



Festival Volunteer Programs: Best Practices and Planning Manual

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1) INTRODUCTION

Volunteerism is an essential fabric in the broad Canadian tapestry of charitable and not-for-profit organizations. Individuals who donate their time, experience, skills and goodwill help to ensure the survival of the nation's arts, cultural, social, environmental, recreational and political sectors. Indeed, the willingness of people to spend their time freely supporting groups and causes with which they share an affinity is an incredibly powerful resource. Through their good citizenship, volunteers can benefit from becoming part of a larger team, with whom they learn new skills, gain unique perspectives, meet new people, and work towards a common goals.

Organizations that carefully and thoughtfully build a volunteer program into their operations can provide for themselves the opportunity to succeed, grow, and advance their mandates despite the strict financial limitations that face most charities and not-for-profits. Volunteers are willing to contribute a normally very costly expense – their free time – through hours, weeks or even months of service. Perhaps more importantly, however, volunteers invaluablely provide ingenuity, community interaction and a friendly public face.

Volunteers are a critical human resource for presenting organizations within the film and video sector, as well as other related organizations within the cultural milieu. At present, however, there exists the reality that many small to mid-size film, video, music, stage and arts festivals in Ontario are limited by the lack of proper skills, knowledge and infrastructure to effectively incorporate volunteers into administrative and operational activities. Every charitable and not-for-profit organization is different, and so the manner in which each can incorporate volunteers into its structure must vary according to individual needs, size and goals.

Nonetheless, many of the festivals in Ontario do share a similar overlying structure: they are regularly scheduled (most often, annually) events that showcase a large number of artistic presentations during a limited timeframe (most often, two to ten days). One of the greatest challenges that face these organizations is successfully integrating contributions from volunteers into their festivals. Other groups that operate on a year-round basis, like a museum or gallery, have the

advantage of fine-tuning their volunteer program on a regular week-to-week or month-by-month basis. Annual festivals, however, do not have that luxury: they must plan their volunteer program entirely in advance.

Many of the provinces' largest festivals have had a great deal of time and assets to invest into their volunteer programs, which now stand among the best in the country and have received international reputations for excellence. Small and mid-size festivals, by way of contrast, are often younger and have more limited resources to build-up their volunteer program. It is important for these smaller organizations to attempt to meet the high-standards often set by these larger cultural institutions, in order to attract the province's vast volunteer population to emerging and nascent organizations. Even without expansive financial resources or a large infrastructure, there are many steps that an organization can take to develop a progressive, responsive and effective volunteer program.

The purpose of this manual is to provide small to mid-size festivals with many of the guidelines and principles that can form the foundation for a developing and sustainable volunteer program. It is written to be used by the board and senior management of festivals as an organizing structure, onto which each group can build their own particular needs. Many of the ideas contained herein are specifically targeted towards organizations that operate regularly scheduled arts festivals with extended periods, normally one year, between each edition. However, many of the Best Practices are based on commonly accepted volunteer theory, and can be successfully incorporated by charities or not-for-profits that operate year-round and outside of an annual festival schedule.

2) BACKGROUND

Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival is North America's largest documentary festival. Each year, the festival presents a selection of over 100 cutting-edge documentaries from Canada and around the globe. Through its industry programmes, the festival also provides a full range of professional development, market and networking opportunities for documentary professionals.

Hot Docs was founded in 1993 by the Canadian Independent Film Caucus, a national association of independent documentary filmmakers. In 1996, Hot Docs became a separately incorporated organization with a mandate to showcase and support the work of Canadian and international documentary filmmakers and to promote excellence in documentary production.

Since its inception, volunteers have played a critical role in the growth and accomplishments of Hot Docs. Before a formal, year-round management structure was in place, the festival was organized solely by its board of directors, who all acted in a volunteer capacity. As the festival expanded to include public screenings, the need developed for a larger and more organized volunteer corps to help with the many new areas of the festival's operations and administration. The festival expanded its recruitment efforts to attract more volunteers, but did not make the commitments necessary to properly track, schedule, organize, train, empower or acknowledge its volunteers. After several years of mediocre performances, Hot Docs dedicated itself to improving the management of its volunteer program. More resources were allocated to the department, outside organizations and advisors with experience in volunteer initiatives were consulted and staff were tasked with developing new approaches that would help to build an efficient, effective and sustainable volunteer program. For the past three years, Hot Docs has enjoyed a great deal of success in the management of its volunteer corps. The number of volunteer participating and applying to work with the festival has increased dramatically. Performance of volunteers in their assigned activities has improved too, and this has been accompanied by an improvement in volunteers' morale, team spirit, and personal commitment towards the festival.

