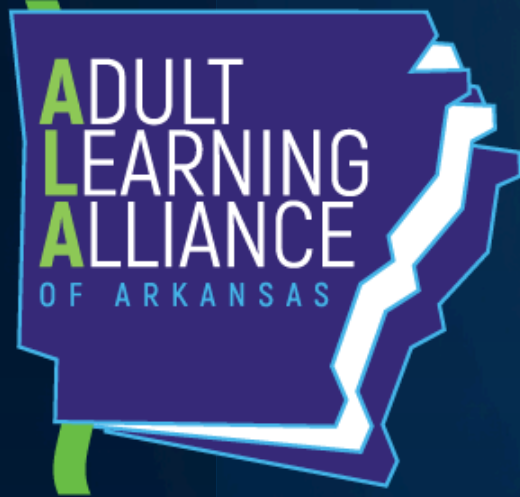
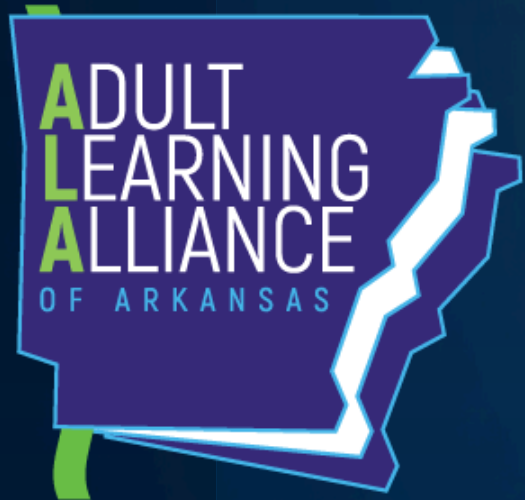




Volunteer Outreach Strategies for Adult Literacy: Building Brighter Futures through Community Engagement

Literacy Texas Annual Conference, July 2026



Volunteering in 2026



Volunteer Numbers and Profiles

Understanding who our volunteers are helps us tailor outreach strategies, improve engagement, and build a stronger, more diverse volunteer community at every level.



63 million

Americans volunteer annually

Volunteers span all age groups — 35% are 35–54, 27% are 55+, and Gen Z participation is growing rapidly through online and episodic opportunities.

30% ages 35–54

Largest volunteer demographic

Professionals, retirees, parents, and students make up the core volunteer base. Occupation and personal interests strongly influence volunteer role preferences.

8 billion

Hours contributed globally per year

Volunteer contributions span education, health, environment, and social services — reflecting diverse interests and a strong commitment to community impact.



Who Are Our Ideal Volunteers?

Our ideal volunteers are passionate individuals committed to making a difference. Here are the key profiles we seek to engage in our mission.



Parents & Families

Parents who want to invest in their community and model civic engagement for their children.



Students & Retirees

Students seeking experience and retirees sharing decades of skills and wisdom.



Professionals

Skilled professionals offering expertise in education, technology, finance, or health.



Mission-Driven

Individuals passionate about student impact and committed to your core mission and values.



Why they Start - Volunteer Motivations

Volunteers give their time to organizations that align with their values. Not the “what”, but the “why”

- ✓ Personal Experience (give back)
- ✓ Because someone they know invited them
- ✓ Family, cultural, or religious practice
- ✓ Sense of belonging, social connections
- ✓ Social status (Peer Pressure)
- ✓ Altruism (Happiness)
- ✓ To help address a need, improve someone's life
- ✓ Resume building (develop skills)





Volunteer Trends Overview

The volunteering landscape is shifting. Understanding these key trends helps us design smarter outreach strategies and connect with volunteers where they are.



68%

Episodic Volunteering

Of volunteers prefer short-term or one-time opportunities that fit into busy schedules.

23%

Online Volunteering

Of Gen Z volunteers prefer virtual or online opportunities such as tutoring and advocacy.

2x

Corporate Volunteerism

Corporate volunteer programs have doubled as companies prioritize social responsibility initiatives.

40%

Shifting Engagement

Of organizations report volunteers now expect more flexible, skills-based roles and remote options.



Volunteering Online: Easy Ways to Get Involved

Volunteering no longer requires being on-site. Flexible hybrid and fully remote roles expand accessibility, attract wider talent, and fit diverse schedules — making it easier than ever to get involved. This allows volunteers to find meaningful ways to contribute from anywhere, at any time.

