We suggest answering a few questions at the start to help you achieve this clarity.

> *"In my research, I have found that the buzz-word of increased employer attractiveness relates primarily to two specific desires: one involving less friction between roles and one involving greater autonomy.* If an employee is allowed to pursue her social engagement with the employer's support, she perceives less conflict between her free time and her work. She can thus combine her volunteering and her professional work more easily. This leads to fewer points of friction between job and private life."

Prof. Dr. Michael Knappstein, Kienbaum Institut
@ ISM für Leadership & Transformation

### United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In internationally active companies with locations in multiple countries, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have established themselves as a universally applicable tool. The SDGs address globally relevant societal goals for which solutions urgently need to be found. → Step 2.2

Whether and to what degree you will agree on a common objective with other corporate locations will depend heavily on how the company as a whole is organized, and on whether decisions are made centrally. If personnel issues are locally managed, or depend strongly on the national culture, it is advisable to agree only on the overall strategic themes, while leaving the selection of a specific project and the project design tasks to each individual location.

→  *https://sdgs.un.org/goals*

*" We asked ourselves which companies have a comprehensive corporate volunteering strategy. Of course, it's impossible to include all soft factors into a quantitative and statistical analysis. However, one very important factor is and remains sheer company size. In the case of large companies with more than 10,000 employees, we've seen a considerable increase in the importance of environmental and social sustainability in recent years. For many companies, corporate volunteering is primarily about strengthening efforts to retain staff and facilitate staff development."*

 Dr. Anael Labigne, ZiviZ gGmbH at Stifterverband

The following introductory questions, which we will develop further in the next steps, will help you determine what exactly what you want to achieve with your CV program.

#### What elements of added value do you want to generate?

Take a look at the elements of added value we identified at the beginning – for companies, for society, for the nonprofit partners and for employees. → Step 1  Which of these seem central to your project? Is it about giving something back to **society**? Or are you placing a stronger focus on **company goals** such as professional development, team cohesion or reputation?

If, when considering this issue, you conclude that you want to focus on company goals, that is perfectly legitimate, just so long as you don't **forget about societal needs** or misunderstand the whole process of social engagement simply as a training exercise. → For more detail, Step 2.

#### Is there already volunteer experience within the company, or are some people already carrying out volunteer work?

Within most companies, there is already a wealth of experience with topics such as volunteering, civic engagement, work with associations and so on. If this isn't true in your immediate work environment, then it may be the case in other departments, or among individual staff members. **Thus, ask around in your company**: What have people done, and what are they doing now? What has worked particularly well, and why?

## Where should the social engagement program take place?

The geographic location is also relevant. Do you want to start at one specific location, or directly involve multiple **teams at different locations**?

## What can your company contribute?

With the goals now firmly in sight, it's time to focus on the company's capacities and the means at its disposal. What can the company contribute? **Time, money, personnel, infrastructure**? Can you offer any specific capabilities that nonprofit partners could benefit from?

Many nonprofits identify the company's contribution of in-house expertise as being a success factor in particularly effective partnerships. It's therefore important to emphasize the specific skills you can contribute. In answering this question, involve the teams and experts in your company.

However, always keep in mind that your company won't be the only entity investing expertise and resources. The nonprofit too will be making a significant investment in the project, particularly with regard to time and staff resources.

## What's the best fit for your company

You know roughly what you want to achieve, and what you can contribute as you seek to realize your goals. But what topic is the best fit, or which topic area has a strategic relation to your company? It may be useful here to consult the company's business strategy, statement of purpose, corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy and sustainability strategy.

In doing so, consider the products or services you offer, and draw a logical connection. For example, companies in the automotive sector might focus on the issue of mobility, technology companies on digitalization, and insurance companies on the reduction of social or ecological risks. A company that has devoted itself to climate protection will have a hard time selling renovation of the local day-care center as a plausible corporate volunteering measure. In this case, a clean-up campaign in the local woods would be a much better fit.

In seeking to establish a match of this kind, it can be very useful to survey stakeholders – primarily employees and the company's management, but also customers and investors. What societal challenges do they think of in connection with your company?

The more the CV program takes this topical fit into account, the more it is likely to win acceptance. Thus, as early as possible, involve the employees, the company's internal employee organizations and even the nonprofit organization in the

process of developing your objectives. Conduct a survey or interviews in order to gain information that will help you make the decision. → see step 1.2

**EXAMPLE**

For Olivia Foster, it's a simple question. In her mind, the project is mainly about strengthening employees' skills and promoting dialogue between the company's decentralized business units. She defines these two elements as goals of the business case.

The conversations with the company's executives and other colleagues reveal that it is important to them that people in the region around the company's Greenville headquarters continue to get to know one another better, and that the area's social cohesion improves. This defines the social case.

By putting the social and business cases together, it emerges that BricksFor-Impact wants to promote social cohesion as a key topic area.

**Are there identifiable societal needs associated with your engagement project?**

Wanting to do something for society is praiseworthy. Nevertheless, you should firmly assure yourself that the societal challenges you perceive actually exist, and that your social commitment is directed toward objectively identifiable needs. A strong focus on needs ensures that instead of simply acting from a perceived feeling of knowledge, you will develop the **corporate volunteering program for long-term viability**, crafting it so as to fill existing gaps. → Step 1.4

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## 1.2   Involve internal and external stakeholders

**Consider which stakeholders you need to involve at which points, and what interests they bring to the table.**

**Whose opinion do you want and need to take into account?**

Corporate volunteering is based on human interactions and personal experiences. For this reason, it is important to give ample consideration to the views of the various stakeholders in your project. It's worthwhile to make sure that all **relevant**

**stakeholders are involved early in the process**. Therefore, ask yourself which internal target groups are the biggest focus – for example, is this trainees, junior staff members or company leaders?

Human-resources departments, sustainability departments, communications teams and internal employee organizations, among other units, are often closely associated with corporate engagement projects. And make sure not to forget your customers! They are the most important target

group for your core business; thus, the same is also true for your social engagement initiative. Take advantage of existing distribution channels or regular points of customer contact (e.g., on your website, through a company newsletter, or when providing advice or consulting services) to solicit feedback and opinions.

## EXAMPLE

BricksForImpact is largely active in the B2B market. Even if social networks may not seem like the most obvious way to reach its customers, Olivia Foster plans to use them anyway – for instance, in order to activate people in the region and ask them for ideas. After all, the company is trying to reach out to and gain the trust of this group with its activities. They are who it wants to support. Therefore, beginning with the new year, the company runs an advertisement on social media with the simple question: "Where would you like to meet our employees in the context of a social engagement project?"

In addition, Foster invites the communications, human resources, sustainability and product development departments, along with the top company executives, to a workshop. She wants to find out from them what social role they see the company playing, and what goals they want to pursue as a part of the company's civic-engagement strategy.

## Whose support do you need for your project?

Social engagement often goes hand in hand with a change inside the company. For change of this kind to be successful, it above all needs advocates. Internal advocates can be found among like-minded colleagues in other departments, among external partners and sometimes even among customers. Often, allies can also be found in the form of employees who engage in volunteer work during their private time, or who are simply well networked within the company. Who was it talking in the hallway the other day about the parents' initiative at the local children's shelter? Who has actively volunteered with a nonprofit organization for decades? Which co-workers often discuss social topics, and might want to be involved in a dialogue on purpose and vision in the company? Be sure to talk to these people!

Moreover, if you haven't done so already, make sure your company's top executive decision-makers have approved the initiative, and are committed to it. But watch out – it takes more than just a well-meaning sign-off from top management to genuinely embed social engagement in the company's activities. For example, plan for the management board to be involved in the first project. There are few things more motivating than a CEO who has planted her own seedling, and who then takes every available opportunity to proudly tout her own horticultural skills.

## Stakeholder map for BricksForImpact

While our stakeholder map draws on the example of BricksForImpact, it can be adapted to fit your needs. The map highlights the thoughts that different stakeholder groups might have about BricksForImpact's corporate volunteering initiative. When using stakeholder maps, it's important to remind yourself on a regular basis of all parties' interests.
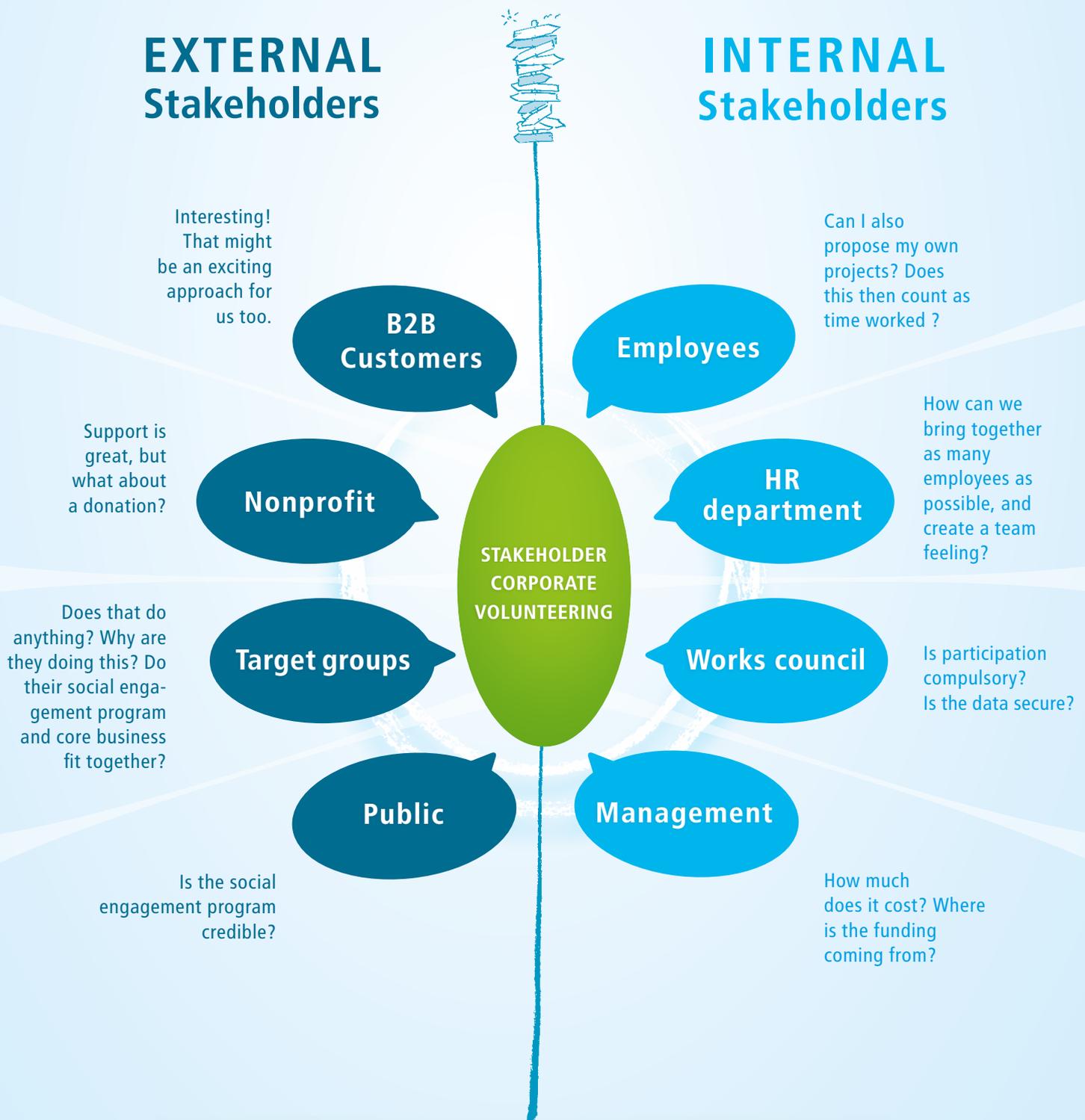
# EXTERNAL
## Stakeholders

# INTERNAL
## Stakeholders

Interesting! That might be an exciting approach for us too.

**B2B Customers**

Can I also propose my own projects? Does this then count as time worked?

**Employees**

Support is great, but what about a donation?

**Nonprofit**

STAKEHOLDER CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING

**HR department**

How can we bring together as many employees as possible, and create a team feeling?

Does that do anything? Why are they doing this? Do their social engagement program and core business fit together?

**Target groups**

**Works council**

Is participation compulsory? Is the data secure?

Is the social engagement program credible?

**Public**

**Management**

How much does it cost? Where is the funding coming from?

