



# IMPACT & ENGAGEMENT THROUGH VOLUNTEERISM

2024

## Volunteerism Toolkit

There are important best practices and tools to help maximize the positive impact a volunteerism program can have on both employees and nonprofits, taking into account the size and geographic footprint of a company.

This toolkit provides your company with a framework for approaching volunteerism, especially given the changing landscape of remote, hybrid, and in-person work.

# A Playbook for Effective Corporate Volunteerism

## Overview



Company-sponsored volunteer programs create ways for companies to encourage, facilitate, or even financially support their employees' efforts to volunteer in their communities. These volunteer programs can take many forms: from paid volunteer days off to matching employee donations, or organizing company-wide volunteer events. Volunteer programs can have both important internal and external impact - as a means to give back to the community, but also as a strategic tool for boosting employee engagement, morale, and even brand perception.

For employee engagement, volunteerism can help support team building, as well as enhance overall job satisfaction and morale. It is well known that employees - especially younger generations - want to work for companies that have a clear set of values and a commitment to the community. A company with a strong volunteer program resonates with employees, enhancing their pride in and satisfaction with their employer.

For nonprofits, volunteers are often a critical component for day to day operations, especially those with constrained budgets. For example, many food pantries have very few full-time, paid staff, and rely on a regular stream of volunteers to help sort, pack and distribute food to those in need of food assistance. Partnering with companies around volunteer events can also translate into financial assistance for nonprofits, with employees gaining important visibility into the work of the nonprofit, and then deciding to donate.

This toolkit is intended to provide you with a framework for how to approach your volunteerism strategy, and leverage the important tools that Groundswell has to offer.

# CORPORATE VOLUNTEERISM

## Facts and Data

**77%**

percentage of employees who believe that company-sponsored volunteer activities are essential to employee well-being

**85%**

percentage of volunteers who donate to the nonprofit they volunteer for



**61%**

of companies offer paid Volunteer Time Off as a part of a broader volunteer program.



# 6 Tips to Maximize the Impact of Your Corporate Volunteerism Programs

Below are some tips from the team at Groundswell, leveraging years of experience in how best to mobilize volunteers for meaningful impact.

## #1: Articulate your goals

When designing a volunteer program, it's important to start by defining your goals, whether you're focused on participation numbers, team-building, or the ability to provide additional support to a nonprofit that is already a recipient of corporate funding. None of these are mutually exclusive, but how you approach volunteerism, and the ways in which you execute it, may help advance certain goals more than others.



## #2: Identify internal champions

A volunteer program is rarely successful unless there are internal champions that can provide peer-to-peer encouragement, or geographic-specific coordination. While Groundswell's volunteer platform provides important tools to facilitate and help execute volunteer programs, some of the most successful companies have internal champions or volunteer "ambassadors" who can engage and motivate their fellow employees to participate, as well as build critical relationships with nonprofits.

For companies that have different geographic hubs or sub-markets, having champions to spearhead and manage volunteer events can help drive meaningful employee engagement at a more local level. Note: coming in mid-April, Groundswell will have new "Team Captain" features built to empower employees to plan and execute volunteer events using the Groundswell portal.

**Tip: Being a Volunteer Champion can take time and effort; consider how to support your Ambassadors or Champions, such as putting funds in their Groundswell account as a thank you for their efforts, allowing them to donate to the organizations that matter to them.**

## #3: Align Volunteer events with key causes

There are many months and days throughout the year where you can use a volunteer event to further recognize or celebrate a cause - such as Earth Day, PRIDE month, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Day of Service, and countless others. You can also coordinate across other aspects of the Groundswell platform - for example launching a donation matching campaign focused on the cause or specific nonprofit(s), to combine financial donations alongside the volunteer hours provided by your employees.

Groundswell's annual [Cause Calendar](#) provides a roadmap to plan for the year, and determine where and when you may want to plan volunteer events.



## #4: Leverage Dollars for Doers

Groundswell's Volunteer Matching feature - also known as Dollars for Doers - provides another way for employees to show their support for the causes that matter most to them. Through Volunteer Matching, an employee logs volunteer hours and then receives funds into their Groundswell account, to then be donated to nonprofits.