A woman with glasses is seen from the back, sitting at a desk and participating in a video conference. The laptop screen shows a grid of participants in a virtual meeting. The background is a bright, modern interior with large windows and indoor plants.

60%

Of roles can be
done fully online

Remote tasks include virtual tutoring, data entry, social media management, grant writing, and online mentoring — no commute required.

23%

of Gen Z prefer
online volunteering

Gen Z leads the shift to digital giving. Popular options include virtual tutoring, mentorship programs, and online literacy support — all from the comfort of home.



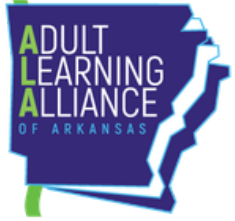
Episodic Volunteering: Fitting Volunteering into Busy Lives

Not everyone can commit to a regular schedule — and that's okay. Episodic volunteering makes it easy for busy individuals to contribute meaningfully, one event at a time.

- ✓ Fits around busy schedules and lifestyles
- ✓ One-time events: fairs, drives, and workshops
- ✓ Seasonal roles: holidays, fundraisers, and campaigns
- ✓ Low barrier to entry for new volunteers



Episodic volunteering is one of the fastest-growing trends in community engagement. By offering flexible, short-term opportunities, organizations can attract a broader audience and convert first-time participants into long-term supporters.



The Rise of Corporate Volunteerism

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is driving a surge in employee volunteer programs. Businesses are increasingly partnering with nonprofits to give back to their communities, bringing valuable resources, skills, and workforce engagement to the causes that matter most.



78%

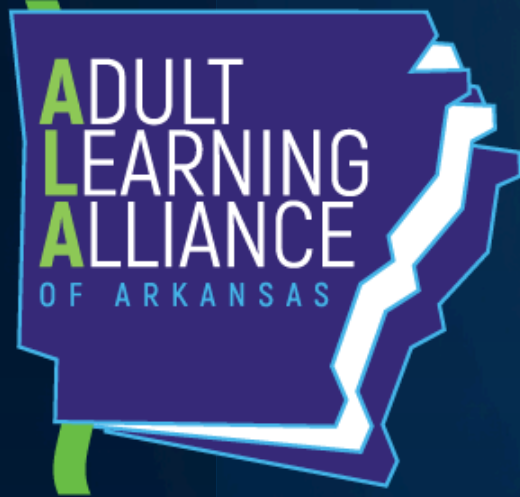
Employee
engagement boost

65% of Companies

Now offer formal employee volunteer programs, up from 40% a decade ago — driven by CSR commitments and employee demand.

2x More Impact

Corporate volunteers bring professional skills and resources, doubling the impact of community programs compared to traditional volunteering.



Strategies on How and Where to Recruit



Reevaluate Your Volunteer Program

Regularly assessing your volunteer program ensures it remains engaging, impactful, and rewarding. A strong program keeps volunteers motivated and clearly communicates the difference they make.

- ✓ Assess program engagement levels
- ✓ Communicate volunteer impact clearly
- ✓ Create plans to make volunteers feel valued
- ✓ Commit to continuous improvement



A well-evaluated volunteer program attracts dedicated participants and strengthens community trust. Gathering feedback and acting on it demonstrates respect for your volunteers' time and contributions.



Identify and Communicate Volunteer Needs Clearly

Transparent, specific volunteer requests attract the right people. Clearly defining roles and skills ensures volunteers know exactly how they can contribute and feel confident signing up.

- ✓ Define each role with required skills and time commitment
- ✓ Include volunteer needs in all outreach materials
- ✓ Be specific: tasks, schedules, and expectations
- ✓ Make sign-up easy with clear next steps