## 1.3 Consider internal objectives

In discussions with project stakeholders, it usually becomes clear quite quickly that many **internal goals** must also be taken into account. These are sometimes not obvious at first sight. For example, one particular person may expect more visibility, and someone else may be harboring doubts or worries about the prospective changes. Experience has shown that when CV initiatives run counter to these internal goals, employees don't participate with the same intensity, and projects may consequently wind up faltering repeatedly at various levels.

Thus, take some time to consider – ideally as a team – what secondary goals the company and other relevant stakeholders may want to pursue **beyond the obvious elements of added value**. Include these goals too when you're planning the strategy and its individual measures. In this regard, it is less important to perfectly address every single internal goal and motivation than it is to be aware of the **expectations of important stakeholders**, and to develop a position in response.

Make sure you understand what motivations your co-workers may have for participating in the CV initiative, as well as any reservations they might have. Add your own personal views, and make sure you listen to your gut: **What is it in particular that motivates you to volunteer?** What would you like to see happen when you take part in a corporate volunteering project? What could get in the way of your participation? Try this thought experiment, both from your own perspective and that of other colleagues.

## EXAMPLE

In the stakeholder workshop, it becomes clear that the internal participants have different goals. Thus, in a direct conversation, Olivia Foster tries to reduce these different goals down to a common denominator. This will allow her, in the course of the initiative's further development, to check whether everyone is still pursuing the same goal, while also engaging in early expectations management if she foresees that a certain interest will no longer be a focus.

13

# Corporate volunteering Business goals and project measures

Ideas for strengthening corporate volunteering's added value

**Companies**

**Corporate Voluntering**

**Employees**

## Companies

☑ **Employee retention, motivation and productivity:**
Allow employees a set amount of paid working time
to participate

☑ **Cross-team, cross-departmental, hierarchy-
spanning communication:** Identify ambassadors for corporate
volunteering in every department

☑ **Employer attractiveness and employer branding:**
Talk about your social engagement on your website and in
job postings. Encourage participation in corporate volunteering
activities by people in entry-level positions, trainees and interns

☑ **Visibility of the social engagement, reputation
and public relations:**
Use tools such as narrative storytelling and social impact reports
in your corporate volunteering communications

☑ **Development of local networks:**
Engage in dialogue with other companies in your region. Launch
joint actions or organize stakeholder workshops on the topic

☑ **Culture of engagement / positive attitude toward work:**
Use mechanisms like matched giving or dollars for doers to
support employees' existing engagement and to encourage new
volunteer activity

☑ **Innovation:**
Give the corporate volunteering participants an opportunity to
reflect: To what extent are the CV activities' target groups
relevant for the company's products or services? How can you
incorporate these target groups' perspectives outside the
context of the CV measure?

## Employees

☑ **Staff development and skills expansion:**
Develop social impact objectives and KPIs for the corporate
volunteering initiative. Following completion of a measure,
work with the participating employees to assess the degree to
which these objectives have been attained

☑ **Social networking (team building)**
Use the social day format, for example, to bring together
participants from different areas of the company

☑ **Meaningful or challenging change of pace.**
To the greatest degree possible, choose as partners impact-
oriented nonprofits that can plausibly demonstrate how
corporate volunteering provably helps the target groups

☑ **Inspiration for private volunteering and continued
social engagement**
Let staff members report on their after-hours volunteer work
through your internal communication channels

☑ **Openness to unfamiliar situations, attitudes
and groups of people:**
Use corporate volunteering programs to bring your co-workers
into new contexts and expose them to unfamiliar ways of
life – for instance, by mentoring youth who have had to overcome
great obstacles in their education

☑ **Reduced stress:**
Allow CV activities to take place during working hours, so that
particularly busy employees (parents, caregivers, etc.) aren't
forced to add these activities on top of their regular work

## Use this space for your own ideas:

_____  _____

_____  _____

_____  _____

## 1.4 Develop a thematic understanding of the proposed area of engagement

With regard to their core business, it will benefit companies to focus their social engagement initiatives on one **carefully defined topic** – or in the case of large companies, a manageable number of well-coordinated topics – or one specific region.

This topic may already be specified by existing guidelines, for example in the area of CSR. Nevertheless, it is critical to develop a **comprehensive understanding** of the subject area in which the company wants to become involved.

To make sure that you're aware of the major developments in your field of engagement, you can ask yourself:

- What is the **societal challenge** to which the company wants to respond? What are the conditions in the location or region in which the company is economically active?

- What are the **causes and effects of the societal problem?** How urgent is it? What leverage points might be useful in generating change?

- Who are the **stakeholders in the system**? What relevant tasks are currently being carried out by the state and by civil society? What are the needs of the nonprofit organizations currently active in this topic area? → Fill out the stakeholder map; Step 1.2.

The effort required to obtain this information **should be commensurate with the expected return**.

## EXAMPLE

The core topic of social cohesion was again confirmed in the stakeholder workshop organized by Olivia Foster. Several other topic areas were raised in the discussion. For example, the sustainability department mentioned the topic of the environment, while the communications team brought up the promotion of sports and fitness. However, the team as a whole was able to agree on a civic-engagement initiative in the area of social cohesion. The company's first-year budget for the project is $100,000, which is approximately 0.1% of its annual revenue. Given this constraint, the team decides to avoid getting bogged down in detailed analyses, and instead seeks out expertise from its network of contacts. In response to a request, the municipal administration says that support is urgently needed for intercultural dialogue projects in the Greenville district where BricksForImpact's headquarters is located.

Relevant data will already be available within many subject areas – the bulk of the effort at this stage will thus consist of **researching and summarizing** what you find. It will also be useful to talk to contacts from within your local circles, as well as to experts, partners and other members of the community. What sort of project would they like to see? Once you've completed all the steps up to this point, you're ready to begin setting specific objectives.

# STEP 2 – Set strategic objectives

## Leave room to improvise

Don't be too specific when planning your objectives. Allow some freedom for independent action, so that employees have an easier time identifying with the project and its measures!

Your company is setting off from a specific starting point, and is setting its sights on a specific destination. The strategy describes the path you'll take to reach this destination. However, to mark out this path correctly, you'll need clarity with regard to exactly where you want to go: What do you want to achieve in the short and long term for your company, its employees, external stakeholders and society? → Step 1.1.

to reach those who ought to participate, and those whose commitment is important.

◼ Demonstrate the quality of your work: All stakeholders – especially the company's internal decision-makers – will want to know what is happening in the corporate volunteering program, and what the resources are being used for.

In short: The objectives constitute the primary foundation for the success of corporate volunteering initiatives.

In many cases, the basic goals of a particular program may seem to be so obvious that a further process of developing objectives will appear to be unnecessary. Generally, this will later come to be seen as a fallacy, because the goals won't turn out to have been as clear as participants had imagined.

## 2.1 Significance and purpose of the objectives

Objectives are important for a solid corporate volunteering program. They help you to…

◼ **Orient yourself:** If the objectives are formulated in such a way that everyone knows what they're supposed to do, it will be easier to manage the corporate volunteering measures.

◼ Plan the **impact analysis:** Without project objectives, there can be no effective monitoring or evaluation processes.

◼ **Motivate employees** and other stakeholders: Precisely formulated project objectives that arouse enthusiasm make it easier

## 2.2 Describe the company's objectives in specific terms

Even during the topic-identification process, you will have semi-concrete ideas about the objectives you think the social engagement program should achieve. Over time, you will adapt these original ideas to the realities of the situation, for example following your discussions with internal and external stakeholders, or after you have developed more certainty about the company's goals. In short, your ideas about objectives will have gradually approached a point of optimization. However, before you conclude the process of clarifying the objectives too quickly, please explicitly **ask yourself this question one more time:** What exactly does your company want to achieve with its corporate volunteering initiative? And why?

Start here with the **company's vision state-ment**. What overall objectives guide you in the course of your daily work? What is the company's area of **responsibility** within its immediate environment? For example, an airline facilitates mobility and brings people together, while the banking sector provides access to sources of financing, and even pro-vides security in certain life situations.

In some sectors and for some products, a first look at this vision statement will be enough to generate clear ideas for a thriving future.

Most companies also have a **vision state-ment for their region**, though it may be less clearly formulated. This should also be taken into account. What does the location or region lack, and what do the people who live there need?

Your social engagement work and the corpo-rate volunteering initiative should be derived from these vision statements and objectives. For example, think about what engagement objectives could be derived from the facilitation of mobility. How could you ensure that people are better able to use their access to financing?

## 2.3 Formulate social impact objectives

Ideally, your social engagement project should remain as close as possible to your **core area of business, and thus to your underlying business strategy**. This will boost the credibility of your corpo-rate volunteering initiative, and make it easier for eople both internally and exter-nally to understand your activities. But how will you establish whether your work has



In formulating objectives, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can serve as an overall guide. The 17 SDGs together address all conceivable fields of social engagement. Thus, if you're looking for an overview that ties together general topical areas with more specific objectives, the SDGs are the place to start. **A key benefit** here is that the SDGs are also linked to clear sub-goals. And they even allow you to see the current progress being made toward achieving the objectives in your country! The SDG Compass additionally provides detailed guidance for companies and their contributions

→ *https://sdgs.un.org/goals*

**EXAMPLE**

BricksForImpact  is focusing on SDG 10, "Reduced Inequalities," because SDG 10 most closely approximates the goal of strengthening social cohesion. In addition, the company's activities are likely to support SDG 17, "Partnerships for the Goals," as it intends to work with nonprofit partners and the municipal administration. Olivia Foster refers to the SDGs because they are at once easily understandable and well-known. Moreover, each of the SDGs is accompanied by pre-formulated sub-goals, which simplifies their translation into everyday life.



been **successful**? How do you determine what specific results have been achieved within the various target groups? A detailed introduction to the topic of social impact can be found in  → Step 6.

The more concretely the social impact objectives are formulated, the easier it will be to determine whether the desired results have been achieved. A project's social impact objectives should be regularly reviewed, because the needs of the target groups or the environment will regularly change.

For the formulation of social impact objectives, this means:

◼ Because you want to **describe a future state**, place yourself at day X, and focus on the status of the objective: How would the situation look if the objective has been achieved?

◼ Focus specifically on the **results of your work**: Instead of "X should be achieved," formulate this as: "X exists."

◼ When formulating the objective, identify the **target groups** for which you want to produce a change right at the beginning. For example, you might say "Students are finding jobs more quickly …"

◼ In the formulation, use verbs that describe how the target groups' living conditions will change as a consequence of the initiative's desired results.

◼ Avoid negative constructions, as these trigger negative associations. "Company employees have developed new skills," is a better formulation than "Employees are no longer so unenthusiastic." Positively formulated objectives provide motivation and help release participants' energy!

## EXAMPLE

After much consideration, BricksFor-Impact decides to focus on the following social impact objectives:

**At the societal level:**

◼ Social groups in the region interact with a sense of togetherness and mutual respect

◼ Trust in public institutions and the overall societal framework is at a high level among region's various social groups.

**For employees and the company itself:**

◼ BricksForImpact employees are expanding their soft skills, including openness, tolerance and the ability to work in teams.

◼ The opportunity to contribute to a good cause is deepening their loyalty to the company. Employee retainment is growing, and the average length of employment is increasing.

# STEP 3 – Develop a corporate volunteering strategy

A well thought-out strategy for social engagement describes a target state along with the path that will lead to that objective. Successful strategies typically leave enough freedom of action to allow participants to react to changes in the environment.

## 3.1 From the objective to the project measures

Choose **corporate volunteering measures that fit your objectives**! Do you want to organize a social day in order to activate as many employees as possible? Or would you prefer to establish a targeted mentoring program that allows employees to help young people who are having difficulties in school? Or should you opt instead for a secondment model that will help a particular manager develop their skills?

Think carefully about what group of employees is relevant, and how long the specific measure should last. Anything is possible, from one-day events to a half-year job-shadowing program. Of course, **individual measures can also be combined**. Sometimes, the resources available will also play a role in this decision.

Certain corporate volunteering measures make sense only if as many employees as possible can participate, for example at a social day. By contrast, nonprofit organizations can easily be overwhelmed by this kind of sporadic but concentrated engagement. Clarify in advance how many volunteers will in fact be useful for the project – and how many the partner organization can manage!

### Make sure you're providing recognition

Find ways to show or increase the appreciation being provided for employees' social engagement. Participation in a CV initiative should be recognized by managers, and actively encouraged as a part of the staff-development process. Try integrating corporate volunteering into management training programs or onboarding processes for new employees. Ensuring awareness of the relevance of corporate volunteering as a development tool generally also requires conditions such as having enough time or mental space. It can be very difficult to get staff members stressed by their daily work routines to be excited about CV measures.