Although Hot Docs did consult several volunteer management theory texts and professionals in revamping its program, the festival did not have a specific

matrix of ideas or principles guiding its actions, other than a general desire to improve its management of volunteers. Accordingly, Hot Docs has spent the past year recording many of the improvements that it has made to its volunteer program, and noting the initiatives that staff members concur have had the most positive impact on the program's development. This manual is a compendium of many of the ideas and principles that have helped Hot Docs. They are presented here to be considered by other organizations as a template for discussions in the development of their own volunteer programs. Most of this manual's information has been organized into ten over-arching Best Practices that provide theoretical and practical starting points for other festivals with nascent volunteer programs to examine and evaluate the direction and effectiveness of their own volunteer programs.

3) BEST PRACTICES

This section is divided into ten Best Practices that describe processes, policies and ideas that Hot Docs has integrated into its volunteer program. As explained in the background information section, Hot Docs has experienced both quantitative and qualitative improvements in the management and performance of the festival's volunteer department. Many of the ideas in the Best Practices are abstract enough that they can be incorporated and used by many non-festival charitable and not-for-profit organizations. Other suggestions, on the contrary, may prove to be too specific or too confining to be incorporated into the volunteer programs of other groups. In all scenarios, however, these Best Practices should provide a strong working structure for an organization's board of directors, senior management and staff to evaluate their organization's interactions with volunteers. Ideally, each of the 'actionables' described in these Best Practices will provide the following:

- i) A framework for general discussions by an organization's board and management about their commitment to developing a successful and sustainable volunteer program.
- ii) The impetus for a review and audit of the festival's policies and procedures, and the extent to which the role of volunteers and volunteerism is incorporated into those documents.
- iii) The values needed to recognize an organization's strengths and weakness in the administration and morale of its volunteer corps.
- iv) Specific ideas and strategies that can be incorporated into emerging volunteer programs.
- v) Starting points for new strategic directions that a festival can commit to in improving its volunteer program.
- vi) The motivation for staff to reevaluate their own commitment to effectively working with volunteers and making use of the resources they offer.

Best Practice 1: The value of volunteers should be officially recognized by the festival's senior management and its Board of Directors.

The critical role of volunteers in helping an organization achieve its mandate should be understood, acknowledged and supported by all staff and board members. The development of a volunteer program should be shaped to match an organization's objectives and values.

Properly recognizing volunteers and dedicating the appropriate resources to facilitate their effective involvement in the organization will help to ensure high volunteer satisfaction and, by association, strong retention rates of volunteers.

Accordingly, management and board members should:

i) approve a declaration that speaks to the importance of volunteer involvement in the festival and that stipulates the organization's commitment to a progressive and equitable volunteer program.

ii) budget the funds appropriate to develop a volunteer program that meets the scope of the volunteer involvement in the festival. Depending on the range of activities participated in by volunteers, applicable expenses might include the salary of a Volunteer Manager and coordinating staff, the cost of providing the necessary space and tools for volunteers to conduct their assignments, and monies to reimburse volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses that they may incur.

iii) obtain insurance coverage that protects volunteers and the organization from liabilities, in the event that a volunteer injures themselves or someone else during the course of their service.

iv) develop a system of volunteer benefits that recognizes the time and efforts of volunteers in a meaningful, appropriate and cost-effective way.

v) schedule regular evaluations of the management of the volunteer program and the effectiveness of volunteers' participation in the festival. Such reviews should aim to assess if the goals set for volunteer participation were met and what results were

realized by their involvement, produce an audit of volunteer program data (i.e. total number of volunteers, hours worked, retention rates, etc.), collect feedback from volunteers and other festival participants who interacted with them, and organize one-on-one exit interviews with volunteers.

Best Practice 2: A festival staff member should be assigned responsibility for the management of the volunteer program.