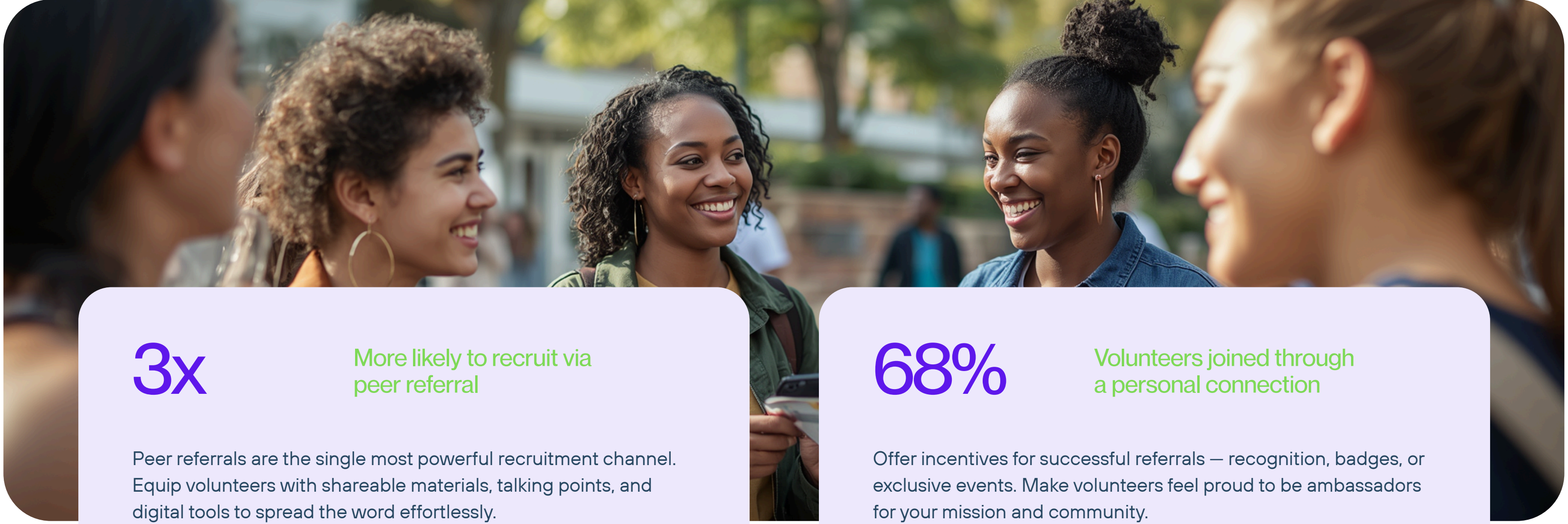


When volunteers understand exactly what is needed and how their skills fit, recruitment becomes more effective and retention improves. Specificity builds trust and reduces barriers to engagement.



Enlist Current Volunteers as Recruiters

Your existing volunteers are your most credible advocates. Peer-to-peer recruitment is highly effective — people trust recommendations from friends and colleagues more than any ad or flyer.



3x

More likely to recruit via
peer referral

Peer referrals are the single most powerful recruitment channel. Equip volunteers with shareable materials, talking points, and digital tools to spread the word effortlessly.

68%

Volunteers joined through
a personal connection

Offer incentives for successful referrals — recognition, badges, or exclusive events. Make volunteers feel proud to be ambassadors for your mission and community.



Community Engagement Outreach Strategies

Building strong local networks is key to sustainable volunteer recruitment. By partnering with community organizations and hosting welcoming events, we expand our reach and deepen our impact.

- ✓ Partner with clubs and faith groups
- ✓ Collaborate with local nonprofits
- ✓ Host info sessions and open houses
- ✓ Build lasting community relationships



Engaging local community groups creates a pipeline of motivated volunteers who are already aligned with your mission. Targeted outreach through trusted community networks builds credibility and long-term volunteer commitment.



Leverage LinkedIn and Social Media for Outreach

Use professional and social networks strategically to reach the right volunteers. LinkedIn connects you with corporate and professional talent, while Facebook and Instagram expand your reach to broader audiences.



LinkedIn

Professional Volunteers

Post volunteer roles on LinkedIn to attract skilled professionals, retirees, and corporate employees seeking meaningful engagement opportunities.

Facebook

Wider Community Reach

Use Facebook events and Instagram reels to showcase volunteer impact, reach diverse demographics, and grow your volunteer community organically.

Instagram

Visual Storytelling

Share compelling photos, volunteer stories, and behind-the-scenes content on Instagram to inspire followers and drive sign-ups through authentic storytelling.

Targeted Ads

Precision Outreach

Run targeted ads on Facebook and LinkedIn using filters like location, interests, and profession to reach ideal volunteer candidates efficiently.