This feature recognizes that some employees may have time to give, but not money to donate – and rewards them for that. You can set up a Volunteer Match program as a stand-alone, or combine with an existing dollar-for-dollar matching program.

### Volunteer matching



Reward volunteer hours at your program's established rate to add funds into their account and say thanks for volunteering

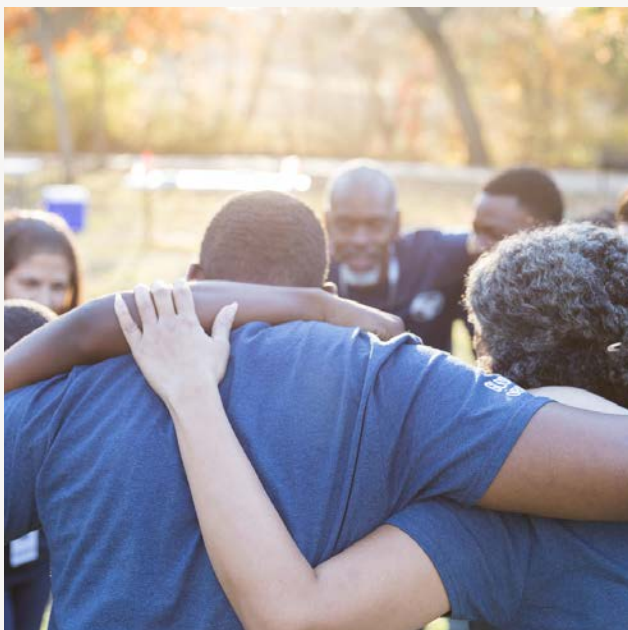
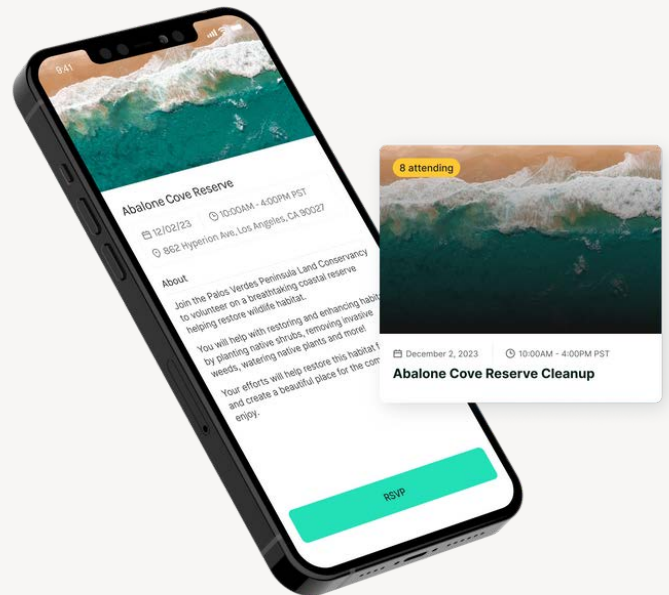
[Customize program](#)

## #5: Unite Employees Across Geographies

Many companies are eager to revive larger, in-person events. But not everyone may be based at the headquarters, and the “new normal” of hybrid work schedules may make it more difficult for larger groups to come together.

Groundswell’s Volunteer Event Management tool allows you to meet employees where they are, and further customize your volunteer program. It enables companies to schedule and manage registration for larger events, as well as empower regional champions to help spearhead events and send targeted invites and event-specific communications to those in the relevant geography

A best practice is to designate a specific time of year for volunteer activation - whether a week or full month - so that employees can feel motivated and inspired to participate when the entire company is focused on volunteer events.



For fully remote workers, the good news is that a lot of creative volunteer engagements emerged during the pandemic, and many companies are sticking with them. For example, some companies are utilizing at-home STEM kits that require assembly before being sent to nonprofits for use with youth programs - and can unify employees through a single virtual event. This allows employees to volunteer their time even if they aren’t able to be at an event in-person. Groundswell’s Volunteer Hours Tracking Tool enables employees to log those individual volunteer hours, so that the company can capture their participation even if it is not with a larger group volunteer event.



