



common
impact

Corporate Resource Packet
Prepared for

SERVE **OHIO**
Ohio Commission on Service and Volunteerism



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About ServeOhio

[ServeOhio](#) empowers local communities to mobilize AmeriCorps and community volunteer resources to meet their most challenging needs. It works with community and organizational leadership to develop and implement AmeriCorps programming to address the frontline issues in education, health and economic opportunity and partner with the nonprofit, government and faith-based sectors to increase the effective utilization of volunteers.

About Common Impact

[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. It connects corporate employees to nonprofit organizations via clearly defined volunteer engagement opportunities to tackle the greatest challenges our communities face. With a deep understanding of both mission-focused and business goals, Common Impact enables nonprofits to achieve even greater results by connecting them directly with skilled volunteers with expertise in areas that can build their organizational capacity and drive change.

The Nonprofit Sector in Ohio

The [nonprofit sector in Ohio](#) is an essential component of the state's economy generating over \$103.2 billion in annual revenue and employing more than 12% of the state's workforce. Ohio registered nearly 60,000 nonprofits in 2019 serving mission area focuses including human services, housing, youth, education, the arts, and physical and mental health. Nevertheless, the nonprofit sector faces ongoing capacity constraints given the necessity for the overwhelming majority of budgets to be devoted to direct service vs. technology, marketing, human resources and/or strategic planning. Skills-based volunteering offers a unique resource in addressing this key challenge.

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Overview

Serve Ohio and Common Impact, in 2017, launched a partnership designed to equip the Ohio-based social sector with the skills, expertise and tools needed to effectively leverage skills-based volunteering as a talent development and capacity building resource. The partnership, in 2019, released the [Nonprofit Skills-Based Volunteering Toolkit: A Guide to Engaging in Skills-Based Volunteering](#). Today, Common Impact and Serve Ohio are pleased to present the Corporate Resource Toolkit: A Guide to Building Skills-Based Volunteering Programs designed to support companies across Ohio in engaging employees in high impact high quality skills based programming.

Skills-based volunteering is a great compliment to any company's existing philanthropic offerings. Focusing employee skills onto capacity building needs for nonprofits helps to make a lasting community impact, increases employee engagement, and provides an exciting experiential learning opportunity for all levels of employees.

The information contained in this resource guide is intended to provide an overview of the basic components of starting skills-based volunteering programming. These key components include:

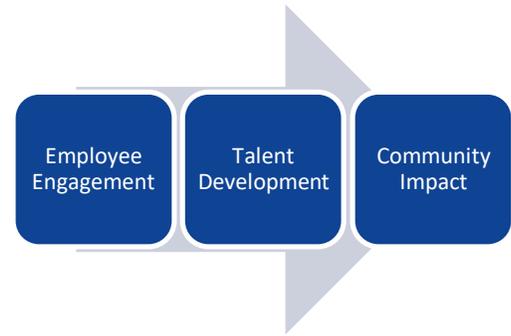
- Nonprofit Partner: The organization that your project(s) will support.
- Nonprofit Need: The challenge or project that your volunteers will participate in.
- Employee Volunteers: Volunteers whose skills are aligned with the nonprofit challenge

For more information on developing, growing, and evolving your SBV offerings, visit commonimpact.org where links on virtual volunteering, focusing SBV on community resilience and disaster response, impact evaluation, days of service, can be found.

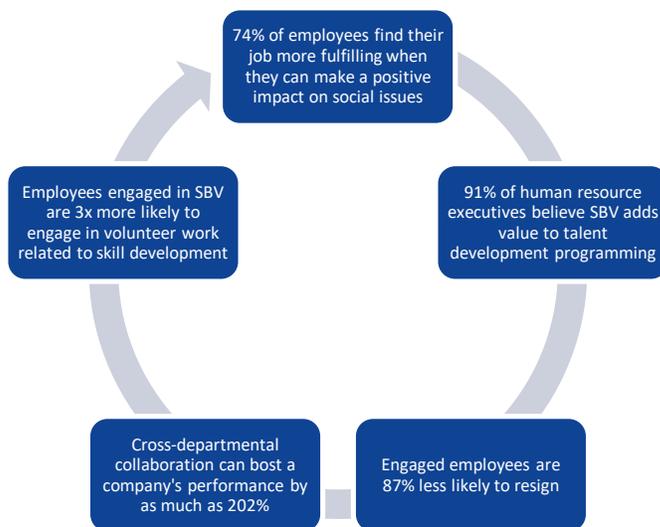
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Skills-Based Volunteering: Where Professional Development Meets Purpose

Skills-based volunteering (SBV) is the practice of lending one’s professional expertise, such as marketing, finance or human resources skills, to build the capacity of a community organization and bring it to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial or organizational maturity so it may more effectively and efficiently advance its mission into the future.