Advertise Volunteer Opportunities Online – Be Specific

Effective online listings attract the right volunteers. Clear, detailed postings with defined roles, time expectations, and tangible benefits significantly improve recruitment outcomes.

- ✓ Write clear, specific role descriptions
- ✓ State time commitments and scheduling
- ✓ Highlight benefits and impact for volunteers
- ✓ Use volunteer matching platforms



Post on platforms like VolunteerMatch, Idealist, and All for Good. Optimize listings with keywords, photos, and compelling impact stories to reach motivated volunteers actively searching for opportunities.



Cultivate Corporate Partnerships

Build lasting business relationships by identifying mission-aligned companies, proposing tailored volunteer programs, and creating mutual value through recognition and shared impact.



67%

Companies with CSR programs

Identify companies whose mission aligns with your cause and propose structured, tailored volunteer programs that fit their CSR goals.

4x

More impact with corporate partners

Corporate partnerships bring resources, skilled volunteers, and expanded networks. Offer co-branded recognition and impact reporting.

82%

Employees prefer purpose-driven work

Engage employees through volunteer days, skills-based projects, and team challenges that connect them to meaningful community work.

3x

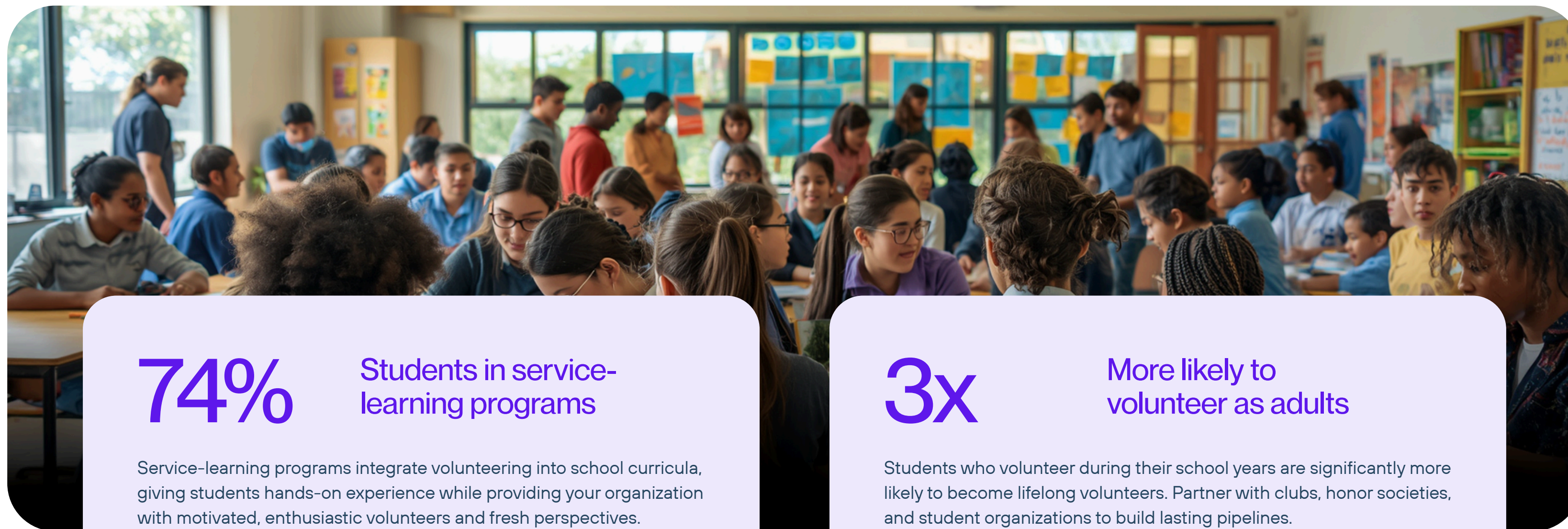
Higher retention with recognition

Celebrate partnerships publicly, share outcomes, and offer annual recognition to reinforce long-term commitment and mutual benefit.



Partner with Local Schools

Schools are powerful partners for volunteer recruitment. Service-learning programs and student clubs connect young people with meaningful opportunities while supporting your mission and community impact.



