



# Jumpstart to GROWTH

## Scouting Volunteer Recruitment Guide

**S**couting volunteers have provided generations of Canadian youth with a first opportunity to sleep in a tent, experience leadership, and to build self-reliance and self-confidence. Volunteer dedication, resourcefulness and enthusiasm are vital to Scouting. That means finding the right volunteers is critically important.

### Who and What is this guide for?

The guide is designed to assist Group Commissioners and Section Scouters recruit volunteers.

### Who is responsible for recruiting?

The recruiting process is driven by the Group Committee, but it works best when all Scouters play an active role in finding good volunteers.

### What makes a good recruiter?

Whether the Group Committee does the recruiting itself or forms a sub-committee, the best recruiters are current volunteers with these characteristics:

- Knowledgeable about Scouting
- Personable
- Good communicators
- Comfortable approaching potential volunteers
- Comfortable hosting recruitment events

### Tips

- Recruiting team membership can vary. For example, if you are recruiting for a specific role you will want to recruit someone to the team who will be very familiar with the role.
- Consider having a Rover or Venturer involved. A youth perspective is helpful when recruiting other youth into volunteer roles.
- In conversations with potential volunteers, focus on the benefits they will get out of volunteering.

### Who makes a good Scouting volunteer?

First and foremost, look for people who reflect the Scout Law. In addition, look for these traits in prospective volunteers:

- Willingness to gain new skills and knowledge
- Patience
- Ability to engage with young people
- Leadership
- Honesty
- Friendly, outgoing personality
- Organizational ability
- Reliable and responsible
- Good communication skills
- Team player

Specific skills are needed for some Scouting roles. For example, budgeting, bookkeeping and fundraising experience are important when selecting a Group Treasurer/Fundraiser. Consult the ["Volunteer Position Descriptions"](#) in *Section 4000 - Appointments/Positions* job descriptions in Scouts Canada's ["By-law, Policies and Procedures"](#) to find the suggested qualifications, special skills and knowledge needed to succeed in Scouting roles.

### Why is my community's demographic profile important?

Canada is a nation of diversity. A Group reflective of your community's diversity — in your leadership as well as your membership — will best serve your community. To achieve this, you may need to recruit volunteers from under-represented groups. If this is the case, seek out someone with influence in the target community and arrange a meeting to explain what Scouting is all about. You might meet with a cultural club president, community association member or religious leader. The objective of the meeting is to identify potential volunteers to fill Scouting roles. Scouts Canada's Volunteer Position Descriptions will help you to describe the skills and characteristics you are looking for. Don't forget to ask for advice on how best to approach those you identify.

## Where can I find volunteers?

The richest source of volunteers is families of Scouting members. Parents alone make up large percentage of Scouts Canada's volunteer base. Scouting alumni and senior section youth members are also excellent sources of volunteers. They understand the program, bring a youth perspective to the leadership team and relate very well to youth.

### 1. Families

Develop a climate for participation in your Group that will help you to get to know families and identify potential volunteers. You can do this by:

- Creating a sense of community
- Making parents feel welcome
- Communicating regularly

#### Tips

- Get to know your parents by name, what they do, and what skills or talents they might offer. Use the ["Parent/Guardian Resource Survey"](#) to collect data.
- Involve them in activities, invite them to group celebrations, host an adults' social night.
- Use the ["It Starts with Scouts Group Newsletter"](#) template to share about Section and Group activities.

### 2. Senior Youth Members

An opportunity to join a Section team as fully participating members encourages youth to become lifelong volunteers. Using Keeos, Kims, Activity Leaders and Scouters-In-Training as volunteers is a great way to increase retention in your Group and to start them thinking about giving back to Scouting. Once Venturers turn 16 and have taken their Wood Badge Part 1, they can be full-fledged Scouters, providing the added bonus of being counted in the Section's youth to adult ratio. During their final Scouting year, consider approaching Venturers with volunteer potential and invite them to continue as Scouters.

### 3. Scouting Alumni

Many Scouting alumni, although they have drifted away from Scouting, continue to value community service. Although many former scouting members may not have time while at college or university, they might be happy to be involved again once they graduate.

#### Tips for recruiting young adults

- Remember that young volunteers may have different needs such as shorter time commitments and greater flexibility.
- Make sure they feel they are welcome participants in the leadership team despite the age difference.
- Keep in touch with your alumni. A Group Facebook page is a great way to keep track of everyone.