Although CV activities are voluntary and unpaid, they cost money, and resources for them need to be planned:

- Create a **time budget**: Plan carefully for the quantity of time that employees will have to spend away from their regular work, and make sure you include project management tasks in the time budget!

- Calculate the **material costs**: Will you have to use company infrastructure (office rooms, transportation)? Also take into account the costs and necessary expenditures that will be incurred by the nonprofit partner organization. Ideally, you will also cover their costs at the place where the volunteering is being carried out (e.g., catering and materials)!

- Consider whether you want to **support the activities with additional donations**, as your nonprofit partner's resources will be tied up while you're carrying out the joint project.

> *"All of our corporate volunteering programs, including the pro bono program, are closely linked to our human resources development. Through volunteering, our employees can develop and expand skills and competencies outside their day-to-day project work with on-the-job pro bono projects and thus in completely different sectors - and within the framework of our along-the-job corporate volunteering programs."*
>
> Claudia Frenzel, KPMG

■ Make sure you're coordinating with your company's **regular operations**: The use of employees can interfere with other managers' plans for day-to-day company business. Thus, make sure you include executives in the planning and decision-making processes at an early stage! → Step 1.1

■ Do a reality check: To avoid raising false expectations for the CV program, you should carry out environmental analyses in advance, both inside and outside the company. For example, are there a sufficient number of nonprofit organizations, or the right ones, to support your plans? Think about the location, as well as who will be internally responsible for implementation! → Step 1.4

■ Make sure you're communicating clearly internally! Extensive internal communication is necessary to convince employees of the value of the CV program. It also helps to recruit participants, and will help market the program. → Step 8.3

## 3.2   Corporate volunteering engagement formats

There's one basic decision you should make in advance: Do you want to implement your corporate volunteering initiative as a company strategy? Or do you instead want to provide recognition, support and encouragement for employees' private volunteer work? → Step 3.6

If you decide to initiate and manage the corporate volunteering engagement program from within the company, you'll have to settle on the right format. In this regard, measures differ with regard to...

■ The **expertise required** to participate.
■ The objectives pursued.
■ The **duration** of the measure.
■ The **number of participating employees** and their function within the company.

The literature contains a bewildering diversity of descriptions regarding the specifics of a CV programs. Simplifying this somewhat, you can essentially choose from **five different options, which are sometimes difficult to distinguish clearly from one another** (→ Page 23).

*"Basically, our co-workers will engage in any corporate volunteering format. We think that's great, because every individual has his or her own strengths. We make a very rough distinction between formats that are skills-based, and those for which people can just jump right in, so to speak. At the same time, we take the format of the encounter with the public into account: Is something like this taking place? And if so, in what form?"*

Rania Al-Khatib, Deutsche Post DHL

# Decision tree

There are many different forms of corporate volunteering, all of which offer their own opportunities and risks.

The following decision tree will help bring you one step closer to the format that's right for you:

**How often should the CV activity take place?**

- Once
- Regularly / multiple times

**Low-threshold (hands-on) or skills-based?**

- Hands-on
- Skills-based

**Number of people participating?**

- < 10
- > 10
- < 5
- > 5

**How long should the activity last?**

- 1-3 days
- Multiple weeks/ months

**One idea would be…**

- Mentoring
- Secondment
- Pro bono work
- Social day-series
- Social day series
- Pro bono Work
- Social shadow-ing mentoring
- Social day 'secondment'

## 1. Action days (also called Social days)

On action days, a day is set aside for volunteer work, for example to paint classrooms, plant seedlings or pick up litter in parks. Employees often participate for only a few hours, and generally perform rather simple manual tasks – but that generally means that many people join in. This explains why this format is very popular among companies. A somewhat more skills-based form of social days can be found with career days, for example, during which employees give interested young people a first look into the professional world, or organize tours of their companies' facilities.

🔹 **ADVANTAGES:** Action days offer a change of pace from daily work, facilitate team building and rarely require participants to have specific professional qualifications. Moreover, action days are an excellent opportunity to attract (and convince) skeptical employees, or those who have previously been less committed.

🔹 **DISADVANTAGES:** Due to their event-like character, action days tend to have a low level of social impact. In addition, action days are often very expensive for the partner organization to organize or require considerable effort. Thus, discuss the issue of relative costs and benefits as early as possible with the project partner.

🔹 Olivia Foster wants a format that will enable the company to pursue both social and corporate goals. For example, she would like to make employees more open to other social groups and people with different (social) backrounds, facilitate dialogue between these societal groups, and thus create a sense of togetherness and mutual respect. In order to achieve these goals, and to involve as many employees as possible, the format should have a low threshold to participation, while also arousing curiosity about the subject of corporate volunteering. In addition, the format should present employees with the opportunity to participate over a longer period of time as well. Given these considerations, it appears to Foster that a combination of a social day and a mentoring program would be appropriate.

## 2. Mentoring

This widespread form of social engagement allows employees to act as mentors, for example by tutoring disadvantaged youth. However, mentoring can also be interesting for employees who want to contribute their know-how to nonprofit organization bodies, for instance as a board member or adviser.

Mentoring is becoming increasingly important; first, because of the huge variety of forms it can take in terms of design and specific volunteer opportunities, and second, because it helps develop professional and social skills.

🔹 **ADVANTAGES:** Mentoring is a good way to promote employees' personal development. Because it promises continuity and ongoing commitment, mentoring is also particularly interesting for nonprofits.

🔹 **DISADVANTAGES:** It is often difficult to find just the right mentoring assignments. Moreover, it usually requires a long-term commitment, good professional or subject-area preparation, and a high degree of reliability on the part of all those involved – both the mentors and the mentees.

## 3. Social shadowing

This measure is focused on the personal development of individual employees or even entire teams. A typical example is the "role shift" by an executive, who takes on a volunteer job-shadowing role in a nonprofit organization, and temporarily, but with long-term effect, makes their expertise available to that group.

🔹 **ADVANTAGES:** Social shadowing facilitates individual learning and is therefore very suitable for the purposes of staff development. It builds on workers' professional expertise and can be used in a targeted way to support nonprofits' organizational development.

🔹 **DISADVANTAGES:** The format requires intensive preparation, and considerable fundamental reflection on the part of participants. Moreover, it generally allows for only a rather brief insight into the nonprofit world.

## 4. Secondment

Under this model, employees are sent to nonprofit organizations, often for periods of up to six months or more, to carry out technical or management tasks there. This can be interesting for older employees, for example, as preparation for a post-employment phase of life ("secondment for transition").

🔹 **ADVANTAGES:** The intensity of secondment stimulates personal development and contributes to a lasting change of perspective. For the nonprofit organization, secondment can provide very effective support – to the extent it has been planned on the basis of genuine need.

🔹 **DISADVANTAGES:** Secondment can be quite cost-intensive. Employees are often involved on a long-term basis and are thus unable to carry out their ordinary work during this time. Moreover, secondment is often limited to just a few employees, and can thus be scaled to only a very limited degree.

## 5. Pro bono work

When a company provides services to a nonprofit organization without charging a fee, the focus is on the employees' core competences. For example, a communications agency may develop a marketing campaign, a law firm might provide advice on legal matters and an IT company could create a new website.

🔹 **ADVANTAGES:** Pro bono work is skills-based, and thus has a very high degree of social impact. It creates significant added value for the nonprofit organization, is meaningful work and promises considerable recognition for the employees involved.

🔹 **DISADVANTAGES:** Only a few employees tend to be involved. In addition, there is little to distinguish the work itself from everyday business tasks.

*"Pro bono mandates are taken just as seriously as all other client engagements!"*

Interview with Claudia Frenzel, KPMG

**What motivated KPMG to carry out pro bono projects?**

It is within our vision and at the core of our CSR strategy to use our expertise and skills, as well as our capabilities, to make an effective contribution to society. With our pro bono advisory services, we support nonprofits with very specific needs and thus contribute to their professionalization.

**What was your experience with introducing the program?**

It took us about a year to set up the program in terms of processes. We initially started with four pilot projects to finetune our processes and then rolled out the project. From my point of view, this pilot phase was essential.

**What is the response among employees to your pro bono program?**

After each project, employees say how great it was to get a taste of the nonprofit environment. They experience appreciation and a sense of reward in a very different way. It is precisely this effect that inspires more and more employees

to sign up as volunteers. However, there is still a need for continuous communication in order to ensure that all internal stakeholders are informed about the program.

**How are executives involved?**

Executives play a role in every pro bono contract, as well as in any other mandate, if only for quality assurance purposes. We also treat pro bono projects like any normal client project, which sends a clear signal both internally and externally. Namely that we take our pro bono jobs just as seriously as we do any of our other customer contracts.

**What kind of results have you seen so far?**

Program evaluations have revealed a variety of positive effects on the company's culture and the perception of KPMG as an employer, as well as enhancements in employees' skills, empathy, ability to work in teams and self-confidence. In addition, our volunteers also learn from the partner organizations. When we ask employees whether the knowledge they've gained through pro bono jobs is transferable to other work contexts, we see 100% agreement! All of the volunteers we've surveyed say they would recommend participation in the pro bono program to others!

## Pro bono work

When employees make their skills available on a pro bono basis, this often takes place in a setting that is both new and unfamiliar to them. The environment, context and culture of a nonprofit organization often demand considerable personal and mental flexibility. For this reason, pro bono engagement is particularly suitable for young employees. By performing such tasks, they can develop their professional skills relatively quickly, while also increasing their selfconfidence.

## 3.3 Time used for volunteering

One key challenge for the success of the corporate volunteering program is making sure the program and its demands are as attractive as possible to potential participants. The program's appeal will be strongly dependent on the **range of possible assignments and the rules governing use of working time**.

**Providing appropriate blocks of time** often presents the greatest hurdle for those developing CV initiatives. CV measures should generally take place during normal working hours. The amount of time you'll want to free up for employees will depend strongly on the CV initiative's strategic significance, as well as the format selected for the CV program.

**Audi allows a period of eight hours** every year per employee, **IT company Salesforce allows seven days**, and **consulting company KPMG allows six days** – although in this latter case, pro bono assignments do not count toward the total, being regarded instead as normal working time. Decide for yourself what quantity of time is appropriate, and what fits with your objectives and the format of your own CV program.

## 3.4 Corporate volunteering in the era of demographic change

The 30- to 45-year-old age group typically shows the strongest levels of social engagement, while employees over 50 tend to participate in CV measures much less often (AmCham Germany, Roland Berger Strategy Consultants, 2011). However, it's also worth looking at older employee groups, or even retirees, because CV programs promote lifelong learning for all age groups.

Such individuals may also be attracted by

the sense of meaningful work, the opportunity to be exposed to different perspectives and the support of the company in **preparing for the post-employment phase of life**. In this way, the experience this demographic group possesses can be used on behalf of the company up to the point of retirement and even beyond.

The German company **Henkel** offers a good example of a format of this kind: Here, even retirees can continue their volunteer work, proposing projects and pursuing the company's overarching vision of social engagement.

Consider how you too can design your measures so that your different employee groups' special skills and experiences are used in a meaningful way.

*"Our employees do their volunteer work primarily in their free time, but some formats also take place during working hours. After all, natural catastrophes and school sessions don't take place (only) after the workday has finished. We have also noticed that when our staffers are involved in face-to-face formats, they like to bring other participants with them, such as customers or their own family members. We prefer that activities of this kind take place on weekends."*

Rania Al-Khatib, Deutsche Post DHL

> *"There's been a huge rush around the topic of corporate volunteering in retirement. More and more companies are approaching us looking for opportunities for their former employees. We're enthusiastic about this trend, and see it as offering considerable potential."*
>
> Beatrix Hertle, lagfa bayern

## Planning and management

- Budget plan, impact orientation, milestone schedule
- Data collection
- Indicator database
- Employee time off management
- Record of volunteer time
- Can be connected with other devices / apps / intranet

## Groups, profiles, and information and networking functions for employees

- Volunteer reports
- Activity descriptions
- Profiles for individual employees
- Self-service portal for employees
- Group management
- Group interaction

## 3.5    Software as a support tool

Please note: we do not receive any benefits or payments for products mentioned on this page.

To implement a corporate volunteering program smoothly, you'll need not only the right objectives and committed participants, but **ideally also an appropriate infrastructure**. When mounting a comparatively comprehensive Corporate volunteering measure, there is a lot to plan, organize and pay attention to. For this reason, an increasing number of software providers have begun offering **tools specifically developed for corporate engagement initiatives**, such as Benevity, YourCause and Salesforce's *Philanthropy Cloud*.