It is important that all festivals designate a staff member to oversee the operations of volunteers. In instances where a festival may not have the resources to cover the expenses of a full-time volunteer manager, it is appropriate to assign supervision of the volunteer recruitment, management and tracking processes to a single employee, such as one who also works in related administrative or operational areas.

Dedicating a single staff member to the management of the volunteer program can help to centralize and coordinate all of the festival's interactions with volunteers. By way of contrast, in a piece-meal system where individual staff members or departments recruit and utilize volunteers without reporting to a dedicated volunteer manager, the organization exposes itself to inconsistencies in the management process, differing levels of due diligence towards policies and procedures and inefficient overlaps of staff resources. For very small organizations where staff members recruit and supervise their own volunteers, the necessity of centralizing volunteer management may not appear immediately obvious. However, as the organization grows and as special circumstances arise (such as disputes with volunteers requiring conflict resolution) it becomes beneficial to consolidate the overall management of volunteers into a single person's job description.

Accordingly, a festival's management should:

- i) incorporate into their staffing structure either a dedicated volunteer manager or, where resources are more limited, incorporate volunteer management duties into an existing staff member's job description.
- ii) assign the responsibility of supervising the festival's volunteers to an appropriate and qualified person. Ideally, this individual demonstrates an understanding of: the

administrative and organization skills necessary to properly track and schedule volunteer participation; the interpersonal skills necessary to successfully keep volunteers motivated and interested in the festival, and to resolve potential conflicts or disputes; the innovative strategies required to successfully recruit volunteers into the organization and how to develop the mechanisms that help to satisfy volunteers' expectations about their participation.

iii) develop written parameters that classify the nature and scope of work assigned to the volunteer manager. Job descriptions for other staff members who work with volunteers should be updated to include their obligations and best practices with regards to volunteers.

iv) encourage the staff member responsible for volunteer management to seek out assistance and guidance from other organizations. This may include consulting and collaborating with other festivals of similar size, but can also include participating in professional development conferences and courses related to volunteer management. (See Section 7 for a listing of organizations that offer guidance and other resources related to the development of an organization's volunteer program).

Best Practice 3: A festival should develop policies and procedures that will govern volunteer involvement in their organization.

To help ensure that volunteers are consistently treated equitably and professionally, a festival's senior management should create policies and procedures regarding the management of volunteers. The staff member who most directly and regularly works with volunteers (the Volunteer Manager if one exists) should ensure that the organization recognizes and addresses the issues most likely to benefit from guidelines and standards.

Policies and procedures can be incorporated into the organization's existing staff and board manuals or, alternatively, a new document dedicated to volunteer management issues can be developed, so long as it is certified by senior management or the board. It is important that the guidelines that apply to volunteers and volunteer management are consistent with the organization's other policies – most relevantly, those that pertain to human resources.

The development of one set of administrative mechanisms and materials to manage volunteers will help to guarantee consistency within the organization, especially over time. The types of policies, procedures and materials that should be developed include:

i) standardized forms for staff requests for volunteers, volunteer application forms, supervisor report forms, interview format and questions, screening procedures, protocols for reference/background/police record checks, performance appraisal criteria and conflict resolution protocols. (See this manual's appendixes for some examples of the types of forms and questionnaires used by Hot Docs).

ii) a secure, confidential system that tracks and provides an accurate record of volunteers' contact information, the nature and extent of their work (i.e. assignments completed and total number of hours) and supervisory feedback on their performance. (See examples of Hot Docs' volunteer database design and structure in Appendix D).

iii) a framework for human resource values that will allow work conducted by volunteers to comply with the standards set in federal and provincial employment legislation. Like staff members, volunteers have the legal mandate to be treated equally, respectfully and without prejudice. A festival should formally adopt a policy that forbids discrimination based on a candidate's: race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, special physical needs or disabilities, age (after the age of majority), or religion.

Best Practice 4: The festival should implement a formal and consistent recruitment and screening procedure for all volunteers.

Volunteer involvement may be an organization's most direct form of community involvement. Consequently, it is important that the means by which people are recruited and selected to participate are transparent and fair. Because festivals may find themselves with more volunteer applicants than they require, it is necessary to develop selection procedures that give equal opportunity to all candidates and that

volunteers are selected based on criteria that is related to the type of work they will be performing.

