

Virtual Volunteering

We know that, as Western students, you care about your communities and want to be involved. Volunteering can help to support your career development and provide valuable skills while helping our community to thrive. This page will provide you with some guidance on how to be involved with your community in a time when physical distancing measures are in effect.

What is Virtual Volunteering

Virtual volunteering or online volunteering means volunteering online from your computer. You don't have to leave your home to make a difference in your community. You don't even have to be in the same country as the person or organization that you're volunteering for, and it's one of the most innovative and incredible modern concepts yet.

Why Volunteer Virtually

Virtual volunteering provides an outlet for many different skills and passions, but it also makes it easier for organizations to do good work all over the world. Volunteer Canada has developed the [Value of Volunteer Wheel](#) that illustrates the many benefits of volunteering, including building confidence, competence, connections, and community.

Before choosing to volunteer we suggest asking yourself the following questions:

- What are my interests?
- What am I passionate about?
- What skills do I have?
- What do I most want to learn from the experience?
- What will I gain from volunteer work?
- Do I want an ongoing assignment, a short-term assignment, or a one-time assignment?

Be Patient with Yourself and Others

Volunteer Canada encourages us to be patient and flexible at this time as volunteer roles and community needs are changing rapidly. Expect response times to be slower than normal as non-profits and their staff adjust to new work arrangements and prepare for new and rapidly evolving service realities.

Likewise, be patient with yourself as you balance your desire to contribute with your own needs and comfort in engaging with community during this time. It might not be possible for you to volunteer right now and that is okay.

For those that are seeking virtual volunteering opportunities, we hope the following list will be helpful to you.

NOTE: Any opportunities offered by the organizations listed below are not Western sanctioned experiences.

Local Community Opportunities

Organization	Description
Charity Village	An online resource that most Canadian nonprofits utilize for recruiting, news and information. They post jobs and volunteer opportunities. https://charityvillage.com/search/#results/5e95c5ee91059fbe29c43557?cv_volunteer_pos=true&page_num=1&kw=
CMHA Middlesex	An opportunity to volunteer on the CMHA Support Line or the new Seniors Support program to provide isolated seniors with support. https://cmhamiddlesex.ca/category/volunteer/
Pillar Nonprofit Network	Pillar is based in London and this volunteer board outlines support needed by local and regional nonprofit organizations. https://pillarnonprofit.ca/volunteer
Skills for Change	Skills for Change offers a range of programs that respond to shifting immigration and workplace trends and lead to employment. Virtual volunteer opportunities include (but are not limited to): mentoring, web or graphic design, and policy research. http://skillsforchange.org
Spark Ontario	Spark Ontario posts volunteer opportunities to support initiatives related to COVID-19 in communities around the province. https://www.sparkontario.ca/
The People and Information Network	If you find yourself in the Guelph Wellington area this site offers volunteer opportunities, including virtual volunteering. https://communitylinks.cioc.ca/volunteer/results.asp?AID=92
Volunteer Toronto	Students can explore ways to get involved in the Greater Toronto Area. Search filters allow you to search for “Volunteer From Home” options, or initiatives related to COVID-19. https://www.volunteertoronto.ca/networking/opening_search.asp
Youth Opportunities Unlimited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to support YOU through fundraising initiatives, e.g., YOU social enterprise product line, Mushed, can be sold as an online fundraiser - https://mushedbyyou.ca/pages/fundraising • YOU is actively seeking donations for recently housed youth. There are opportunities to do a drive to collect toiletries, household items, gift cards, etc.

National Opportunities

Organization	Description
Canadian Blood Services	During these challenges times, Canadian Blood Services continues their responsible for the safety of the national blood supply system. https://blood.ca/en
National Geographic	Learn how you can participate in citizen science projects in which volunteers and scientists work together to answer real-world questions and gather data. http://www.nationalgeographic.org/idea/citizen-science-projects/
Volunteer Canada	Volunteer Canada was established to provide national leadership and expertise on volunteer engagement to increase the participation, quality, and diversity of volunteer experiences. This site provides an overview of many different volunteer boards that can connect you to virtual volunteer opportunities with Canadian organizations https://volunteer.ca/index.php?MenuItemID=419&lang=en
Volunteer Match	Volunteer Match is a network that connects volunteers and nonprofit organizations through common interests. https://www.volunteermatch.org

Global Opportunities

Organization	Description
CUSO International	CUSO connects communities around the world with skilled Canadians to help end poverty. They offer many virtual volunteer opportunities from business development, communication, education and IT support. https://cusointernational.org/home/types-of-volunteers/e-volunteering/
National Geographic	Learn how you can participate in citizen science projects in which volunteers and scientists work together to answer real-world questions and gather data. http://www.nationalgeographic.org/idea/citizen-science-projects/
Outreach360	A longstanding partner of Western's Impact Experience program (formerly Alternative Spring Break). Their team in Jinotega Nicaragua provides free before/after school English language learning for children. Unfortunately, between civil unrest and now a global health pandemic, their school has had few opportunities for volunteers to come and help children with their English. As a result, they are looking for

	volunteers to host online tutoring sessions. Note: there is also a fundraising component, and they ask tutors to raise \$250 for the schools as well. donate.outreach360.org/virtualvolunteering
Red Cross	During times of disaster, the Red Cross utilizes digital volunteers to monitor online discussions to find people who need help, and to share important updates on social media. If you are active on Facebook and Twitter, this could be a great opportunity for you. https://www.redcross.ca/volunteer/covid-19-volunteering
United Nations	The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) program contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. This site provides many different volunteer opportunities and there are in need of a variety of skills. https://www.onlinevolunteering.org/en/opportunities
Volunteer Match	Volunteer Match is a network that connects volunteers and nonprofit organizations through common interests. https://www.volunteermatch.org
World Community Grid	World Community Grid is a simple way to support cutting-edge research related to important global humanitarian causes. Your computer or mobile device could be powering scientific research on health, poverty and sustainability. https://www.worldcommunitygrid.org/

Do you know of additional virtual volunteering opportunities? We'd love to hear from you. Contact us at cel@uwo.ca.