Skills-Based Volunteering Training Academy
Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is Skills-Based Volunteering?**

  Skills-based volunteerism (SBV) allows individuals to put their expertise to work to help address complex social issues by helping nonprofits build their capacity and extend their reach in the community. Skills-based volunteering can take many forms but is most impactful when focused on projects that build an organization's internal capacity.

- **What are the benefits to being part of this training opportunity?**

  Participating organizations will receive best in class training and support from skills-based volunteering experts from Common Impact consultants and Serve Ohio staff. The training will include:

    - Custom support in project identification and scoping from Common Impact consultants in preparation for the SBV Boot Camp. (estimated two to four (2-4) hours of individual support as needed)
    - Boot camp style training held virtually over three weeks in March 2021
    - Peer to peer networking and learning opportunities with other 2021 training cohort participants
    - Webinars hosted by ServeOhio and Common Impact
    - Ongoing project implementation support from SBV consultants for your nonprofit in planning and implementing skills-based volunteering projects for up to nine (9) months following the boot camp
    - Peer to peer networking and learning opportunities with other participating nonprofits from around Ohio

- **What will the boot camp entail?**

  The goal of the boot camp is to teach attendees how to lead effective skills-based volunteering opportunities – from start to finish - through a combination of presentations and interactive training activities. The content will be led by Common Impact, a nonprofit with more than twenty (20) years of experience in developing and leading skills-based volunteering programming. Topics will include:

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- Introduction to skills-based volunteering
- Organizational readiness
- Identifying and planning skills-based volunteering projects
- Recruiting volunteers
- Managing volunteers and projects
- Evaluating skills-based volunteering engagements

- **Who should my organization designate as the key points of contact for this opportunity?**

  Selected nonprofits will designate two (2) staff members to attend the boot camp. Organizational buy-in, strong project management, and program perspective are integral to the success of any skills-based volunteering engagement. As such, this opportunity requires the support of the organization's volunteer manager or director and a program lead that can provide perspective on the actual delivery of programming and/or a specific organizational need. (i.e. program director, marketing associate, development coordinator). One of the attending staff members should be from the organization's leadership team (Director, VP, Department Head, etc.)

  During the course of the boot camp and immediately following, attendees will be engaging in project scoping (identifying projects) and project planning (creating a detailed description and needed steps to completing the project). Because organizations will not enter the boot camp knowing exactly which projects they will plan, we ask that you select the persons **most likely** to be involved with the implementation of the engagements as well as someone (such as the volunteer manager) that can ensure that the learnings and processes are institutionalized at the organization. **It is highly recommended that you designate the person that has the most relevant program perspective for the challenge identified in the application (such as IT Manager or Development Director) and the person responsible for institutionalizing and replicating SBV programming at your organization (such as Volunteer Director or External Affairs/Advancement).**

- **How can I learn more?**

  Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend a Technical Assistance webinar to learn more about this opportunity, Common Impact's approach to SBV, and how to ensure this opportunity is a good fit for your organization and staff. (note the session will be recorded)

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SBV Training Academy Technical Assistance Webinar Registration (January 14, 2021 at 1PM EST)

- **Do I need to have SBV projects planned in advance of the application or boot camp?**
  No. It is not required that you have projects planned in advance of the application, but applicants will be required to prioritize one to two (1-2) organizational challenges on which a project could be focused.

  Once nonprofits are selected to participate in the opportunity, each nonprofit will receive two to four (2-4) hours of customized support and guidance from Common Impact consultants to help prioritize organizational needs and plan SBV projects. These support calls will take place leading up to the boot camp, to ensure that each attendee has a prioritized project or opportunity on which to focus their planning and learning.