Depending on the nature of work to be conducted by the volunteer, it may be necessary to examine their background to ensure that they are an appropriate selection. The scope of a festival's screening procedure may be limited to gathering basic information through a questionnaire or application form (see Appendix C for an example of the types of information Hot Docs normally collects from applicants). A personal interview, even an informal one, conducted by the volunteer manager is also a good method of assessing applicants' strengths and what type of contributions they could provide to a festival.

Depending on the sensitivity of the position to be held by the volunteer, other screening mechanisms may be appropriate. Reference checks are a good way to gauge an individual's historical disposition to performing in a professional work environment. For volunteer jobs that expose the festival to higher levels of risk, more extensive screening may be appropriate. For jobs that require a volunteer to deal with large amounts of money (collecting cash or credit card numbers, for instance), a festival should consider it prudent to conduct a criminal background check. Also, for a job that requires a volunteer to heavily exert themselves physically (lengthy periods of manual labour, for instance), it may be appropriate to conduct medical checks to ensure that the applicant would not endanger their health by participating. Checking an individual's criminal and medical background should not be perceived as inappropriate: such due diligence is a critically important way to safeguard an organization from legal liabilities and financial exposures. Of course, such checks should only be conducted with the full consent and cooperation of the volunteer candidate.

In summary, a festival should develop a recruitment and screening procedure that:

i) is transparent, unbiased and fair to all applicants. At minimum, a screening process should include the completion of a questionnaire and application form that addresses key concerns and interests of the volunteer department. If possible, the volunteer manager or the future supervisor of a volunteer candidate should interview

or informally speak with applicant to gauge their level of interest and their ability to perform different duties and assignments.

ii) that reaches out to disparate groups and neighborhoods to help to improve the festival's profile and interaction with a variety of different communities.

iii) ensures that festival stakeholders – public, staff, and other volunteers – are not placed in jeopardy by assigning an unscreened volunteer to a position that could be exploitive or dangerous for any parties involved.

Best Practice 5: A festival should assign volunteers to roles that take advantage of their skills and experience, while also matching their interests and requests.

An effective and sustainable volunteer program must recognize that it is essential to carefully designate volunteer positions to individuals who can perform the associated tasks, but who will also derive personal satisfaction from their work. Volunteers donate their time because they hope to find their involvement with a festival rewarding in some manner: it may be professionally, personally, or intellectually. In order to keep a high-rate of volunteer satisfaction (and, by association, retention) it is important to solicit from applicants what areas of interest they have in the festival, and if there are any particular assignments that they would like to request.

At the same time, of course, it is important that volunteers are not assigned duties which are beyond their abilities. A good questionnaire and application form should be structured to collect both an applicant's background and what areas of work are of interest to them. By extension, a volunteer manager needs to weigh both of these concerns in distributing assignments and, ideally, find a position that balances the festival's requirements with those of the volunteer.

There are several steps that a festival can take to ensure that volunteers are appropriately assigned, including:

i) the development of a comprehensive questionnaire and application form that collects information about individuals' skill sets and also how they would like to be

involved in the festival (see Appendix C for an example of Hot Docs' application forms).

ii) assessing each volunteer position at the festival, and associating with it the skills sets required to perform its duties (i.e. computer skills or language abilities) and also the domain of interest to which it may apply (i.e. customer relations or marketing).

iii) the implementation of matching mechanisms that allow a volunteer manager to quickly fit a volunteer applicant with appropriate positions at the festival. Developing a basic database of volunteers and positions (by using either off-the-shelf software, like Microsoft Access to dBase, or a customized solution; see Appendix D for information about Hot Docs' database structure) can be an invaluable tool in matching criteria together.

iv) the scheduling and planning of 'sign-up' meetings, which can be especially helpful and efficient when a festival must assign many different volunteer positions. These types of meetings provide volunteers with a certain amount of independence and choice in their assignment. A volunteer manager may wish to organize multiple 'sign-up' meetings, where different groups of volunteers (perhaps of varying experience/skill levels/areas of interest) are given the opportunity to choose what positions they would like to fill (with different positions offered to different groups). Sign-up meetings may incorporate a "1st choice, 2nd choice, 3rd choice" methodology, providing the volunteer manager the flexibility to fill positions appropriately while also providing the volunteer with input on their assignment.