Why Engage in Skills-Based Volunteering?



Skills-based volunteering is one of the strongest experiential learning opportunities for employees. Whether you're looking to develop basic functional skills in junior employees, cultivate your high performers into the next level of leadership or trying to build, reshape or reinforce your company culture, skills-based

volunteering can help you reach your goals. Corporate skills-based volunteering programs amplifies the impact of nonprofit organizations and grantee partners through critical capacity building work. The resources and opportunities developed as a part of skills based volunteering can sustain your company, your employees and the community.

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THE NONPROFIT SECTOR

Nonprofits spend an **average of 2-8% on infrastructure functions, compared to the private sector's 20-35%**. Skills-based volunteers provide a critical resource to nonprofits, supporting vital, yet underfunded core business functions and helping to close this capacity gap. SBV amplifies investment 7:1 in critical nonprofit infrastructure compared to traditional hands-on volunteering, enabling organizations to be more effective in tackling community challenges.

- In 2020, Common Impact released a [study](#), in partnership with True Impact, designed to quantify the impact of SBV on the social sector. These approaches rely on data from Independent Sector and from the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. With this new framework, nonprofits can better quantify the impact of SBV programs on the number of clients served, supported, and developed.



UNDERSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

The two main components of any SBV engagement are the nonprofits (the partner) and the corporate volunteers (the people). These groups work collaboratively to identify and address a nonprofit capacity or infrastructure challenge. Determining the right employees to participate in a SBV engagement requires identifying programmatic goals and how skills-based volunteering can further those company objectives. Below are a series of questions designed towards supporting new program development.



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IDENTIFYING NONPROFIT PARTNERS

Another key component of skills-based volunteering is identifying nonprofit partners with the relevant and time appropriate need.

1. **Current Nonprofit Partners:** A great place to start when looking for potential nonprofits to partner with on a skills-based volunteering engagement is to review existing relationships.
 - a. **Community Partners:** You may already have relationships with nonprofits in your community that you have volunteered with, donated to or sponsored. Starting with a pre-existing relationship will help you identify the key staff from the nonprofit that you might want to involve. You are also more likely to have insights into their current mission, programs and potential project challenges.
 - b. **Grantees:** Connect with your company's Human Resources or Corporate Responsibility teams. Are there nonprofits that are already part of your corporate giving programs that may be interested in skills-based support as well?

2. **Employee Connections:** If you are not able to identify existing nonprofit partners, use your employees to learn more about the Ohio-based organizations they support. You may have employees that sit on the board of a nonprofit, volunteer or donate regularly.

3. **Open Sourced:** Many companies conduct widespread outreach to engage a variety of nonprofits. If this is the strategy you wish to employ, it will be helpful to think about the following key factors, which will guide you in identifying the types of nonprofits you would like to work with:
 - a. **Location in Ohio.** Are you interested in supporting organizations in close proximity to your office location or main hub?
 - b. **Organization size.** While most nonprofits can benefit from skills-based support, it's important that the organization has the capacity, resources, and existing processes and norms to execute recommendations and plans.
 - c. **Mission area/population served** Are you interested in aligning your skills-based programming with other priorities such as your company's existing philanthropic and volunteering pillars? Are you open to supporting a variety of causes and issue areas?

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OHIO CASE STUDY

 **CityLink Center** CityLink Center, a nonprofit based in Cincinnati, OH, provides integrated services and training opportunities to help families and individuals break free from poverty. They provide a holistic approach and offer programs in critical areas such as education, childcare, transportation, employment and more.

The Need

CityLink needed to expand their job training and placement services by providing new avenues for hard-skills training programs that enable clients to access opportunities with living wage jobs. The organization needed expertise to assess the industries who could require an influx of new talent, identify leads for partnership and make recommendations for incorporating the programming into their existing portfolio.

The Project

 Fidelity employees researched local industries that would benefit from professionals with hard-skills training. Following industry identification, the team conducted an in-depth analysis of potential partners for CityLink. The team delivered the industry and partnership recommendations along with a roadmap and a set of tools for CityLink to inform partnership cultivation and enable efficient, data-driven growth. The team spent over 1,000 hours, delivering more than \$8,000 in value, meeting with local industry leaders, conducting market research on job trends data and hard-skills training and offering business planning considerations.



