



How to Find, Vet and Onboard NonProfit Organizations for One Day Volunteering

By Give A Day Global
www.giveadayglobal.org

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The Background

In 2012, Kerry Rodgers, Courtney Regan and Kathleen Ruffle founded Give A Day Global to serve a need that was missing from the voluntourism market place: one day volunteer experiences. While voluntourism has been a booming interest in the last decade, often the experiences require a minimum time commitment of one week, two week, or one month. However, most Americans can only take 2 weeks vacation, so while they want to give back, they don't have the opportunity to do so.

Give A Day Global was founded to deliver on this unmet need. Our mission is to empower travelers to make a difference, to support communities creating change, and to connect people as global citizens, one day at a time.

During our three years as a 501c3 nonprofit, we discovered twenty-six nonprofits in developing countries that were willing to accept one-day volunteers. We marketed these opportunities online, through tour operators and our personal network to create awareness. Due to our efforts, we coordinated more than three hundred volunteer days for travelers.

For many reasons, Give A Day Global will no longer be actively coordinating these volunteer days as of January 2017. However, we do want to let the world know about the amazing partners we've working with who are still willing to accept volunteers and are open to direct communication.

We also want to share our experience and learnings. So if you want to find, vet and onboard partner organizations like we did – you have the tools right here in this document.

As Voluntourism becomes more popular and in-demand by travelers, it's critical that volunteering work is done through reliable, credible and established nonprofits committed to bettering their communities.

How to FIND partner organizations

We look for nonprofits who are effective, have sound financials, and a reputation for integrity and community impact. The organizations must meet these requirements:

- Location: Be located near an urban hub or tourist destination.
- Community Participation: Involve and empower the community they are serving.
- Language: Have staff who speak English fluently for interacting with our volunteers and communicating with coordinators.
- Communications: Have reliable access to phone and Internet communications.
- Financial integrity: Have transparent and verifiable financial records that demonstrate fiscal responsibility.
- Legal Structure: Be legally established as a nonprofit either in the US or in their home country.

*Note: We also recommend to avoid working with orphanages. Although some orphanages do good work, journalists and child advocates have documented a great deal of fraud and child trafficking that is commonly conducted through orphanages. It is extremely difficult to evaluate the integrity of an orphanage beyond a shadow of a doubt, and the stakes are simply too high.

Thus far we have looked for partner organizations in developing countries, however this idea can apply all over the world.

To find specific organizations, we recommend:

- Doing online research, asking local people and companies such as hotels.
- See the resource spreadsheet of organizations that support other international organizations at the bottom of this document. The benefit of this resource is they are mostly vetted already - which really helps.
 - These are the top four most helpful resources
 - <https://www.globalgiving.org>
 - <http://www.omprakash.org/>
 - <http://grassrootsvolunteering.org>
 - <http://give2asia.org/> (for Asia only)
- Google is your friend, especially when looking for a specific type of nonprofit in a specific region.

Once you've found a handful you think might work, how can you assess whether or not they are a good fit?

How to VET partner organizations

Now that you found a potential partner organization, it's time to vet them and make sure they are legit, reliable, organized and a good fit for one-day volunteers.

Start by doing online research. Try and answer as many of the questions in [Exhibit A](#) as possible. You won't be able to obtain all this information, but do the best you can. The biggest flags are:

- Are they legally established as a legal nonprofit organization in their home country?
- Do they carry their own general liability coverage that extends to the volunteers?
- Read through their annual report to understand their financials, how much of their fundraising goes toward programs?
- Do they currently accept one-day volunteers? If so, what types of activities do they participate in?
- Is the leadership from the local community, or do they have a decision-making process that takes community voices and solutions into account?

If the nonprofit is looking like a potential partner, it's ideal if either someone from your company conducts what we call a "trusted traveler" site visit. This person will ideally volunteer for a day, and spend some time with the leadership discussing the programming options, logistics of how you would like to work, common goals etc.

A caution: very few nonprofits have existing programs for one day volunteers. BUT if they are approached by a tour operator saying that they have travelers who want to make a donation and volunteer - that is much more likely to be welcomed. Also, the hope is that some travelers may become on-going advocates or supporters of the nonprofit's cause.

How to ONBOARD partner organizations

It's critical to make sure both the volunteer and organization are set up for success, and that everyone has a productive, meaningful day. There are several considerations to make sure this is done properly.

After the vetting process you'll have a good understanding of the mission and work of this organization. Are they better for big or small groups? Are they OK with kids? Is this a half or full day experience etc.? You'll want to consider all of this when thinking about the following.

Programming

It's so important the volunteer is working and learning throughout their day, not wondering that they are doing there, feeling unwelcome or unhelpful. Does the organization already offer one-day experiences? If so, what do they do? If they don't, work with them to set up some options. Ideas include:

- Wildlife refuge center: Cleaning cages, creating toys for animal enrichment, cutting fruits & vegetables and feeding animals.
- Community centers or schools: Teach a short program about where the travelers are from. For example, if they are from San Francisco talk about the destinations, its attractions and then have them draw a picture of the Golden Gate Bridge. Bring arts & crafts projects, teach English or help with cooking and serving food.
- Environmental: Working on a farm, weeding, harvesting and watering.