v) providing to volunteers written descriptions of the available positions, so that they have a specific understanding of what their responsibilities would and would not include. It is important to highlight any position's extraordinary demands on the volunteer: for instance, if the assignment would include strenuous physical involvement (i.e.: standing for several hours or lifting heavy objects), driving a car, highly specialized skills or language abilities. Also, descriptions should point out if the position has special requirements (i.e. a driver's license) or would ask the volunteer to participate in a criminal or medical background check. Position descriptions should also clearly define required time commitments and any quantitative benefits associated with the work.

vi) providing opportunities for volunteers with special requirements the ability to become involved in the organization is a good way to allow the volunteer program to reach out into different communities, and to have the organization be represented by different groups. Where appropriate, the development or adjustment of volunteer duties should be conducted to ensure all individuals have an equal opportunity to contribute and become involved. Of course, any changes in the assignment must not put any of the festival's participants (public, staff and other volunteers) at risk, and that the normal organization standards are not compromised.

vii) assignments should be reviewed by staff, with input by volunteers, to ensure they are effectively addressing the needs of the festival and that they follow the overall mandate and vision of the organization.

Best Practice 6: A festival should organize volunteer orientation meetings, and provide volunteers with appropriate training and informative background materials.

Any organization that works with volunteers should consider organizing orientation meetings for volunteers, where important information about policies and procedures, expectations and other practical matters are conveyed. For limited-time events, like a film festival, these types of sessions can be particularly critical; because of the relatively short duration of most festivals, there is not much time for volunteers to learn on the job. By extension, it is important that volunteers receive all of the proper guidance and direction necessary to perform their specific assignments. A well organized volunteer orientation meeting should aim to accomplish the following:

i) clearly communicate the festival's relevant policies and procedures, especially those that specifically relate to volunteers. The volunteer manager should articulate the board of director's declaration regarding volunteers, performance expectations for all volunteers (i.e. issues like timeliness and presentation should be addressed), mechanisms available to volunteers to either lodge a complaint or provide feedback, and the methodology that will be followed to resolve any conflicts.

ii) help to develop the volunteer corps morale and feelings of personal involvement in the festival. Everyone enjoys a sense of personal investment in their work, and this is particularly true of people who volunteer their time. Orientation meetings are an excellent opportunity to visually remind volunteers that they are part of a larger team that is working towards a shared goal. If possible, it can be very beneficial for the festival's senior management (especially the festival's director) to be present to express thankfulness and appreciation to the volunteers for their time, to provide them with a sense of ownership over their own contributions, and to demonstrate that the festival will provide them with the support structure necessary to complete their assignments and enjoy their work.

iii) distributing written materials that provide volunteers with a resource that can be referenced in the absence of a staff member. Brochures that include Frequently Asked Questions, Maps, Important Phone Numbers, and other background information can help volunteers who face a steep learning curve. It may also be appropriate to distribute materials that detail what the festival's Emergency Procedures are, and how the volunteers should respond in the event of a crisis.

Best Practice 7: A festival should provide volunteers with an enjoyable and safe working environment, arrange supervision where appropriate, and track volunteers' performance.

It is every organization's responsibility to ensure that it is providing all staff members and volunteers with working conditions that are safe and secure. Volunteers participating in a festival often do not have the time to properly acquaint themselves with their surroundings when they arrive for their assignments. Accordingly, their on-site supervisors should be able to quickly communicate important information about their work site; for volunteers working in public venues (i.e. a movie theatre), it is important that they know where the emergency exits, fire extinguishers, telephones, bathrooms, staircases and elevators are located.

All volunteer 'shifts' should have a supervisor present that a volunteer can check-in and check-out with. This supervisor should be provided with a log of all the volunteers scheduled to work with them, their scheduled arrival time, and information about any special needs that the volunteer may have. Volunteers,

similarly, should be provided the name and location of the individual that are expected to report to. Of course, a supervisor does not need to observe the volunteers at each moment of their shift, but even the most basic assignments should be assigned a senior individual who can make sure the volunteers arrive and complete their work, who can answer any questions that might arise, and who can record feedback for the volunteer manager about the volunteers' performance.