74%

Students in service-learning programs

Service-learning programs integrate volunteering into school curricula, giving students hands-on experience while providing your organization with motivated, enthusiastic volunteers and fresh perspectives.

3x

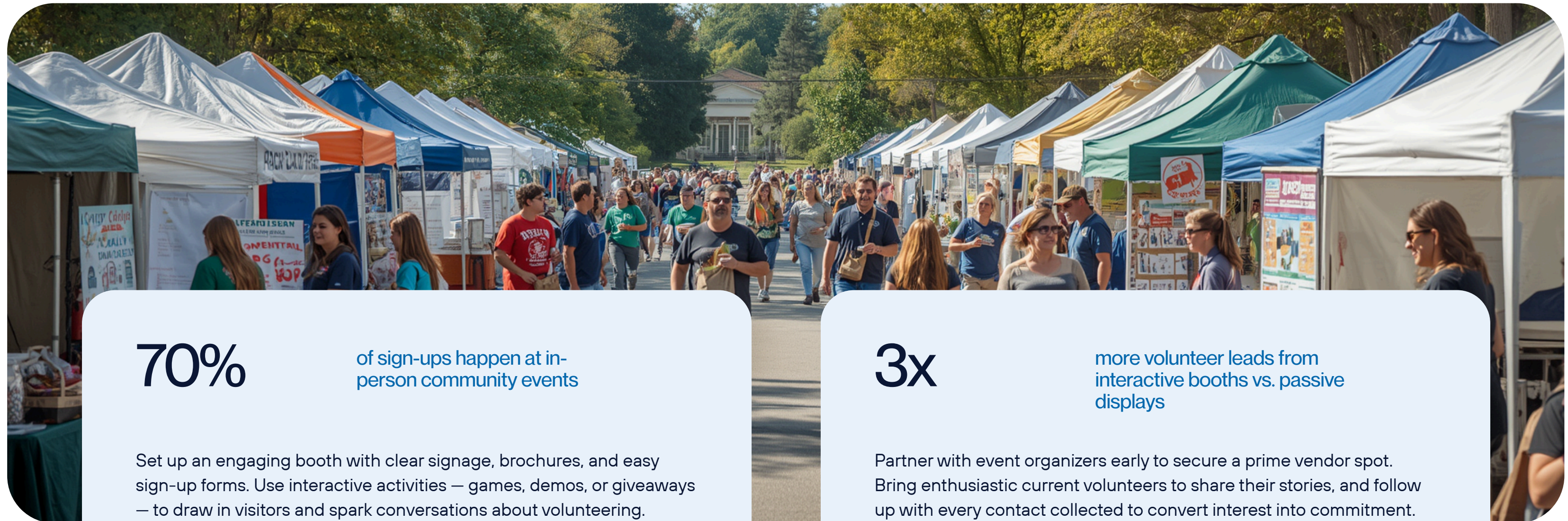
More likely to volunteer as adults

Students who volunteer during their school years are significantly more likely to become lifelong volunteers. Partner with clubs, honor societies, and student organizations to build lasting pipelines.



Participate in Community Events

Fairs, markets, and festivals offer prime opportunities to set up volunteer recruitment booths, engage passersby with interactive activities, and collect sign-ups from motivated community members.



70%

of sign-ups happen at in-person community events

Set up an engaging booth with clear signage, brochures, and easy sign-up forms. Use interactive activities — games, demos, or giveaways — to draw in visitors and spark conversations about volunteering.

3x

more volunteer leads from interactive booths vs. passive displays

Partner with event organizers early to secure a prime vendor spot. Bring enthusiastic current volunteers to share their stories, and follow up with every contact collected to convert interest into commitment.



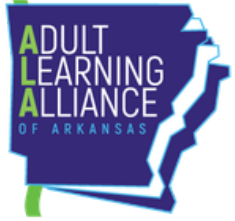
Reconnect with Past Volunteers

Re-engaging alumni volunteers is one of the most effective and cost-efficient recruitment strategies. Past volunteers already know your mission — they just need a reason to return.

- ✓ Personalized outreach and updates
- ✓ Highlight exciting new opportunities
- ✓ Recognize and celebrate past contributions
- ✓ Invite to tutor recognitions and other program events



A warm, personalized message goes a long way. Reach out to past volunteers with updates on your program's impact, share new roles that match their interests, and make them feel genuinely valued for the time they previously gave.



