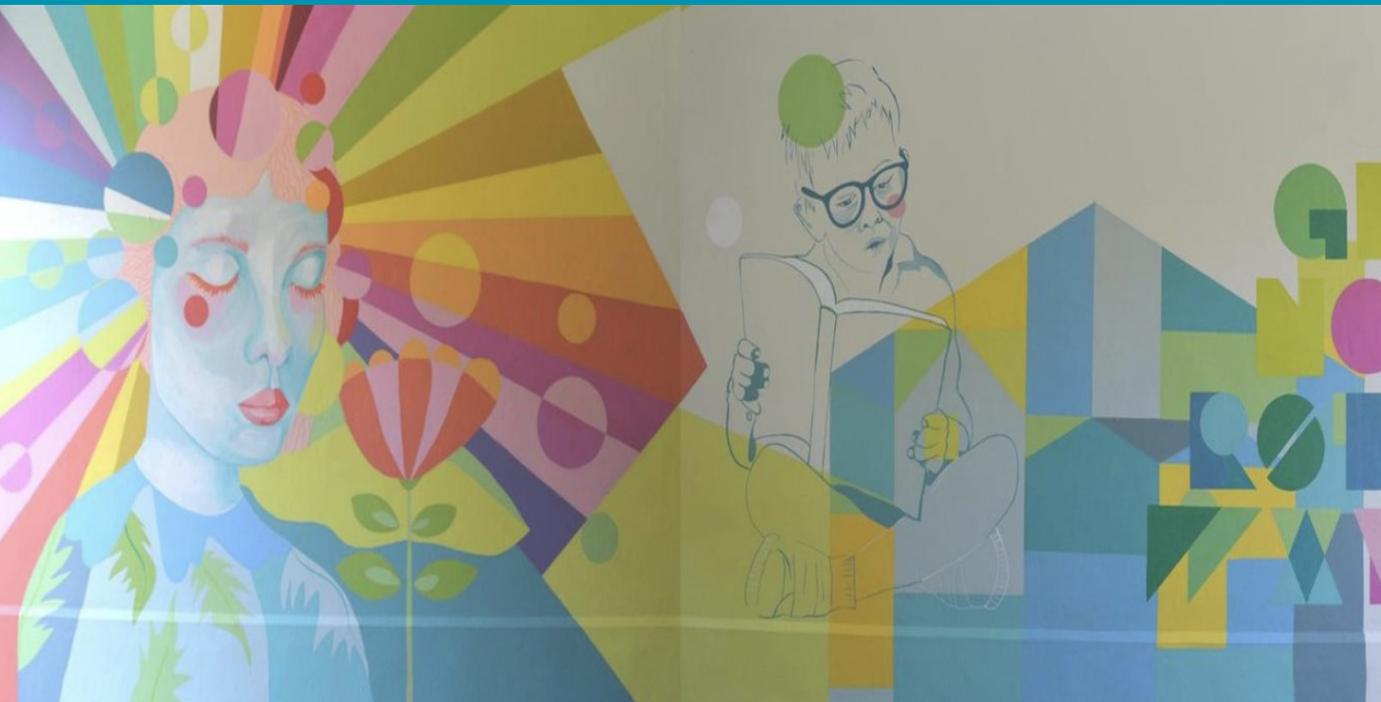


A Day to Make a Difference

A handy guide for you and your staff



May 2021

www.ed.ac.uk/local



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH



The policy

The University of Edinburgh's [Special Leave Policy](#) enables all staff to take up to 1 day's paid leave for year, pro rata for part time staff. The University is committed to helping its staff to achieve a good work-life balance.

What does it say about volunteering??

Special leave

You can request time off to volunteer. This can be with a charity or local organisation or at a sporting or other high profile events, e.g. Royal Edinburgh Hospital, the Commonwealth Games.

This means that there are a wide range of activities you can do. We suggest you find an opportunity that maximises the benefit for communities, and is a response to a need defined by that community.



Volunteering is good

There's lots of evidence which proves volunteering and giving to others is good for you. Here are a few resources if you're unsure:

[Why Volunteers?](#), NCVO – a chance to give something back to the community or make a difference.

[Why Volunteer?](#), Volunteering Matters – volunteers make a massive difference to people and communities.

[Benefits of volunteering](#), Volunteer Scotland – volunteering is one of the most rewarding things you can do.

The University recognises the role of giving as part of your [health and wellbeing](#).



“As someone who’s only lived in Edinburgh for a few years, volunteering for a local organisation has also helped me to feel more connected to, and a part of, the local community.”

Annie Lovett, Senior Philanthropy Officer, volunteers for the Pregnancy and Parents Centre.



Making use of your day

In order to make use of your day, you'll need to think about what sort of thing you'd like to do, who you could help and how you could achieve it. Here's a few ways to think about it:

Group	or	Individual	<p>Do you want to volunteer by yourself or with your colleagues?</p> <p>Do you want to volunteer face to face, or would you prefer to do it online or by phone?</p> <p>Do you want to use your professional skills, or find something completely different from your every day?</p> <p>Do you want to volunteer just this once, or do you hope to continue volunteering after your Day to Make a Difference?</p> <p>Is there a charity or organisation that your team/department/school already contribute to, or could you suggest one?</p>
In-person	or	Remote	
Skills based	or	A novel experience	
One off	or	Ongoing	
Existing connection	or	A cause you believe in	



Group Volunteering

We think that volunteering as a group has massive potential to benefit you, your colleagues and the local community.

Many group volunteering opportunities have been unavailable during the Covid-19 pandemic, at a time when community spirit and energy to give has been at it's highest.

Even now, there are creative ways to volunteer together:

- Volunteer for the same charity, individually and over a number of days, contributing to the same goal.
- Find an organisation still delivering vital in-person services, like emergency food provision.
- Utilise your team's professional skills, and work collaboratively over a short period of time to solve a specific problem for an organisation.



1. Think about who, what and how
2. Make contact and arrange your volunteering
3. Tell your manager
4. Record it in People and Money
5. Volunteer and share your story

Your 5 step plan



Useful information

This guide has been produced by the [Community Team](#). We have worked with communities in the Edinburgh City region for many years and are committed to deliver positive change locally and regionally.

The [Community Plan](#) 2020-25 sets out 32 practical commitments the University is making to local communities. Commitment 9 is to encourage staff to take part in a Day To Make a Difference. If we all use our day we could collectively give back more than 100,000 hours to local communities!

Visit [Edinburgh Local](#) to find out more about the policy and how to take part. You can find volunteering opportunities at [Volunteer Edinburgh](#) and the [Edinburgh University Students' Association](#), as well as on the usual social media platforms.

To get in touch with us directly please email: local@ed.ac.uk