While these packages offer a broad range of individual features, it can be difficult to find just the right one immediately. Some large companies have even had their own software development departments **create their own tools internally**.

Thus, ask yourself at the outset which features you are likely to need. In doing so, you should refer to your project's focus in order to prioritize your must-haves and your nice-to-haves, and subsequently request demo versions from individual software providers. We've compiled a few of the **possible features** for you here:

## 3.6    Employee free-time engagement

Even if it's not strictly speaking "corporate" volunteering, it is **worthwhile to support the volunteer work that employees do during their free time**. Not least because this offers a good introduction to the world of corporate volunteering, both for the company and the employee.

Socially engaged people are typically strongly influenced by individually felt values and the desire for self-determination. This explains why employees may take a critical view of official CV measures. Private matters should remain private, goes this thinking, and social engagement should remain voluntary (rather than being led by the company). Companies that support employees' personal volunteering activities show that they respect this private sphere.

But for other reasons too, it can be worthwhile to think about supporting private social engagement rather than engaging in a company-led CV initiative. CV programs often require considerable resources and coordination, along with an involved process of identifying and formulating objectives. Entities that support private activities thus save on these expenses. The downside is that social impact cannot be planned, and the initiatives supported generally have no direct relevance to the company. Nevertheless, the company can benefit even in these cases, through a corporate culture that values active social engagement, through the development of local ties as the employees act as company ambassadors, and through a reputation as a good employer.

There are a number of building blocks you can use to support employees' private social engagement:

🔷 Time: Private volunteering can't always take place in the evening hours or on weekends. In such cases, **flexible working hours** provide employees with the freedom they need. Best ex-ample: Volunteer fire departments.

🔷 **Resources**: Make additional resources available in order to support the engagement program, perhaps in the form of time off or the **use of company infrastructure such**

**as office supplies and rooms**. Financial support is also useful ("dollars for doers"). For example, the company could offer an additional donation for every hour an employee spends privately volunteering, or else provide a fixed amount per project.

🔷 **Information**: There is often a lack of knowledge about opportunities for participation. Who is already doing what? And where can good projects be found? **Online community platforms, which allow members to share experiences** and highlight good examples, will draw others to follow your lead, as well as potential helpers. Intermediary organizations such as volunteer-placement agencies can also help.

🔷 **Recognition:** Communications that highlight employees' private engagement contribute to a corporate culture that rewards the dedication of every individual. **Intranet messages, inhouse magazines, company parties** and other venues can be used to call out good examples.

In all of these cases, you should explain why the company supports its employees' private engagement – and how this fits in with the company's philosophy.

*"We think it's great when companies clearly design their corporate volunteering programs as voluntary activities, while also offering incentives for employees. Social engagement should be clearly supported by the company. Programs should be considered over the long term, and supported by allowing the use of working hours, or even through monetary rewards. If a volunteer breaks off their work with us due to a lack of time, or because of unclear time resources, it is a big problem for us and our target group."* Vera Steiner, JOBLINGE Berlin

# Tip for corporate volunteering professionals

Once you've answered the core questions associated with your corporate volunteering initiative, you should work to make it a lasting component of the company's activities. Developing suitable procedures and structures requires time and energy, but will also lead to a higher level of commitment, better processes and clear responsibilities – which in turn will make your job much easier in the future. In this context, we recommend that you draw up a set of corporate volunteering guidelines. corporate volunteering guidelines can today be found in many companies, especially those that have multiple locations or operate internationally. These guidelines address the following topics:

- (Social impact) objectives
- Thematic areas, criteria for exclusion
- Responsibilities, processes, approval policies
- Time off policies, promotion of employees' private engagement
- Structures for social impact assessment and reporting
- Legal issues

## CASE

## John Deere's volunteering journey and the John Deere Foundation

The U.S. company John Deere and the John Deere Foundation are socially engaged mainly in regions where the company also has a branch office. For a number of years, the John Deere Foundation and the company's U.S. and European subsidiaries have sought to create a strong culture of engagement and philanthropy. One of the central pillars in this regard in Germany, for example, is employee volunteering. Depending on the local context, the measures and formats for employee volunteering vary and range from low-threshold to more complex projects.

### Education mentoring: Partnership with iJAG (Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates)

iJAG is a U.S.-American nonprofit organization connecting business and education to provide the most cost-effective dropout prevention and school-to-career solutions in Iowa. Students in the iJAG program face several challenges at home and inside the classroom in adapting to the education system. The program design relies on real-world, project-based educational methods that are combined with an approach aimed at cultivating personal bonding with students. iJag specialists help program beneficiaries overcome barriers and empower them in their career and in the next steps they face in education.

Since 2005 the John Deere Foundation has donated more than $2.5 million to iJAG, making it the program's largest private sector funder. In addition to this contribution, various local businesses and organizations, such as United Way, also support the program implementation with donations and volunteers.

### Social day: The Day of Caring in Germany

In 2015, John Deere Germany launched its CV program with a social day. Five years later, hundreds of employees at a half-dozen locations are now packing bags of food for their local food banks. The annual Day of Caring is a collaborative project between John Deere, the John Deere Foundation, PHINEO, United Way and regional food bank locations.

### STEM mentoring: Partnership with Hands On Technology

With the aim of offering John Deere employees a further opportunity to engage in skills-based volunteering, the company has had a partnership with the Leipzig-based nonprofit Hands on Technology since 2020. This organization organizes Lego robotics competitions as a part of the global FIRST Lego League initiative. Young people form teams to compete on the basis of their robotics skills. The company's staff members can support the competition in an organizational role or join in as a team coach.

### Outlook

With the goal of sharing know-how and making it available to other companies, John Deere has partnered with PHINEO to support education and dialogue formats. These include publications, webinars, workshops and events that bring together people from different organizations. In the future, some of these measures will support the involvement of both regular and executive-level employees.

*"For John Deere, being anchored in society is very important. We thus encourage private engagement in the same way as we do corporate engagement. With our current activities, we'd like to motivate more colleagues to get actively involved."*

Mark von Pentz, John Deere

Find out more at:

→ https://www.phineo.org/en/magazine/volunteering-day-how-john-deere-links-social-engagement-and-core-business

# STEP 4 – Find the right partner

According to the National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS), there are more than 1.5 million nonprofit organizations registered in the United States. This figure includes public charities and private foundations, as well as other non-for-profit entities such as chambers of commerce, fraternal organizations and civic leagues. All of these organizational types can be considered as candidates for cooperation. To narrow the circle of potential candidates, the next step is to translate your strategy into action: Who specifically does your company want to work with, and in what way?

## 4.1 Why a partner?

There are three main reasons why corporate volunteering should be implemented jointly with a nonprofit organization:

▬ **A focus on needs:** It's not just that you want to do something good. You want to make a direct contribution to addressing a genuine societal challenge. In order to achieve this goal, you need to find out what the real needs are in your area of focus or in your region. Nonprofit organizations can help to ensure that your social engagement is actually applied where it is needed.

▬ **Social impact orientation:** When you work with a nonprofit organization, you can develop joint social impact objectives right from the start. This will ensure that your engagement in fact makes the social difference that you and the partner organization want to achieve.

▬ **Change in perspective:** The opportunity to leave the familiar work environment and venture into unfamiliar territory offers a wide range of opportunities for further development – and broadens people's horizons. Working in or with a nonprofit organization automatically allows you (or the company's employees) to learn about new realities in life and work.

## 4.2 Active or passive search?

There are basically **two options**: Either you choose from among the requests for cooperation that your company probably receives on a regular basis, or you initiate a search on your own. The most important thing is that you **don't leave the choice of the partnership to chance**. Rather, you must make a deliberate decision in selecting a cooperation partner.

The more visibly, invitingly and credibly your company's social engagement initiative is communicated, the more attractive it will appear to potential cooperation partners, and the more inquiries you will thus receive. If your external approach is more passive, you will have to rely on finding appropriate organizations yourself.

Searching for the right cooperation partner is easier today than it was in the past. In recent years, a **broad range of local volunteer offices and digital placement platforms** has emerged, serving as a bridge between the for-profit and nonprofit worlds. **Community foundations, neighborhood associations and municipal offices** today offer all kinds of advice and information. Some even provide specific services such as matchmaking between companies and nonprofit actors.

*"Working with volunteer placement agencies or intermediaries is appealing to us. They can help us find partners that are the perfect fit – that saves us considerable time and effort!"*

Vera Steiner, JOBLINGE Berlin

Intermediary agencies of this kind, which are often professionally run, support both sides in the initiation and implementation of CV projects, for instance by arranging volunteer work placements. Their advantage lies in their knowledge about and access to nonprofit organizations.

As an alternative or supplement to such intermediaries, you can **ask around within your corporate networks**. There are numerous promising approaches (e.g., The Conference Board, Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship → *https://conference-board.org/us/* ) that require corporate cooperation. If you help to strengthen networks of this kind, you'll benefit from the shared knowledge and the bundling of interests!

## 4.3   Key questions for the search

It can be helpful to define the criteria you'll use to make a first tentative list of potential partner organizations. Selection criteria of this kind are a good thing. **Within the company**, they help you make better, more thoroughly thought through decisions. This in turn makes the selection process more transparent. **Externally**, criteria of this kind sharpen outsiders' picture of your engagement strategy, and contribute to realistic ex-

pectations management ("Does it makes sense to submit a cooperation agreement to this company?").

Pay attention to three aspects in particular when doing your research: **transparency**, **organizational fit** and **social impact**. Some companies rely primarily on references and recommendations – which is understandable, but also causes small, highly promising nonprofit organizations to fall through the cracks. Thus, take a leap of faith and put some smaller nonprofits as wildcards on your short list of potential partners. You'll find a checklist that can be used for this purpose on → page 31.

One rule of thumb: The more involved you want to be, the larger your planned investment and the longer-term the partnership is expected to be, the more criteria the nonprofit organization should fulfill, and the closer you should look to see how strong the fit is.

In this regard, it's important to remember that the organization doesn't have to be perfectly equipped in all areas from the beginning. Companies can also consciously decide to help organizations **develop a stronger impact orientation**. Suggestions for this task are offered in → Step 7

From time to time, BricksForImpact does receive donation requests from local associations, but Olivia Foster sees this as being too small-scale. Therefore, she writes down a list of criteria for a suitable partner organization. It needs to be a nonprofit organization that is located in or near Greenville. The organization's approach should involve promoting encounters between people from different backgrounds – for example, between those with different levels of education, those who come from different districts of the city, or those with and without disabilities. It is also important that the organization bring relevant references to the table. Here, however, Foster would be satisfied if the organization is well-known within city government circles, and if the nonprofit's online presence and annual reports are informative, transparent and plausible. BricksForImpact and the organization can also together take a look at the social impact achieved by the nonprofit to date. There is also one last point that Foster doesn't want to leave out: The support should not only benefit the company, but should also be of genuine assistance to the nonprofit.

The following portfolio emerges from conversations with co-workers and city employees. First, the local religious or spiritual community; second, local sports associations; third, an academic mentoring program for the city's elementary school; and fourth, the youth center in the neighboring district.

Together with her colleagues, Foster decides to go with the youth center, which not only fulfills the criteria noted above, but also scores extra points because BricksForImpact employees can all contribute their individual strengths. During a first telephone inquiry, Foster learns that the center is always looking for mentors and advisers for youth groups. An ideal fit!

# CHECKLIST

## Finding the right partner organization

The following checklist outlines aspects that can be used to identify professional and impact-oriented nonprofits. Very few organizations fully live up to this ideal. The list should thus be regarded as a means of approximating the social impact potential held by individual nonprofit organizations. Thus, in the next step, take a closer look at the issue of social impact. Some of these questions may be best addressed in an initial face-to-face conversation.

- [ ] Does the organization present its structures, business processes and funding in a transparent way?

- [ ] Does it have stable structures and financing sources?

- [ ] Can clear areas of responsibility be identified (e. g., management, supervisory structures, finances and controlling)?

- [ ] Are business processes transparent and documented?

- [ ] Are relevant legal documents (e. g., articles of association, annual reports) available and accessible?

- [ ] Do our ideas match the nonprofit's goals?

- [ ] Do the nonprofit organization's needs mesh with the kind of corporate volunteering activity we want to provide?

- [ ] Can work assignments at or with the nonprofit be adapted to our circumstances?

- [ ] Is our corporate volunteering plan appealing to the organization?

- [ ] What common goals might we have?