To provide a welcoming and professionally conducive work environment, a festival should make sure to:

i) assign volunteers to supervisors, who can log their performance and who can help and guide the volunteers where appropriate. If the festival has limited resources and does not have enough paid staff to properly fill supervisory roles, a system of 'Volunteer Captains' could be implemented. This arrangement assigns volunteers with more seniority and experience into the supervisory role: they become responsible for monitoring and aiding other volunteers. Typically, Volunteer Captains have a more extensive background with the organization, or have worked or volunteered in similar capacities elsewhere. A system of Volunteer Captains can also provide a means of positive reinforcement that allows outstanding volunteers to be recognized and dually rewarded with more responsibility. At the same time, it is important for a volunteer manager to carefully monitor all supervisors, especially Volunteer Captains, to make sure that they are being courteous, supportive and professional with the volunteers who report to them.

ii) develop a record system that tracks feedback from supervisors about volunteers' performance. Ideally, this system is integrated with the structure used to organize volunteers' applications, questionnaire forms, shift scheduling, assignment requests and special skills. It is important to keep notes about the volunteers timeliness and their ability to perform the assigned tasks. A supervisor should also qualitatively remark on how well the volunteer responds to their work environment and if they are enjoying their assignment; this information can be invaluable when attempting to determine future placements. A volunteer manager should develop a standard form for all supervisors that details the volunteers and shifts under their pervue, and implement a system whereby all feedback information is collected and documented in a secure and regular fashion. All records need to be kept highly

confidential and must not be accessible by volunteers. Additionally, a festival should keep emergency contact information for each volunteer should a medical emergency arise during their shift.

Best Practice 8: A festival should develop a formal acknowledgment and benefits program for volunteers, that recognizes their work and commitment.

It is important for a festival's board and staff to regularly thank volunteers for their time and contributions. These acknowledgements can be made one-on-one and in group meetings, like an orientation session, but they should also be more formally and publicly communicated. There are many opportunities for festivals to recognize their volunteers: in printed materials like programme books and brochures, in marketing materials, before screenings and performances, and in annual reports and similar documents.

Such acknowledgements are an important aspect in the operation of a successful volunteer program. There are additional systems that a festival can use to provide added incentives for volunteers to contribute their time and to express gratefulness for their assistance, including:

i) the development of a clearly articulated benefits structure that provides volunteers with access to the festival's performances, screenings or services. It can be advantageous when volunteers are able to participate in the mandate in the organization's activities, as it allows them to better understand the impact of their work, and how it is helping to fulfill a larger goal or vision. A film festival may want to provide volunteers with free entry to the screenings. It is important that access is provided equally to all volunteers. Accordingly, a system that translates, for example, the number of hours a volunteer works into a related number of vouchers that can be used to gain free entry into screenings is a common and fair way to provide volunteers with access to the festival's events. As resources permit, a festival should strive to find new and attractive methods for rewarding volunteers that also allow them to become more involved in the organization's activities. It is important that formal recognition is provided fairly and consistently and does not

suggest preferential treatment to any individuals. (See Appendix B for an example of Hot Docs' hand-outs about benefits for volunteers).

ii) the organization of volunteer and staff social events. Volunteer 'Thank You' parties and get-togethers are an effective way to encourage a sense of teamwork and community among volunteers and staff. It allows opportunities to volunteers to get to know one another (and also find out about other areas of the festival) and it allows staff and volunteers to interact as equals. Festivals may want to organize such an occasion after their event has completed, as it can provide a good means of closure for that year's volunteer corps while also providing an incentive and encouragement for volunteers to return for future festivals.

Best Practice 9: A festival should develop conflict resolution strategies and train volunteers and staff to meet these guidelines, and set clear standards for dismissal.

It is an unfortunate reality of all festivals that, very often, situations will arise that demonstrate severe disputes between parties, or that reveal a gross negligence on the part of a volunteer or staff member. It is the obligation and duty of festival management and the volunteer manager to properly orient staff members and volunteers to these types of situations, and to instruct them on how and how not to proceed in the most sensitive and volatile of circumstances.