It has gone from insights the team has delivered to actual programmatic implementation in a very short period of time, and we are anticipating that between these two programs, we will see upwards of 120 to 140 people go through industry training in the next year, which is just really incredible."

- John Oudersluys,
Executive Director

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PICKING A SKILLS-BASED VOLUNTEERING PROJECT

Project Types

There are several different models or types of SBV projects to consider depending on the needs of your nonprofit partners, the goals of your program, and the capacity of your employee volunteers.



For more resources in determining the [right type of project](#), visit  **capacity commons**, a one-stop-shop for skills-based volunteerism. This interactive tool and resource hub offers sample skills-based projects, templates and case studies to support best-in-practice project ideation and execution.

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Talent Development

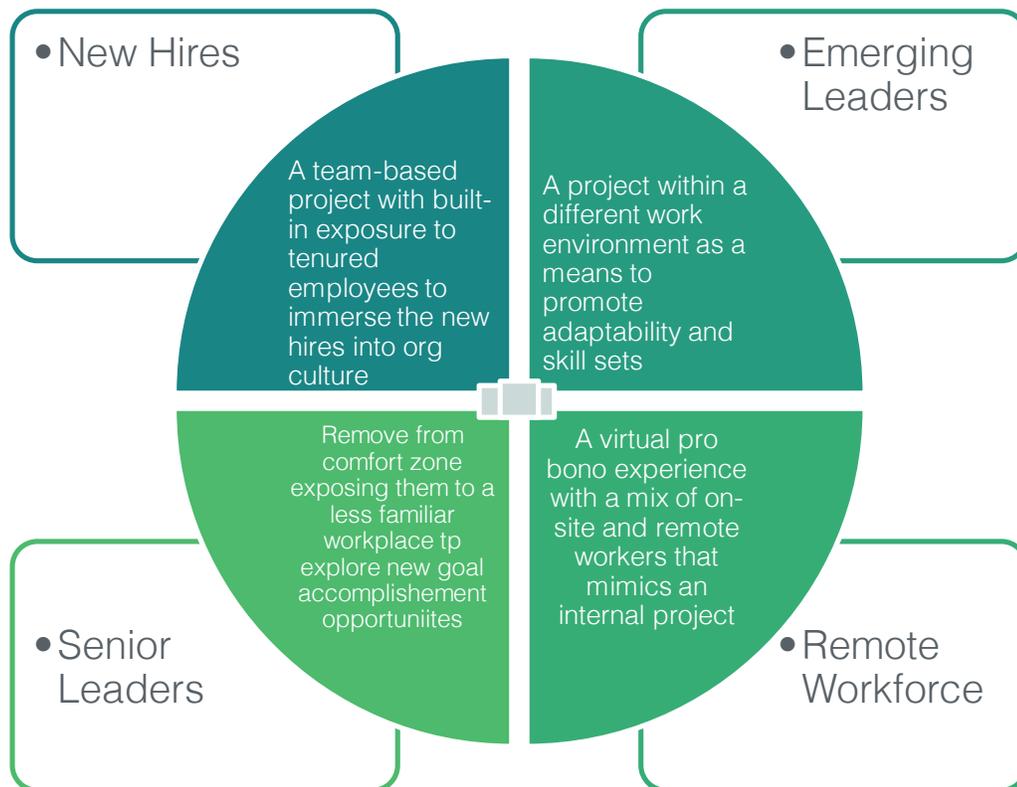
Skills-based volunteering programs offer unique opportunities to develop talent while delivering impact. Depending on their existing skills, level of seniority, and experience, employees will be poised to tackle different project types thereby gaining leadership and functional skill sets. Opportunities for skills-based volunteering offer employee groups, determined by seniority, location, or professional development needs, an excellent way to hone and develop skills and increase team morale, all while making an impact for the social sector.

Type	Programming	Outcomes
Targeted	Hones in on talent and leadership development of specific types of employees	Addresses and improves upon selected skills that are identified as critical to those employees with measurable results
Integrated	Connects skills-based volunteering programs with a company's talent and leadership development programs	Achieve enterprise-wide talent goals with a tangible impact on business growth.
Open	Allows employees with skill sets that match nonprofit need to participate in skills-based projects.	Benefit from the professional development inherent in a strategic consulting engagement

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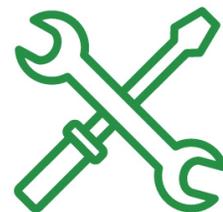
MATCHING EMPLOYEE TYPE WITH VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY

The talent development goals of a skills-based volunteering program are determined based on employee skill level and project opportunities. Below is a series of examples of skill levels and appropriate project type.