- [ ] Does the organization address the issue of social impact? Does it identify its social impact objectives? Does it report on its social impact? → Step 6

- [ ] Does the organization have a clear vision and strategy?

If you can answer yes to most of the above questions, you already have a good indication that this is a professionally operated organization that offers a considerable degree of fit with your company.

# STEP 5 – Design your corporate volunteering partnership with impact in mind

*"Keep yourself focused on the company's core competences, and align yourself with experienced partners from the nonprofit sector. Just like in their core business, companies are only effective in their social engagement when they do what they're good at. Where the competences associated with the firm's business operations end, an expert is needed — that is, at the point where the social engagement is actually implemented."*

Rania Al-Khatib, Deutsche Post DHL

The project partner has been found. Now it's time to get started. Yet, like many other endeavors, even well-planned CV projects rarely proceed in a straight line. In order to

adapt to possible challenges as early as possible, you'll need a relationship of mutual trust, a suitable reporting system and a project management team that can react quickly to changes. More than anything, however, this requires a good feeling for the partner organization.

## 5.1 Change of perspective: The world of nonprofit organizations

For companies, the world of nonprofit organizations often represents uncharted territory. Therefore, for corporate volun-

## CASE — Airbus Foundation's volunteering journey

Video → *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yds5u_zlcuw*

◾ The international "Flying Challenge" program of the Airbus Foundation was created jointly with United Way in France, and since that time has also been implemented in the United States and the United Kingdom.

It shows students on a practical level that the practical skills they learn in school will be needed later in their working lives. The goal is to motivate them to finish school, excite them about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) topics, and inspire them to pursue a career with a good future.

The Airbus Foundation successfully started the program implementation on a pilot basis in Munich, where Airbus operates one of its offices in Germany. The program started with an analytical phase, where the conditions at the

Munich location where assessed regarding societal needs and gaps, relevant stakeholders and potential program partners.

Young people in the region with a migrant background and/or from socioeconomically disadvantaged families are often affected by educational disparities. The Flying Challenge program was thus focused on this target group. For the implementation on the ground, the Airbus Foundation selected the local nonprofit RockYourLife! as its partner. Within the scope of a tandem mentoring program, a group of Airbus employees met regularly with students and youth over a six-month period. Their conversations ranged from career options to issues drawn from daily life. The program was supplemented by three key events: a kick-off, a factory tour and a flight experience held at the end of the six months.

Find out more at:

→ *https://www.united-way-germany.org/en/what-we-do/airbus/*

teering measures to succeed, an understanding of nonprofit organizations' motivations and working style is needed.

For nonprofit organizations, collaboration with companies is becoming **increasingly important**. This means that organizations often greatly appreciate the fact that the business community is seeking to tackle societal challenges. At the same time, they expect such relationships to be conducted on an equal footing.

From the organization's perspective, the cooperative activity is in **no way simply a service** being provided to the company. Rather, it is seen as a joint activity primarily intended to contribute to the organization's own social mission. If a company fails to consider the nonprofit's needs and goals, the organization will see itself degraded to the status of a mere event-planning agency or charity recipient – and the planned corporate volunteering measure will inevitably be disappointing.

## EXAMPLE

Olivia Foster has multiple discussions with the youth center's management board. Together, they discuss what tasks can be taken on by which partner, and how to tell whether the partnership is a success. With regard to the issue of a suitable volunteering format, both sides agree on a two-part model: Once a month, the company's employees will take on the supervision of youth groups, according to their individual personal strengths – for example, by supporting a painting group or a sports team. The mentors will support the center's full-time supervisory staffers. Working with other BricksForImpact volunteers, they also plan an annual neighborhood festival at which the youth groups can showcase themselves and their activities. This will crea-

te a meeting place where families, friends and neighbors can encounter one another. In discussions with the youth center's board, it quickly becomes clear that the organization lacks the financial resources to be able to engage in viable long-term projects, or even to launch the partnership reliably. Therefore, Foster reserves $10,000 from her annual budget to serve as a yearly donation. Foster and the youth center board agree on an initial three-year partnership, and then discuss what key data points will be included in the reporting process, and when they should set reporting deadlines. They agree that some key metrics will be collected without going into too much detail, and that in order to save on resources, the reporting will be based on information that the youth center is already providing to other funding entities.
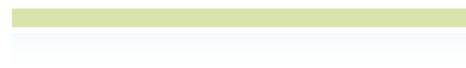
However, the risks associated with a project are not solely on the side of the company; the nonprofit too is taking a chance when entering into a CV collaboration. It is thus advisable to identify and assess any risks and reservations that may be perceived by the nonprofit organization.

### Resource expenditure

The **expenses for the nonprofit** resulting from the collaboration with a company should not be underestimated, particularly given the fact that time and money are often scarce commodities in such organizations. If the organization's calculation shows that its costs can be expected to exceed any benefit received through the CV project, it is very likely to turn down the offer of cooperation. Especially in cases of brief projects or short-lived partnerships, or when volunteers have limited skills or are not a good fit for the work, nonprofit organizations will probably

**Skilled worker shortage in the nonprofit sector:**

Like the business sector, nonprofit organizations are suffering from a shortage of young staff members and skilled workers. These organizations' governing bodies are thus likely to view employees from companies as welcome reinforcements.

offer their thanks and decline. You can increase organizations' willingness to engage in a cooperative venture by supplementing the volunteers' time and technical expertise with an offer to provide financial support or a donation, especially if this can generate structural benefits (e.g., IT, legal advice, etc.). And above all, make sure you're listening carefully. What does the organization really need, what will help push it to the next level, what does it not in fact need at all?

### Reputational risks

Some nonprofits aren't sure how far they're willing to serve as an **advertisement** or even a **fig leaf** for a company, and wonder whether the company is in fact seeking to use its social engagement to divert attention from problematic business practices. Entering into cooperation with a company that has a negative reputation can cause lasting damage to a nonprofit organization's public image and credibility. Thus, be sure to communicate your goals and interests. Act transparently from the beginning, and make it credible that you sincerely care about the social impact being generated.

### Internal dynamics

Like companies, nonprofit organizations must engage in internal persuasion campaigns. In order to win employees' support for the cooperation with the company, they'll need to discuss the rationale and goals of the partnership, along with any potential reservations. You can help to facilitate this process

## In some cases, offers may be rejected

Some companies believe that sending employees to volunteer is the equivalent of providing financial support. This is only partially true. Bear in mind that you may in fact not be doing the organization any favors with your corporate volunteering measure – and accept the rejection with good grace if they decline the offer.

by offering to provide detailed answers to any questions asked by your partner organization's team.

## 5.2 Clarify roles and expectations

To appropriately address the risks outlined above, it will be useful to identify the roles and expectations in the partnership as early as possible. The first step in doing so is to clarify the basic parameters:

▪ Have you and the organization each articulated your objectives for the project, including both the business case and the social case? → Step 5.1

▪ What specific individuals will be working on the project, and what roles will each of them play? Who will substitute for whom in cases of absence?

▪ Who will make the decisions? Who will communicate the status of the project, the fact that goals have been achieved, and key deadlines?

▪ Who will contribute what resources to the project?

What are the exact procedures? Who needs to be where, and when? – In these latter questions in particular, the partner organization is the expert. Listening well is hugely important to make sure you are contributing realistic ideas.

■ Have you agreed on a joint set of social impact objectives? → Step 2.3

■ Have you jointly identified indicators for the impact analysis? → Step 6.4

■ Who will be responsible for briefing volunteers, and who will debrief them about their experiences afterward? → Step 6.4

■ Do you already have a cooperation agreement? → Step 5.3

*"My three tips:*

■ *First: The social engagement project must fit your company's CSR strategy.*

■ *Second: It is necessary to secure support from the management level, especially in the initial phase.*

■ *Third: Ensure that you make enough financial and staff resources available."*

Claudia Frenzel, KPMG

## 5.3   Lock down the terms of the agreement

The **rights and obligations of both parties to the collaboration should be contractually fixed**. The aspects specifically covered in the agreement will vary substantially from case to case, and will depend strongly on the project's scope and format.

Depending on the company, the document should address issues relating to the drafting of the contract itself, insurance coverage, compliance and legal departments, data protection, and communication.

Generally speaking, a project agreement can address or include the following aspects in their entirety or in part:

■ Preamble or context of the collaboration

■ Services to be delivered by each party, along with a description of the engagement format

■ Contact persons, roles and responsibilities

■ External presentation

■ Limitation of liability

■ Possible: Confidentiality clause

5

Available in English and German as an eBook (PDF) and in German as a print publication:

Our PHINEO Sector Report "Jobs head – Effective Approaches and Projects in the Transition from School to Work"

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→ *https://www.phineo.org/en/publications*

## 5.4 Ongoing coordination and dialogue

The volume of support your company provides to the organization will largely depend on the scope of the CV initiative, the volume of available resources and the organization's degree of professionalization. Even if there is no masterplan for efficient coordination in a partnership, there are some basic **criteria for success:**

▬ Communicate regularly with each other. If necessary, agree at the beginning of the project when and how often you will coordinate with one another.

▬ Set aside enough time for conversations and face-to-face meetings.

▬ Record the results of these discussions, and make them available to all participants, for example in the form of minutes, perhaps distributed through email lists.

▬ Promote a joint culture of learning, for example by engaging in regular analyses of what has gone right and wrong. This will require openness and trust from both sides, across hierarchical boundaries. → Step 7

▬ By actively providing feedback to the organization, you show that the project is important to you and that you appreciate the effort that went into creating it.

▬ Establish feedback mechanisms in the other direction as well, as comments from your nonprofit partner can provide valuable guidance in further developing your corporate volunteering program.

## The difference makes the magic

Different organizational cultures, professional languages and mindsets regularly collide in CV projects. Consultants trained to value efficiency, who talk about deadlines, KPIs and timelines, meet full-fledged pedagogues who are intimately familiar with their target groups, and who know that progress requires time, processes can be complicated and successes can often be communicated only in a very nuanced way. Particularly during the initial meetings in long-term CV projects, it is very important to exchange ideas about basic procedures, approaches and operational mechanisms. Moreover, it's vital to respond openly and respectfully to ways of working that might at first seem foreign or strange. Quite often, it is precisely these initially irritating encounters that turn out to be valuable sources of learning. Volunteers leave their familiar environments and step out of their comfort zones – and that's where the magic happens.

## 5.5 Reporting

There is still a tendency among some companies to complicate the work of non-profit organizations with detailed reporting requirements and use-of-funds statements. However, impact-oriented corporate volunteering management means that the partnership is characterized by a **healthy level of trust**, and that reporting obligations are kept to an appropriate level. Accordingly, the reporting requirements you impose on the nonprofit organization should be as lean as possible. A report could answer questions such as the following:

# "Be bold and have fun!"

Interview with Vera Steiner,
JOBLINGE Berlin (Germany)

**⬛ How would you describe a good corporate partner?**

It's perfect when there are one or two committed people in the company who can act as consistent contact persons. They can then filter the desires of the potential volunteers, and coordinate the assignments with us. Resources are scarce, and companies should factor that in. For instance, if a workshop is being held, it's great when they can provide the space and materials for it. Also, the procedures should be clear to both sides: How is what being done, and where? Who is showing up where when, and what's happening there? Otherwise, it's extremely important to us that the company be straightforward with us. It should tell us openly what it hopes to gain through the collaboration, along with what it expects to happen,

and what it wants to achieve. And maybe most important: Be bold, have fun, and be ready to embrace something new!

**⬛ What are some potential hurdles to cooperation?**

If the two partners fail to understand each other's expectations, or even if we fail to formulate ours clearly, it may turn out that the volunteers' work doesn't match up with actual needs. For example, the employees of one company wanted to support us by making our participants' resumes look more professional. Afterward, our young people came back with resumes whose language and design made it look like they were aiming at top management jobs, instead of having just completed training as a plant mechanic, for example. For us, the redesigns were completely unusable! That showed us that we have to talk to each other about different life realities.
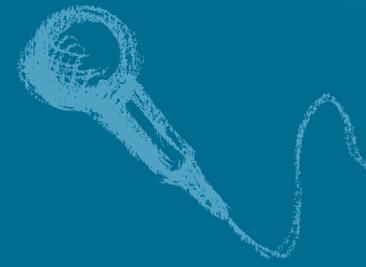
⬛ What activities and measures were carried out, and what were their objectives? What investments or resources were or are needed to perform the activities or provide the services?

⬛ What results were achieved? What target groups were reached, and what specifically

has changed in their living situations? What lessons were learned by the nonprofit organization – including from failures?