- **What are the requirements for participation in this opportunity?**
  Selected nonprofits will
  1) participate in consulting calls with ServeOhio and Common Impact prior to boot camp (estimated time commitment two to four (2-4) hours per nonprofit);
  2) attend a comprehensive SBV Boot Camp held virtually via Zoom over three weeks in March 2021;
  3) identify, develop, and manage at least one skills-based volunteer project (length of project to be determined during boot camp) which will be supported by monthly coaching calls and quarterly cohort webinars hosted by Common Impact and ServeOhio.

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More about SBV

- ### Where can I learn more about SBV?

  In 2019, ServeOhio and Common Impact collaborated to develop a Nonprofit Skills-Based Volunteering Toolkit. It contains a comprehensive set of resources and guidance to support nonprofits in every step of the SBV process – from assessing organizational needs to evaluating the impact of projects. Access the toolkit on the ServeOhio website HERE.

- ### What is capacity-building?

  Capacity-building refers to an organization making an investment into their organization's infrastructure, or back-end operations. These actions result in an organization increasing or improving their ability to deliver on their mission. Examples include implementing or improving a database, adding staff to support operations, developing a comprehensive strategic plan, documenting a marketing plan, and many others. Click here for more examples of capacity building projects.

  The application includes questions about your organization's capacity or operational challenges within the key areas of: Finance, Marketing, Strategy, Operations, Development/Sales, Technology, and Human Resources. **The operational challenges identified will serve as the basis for the hands-on project planning work that will take place at the boot camp. As such, nonprofits are encouraged to give careful consideration to the capacity challenges prioritized on the application.**

- ### Who is involved in this opportunity?

  ServeOhio is partnering with Common Impact to deliver the training and consulting components of this program. Common Impact is a nationally-recognized nonprofit that works to build a society in which individuals and businesses invest their unique talents towards a shared purpose: **strengthening the local communities in which we live and work.** They connect corporate employees to nonprofit organizations with proven models to tackle the greatest challenges our communities face.

  Founded in 2000, Common Impact has partnered with Fortune 500 companies and hundreds of nonprofit organizations on initiatives that create transformational change. To

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date, they have **engaged in more than 700 unique projects and invested more than $20M of impact** back into communities.

The Common Impact model is widely recognized as a best in class approach to skills-based volunteering. This training program will provide participants the opportunity to learn from these SBV experts, access the tools and resources utilized by Common Impact's team of consultants to execute hundreds of projects annually, and receive targeted support as they implement projects. Common Impact will design the boot camp and ongoing curriculum as well as a customized toolkit for participants.

- ### What does organizational readiness mean?
  Organizational readiness is an important factor in determining if your nonprofit is prepared to engage in skills-based volunteering. To learn the factors that are utilized to determine organizational readiness, please see page 11 of the Nonprofit Skills-Based Volunteering Toolkit. Nonprofits can also complete an anonymous assessment of their organizational readiness by completing a Readiness Assessment.

- ### What does project readiness mean?
  Project readiness refers to the elements of a specific SBV engagement or project that indicate if the project is a good fit for a pro-bono engagement. Please see page 19 of the Nonprofit Skills-Based Volunteering Toolkit for a list of project readiness factors.

- ### What makes a good SBV project?
  Skills-based volunteering projects differ from other, more traditional forms of volunteering. Successful SBV engagements are typically time-bound – with a discreet start and end date, narrow in focus, and have a clearly defined deliverable or end product. Click here to see examples of the types of projects that have been successful. (*note: this is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but rather to serve as a foundation for understanding the types of engagements on which this training program will focus*)

- ### Do I have to be experienced in engaging skilled-volunteers to participate in this opportunity?
  The goal of this training program is to teach Ohio-based nonprofits the skills and processes needed to engage skilled-volunteers - including identifying and planning projects,

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recruiting volunteers, project management, and evaluation. As such, applicants are not required to enter the program already having experience in engaging skills-based volunteers. Upon selection for participation in the boot camp, participants will have the opportunity to receive up to four (4) hours of consulting support from SBV experts from Common Impact. This support will include discussion of organizational needs and challenges, and potential SBV projects to focus on for this opportunity.

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