### 4. Other sources of volunteers

- **Group sponsors**  
Group sponsors may let you place a call for volunteers in their electronic or print publications or make announcements at church services and meetings.
- **Companies, governments and service departments**  
Use the ["Volunteerism in the Workplace"](#) letter template to advise them of the professional development opportunities Scouts Canada can provide to employees. Police, fire and emergency service workers are especially community-oriented.
- **Students from local schools**  
Call schools to find out about student volunteer programs and how you might promote Scouting volunteerism in the school. Some provinces require students to contribute volunteer hours in order to graduate. A rewarding volunteer experience often results in students continuing as volunteers.  
  
College and university students may volunteer in order to broaden their experience or improve their résumés. You can post notices on institutions' electronic bulletin boards.

- **Scouting youth**  
Ask them to suggest “way cool” leaders from their neighbourhoods.
- **Social media**  
Experiment with LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Find Scouts Canada on these sites or tap into your own social networks.
- **Friendstorming**  
Ask every member of the Group Committee to bring the name of a potential volunteer to the Committee meeting each month.
- **Charity Village**  
Post volunteer opportunities on the Charity Village website. [“www.charityvillage.com”](http://www.charityvillage.com)
- **Volunteer Bureaus**  
Many communities have local volunteer centres that serve as clearing houses for volunteer job postings.

## The Volunteer Recruitment Process

### What motivates people to volunteer?

People volunteer for many reasons. Understanding why they do can make your recruiting more effective:

- To get involved in their communities
- To help others
- To feel a sense of achievement
- To develop new interests
- To have new experiences
- To learn new skills
- To boost career options
- To demonstrate their commitment, dedication and interests to others
- To meet a diverse range of people and make new friends
- To have fun

### Why is Scouting a great volunteer experience?

Many people are looking for ways to develop skills that help them achieve personal and professional goals. Scouting has a long tradition of providing such opportunities.

- More than 50 hours of on-line and experiential learning in understanding youth, program planning, leadership and risk management is available to new Scouters.
- Scouting offers many opportunities to develop administrative skills and explore leadership styles.
- There are opportunities to develop marketing, communication, financial management and fundraising skills.
- Scouts Canada also offers excellent volunteer development courses.

### Is there a Scouting recruiting process?

Above all, your recruitment process needs to be fair and lead to the selection of the best candidates.

Here is a proven step-by-step process and some tips for applying them effectively:

#### **Steps 1 and 2: Define the job and the qualifications**

Job descriptions for most Scouts Canada volunteer roles are included in *Scouts Canada’s Bylaw, Policies & Procedures, Section 4000 - Appointments/Positions*. Each job description lists job tasks and the qualifications needed to perform them effectively. Use these job descriptions not as a checklist, but as guides to help you identify the best candidates.

#### **Step 3: List and prioritize candidates**

Gather names of candidates who demonstrate Scouting values and appear suitable for the role. Use a matrix and rating system to compare their abilities and qualifications against the requirements of the role.

### Tips

- Maintain records of potential volunteers and their skills and interests so that you have a pool of candidates when positions arise.
- Cast your recruiting net beyond your Scouting families.
- Have copies of job descriptions on hand for the roles you’re looking to fill so that you can give them to potential candidates.

## **Step 4: Meet with the leading candidate**

This interview is your opportunity to confirm that the candidate is a good fit for Scouts Canada, your Group and the available volunteer role. Check out the [“Screening Interview Guide”](#) for more information. Review the reasons why you believe he or she is the best candidate for the role and what the role entails. Be prepared to answer questions about Scouting and help your candidate understand the process of becoming a Scouter. Assure them that they will be supported in their Scouting journey from that day forward.

## **Step 5: Welcome the volunteer**

If you are confident that you have the right person and they agree to take on the role, hire them. You can immediately begin the new volunteer screening and registration process. Provide the volunteer with a copy of the [“New Scouter Welcome Kit”](#) and a list of training options offered by your Council. The new volunteer’s success as a Scouter requires a program of support by your Group and Area Teams.

A workshop called *The Grizzly Creek Solution* expands on the volunteer recruitment process. Contact your Council Field Executive or Area Commissioner for more information.

## **How can we best support our volunteers?**

“It Starts with Scouts.” To fulfill this promise to our youth, a vast number of volunteers is needed and an unwavering commitment to support them. Volunteer success is supported by a formal program that includes orientation, program tools, formal training, in-person support, and feedback and recognition.

The [“Volunteer Support Toolkit”](#) is a collection of resources to help Groups provide new volunteers with the care and guidance to provide a fulfilling and satisfying volunteer experience.

## **Recruiting success factors**

- Know your Scouting families
- Use the Scouting volunteer recruitment process
- Look beyond your parent pool
- Be honest about what is involved in a volunteer role
- Match volunteer skills and interests to appropriate roles
- Start volunteers with small tasks
- Welcome new people and introduce them to the Scouting culture
- Support your volunteers

## **Questions?**

Contact your Area Commissioner or the Council Office.