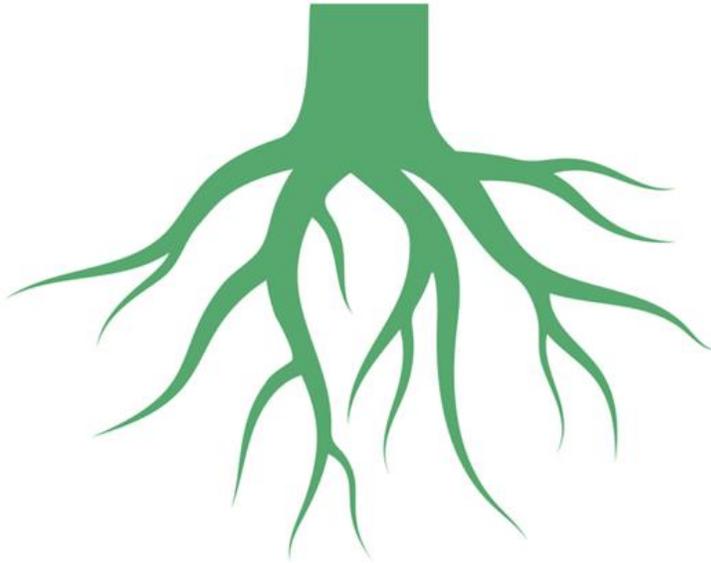


DEFINING THE PROJECT

Critical to delivering a successful skills-based project that engages employees and delivers impact is creating a project scope that meets nonprofit need. Companies can leverage the scoping resources that are a part of Capacity Commons in narrowing and defining nonprofit need



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Projects should be narrow in scope with clearly defined goals, phases and timelines.

The first and most important step is to understand the “root challenge” the nonprofit is facing in order to be able to build a project that addressing the underlying issues vs. the symptoms. The [Project Scoping Tool](#) offers key guidance in considering the right skills to align with project needs.

Consider the below questions as a key component in understanding how skills can best be leveraged:

- Why does this challenge exist?
- How does this challenge affect a nonprofit’s ability to achieve its mission?
- What’s missing? Is it a plan, a process, a technology, something else?
- What has prevented this challenge from having been addressed?
- What skills or expertise are lacking that would enable this project to move forward?
- What would be an ideal deliverable for a project that would enable success?
- How would the deliverable be utilized and/or implemented?

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GROWING A SKILLS-BASED VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM

Skills-based volunteering can be a one-off opportunity for community impact, a strategy for team building as a key component of an acquisition strategy, or an integral part of a talent development and brand enhancement strategy. How you build a program should be based on corporate needs and opportunities for impact. Key questions can include:



MEASURING THE IMPACT OF A SKILLS-BASED VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM



Being able to measure the impact of your skills-based volunteer activities – for your company, your employees and your nonprofit partners – is critical to delivering win-win-win benefits.

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Talent Development: Functional Skills & Leadership Talents

WHAT CAN YOU MEASURE?

- Functional Skill Development: Measure an employee's progress on a specific functional skill such as an application development, project management or LEAN operations
- Leadership and Soft Skill Development: Measure an employee's progress on critical leadership skills such as navigating complexities, influencing and client focus
- Promotion Rates: Measure how your skills-based program is developing your leadership bench by identifying promotion rates among participants.

Employee Engagement: Employee Engagement, Retention and Satisfaction

WHAT CAN YOU MEASURE?

- Engagement: Measure an employee's engagement with your company, their colleagues and their community
- Retention: Measure the impact your skills-based program as on your retention rates
- Satisfaction: Measure how connected and loyal employees are to your company

Community & Philanthropic Impact: The Difference Made in Your Community

WHAT CAN YOU MEASURE?

- Nonprofit Effectiveness: Measure the increase in a nonprofit's ability to deliver on its mission as a result of your skills-based support
- Nonprofit Relationship Development: Measure the benefits to deepening your relationship with your nonprofit partner
- Issue area impact: Measure how your skills-based support on a specific issue area across multiple organizations has impacted that issue

Conclusion

Skills-based volunteering is the fastest growing type of volunteer program. More than half of all companies, as of 2016, have engaged their employees in skills-based volunteer service programs. ServeOhio and Common Impact are pleased to present this guided resource to support companies in considering "How can we launch skills-based volunteering programs?" and "How can programs be created to achieve the highest level of impact? A strategic approach to program design will support a thriving social sector across Ohio.