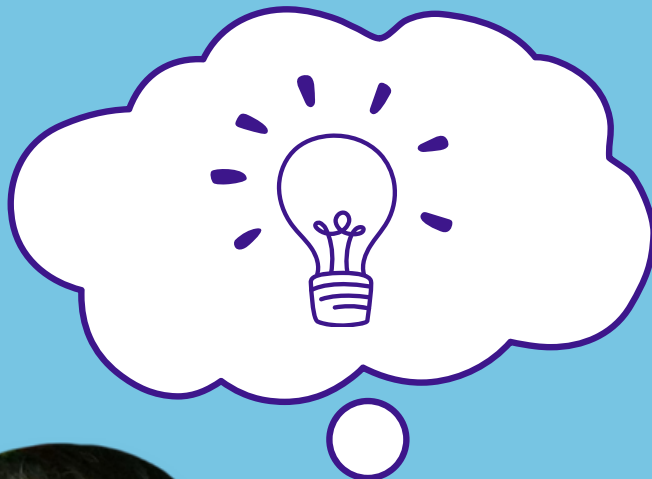


# Thoughts on Volunteerism

A Checklist to Help You Make the Most of  
Your Time, Talents and Resources

National Volunteer Week is April 14-20, 2024



Compiled by: **Danielle**  
 **Russell**



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**IMPACT**

# What is National Volunteer Week?

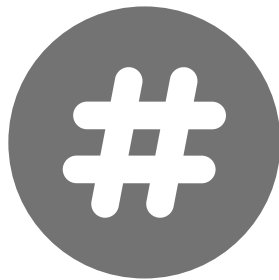
National Volunteer Week is an annual opportunity to celebrate Canada's 24 million volunteers (1).

81 years ago in 1943, National Volunteer Week was observed in Canada for the first time, as a way to celebrate the contribution of women on the home front during the Second World War.

This year's theme is Every Moment Matters.

It is a time when volunteers, and those of us who are lucky enough to make our career supporting them, reflect on our collective impact on society.

(1)According to Volunteer Canada



**#National Volunteer Week**  
**#EveryMomentMatters**

## Why Impact Makers Should Care

I often say that my career runs on volunteers, having worked in the Not-for-Profit sector for over 16 years, I've worked alongside hundreds of dedicated humans who give of their time. There are 170,000 nonprofits and charities in Canada (2); each of which has at least 3 volunteers – the minimum number of directors required at incorporation.

At some point in your life, if not in your average week, you are touched by volunteers. Maybe they are staffing the cultural event you're attending, or collecting donations for your favourite charity, or maybe you're among your peers at the Board table of your professional association.

I live by the Motto: "Everyone Must Serve", and while I appreciate that for everyone service looks a little bit different, I like to believe that everyone is looking for their place to make a difference and an impact. And, one of the best ways to do that is volunteering your time, for a few hours, for one day, or for months or even years.

In early 2023 Volunteer Canada raised the alarm, in the post-COVID world, there was a critical shortage of volunteers, with as many as 65% of organizations identifying shortages. When Not-for-Profits can't fill volunteer positions, services suffer – in many cases services that individuals, groups and communities rely on.

(1)According to Imagine Canada

# FAQs About Volunteering

**Question 1:** Can anyone be a volunteer?

**Answer 1:** Yes! With a bit of time and care, anyone can find a way to make an impact.

**Question 2:** I'm in a busy season of life, can I still volunteer?

**Answer 2:** Most likely, yes, you'll just need to find the right opportunity that works with your schedule, or can accommodate your needs – be it somewhere that is child friendly so you can bring the kids or volunteer as a family, or somewhere that will allow you to “work from home”.

**Question 3:** How do I choose an organization and role?

**Answer 3:** Much the same way you would look for a job to apply for, you are looking for an issue you care about, and an organization that has a need for your skills. I say it all the time “not everyone needs to be (or should be) on the Board of Directors”, it takes a bit of self awareness to know what might be beyond your current skill set or training.

**Question 4:** I have limited resources, can I still volunteer?

**Answer 4:** Yes, absolutely, but please understand that in many cases you will not be compensated or reimbursed in any way; in fact, it is against the law for Registered Charities to pay board members or their families any amount beyond the reimbursement of reasonable expenses.

**Question 5:** Can't I just donate money?

**Answer 5:** Yes, absolutely. If you are looking for more information on how to make informed decisions about your donor dollars, check out my [2023 Giving Tuesday Guide](#) (available for free download on my website).

**Question 6:** I need more help finding the volunteer role that's right for me.

**Answer 6:** Follow your favourite Not-for-Profits on social media for calls for various volunteer positions, ask around at their next event, or check out online job boards. Many organizations now post the searches for their most senior volunteer roles (such as the Board of Directors) on LinkedIn, and Charity Village also has [a robust listing of Volunteer opportunities](#).

# Where I Volunteer

## Some Ideas if You're Stuck

### Where My Time Goes:



### I Work Here



### I'm on Board (of directors)



## Danielle's Bio and Contact Details

Danielle S. Russell, CAE, C.Dir, is a Canadian Not-for-Profit Industry Leader with over 15 years of experience in the sector. Danielle has held both volunteer and paid leadership positions with over 20 Not-for-Profit Associations and Charities.

Ms. Russell holds a BA in Political Science from Wilfrid Laurier University – the Volunteer Capital, and is a Certified Association Executive (CAE) and Chartered Director (C.Dir); she is the Executive Director of the Canadian Defence Lawyers (Association) where she reports directly to a board of 21 enthusiastic and passionate volunteers.

Danielle is a member of the Board of Spinal Cord Injury Ontario and the Wilfrid Laurier University Alumni Association, and in 2023 was selected by her peers to Chair the Race Relations Committee for the City of Markham. As a past member of the CSAE Board, she remains an active volunteer, and is currently chairing the 2024 Summer Summit Education Committee.

Danielle is a sought after speaker, industry commentator and writer, and provides consulting services to Charities and other Not-for-Profits. She is also the brains (and heart) behind #TuesdayThoughts:

### Contact Info:



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### Work With Danielle:

**For media inquiries** about 'Thoughts on Volunteerism: A Checklist to Help You Make the Most of Your Time, Talents and Resources'; or for industry expert commentary on National Volunteer Week (April 14-20, 2024) **OR for general inquiries** about working with danielle: [danielle@daniellerussell.ca](mailto:danielle@daniellerussell.ca) | 416-558-2039