⬛ What methods were used to determine and document all of this? → Step 6

# STEP 6 – Evaluate your project's social impact

How can you determine whether your intended results are actually being achieved? What data can you use to answer this question? And how can your company convince the nonprofit organization to implement monitoring and evaluation procedures? – All this is what the sixth step is all about.

## 6.1 What is social impact?

In terms of community engagement, social impact is said to occur when a measure **leads to changes**…

⬛ Within the target group, and / or

⬛ In their living environment, and / or

⬛ Within society.

One thing is important to think about in advance: **Avoid having exaggerated expectations** regarding the measurability of corporate volunteering results! Instead, when evaluating CV measures, use comparable staff-development measures as a yardstick. Focus on the possible – and on what's most important: A good impact analysis focuses on the objectives that are most relevant to the measure's primary addressees (→ Step 1.2).

> *"Many companies look for metrics and benchmarks that can succinctly represent and compare their CV measures – and even legitimize them. This is often followed by an attempt to calculate the monetary value of the time worked. This is problematic, because there are no standardized hourly rates for volunteer work:*
>
> *A minimum hourly wage of €9.50, for example, doesn't do justice to high-value pro bono services.*
>
> *And using real hourly wages as a baseline doesn't reflect actual market conditions, as nonprofit organizations usually wouldn't be able to afford these. The value of nonprofit work is overall too multifaceted and difficult to quantify to enable it to be expressed in such a figure. Qualitative descriptions are more appropriate in this regard."*

Jonathan Przybylski, VONOVIA

## 6.2 Why results should be measured and evaluated

Everyone's talking about social impact these days. The international environment seems to abound in impact-oriented entities. But the degree to which individual companies are already thinking in terms of objectives and societal improvement in fact depends strongly on the individual sector and region.

The potential offered by impact-oriented corporate volunteering management is primarily reflected in the following factors:

### Social impact provides motivation and legitimation

For a social engagement project to be successful over the long term, various internal and external stakeholders must be convinced of the initiative's added value. For example, if the company's decision-makers cannot plausibly demonstrate that the expenditure is genuinely resulting in social impact and/or fulfilling the business case (→ Getting started: Added value through corporate volunteering), they are very likely to cut the program. Moreover, employees and other potentially other interested parties are also likely to want to be informed. Nothing underscores the seriousness of your commitment more than the fact that the social engagement project is leading to demonstrable positive change.

### Social impact helps with learning, improving and managing

Analyzing the social impact achieved by individual measures, and comparing results on this basis, can help improve your overall civic-engagement strategy, making it more effective. Which projects are particularly successful, and should be continued or even scaled up? And which projects have been

*"We use evidence of social impact for a variety of purposes. It helps make our engagement more transparent to our own employees, and helps motivate them, for example through regular webinars. We additionally use evidence of social impact to make the projects more comparable for us internally. In addition to the SDGs, we look at social impact as a parameter. It's also the case that projects with greater social impact tend to be allocated more funding."*

Rania Al-Khatib, Deutsche Post DHL

| *Inputs* | *Outputs* | *Outcomes* | *Impact* |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Resources** | **Services and products** | **Results at the target-group level** | **Results at the societal level** |

rather disappointing in terms of their social impact? With the help of a social impact analysis, resources can be steered toward activities that allow them to generate the optimal results.

### 6.3 Develop a logic model

The various levels of social impact can best be explained with reference to a so-called logic model. You'll need a logic model of this kind in your engagement strategy in order to plan and achieve your intended results. The task of the logic model is to place the planned social impact objectives and the resources and services needed to achieve these goals into a causal relationship. For example, a logic model helps you review the plausibility and feasibility of a proposed corporate volunteering measure. While there are countless variations on the idea of logic models, in the following sections we will use **the input-output-outcome-impact (I-O-O-I) model.**

#### Inputs (resources)

Inputs refer to all resources that are necessary in order to realistically be able to implement a CV measure. For any specific CV measure, this may include funding, staff resources (paid and volunteer), material resources and infrastructure (office space, etc.). Your company will probably contribute primarily money and in-kind resources.

#### Outputs (services)

The outputs include the services and products generated over the course of the corporate volunteering measure, as well as the use of these services by the target group. Outputs should be reviewed on the basis of a variety of parameters.

■ **Does the service / product correspond to the target group's real (and not just perceived) needs?**



**More on the development of a logic model ... and the IOOI-Modell** in our SOCIAL IMPACT NAVIGATOR ("Kursbuch Wirkung") book, which is available in six different languages (including Italian, Spanish and German) as an eBook (PDF). The German-language edition is also available in print.

→ https://www.phineo.org/en/social-impact-navigator

*I-O-O-I*

Greatly simplified, BricksForImpact's **logic model** for its target group of young people looks like this:

**EXAMPLE**

■ **Is the target group satisfied with the service or product?** Satisfaction is a critical factor in determining whether an offering has in fact generated social impact among the project participants. The more enthusiastically that participants use a measure, the more likely it is to be successful.

■ **Is the target group actually using the service or product?** Just because an offer exists doesn't mean that the target group will also (consistently) use it.

The success of the Corporate volunteering measure, and thus of your social engagement campaign more generally, depends strongly on the step from the outputs to the outcomes and impact, or the results at the target-group and societal levels.

### Outcomes (results within the target groups)

Outcomes are the results at the level of the target groups. This may take the form of a change in knowledge, skills or attitudes, or of changes in behavior and actions. When a target group demonstrates new insights, changes its attitudes or shifts behavioral patterns, that is an outcome. This last outcome, a change in behavior, creates the basis for improvements in the target group's living conditions, for instance by leading to financial or social gains.

### Impact (societal-level results)

While outcomes refer to the measure's results within the target groups, impact (used in this specific sense) refers to the desired changes at the overall societal level. For example, this may be changes in social or economic conditions within the society. In this sense, impact always refers to a specific part of the society, such as the population within a certain district of a city, or within a region.

**But watch out:** Developments at the societal level are **influenced by a wide range of factors**! It is often **difficult or even impossible to prove** a causal relationship between a corporate volunteering measure and a

| Inputs | Outputs | | Outcomes | Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Resources** | **Services and products** | | **Results at the target-group level** | **Results at the societal level** |
| *"What we invest in the project"* | *"What we do or offer in our project, and the people we reach"* | | *"What we want our project to achieve within our target groups"* | *"The contribution we want to make with our project at the societal level"* |
| Unrestricted donation (that is, a non-earmarked donation) Employee resources (time, etc.) | Group activities for young people take place | | Young people are learning soft skills such as tolerance, openness and empathy | There is a stronger communal spirit and sense of mutual respect in society. |
| | | | Youth are learning hard skills such as various sports, job-application skills, a professional mindset, etc. | |
| | | | Young people are experiencing a sense of self-efficacy, and are mentally stronger | |
| | Neighborhood festival takes place | | Relatives, friends and people from different societal backgrounds are building tolerance and openness toward one another | |

*Corporate volunteering activity*

**Supervision of youth groups**

**Organization of the neighborhood festival**

*"Thanks to regular surveys, we know, that some formats have a quite positive effect on our staff members. They are more satisfied and feel a closer connection to the company. But our partner organizations also send us clear signals, for example, that long-term formats are more effective than one-off actions. Volunteer work that takes place over multiple sessions, or which is skills-based, results in greater social impact. Thus, we try to develop our staff members' engagement. We start with one-off activities, and then motivate them to repeat and continue their work, paving the way for skills-based volunteering."*

Rania Al-Khatib, Deutsche Post DHL

particular impact (especially since impact typically occurs only after the passage of considerable time).

## 6.4 Collect data and evaluate your results

Once you've created a logic model, this lays the foundation for the subsequent evaluation of the results. "Evaluation" may sound like a task requiring scientific training, but please don't worry. This means nothing more than collecting the right (easily gathered) data in order to measure your outputs, outcomes and societal-level impact. While the data on outputs alone does not allow you to draw conclusions regarding your social impact, it is nonetheless advisable to collect it, as this will allow you to develop a better understanding of which factors lead to what results. This in turn enables you to draw valuable project-management conclusions, and adapt your activities as necessary. For example, if you know that a specific CV measure has been particularly well received by the target group, and you also know why that is – for example, because you have conducted a survey of the target group – then it may

be easier to define additional social impact objectives based on this knowledge.

How can you track whether the social impact goals have been achieved?

### ▬ Focus your efforts!

If you don't have sufficient resources to evaluate all your CV projects to the same level of precision, it can be worthwhile to focus on one exemplary project. With every evaluation, you will learn something new, and many lessons can also be applied to other projects. In addition, the evaluation of a project has a signaling effect –- that is, if a project has demonstrably generated social impact, it will underscore the credibility of your activities.

### ▬ Back up every social impact objective with appropriate indicators!

Indicators are used to determine whether a particular state of affairs is in place, or a certain event has occurred. Indicators give information regarding a project's **progress**, and on whether it is proceeding as planned. For example, yellow leaves on the trees are an indicator that autumn is

| Inputs | Outputs | Outcomes | Impacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| Resources | Services and products | Wirkungen auf Ebene der Zielgruppe | Wirkungen auf gesellschaftlicher Ebene |
| *"What we invest in the project"* | *"What we do or offer in our project, and what we achieve with it"* | *"What we want our project to achieve within our target groups"* | *"The contribution we want to make with our project at the societal level"* |
| Amount of donation

Number of volunteer hours spent | Number of instances in which young people were supervised by employees ( ● count)

Number of young people that regularly take part in the offerings ( ● count)

Number of participants at the neighbor-hood festival ( ● count) | Number of young people who say the offerings have expanded or strengthened their skills ( ● survey)

Development of positive dynamics in the youth groups, for example with regard to teamwork, conflict-management skills, or new attitudes toward inclusion and diversity ( ● observation)

Number of young people who say they have friends from different family or social backgrounds ( ● survey) | Reduced number of conflicts or incidents of discrimination in the local area (e.g., based on statistics from victim associations or victim counseling centers) Improvement in school per-formance due to stronger self-confidence among young people ( ● surveys of parents, caregivers, teachers, etc.) |

coming, and dancing leaves are an indicator of the presence of wind.

At the output, outcome and impact levels, ask yourself how you would recognize whether and to what degree the objectives in each of these categories had been attained. An indicator of this kind serves as a point of reference suggesting – or even clearly demonstrating – that the objective has been achieved.

### ◼ Draw on external support!

You might consider outsourcing the collection of data on your results to external professionals. Service providers that specialize in evaluations of this kind can certainly offer assistance, and many universities also have a suitable research focus. The nonprofit organizations themselves are of course often the experts in assessing social impact that takes place outside the company itself. If your

volunteers are directly active with the organization on the ground, you should ask the nonprofit for evidence of social impact.

### ◼ Draw on existing structures and established data-collection methods!

Collecting data on your social impact doesn't have to be a complicated task. Indeed, to save on resources, it can be woven into ongoing processes. If you don't want to use a separate questionnaire, for example, you can include questions about volunteers' satisfaction and experiences with the CV offerings in the company's annual employee survey.

There are many methods for collecting data on results, taking many forms. They differ greatly with regard to effort, the prior knowledge needed, and the validity and reliability of the statements produced. This is illustrated in the following figure (next page)

## Measuring social impact as a student thesis

The evaluation of your activities may also be interesting to students. Some may thus approach your company in the context of a bachelor's or master's thesis.

Thus, consider what you need the information for, and what levels of both **validity** and reliability you need the data to possess. At the start, less is often more. If your budget is small, or you're still in the project's early days, it's best to begin with **small, easily manageable measures** that you can gradually expand. The findings may initially be less precise, but this is in many cases **sufficient** to generate learning and improvement processes.

■ What is the information needed for?

■ How reliable do the statements being made need to be?

■ What level of effort can you realistically expend?

■ What information is needed, and what knowledge do you hope to generate?

■ How can the right data for the indicator be collected?