# #6: Leverage Data for Internal Feedback and External Storytelling



Groundswell’s streamlined reporting dashboard allows companies to easily access key metrics around volunteer hours, participation levels, and number of events. By integrating across giving and volunteering programs, companies can have a holistic and real-time view of their impact for ongoing or annual CSR/ESG reporting requirements. The data is also an important tool for internal reporting and engagement - highlighting regions that may be particularly active in their giving and volunteering, and inspire more engagement for future events.

## Tips on how to effectively leverage data for internal and external audiences:

- Track key metrics such as number of volunteer hours, number of participants, number of volunteer events held, and any other direct outputs that can give a clear picture of a volunteer program’s scale.
- Weave in qualitative reporting - stories, testimonials and case studies that bring the numbers to life. This could include spotlighting how the collective support from employees made a meaningful difference in a nonprofit’s work - whether something related to the environment (e.g. tree planting) or school beautification projects in the months leading up to the new school year.



# CORPORATE VOLUNTEERISM

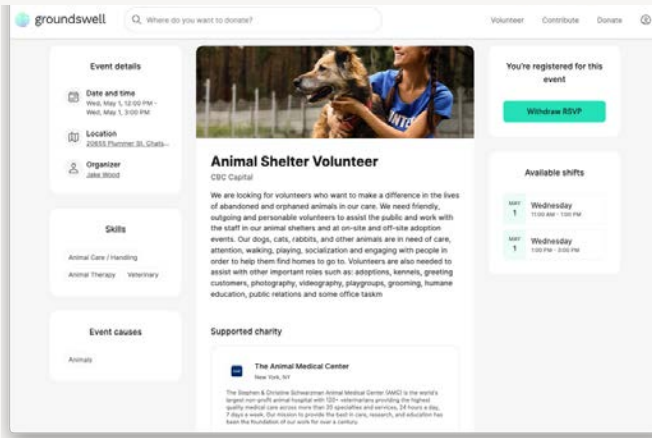
## Features on Groundswell

### Volunteer Events

Groundswell enables companies to schedule and manage registration for larger events, as well as empower teams based in different regional hubs to schedule and track participation in their own volunteer events.

#### Features:

- Create volunteer events (in-person & virtual)
- Manage RSVP's & pre-event questions
- Message attendees
- Mobile app for employees to RSVP & log hours on the go

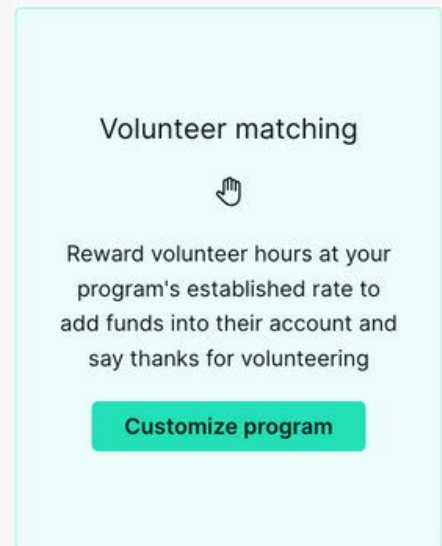


### Dollars for Doers

Groundswell's Volunteer Matching feature - also known as Dollars for Doers - provides a flexible and inclusive way for employees to show their support for the causes that matter most to them.

#### Features:

- Set matching funds per volunteer hour
- Employees receive company match for recorded volunteer hour
- Matching volunteer hours can be set as its own program or combined with other donation matching programs.



### Volunteer Hours: Tracking & Approving

The Volunteer Hours Tracking Tool enables employees to log individual volunteer hours, so that the company can capture their participation even if it is not with a larger group volunteer event.