Leverage Your Board for Volunteer Outreach

Board members are powerful ambassadors for your volunteer program. Their networks, credibility, and community connections can open doors to new volunteers, corporate partners, and community organizations that traditional outreach may never reach.

3x

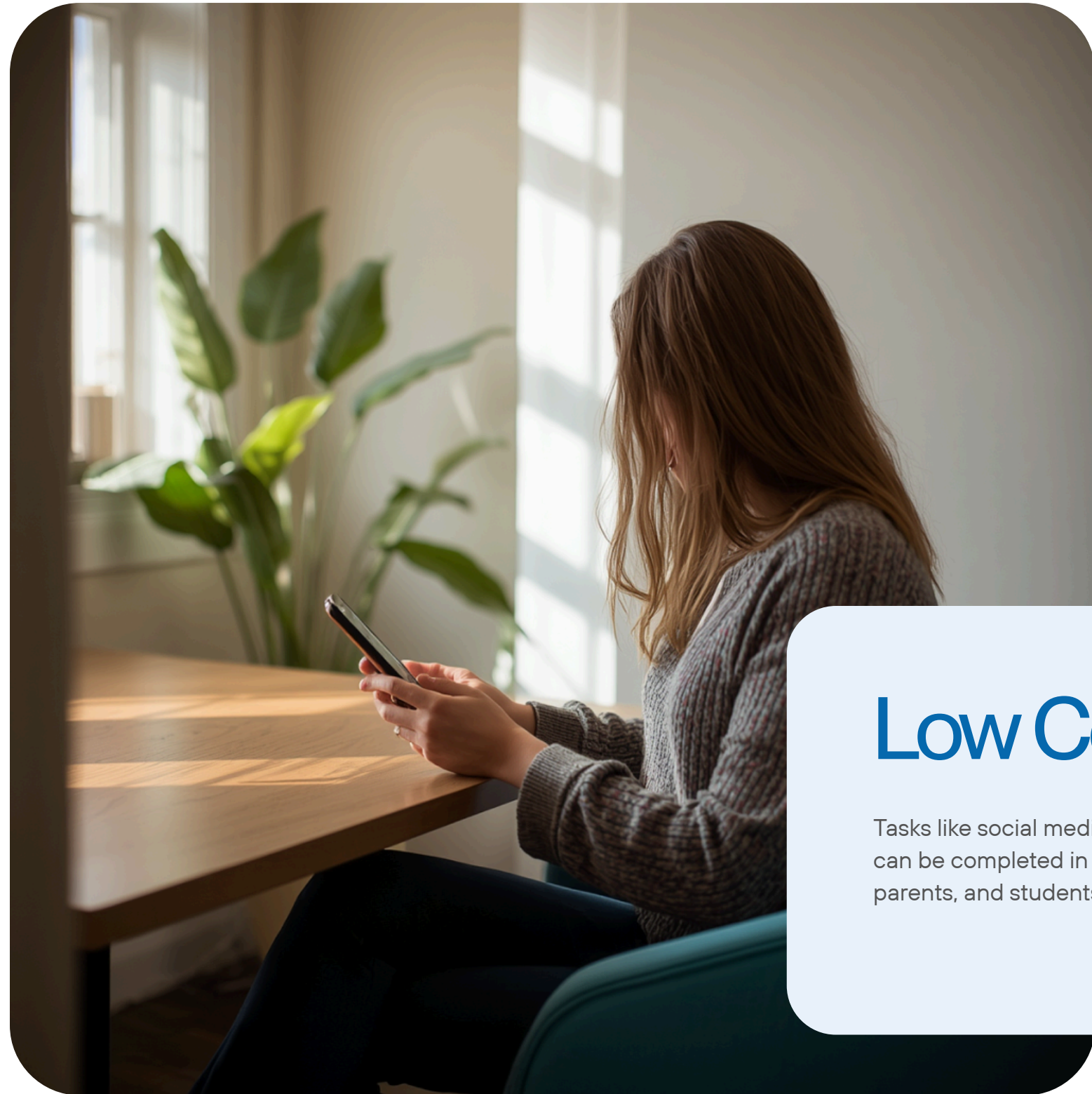
More referrals via board networks

Board members bring trusted relationships and influence. Equip them with talking points, recruitment materials, and clear volunteer role descriptions to share within their professional and personal networks.