If you've decided to invest in a software package, be sure to use it for planning and carrying out your impact analysis. Some programs offer the ability to integrate relevant data directly, while then allowing it to be exported for use in the analysis. → Step 3.5
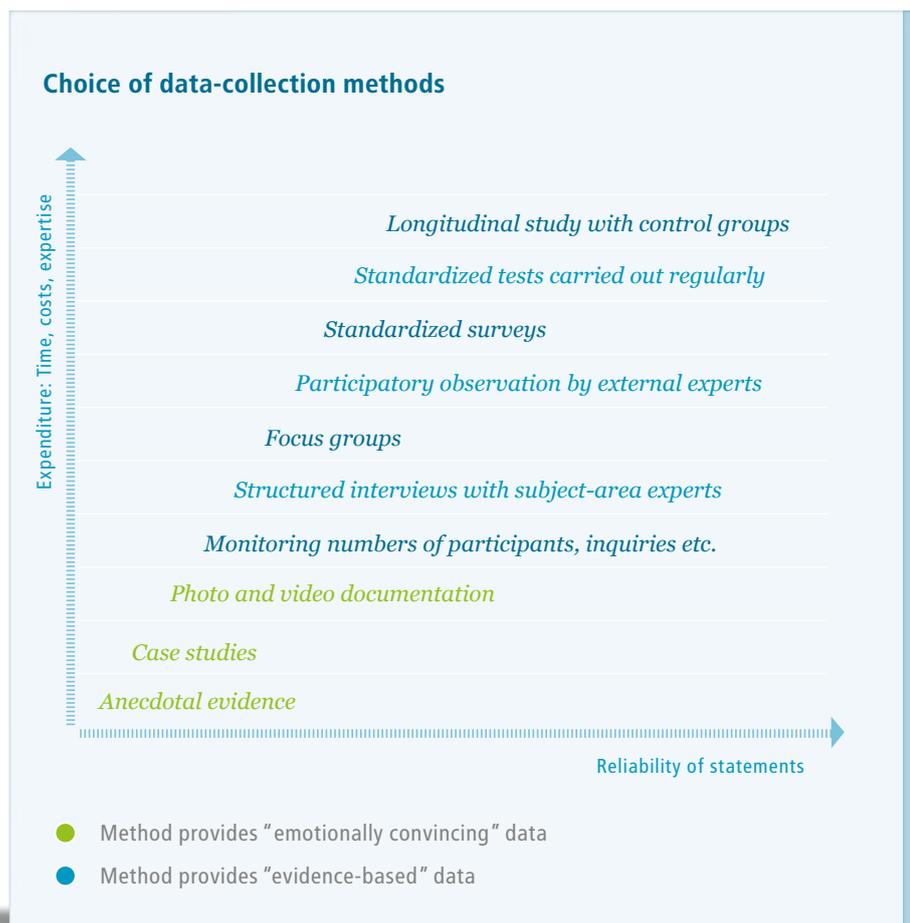
### Choice of data-collection methods

*Expenditure: Time, costs, expertise*

*Longitudinal study with control groups*

*Standardized tests carried out regularly*

*Standardized surveys*

*Participatory observation by external experts*

*Focus groups*

*Structured interviews with subject-area experts*

*Monitoring numbers of participants, inquiries etc.*

*Photo and video documentation*

*Case studies*

*Anecdotal evidence*

*Reliability of statements*

● Method provides "emotionally convincing" data
● Method provides "evidence-based" data

## Involve your partner organization

It is both appropriate and legitimate to ask the nonprofit organization about the results achieved by the corporate volunteering measure. Keep in mind, however, that providing this evidence of social impact will also represent effort and expense on the nonprofit's part. Moreover, this is often not covered by the original project funding. In addition, many organizations have to meet requirements imposed by multiple funding bodies. Therefore, support your nonprofit partner in the collection of social impact data, for example by providing additional funding.

## → INTERVIEW

*"To be able to manage resources efficiently, it's important to measure and evaluate your social impact!"*

Interview with Michael Verbücheln, University of Mannheim

**Why is it useful for companies to measure and evaluate the social impact produced by their corporate volunteering projects?**

This is useful for three reasons. First, when you think about social impact, you have to develop a logic model. This helps in defining objectives, and pushes you to ask yourself what exactly you want to achieve with the program. Second, examining the results in this way supports project management. Resources are being used for the CV program, particularly in the form of employee time away from work tasks, but also for planning, additional donations and other purposes. To be able to manage these resources efficiently, measuring and evaluating the social impact is important – it shows where the resources are best invested. And third, the impact analysis is useful in the company's external communications. Today, even investors want to see more than simply how many volunteers were involved. With the help of demonstrated social impact, you can make the company's social engagement more tangible.

**How widespread is social impact analysis in practice?**

There's been a change in perspective over time. When the topic of social impact measurement and evaluation first arose, there was considerable respect for the idea. To many, however, it seemed too foreign, and too big of a job. Today, companies are taking a more practical approach. They're no longer trying to measure everything; instead, they're concentrating on what's essential. For example, if a company has a focus on education, it will now pay attention only to what has changed with regard to the education-related aspects of their program. In the past, data would have been collected on many other aspects as well.

**Is the feasibility of the impact analysis dependent on the CV activity?**

The analysis will depend on the scope of the activity. If you have a small number of participants, for example in the context of pro bono work, then qualitative interviews are obviously better than a standardized survey, which is more suited to a social day. In addition, it of course depends on what kind of data you want to collect. Too often, the results for the company and for its employees are mixed up. The same applies to the social impact at the level of the nonprofit and on the level of society.

**What can a company that has only a small budget available do in this area?**

Instead of trying to evaluate everything, these companies should focus on just a few aspects, but do so accordingly intensively. Also, you shouldn't collect data on a topic you've already looked at. Integrate the survey questionnaires into existing tools or communications. It can be useful to create a pool of questions having to do with personnel issues, and use this in coordination with the HR department. Thinking through the logic model is an important part of evaluating social impact. You have to do this even as a small company.

# CHECKLISTS

## Possible items for your evaluation survey

Employees should be surveyed following a corporate volunteering assignment. Ideally, work with your CSR and HR departments to jointly develop a standard questionnaire designed to gauge employees' satisfaction and assess the results of corporate volunteering measures. You'll need to make reference to data protection issues, and thank them for their participation. But the following parameters are also useful.

## Five-level scale from "Does not apply" (1) to "Fully applies" (5) – please mark your choice:

- I understand why our company offers this specific corporate volunteering measure.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- I understand the intended goals of the corporate volunteering measure.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- The process underlying the CV measure was understandable to me at all times.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- My supervisors actively support my participation in the program.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- I understand the general conditions governing my participation in the measure. I understand that my social engagement is voluntary, and takes place during working hours.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- During or as a result of the corporate volunteering measure, I have gained new insights and/or learned something new.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- As a result of the corporate volunteering measure, I have been able to enhance or expand my professional expertise.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- During or as a result of the corporate volunteering measure, I have been able to develop skills outside of my professional expertise; for example, I now have a better understanding of what respectful collaboration means, I am more empathetic, I am better able to motivate and persuade others, etc.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- During or as a result of the corporate volunteering measure, I have gained self-confidence and/or felt more self-efficacy.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- As a result of the corporate volunteering measure, I understand better than before how nonprofit organizations function and what they do.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- As a result of the CV measure, I feel more closely connected to our company.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- I think it is important that our company supports social engagement in general.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

- I think it is important that our company provides support specifically for its employees' volunteer engagement.  
  `− 1 2 3 4 5 +`

## Five-level scale from "Does not apply" (1) to "Fully applies" (5)
## – please mark your choice:

- I was already convinced by our company's social engagement even before participating in the corporate volunteering measure.

  `– 1  2  3  4  5 +`

- I intend to stay socially engaged.

  `– 1  2  3  4  5 +`

- I was socially engaged before participating in the corporate volunteering measure.

  `– 1  2  3  4  5 +`

- I would recommend participation in corporate volunteering measures to others.

  `– 1  2  3  4  5 +`

## Yes / no questions – please mark your choice and note your suggestions. Thank you!

- My impression is that the collaboration with the nonprofit organization went smoothly.

☐ Yes
☐ No, because ... _____
   _____

- It was my impression that during the corporate volunteering measure, the organization had other, more urgent support needs.

☐ Yes, such as: _____
   _____

☐ No

- As a result of the corporate volunteering measure, I am better able to do my core work tasks.

☐ Yes, in this way: _____
   _____

☐ No

- As a result of the corporate volunteering measure, I have gained ideas for products and / or services, or for their improvement, their marketing, etc.

☐ Yes, in this way: _____
   _____

☐ No

- I have suggestions for improving the corporate volunteering program.

☐ Yes, in this way: _____
   _____

☐ No

# STEP 7 – Learn and improve

On the one hand, learning and improving means that your company engages in regular discussions with the nonprofit organization, with the goals of learning from and with each other, and of improving the collaboration. But it also means that your company itself should be a learning institution.

In this double sense, impact-oriented corporte volunteering management means that the company transfers the experiences gained through the individual measures into the company, and then back again from there.

## 7.1 Involve the nonprofit organizations

You can ask for feedback from your partner organizations and other stakeholders regarding **how the company's social engagement efforts are generally perceived**.

In doing so, ask:

▬ How satisfied are third parties with the social engagement initiative? What role does your company play in the field being addressed?

▬ How are administrative processes regarded (project management tasks, bureaucratic requirements, etc.) – particularly if your company is providing institutional support to the organization, or is assisting in the evaluation process.

## 7.2 Learning within the company

Learning rounds and conversations with the project partners are important. However, the company itself should regularly **reflect on the lessons learned from its engagement** in the corporate volunteering measure. Learning means that there is a regular process of scrutinizing the results from the impact analysis. This should focus on whether, and to what degree, the company is moving in the direction of the desired social impact objectives:

▬ In what areas have you achieved or not achieved your goals, and why?

▬ To what extent are you deviating from your planned results?

▬ At what points do you need to take a closer look at the results – for example, through a smaller evaluation – and try to identify causes?

An appraisal of the CV program is important for the broader evaluation process and for developing the initiative further. However, it can also help to increase innovation potential and promote learning and personal development among staff members. In the case of long-term corporate volunteering projects, training sessions conducted before and after employees' volunteer assignments can be the right place for this. The experiences gained by the volunteers during their work can best be evaluated through joint reflection. Moreover, the qualitative impressions obtained in this way will be a good complement to the data gathered via questionnaire!

→ Step 6.4

# CHECKLIST

## How good is your learning environment?

- [ ] Promoting a culture of learning is an active element of the engagement program, which involves making sure resources are available (e.g., time, material costs, knowledge management, etc.).

- [ ] You are taking time as a team to reflect on the work and its results, and to exchange ideas openly.

- [ ] There are established responsibilities, and specific people accountable for leaning and knowledge management.

- [ ] You are using the findings from the impact analysis; specifically, you are learning from them and documenting them so that the knowledge is not lost.

- [ ] The findings are being implemented promptly, rather than disappearing into a drawer or archive.

- [ ] People are allowed to make mistakes, but you also use these as an opportunity to learn.

- [ ] The company takes advantage of opportunities to engage in dialogue with its target groups and other stakeholders, and to learn from them.

- [ ] The individuals responsible for the CV project push for changes and ensure that they are realized.

- [ ] And don't forget the importance of celebrating successes together!

Joint learning is a key prerequisite for ensuring high-quality corporate volunteering engagement over the long term – because **without learning, there is no social impact!** In this regard, the culture of learning should go hand in hand with a **culture that accepts failure** and weaknesses.

## EXAMPLE

Olivia Foster selects a sample group of 10 volunteers from among the participants in the corporate volunteering measure. She interviews them using a short, standardized questionnaire that she has developed on the basis of the volunteering activities they have performed. She is particularly interested in areas where there is room for improvement. At the same time, she makes a note to herself that in the run-up to the next measure, she will ask all of her involved co-workers to pay even more attention to areas that could be improved, and to give her immediate feedback.
She also calls the youth center and asks several questions there as well: Overall, what do the employees there think of the collaboration thus far? What needs to be optimized, and what can be learned? She summarizes this feedback and communicates it to everyone involved as part of a thank-you email. This helps everyone understand what the nonprofit thinks about the collaboration.

## Involve your partner organization

- Continually improves processes, and ideally also enhances your engagement program's social impact.
- Builds knowledge both within the company and in the nonprofit organization.
- Lays the groundwork for important decisions.
- Helps to motivate everyone involved.

# STEP 8 – Communicate the corporate volunteering project's social impact

We have mentioned this previously at length – corporate volunteering is all about motivating employees to volunteer, and keeping those who are already helping to implement and design a CV measure (and who thus have a significant influence on the engagement program's social impact) happy. For this to succeed, good communication is needed!

You may have experienced, helpful communications-department colleagues working with you, or you may be part of the communications department yourself. Nevertheless, we would like to offer you a few tips and ideas on how you can optimize your strategy for communicating the Corporate volunteering initiative's social impact.

A key point here, which can't be repeated too often: Keep your partners in mind! Joint communications efforts that not only utilize your partners' channels and networks, but also clearly describe their goals, will ultimately achieve appreciably more. Therefore, involve your nonprofit partners in the communication process at an early stage!