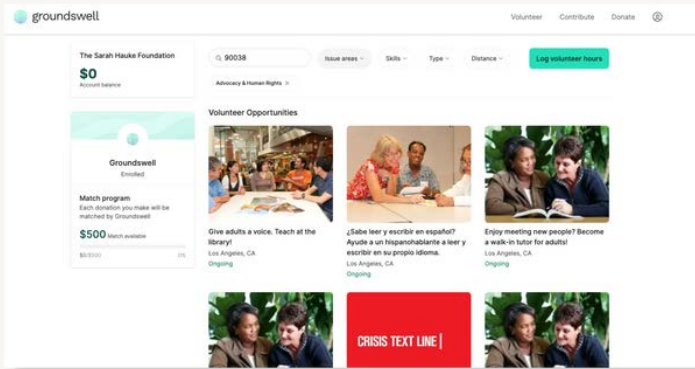
#### Features:

- Review and approve submitted volunteer hours
- Download CSV of hours from the Volunteer Dashboard





# Volunteer Opportunity Database



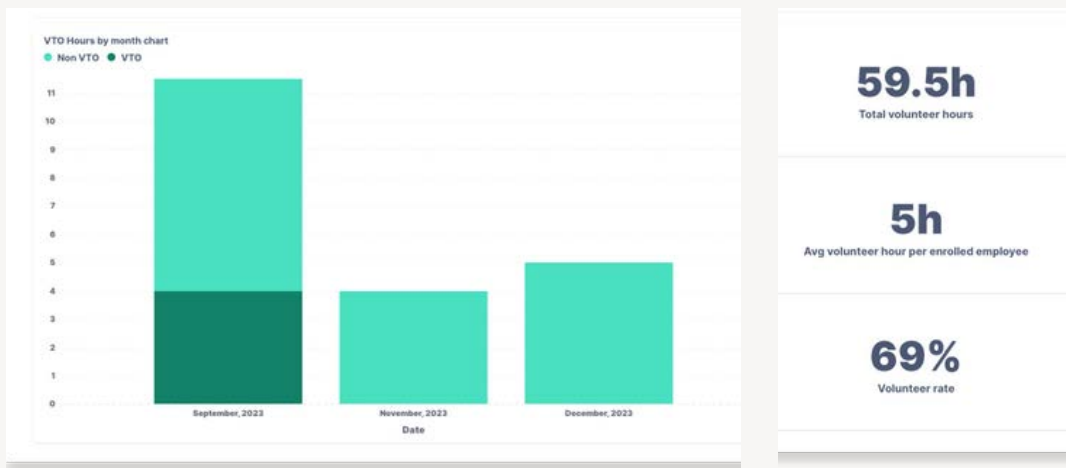
Employees have the ability to discover local volunteer opportunities through the optional VolunteerMatch integration.

## Features:

- Search volunteer opportunities based on geographic location
- Thousands of volunteer opportunities employees can choose from sourced from VolunteerMatch's global dataset.

# Analytics: Volunteer Dashboard

Groundswell's streamlined reporting dashboard allows companies to easily access key metrics.



## You can track:

- Volunteer hours
- Dollars for Doers matches
- Participation levels
- Number of events held

## Additional Features:

- Download CSV of raw data for your volunteer events and hours
- Download data by region or department

# Additional Support: Groundswell Help Center

- Volunteer matching: <https://helpcenter.groundswell.io/hc/en-us/articles/19175120651796-How-To-Set-up-Volunteer-Matching>
- Volunteer event set-up: <https://helpcenter.groundswell.io/hc/en-us/articles/19175670631956-How-To-Set-Up-a-Volunteer-Event>
- Volunteer Hours Tracking Set-up: <https://helpcenter.groundswell.io/hc/en-us/articles/19170975190932-How-To-Set-Up-Volunteer-Hours-Trackingz>



## Groundswell is your ally in corporate philanthropy.

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Corporate giving programs aim to empower employees and help companies facilitate and support philanthropic efforts. As global access grows and corporations become more diverse, employee representation becomes an increasingly important subject.

Groundswell enables companies to lay the foundation for their employees to adopt a generous giving attitude towards charities and world-shaping efforts.

## Want access to other toolkits like this?

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Reach out to us [hello@groundswell.io](mailto:hello@groundswell.io)