68%

Of boards increase volunteer sign-ups when actively engaged

Encourage board members to participate in volunteer events alongside community volunteers. Their visible involvement reinforces organizational commitment and inspires others to join the cause.



Explore Micro-Volunteering

Micro-volunteering offers small, flexible tasks that fit into even the busiest schedules. From sharing a social media post to completing a quick data entry task or covering a short event shift, these opportunities make it easy for anyone to contribute meaningfully without a long-term commitment.



70%

of volunteers prefer
flexible, short-term
tasks

Low Commitment

Tasks like social media shares, data entry, and short event shifts can be completed in minutes — perfect for busy professionals, parents, and students.

High Engagement

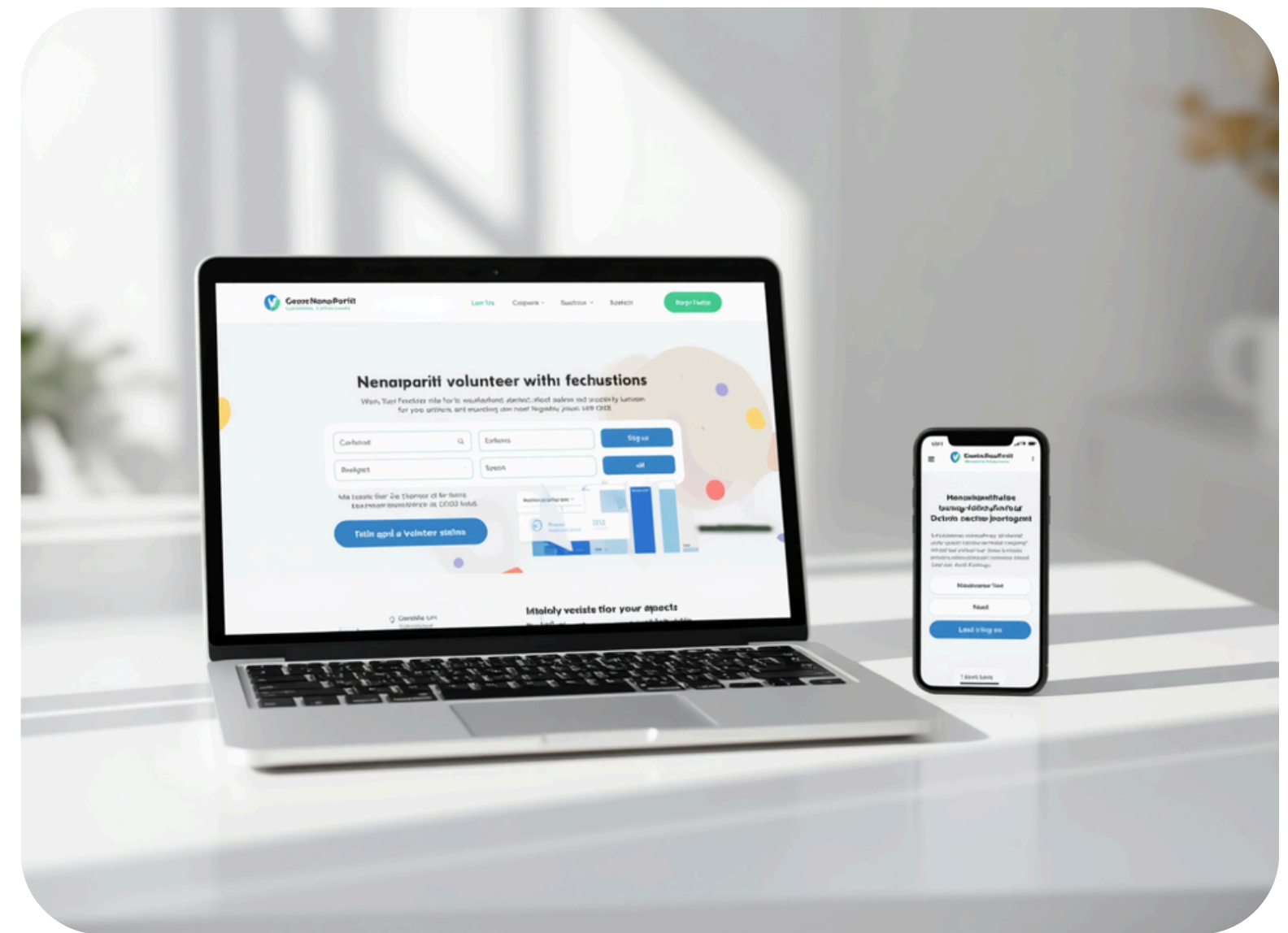
Micro-volunteering lowers the barrier to entry, attracting new volunteers who may grow into long-term supporters. Small actions add up to big impact.