A lot of organization will have five or more activities they could offer, then assign an experience based on the greatest need that day.

Donations

Nonprofit organizations spend a lot of time preparing for volunteers and hosting one-day volunteers, so it's important to provide them with some financial benefit. (This also makes organizations much more willing to partner with you.) It's important to contribute to the great work they are doing in their communities; remember organizations rely on such donations for survival.

At Give A Day Global, we requested a donation of \$100 per adult and \$25 per child and 100% of that went to the organization. It's best to collect this money upfront before the day, much like a tour and deliver that money by a previously determined method.

Note: At Give A Day Global we also recommended that volunteers consider crowdfunding their donation. This can be a fun and engaging way to help a cause, and it also makes volunteering accessible to a wide demographic of travelers. Travelers can use crowdfunding sites such as "Go Fund Me." We always remind travelers, getting just 10 friends to contribute \$10 each covers their donation!

The nonprofit should also let volunteers know how they after the volunteering day is complete.

Communications

To set volunteers expectations, it's helpful to have a volunteer manual that describes an agenda of the day, what to (and what not to) bring, what to wear, any cultural customs they should be aware of, standard limitations (i.e. no kids), and contact information. See [Exhibit B](#) for a sample.

To set the nonprofit's expectations, it's helpful to provide as much information as possible about the volunteers prior to travel, talk through with them what the day will be like, then the day of show up on time and be flexible and kind to their needs. Remember this is just one of the many happenings at each organization and we don't want to deter their main priorities.

Logistics

- Require all participants to sign waivers of liability/hold harmless agreements.

- Recommend travel accident insurance for any volunteers traveling abroad either from the organizations they are volunteering for or personally.

Soliciting Feedback

As with any travel experience, you want to know what went well and what didn't so you can improve the next time around. Roll this into your company's standard processes, but a brief email with a few questions usually provides the best response. Be sure to share positive feedback to encourage more volunteering!

We hope you find this information helpful when looking to find, vet and onboard partner organizations for one-day volunteer experiences. If you have any questions or further needs, please reach out to either:

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We wish you the best of luck in working to make this world a better place, one day at a time!

RESOURCES FOR FINDING PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Organization

Website

Omprakash Foundation (fiscal sponsor)

<http://www.omprakash.org/>

Global Giving

<https://www.globalgiving.org>

Silicon Valley Community Foundation

<http://www.siliconvalleycf.org/ngo>

Grassroots Volunteering

<http://grassrootsvolunteering.org>

Give2Asia (fiscal sponsor)

<http://give2asia.org/>

Guide Star

<http://www.guidestar.org/Home.aspx>

Network for Good

www.networkforgood.org/

Charity Travel

<http://charitytravel.blogspot.com/>

Active Aid International

<http://www.activeaidinternational.org>

Globalteer	www.globalteer.org
Goodwill Globetrotting	http://www.goodwillglobetrotting.org/
Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service	http://ccivs.org/
Service Civil International	http://www.workcamps.info/icamps/MX-SCM/en/
Volunteer work Thailand	http://www.volunteerworkthailand.org
Se7en	http://www.the7interchange.com/
Volunteer Southeast Asia	http://volunteersoutheastasia.com/
Partnership Volunteers	http://www.partnershipvolunteers.org/
VAOS	http://www.vaops.com/
Independent Volunteer	http://www.independentvolunteer.org
Idex	https://www.idex.org/
The NGO List	http://www.thengolist.com/
Universal Giving Volunteers	http://www.universalgiving.org/volunteer/
Erin	goeringo.com
Handy Travelers	http://www.handytravelers.com/
Stuff your Rucksack	http://stuffyourrucksack.com/
Moving Worlds	http://www.movingworlds.org/
Foundation for Sustainable Development	http://www.fsdinternational.org/opportunities
Village Volunteers	http://www.villagevolunteers.org/
One World Children's Fund	http://oneworldchildrensfund.org/
Traveler's Quest	http://www.travellersquest.com
Volunteer Basecamp	http://www.volunteerbasecamp.com
Volunteersouthamerica	http://www.volunteersouthamerica.net
Charity Vault	http://www.charity-charities.org

The Muskoka Foundation

<http://www.themuskokafoundation.org>

Travel Giver

<http://travelgiver.com/project-list>

True Volunteers

<http://www.truevolunteer.org>

Journeys 4 Good

<http://journeys4good.com>

Developing World Connections

<http://www.developingworldconnections.org>

Family Travel Network

<http://www.familytravelnetwork.com/>

Global Partnerships

<http://www.globalpartnerships.org/our-investments/our-partners/>