



Looking for employee volunteering ideas?

[VOLUNTEER.IE](https://www.volunteer.ie)



**Volunteer
Ireland**
Obair Dheonach Éireann



People are interested in many different causes and like to give back in many different ways. While one person might love the idea of sharing their professional skills and knowledge or helping at a charity fundraiser, another will prefer to get stuck into a painting or gardening project or participating in a climate action litter clean up. By offering a variety of ways to get involved and participate you are likely to see greater interest and uptake in volunteering by your team members.

While [I-VOL](#), the national volunteering database, is the recommended first stop when searching for volunteering opportunities, we have listed some programmes and opportunities below to help spark ideas for how your team might engage in volunteering. Many of the opportunities below require a partnership between the company and the non-profit. Partnerships and donations support charities to deliver their vital day to day work while providing your staff with a unique opportunity to learn about a cause and give back in a meaningful way.

Supporting *Education* through Employee Volunteering

Kinia

Kinia trains employee volunteers as Early Reading Buddies. Small corporate teams come together twice a week, for 30 minutes, across 6 weeks to meet with children in need of reading support. Volunteers read with the children, bringing books to life, and instilling a love of reading for these children. This programme takes place both virtually and in person.

DPS Global

A consulting, engineering and construction company – developed an in-house programme, called Aspire2, to support students in DEIS schools to progress to Third Level, Further Education and Apprenticeships. The programme offers a wide range of supports from direct financial support for students, student mentoring via an employee volunteer programme, youth advisory panels, work experience and a parents training programme. The programme has a full-time staff member within the company to manage the programme and ensure its continued success. The programme has recorded an 8% increase in students going on to third level. DPS Global are happy to share their programme model with other companies so please get in touch with Volunteer Ireland if you are interested in learning from them.

Junior Achievement

Junior Achievement partners with businesses in areas such as entrepreneurship, employability, financial literacy and STEM. Their programme's utilise the experience of those already in the workforce to help young people of all ages to fully understand the important role that education plays in shaping their futures. Business volunteers act as role models from the working world and all volunteers are recruited, trained, vetted, equipped and supported to deliver hands-on learning experiences in primary and second level schools. Through their entrepreneurship, employability, financial literacy and STEM programmes they encourage young people to stay in school and help them realise their potential.

Early Learning Initiative

ELI at National College of Ireland was developed to address the problem of educational underachievement in marginalised communities. Building upon tried and tested models of early years' intervention, ELI works with communities in areas of greatest need, to provide world-class parent and child learning support programmes. Through their company partnerships employee volunteers assist with a range of opportunities including mentoring, STEM, language cafés, storytelling, careers events, coding and educational gaming.

Supporting *Climate Action* through employee volunteering

The [Clean Coasts](#) corporate volunteering programme is an ideal opportunity for companies to make a tangible and immediate improvement to the environment. Clean Coast Action days take place at beaches, rivers and canals, depending on what suits the company, and can be organised throughout the coastline of Ireland.

[Stepping Stone Forest](#) volunteers are part of a really exciting new forestry and rewilding initiative. Based in the Tallaght area the project is Ireland's newest and fastest growing, tree planting programme. Taking place in tree planting season (generally Nov-Dec) volunteers come together at various parks in South Dublin to help with the soil preparation phase by laying down layers of newspaper and cardboard, covered by a layer of wood chip mulch. Following soil preparation volunteers plant bare root native Irish trees to help create mini-woodlands throughout Dublin.

[FoodCloud](#) is an Irish social enterprise that reduces food waste by redistributing surplus food from food businesses to charity and community partners.

On a daily basis small teams of company volunteers support FoodCloud's warehouse Hub in Dublin to sort and pack food orders to be distributed to charities that day.

This is a true win-win scenario, charities have access to a supply of fresh food and businesses can contribute to their community in a meaningful and practical way by ensuring that no good food goes to waste.