## 8.1 Advantages of good communication

Externally, transparency creates **a sense of familiarity** and generates **trust**. For example, the public can develop an understanding of the corporate engagement program only if it is informed about it.

Internally, the company benefits because transparency allows other employees to become aware of the project's successes. When the employees learn what the company is committed to, what long-term goals the CV initiative is striving toward, and what they themselves are contributing to with their volunteer work, this enhances their motivation and identification with the company. However, this requires that the initiative's social impact be made transparent, and that the results achieved be placed into a context.

## 8.2 Target groups

In addition to internal stakeholders such as the management board, the human-resources department, executives and employees (→ Step 1.2), your company's customers, the media and suppliers can be considered as interested parties.

*"At the first meeting, a number of communications staffers suddenly showed up unannounced, and wanted to take photos for the company's social media channels. Public relations is legitimate and even important – but both sides should be getting something out of it. And for that, you have to discuss it openly with each other."*

Vera Steiner, JOBLINGE Berlin

## 8.3 Measures and content

Various kinds of **communications measures** can be used for this purpose, all of which offer individual advantages and disadvantages. We don't have the ability here to go into depth on this subject. However, what all such measures have in common is that you must clarify in advance what **is to be communicated to whom**. Being transparent in your reporting on a project's social impact means bringing together the **needs**, the **target groups**, the **products or services offered**, and the measure's **results or social impact** into a logical and **understandable relationship**.

- What is the core message that you want to get across?

- What societal challenges is the company addressing?

- To what extent are the company's core business and its social engagement program tangibly linked?

- With what (nonprofit) partners was the corporate volunteering measure carried out?

- What are the key metrics used to evaluate the social engagement program?

- What kind of social impact has been created? What target groups have been reached, and what specifically has changed in their living situation? What lessons have been learned – from failures as well as from successes?

**Also ask yourself:**

- Who specifically do you primarily want to reach with your communications?

- What do these addressees expect? What content, findings and conclusions will they be particularly interested in?

- What sort of expectations do the addressees have with regard to details and comprehensiveness?

- How can you present your work and the project's achievements in a way that is understandable to and interesting for outsiders?

To produce a **coherent overall picture**, you should link key quantitative metrics with qualitative statements. For example, the number of events held says nothing by itself about the social impact achieved by the project!

Try to strike a good balance between **facts and entertainment**, as well as between **emotional and logical** communication. For example, success stories from within the corporate volunteering measure's target groups can be emotionally appealing. The story of how a participant was helped by the project, told from her viewpoint, could be a good way of communicating this. For this, you'll need the nonprofit organization's help. Ask for specific evidence of social impact as early as you can.

If you are reporting on a joint project, it is critically important to involve the organization you're supporting **early and consistently in**

**your communications strategy**. Moreover, you should support them in their own communications. Make an effort to work with those overseeing the project to analyze and emphasize the project's results. It is essential to document not only how **funds have been used**, but also the **results** and the **lessons learned**.

## EXAMPLE

Working with the company's communications department, Olivia Foster creates a communications plan early on, which includes briefing volunteers ahead of time so they know what activities they should be reporting on afterward. The neighborhood festival is defined as a communicative highlight, because it visually expresses the rationale behind the corporate volunteering measure quite well.

The plan is also to communicate the corporate volunteering measure as a story on the company's homepage, as a video posted on the company's social media channels, and in both ways in the newsletter. The corporate volunteering measure is also spotlighted in the company's annual report in the "staff development" section.

| | *Internal communication* | *External communication* |
|---|---|---|
| *Before the activity* | If you have used a survey to collect employees' interests, goals and perspectives (→ Step 1.2), share this information with the teams.<br>Get the company's executives involved, and invite them to the activity.<br>Announce the activity on the intranet. | Announce the partnership with the nonprofit on your website and through your social media channels, and try to place a story in the regional newspaper, etc. |
| *Along the way* | Connect actions at different locations or involving different teams using video livestreams, or provide the various teams with updates on each other's work so as to strengthen the connections between them. | Post photos, videos and early quotes on social media. |
| *Afterward* | Ask the participating employees to contribute a blog post, a personal story, etc.<br><br>Offer corporate volunteering onboarding or training sessions at which former participants talk about their involvement. | Get the local press involved, post in all online channels, and provide information in stakeholder-relevant channels (flyer annual report, etc.). Include as many different voices and perspectives as possible, including those of participants and partners.<br><br>Draw on the results of your impact analysis (→ Step 6) when writing up the company's annual report (→ Step 8.4). |

*"In the interaction between business and civil society, the important point is not that the business community voluntarily gets involved or even "helps." Instead, it is about negotiating and learning together. That's why "co-creation" is actually an even better description than "corporate volunteering." Solving social challenges together and creating a working relationship between a company and its non-profit partners, which we are more familiar with from the startup scene with clearly defined collaborative goals - that could take corporate volunteering out of its niche and into a more broader social impact."*

Dr. Anael Labigne, ZiviZ gGmbH at Stifterverband

Like other areas, corporate volunteering is influenced by societal trends and developments. Outside the context of unplannable, acute events that demand social engagement – such as the coronavirus pandemic – the following current themes are of high priority:

### Digitalization

The **design and selection of suitable formats** is increasingly guided by digital networking within companies. A digital environment makes it possible for employees at different locations and possibly even worldwide to define, coordinate and implement joint corporate volunteering measures, such as online donation campaigns following natural disasters. As many as one-quarter of internationally operating companies confirm that in 2018, they used **digital tools** for the purposes of social engagement (CECP, 2019). Particularly popular digital CV formats include digital mentoring – for instance with Volunteer Vision ( → *https://www.volunteer-vision.com* ) – and hackathons for good causes.

While this trend is expanding possibilities with regard to forms of social engagement, digital tools are also making it easier to **monitor projects' successes and social impact.** → Step 3.5

Finally, corporate volunteering can also help in **managing the demands of digitalization**. Competences that are becoming increasingly relevant in the digital age – including so-called future skills such as creativity, agility and empathy – can be enhanced through cor-

porate volunteering (ZiviZ, 2021). This is a key argument as to why future-fit companies need to engage in corporate volunteering!

### Purpose

Much as customers judge a company by the role it is playing in climate protection or in the solution of social crises, employees look for purpose when assessing their own behavior and that of their employers. For this reason, young companies everywhere – particularly startups – are busily devising fresh visions for the future that link the production and distribution of products and services with a greater sense of purpose. This is exemplified by the so-called purpose company movement → *https://purpose-economy.org* .

This development is also becoming more relevant for medium-sized and large companies. For these firms, it is important that their **social engagement be both plausible and credible** – and is not simply green- or whitewashing. Because even the most noble project will do nothing to deflect public criticism if the company is harming people or the environment elsewhere.

### Innovation

Innovation arises from new **encounters, ideas and situations**. Corporate volunteering furnishes an abundance of these ingredients.

When working on a corporate volunteering measure, employees generally encounter people whose life realities are completely different from their own, and who are generally outside the target group of the company's core business activity. If the corporate volunteering measure is deliberately designed and used as a **communication channel to reach these target groups**, it can result in innovation. Indeed, some sources suggest that impact-oriented engagement positively influences a company's innovative capacity (Gilroy, Labigne, Kononykhina, & Riess, 2019). In order to promote this innovative spirit, you should hold discussions with all participants regarding their experiences, using a creative, participatory method. For example, a design-thinking workshop could be used to brainstorm conclusions that might influence future activities such as product development.

*"As with other sustainability issues, corporate volunteering's contribution as an innovation driver will be even more important in the future. The current societal narrative is that large companies need to open up, because closed companies don't do justice to either their stakeholders or their customers. For corporate volunteering, this means that in the future, so-called outside-in processes must be considered. This will allow experiences from the "outside" – that is, experiences that employees collect during their social engagement – to be brought systematically into the company."*

Dr. Anael Labigne, ZiviZ gGmbH at Stifterverband

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# CONCLUSION

Over the course of this guidebook, we have delved deep into the form of social engagement known as corporate volunteering. We have looked at its opportunities and challenges, highlighted the potential added value it generates, and presented relevant tools.

Corporate volunteering is misunderstood when it is viewed solely as a team-building or marketing exercise, thus disregarding its greater potential. If designed correctly, it offers considerable added value for the participating employees, the nonprofit organization, the company and society at large.

Corporate volunteering can look different in every company. It will necessarily be tailored to the individual firm's corporate strategy, the desires of the company's employees and the needs of the partner organization.

## We believe that ...

◼ Corporate volunteering can be an outstanding tool in promoting **learning, motivation and the personal development** of a company's employees in a targeted way, while also increasing the firm's appeal as an employer. In the future, as people decide where they want to be employed, the perception of meaningful work will play a greater role. Corporate volunteering programs can serve an important function in this regard.

◼ Corporate volunteering works only if it is set up as a **genuine partnership with the nonprofit partners**. That means you need to ask the right questions, listen well and focus on needs. You'll need to make resources available. You'll have to formulate objectives together, and create good communication channels that allow you to adapt your joint processes along the way. Corporate volunteering can also trigger cultural change within the company in the direction of more partnership and dialogue.

◼ In the future, such programs will serve as **drivers of innovation**, and social engagement will be viewed more explicitly as an opportunity for learning. Agile work, co-creation and empathy are future skills that are already in demand today.

Now it's up to you to bring your ideas to fruition. If we have inspired you to try generating social impact for all stakeholders, and to engage in beneficial partnerships with actors from other sectors, we have already achieved our goal.

We now wish you, your co-workers and your partner organizations much fun and success – and of course, much social impact – in your volunteering activities.

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● In **action days** or **social days,** a company's employees volunteer on behalf of nonprofit organizations in fields outside of their own professional field of activity. In most cases, these events involve manual, physical or organizational tasks.

● **Corporate citizenship (CC)** entails a voluntary social investment by the company in an area outside its core business, which contributes to the solution of societal challenges. CC activities can also generate added value for the company.

● **Corporate social responsibility** refers to companies' societal responsibility, in the sense of sustainable business.

● **Corporate volunteering (CV)** refers to social engagement by employees that is actively supported by the company. Employees can often use a portion of their normal working hours to engage in the volunteer work.

● **Dollars for doers** is a form of social engagement in which a company offers financial incentives to generate extra motivation for employees' private volunteer work, for example by paying them for the hours in which they volunteer for a nonprofit organization.

● **Greenwashing** refers to activities aimed at giving a company a more environmentally friendly image than is justified by a close look at its actual practices.

● **Hands-on-volunteering** is about becoming directly involved in a project and gaining familiarity with other working environments. This generally doesn't require the volunteer to have specific professional or expert skills.

● **Matched giving** refers to a model in which a company matches employee donations with an equal or even higher contribution, thus increasing the total given. This is intended to provide an incentive for staff members to make donations.

● **Mentoring** is when a company's employees take part in a program providing direct, often one-to-one assistance to others, for instance by tutoring youth who need help in school, or helping people who may need assistance in performing day-to-day activities. The mentors pass on their knowledge to another person (the mentee).

● **Pro bono** social engagement refers to (skills-based) work or services performed by companies or experts for a nonprofit organization, free of charge.

● **Secondment** is when employees are assigned to work at a nonprofit institution for a period generally lasting multiple months, while continuing to receive their full pay.

● **Skills-based-volunteering** is a way of using expert or technical knowledge and job-based skills to provide a nonprofit project with professional support.

● In contrast to other forms of sponsorship, **social sponsorship** places a higher priority on the not-for-profit motivations (societal needs) than on the company's communications objectives.

● A **donation** is a contribution (monetary, in-kind resources or volunteer time) voluntarily given to a nonprofit entity outside the company. It is granted without any expectation of receiving benefits in return (e.g., in fulfillment of social impact objectives focusing on a public benefit). A donation cannot be earmarked for a specific purpose.

● **Sponsorship** refers to activities which, aside from any nonprofit social impact objectives, are also pursued for advertising purposes driven by clear business-policy interests. These business-policy interests may be given the highest priority in the decision-making. In this case, unlike with donations, the company receives a contractually agreed service (e.g., the placement of a logo, or public mention of the financial support) in return for its support.

● The United Nations' **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** have the objective of ensuring sustainable development worldwide in the economic, environmental and social spheres.

● **Whitewashing** refers to activities aimed at giving a company a more socially conscious or socially responsible image than is justified by a close look at its actual practices.

● A **social impact objective** describes a specific desired positive change within a target group or in a part of society to which an intervention should contribute over the long term.

*Free of charge:* PHINEO dictionary German–social, social-German at → *https://www.phineo.org/en/publications*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**THANK YOU!**

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