Create a Volunteer Page on Your Website

Your website is a powerful recruitment tool. A dedicated volunteer page serves as a digital hub — making it easy for potential volunteers to learn, connect, and sign up from any device.

- ✓ List all volunteer roles and skill requirements
- ✓ Include easy-to-use online sign-up forms
- ✓ Share impact stories and volunteer testimonials
- ✓ Ensure mobile-friendly, intuitive navigation



A well-designed volunteer page reduces barriers to entry and builds trust. Keep content current, highlight the difference volunteers make, and provide a clear call-to-action so visitors can get involved in just a few clicks.



Volunteer Recruitment Messaging

Strong recruitment messaging attracts the right volunteers by clearly communicating your mission, expectations, and impact. When your message resonates with the right audience, you build a more engaged and committed volunteer team.

- ✓ Make the mission clear — lead with why your work matters
- ✓ Be specific about the role and time commitment
- ✓ Explain the impact volunteers will have
- ✓ Tailor the message to your target audience
- ✓ End with a simple, direct call to action



Effective messaging reduces recruitment friction and ensures volunteers arrive prepared and motivated. Focus on clarity, relevance, and a compelling reason to act now.



Volunteer Orientation

Orientation is the first step in setting volunteers up for a meaningful experience. It builds connection, clarity, and confidence from day one.

- ✓ Welcome volunteers and build connection
- ✓ Clarify mission, values, and expectations
- ✓ Review roles and first-day logistics
- ✓ Set volunteers up for long-term success



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

A thoughtful orientation helps volunteers feel prepared, valued, and excited to contribute. When expectations are clear from the start, volunteers stay engaged longer and make a greater impact.

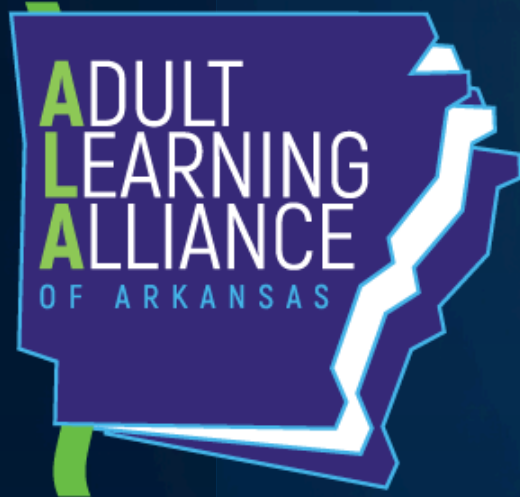


Thank Your Volunteers!

Their dedication and passion make your mission possible. You should be committed to recognizing their impact through awards, shout-outs, and appreciation events — and to continuously improving through their valuable feedback.

Recognize Volunteers & Seek Feedback

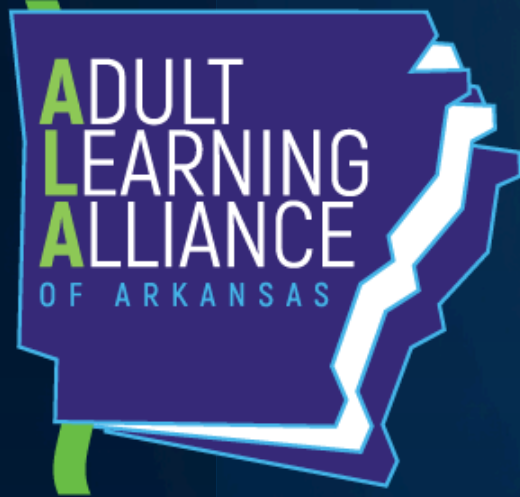




Questions?

Thank you for the
opportunity to share my
thoughts with you





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