ReWild Wicklow partners with public, private and community partners to expand native habitats by planting trees and conducting other conservation work. Tree planting season is Oct–March and during this time volunteers meet every weekend to plant trees or support on other conservation projects being undertaken to protect, enhance and increase native habitats across Co. Wicklow.



Ballybrack's Climate Action Club meet each weekend for a range of climate focused activities from litter picks to pop up pollinator patch events. Litter pollution is a very significant problem in the Ballybrack area and so their focus is on preventing water pollution before it begins. When it rains, the dye from packaging and pieces of litter left on the ground creates polluted runoff water, which flows into our drains and then into our rivers and seas. The fish eat the plastic thinking it is food! This problem is so significant that tiny pieces of plastic are even being found in the fish we eat!

Self-organised litter clean ups happen every day around the country. If organising your own company litter clean-up, we recommend doing some research into the litter blackspots in your area or you might contact your local Tidy Towns or Council to see if they can suggest areas that are heavily littered.



Supporting *Older People* through employee volunteering

Write letters and cards for Christmas, Halloween, Easter, St. Patrick's Day to those in nursing homes. You will find lots of these opportunities on www.volunteer.ie or you can contact a local nursing home directly to see if they would welcome cards and letters from your employees.

Supporting *Inclusion & Diversity* through employee volunteering

Organise an **Accessibility in Action** team event using the [Wheelmap](#) app. This app is available for anyone to download and use and allows your team to map the wheelchair accessibility of buildings and businesses in their local area. The app is available for use by wheelchair users and others with mobility challenges to help them plan daily activities, outings and excursions.



Many organisations are thrilled to receive pre-assembled care kits and play packs for their clients. Organisations such as **Children in Hospital Ireland** provide much needed play packs for children who are ill in hospital, the **Irish Red Cross** supports Ukrainian refugees by providing essential care kits for women and children, while homeless organisations such as **Novas**, **Simon Community** and **Focus Ireland** are always in need of toiletry supplies and care packages for their clients.

What if I can't find a ready-made volunteer opportunity for my team?

1

Ask your teams to reach out to their local networks to see if there are needs within their communities that could use your company's support e.g. a school, sports club, community centre, Tidy Towns group. Remember to come to the table with some ideas for how you might help e.g. painting changing rooms at a sports club, installing veg beds at a primary school, supporting a fundraising event, careers sessions with TY students, clearing and replanting flower beds in a town or at a local community garden and so on.

2

Brainstorm ways you can organise an activity internally that will support a non-profit or cause close to your heart e.g. purchase toiletries for the homeless or food for Christmas hampers.

3

Look to connect in with a national campaign such as [National Tree Week](#), the [All Ireland Pollinator Plan](#), [National Spring Clean](#), or [Backyard Biodiversity](#).

4

Support fundraising events whether it's [Sing for Simon](#), participating in the Pieta House [Darkness into Light](#) walk or shaking buckets on [Daffodil Day](#) for the Irish Cancer Society.

5

Contact [Boardmatch](#) about sharing your professional skills on a charity Board. Some key skills in demand are law, finance, HR, I.T., data protection and marketing and social media

6

Set up a [Coder Dojo](#) in your company for young people interested in coding, contact [Irish Men's Sheds](#) to see how you might be able to support their members, run a bingo night for a local disability organisation and its members, set up a [blood donation drive](#) or you might even consider participating in the TV programme [DIY SOS](#).

7

Check out [Missing Maps](#) where your team can volunteer online to map unmapped areas of the world where people live at risk of disasters e.g. flooding, landslides, earthquakes. The data you map is made available to individuals, communities and organisations to prepare and respond to disasters in these areas.

8

Look at supporting local **DEIS schools** (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools). DEIS schools address educational disadvantage and support educational inclusion. Employees could volunteer to facilitate fun STEM learning activities in class or organise a larger interactive workshop in a subject related the organisation's area of expertise. You can get a list of DEIS schools on [Gov.ie](#).



Volunteer Ireland

Obair Dheonach Éireann

VOLUNTEER.IE