Volunteers need to know what is expected of them and what limitations they have governing their actions. If they are not properly informed of such boundaries by their supervisors, they cannot be expected to intuitively assume what the correct course of action is in situations when they become involved in a conflict with third parties. It is often a good policy to inform volunteers that they are only supposed to engage in difficult confrontations to a very limited and narrow degree. Conflicts with third parties (i.e. audience members or festival guests) should be mediated by a paid staff member who is more fully apprised of the festival's policies and procedures. Also, it is important to communicate to volunteers that asking them to defer to a staff member is not indicative of a lack of trust or confidence.

It is equally important that all standards for dismissal from the volunteer program are made clear. It is often wise to raise the topic in a group setting, such as an orientation meeting, to ensure that individuals do not misinterpret the explanation as a reprimand or warning. It can be helpful to provide volunteers with a clear and detailed explanation of what process a dismissal would follow. This can be difficult territory for a volunteer manager to navigate, so it may be helpful to reaffirm to volunteers that dismissal would only be required by the most extreme instances of negligence or malfeasance, and it may be appropriate to provide examples that demonstrate such situations. It is important for the festival to have a written and approved policy for such matters, and to openly share that documentation with volunteers. Individuals need to be treated equally and without prejudice and, even in the most alarming situations, it is important for the volunteer manager to treat the volunteer respectfully.

Best Practice 10: A festival should solicit feedback and collaboration from volunteers, and consider each volunteer to be an equal member of the organization's team.

An inclusive and effective approach to human resources should consider individuals at all levels of the organization: board, management, staff and volunteers. Festivals that treat volunteers as essential constituents that determine the success of the organization benefit from higher volunteer morale and retention, stronger volunteer performances, and receive valuable 'front-line' feedback about operations and policies.

It is important that an organization wholly and sincerely adopt a two-way approach to volunteerism that recognizes both what the volunteer provides to the festival and what the festival provides to the volunteer. To help ensure that volunteers are given the opportunity to fully contribute, a festival should:

i) gather feedback, criticism and advice from volunteers. This can often be collected through post-facto questionnaires that ask the volunteer to rate and comment on the various aspects of the festival to which they were exposed. Such forms should be designed to gather opinions about both the volunteering experience itself (with suggestions for improvements or modifications) and the volunteer's thoughts and

observations about areas of the festival that extend beyond their own assignment. It is important that a volunteer be able to provide anonymous and confidential feedback if they desire to, and a suggestion box can often accommodate this need. Staff members, especially the volunteer manager and other supervisors, should also try to informally chat with volunteers to hear their feedback. Creating a mechanism that allows volunteers to feel that their commentary is an important tool for management helps to boost volunteer morale and cultivate a team spirit.

ii) provide volunteers opportunities for advancement. This can be offered through such systems the Volunteer Captain model (see Best Practice #8) or by giving volunteers special consideration or notice about openings in paid staff positions. Very often, of course, volunteers with experience provide an organization with one of its most competitive and knowledgeable pools from which to find individuals to fill job vacancies. Ideally, all volunteers should be given an equal opportunity to apply for a new or recently vacated position.

iii) keep volunteers well informed about the new developments and initiatives. An annual festival is especially susceptible to high volunteer turnover because of the long duration between its events. This can be mitigated by keeping in touch with volunteers throughout the year (i.e. by using email bulletins or newsletters) about what is being planned for the next festival. This can be an important way to help to make them feel involved and connected with the organization, even during its off-season.

iv) provide constructive feedback to volunteers about their performance and contributions. Positive reinforcement is a critical tool for supervisors to utilize: volunteers like and benefit from knowing when they are doing a good job. Similarly, if a volunteer is not doing their assigned task properly, supervisors need to be able to recognize and correct these situations with tact and respect. Most volunteers understand that their performance is largely governed by how well they are trained and directed, and would prefer to receive constructive and fair criticism rather than being ineffective in their duties.

4) BEST PRACTICES SUMMARY

1. The value of volunteers should be officially recognized by the festival's senior management and its Board of Directors.
2. A festival staff member should be assigned responsibility for the management of the volunteer program.
3. A festival should develop policies and procedures that will govern volunteer involvement in their organization.
4. The festival should implement a formal and consistent recruitment and screening procedure for all volunteers.
5. A festival should assign volunteers to roles that take advantage of their skills and experience, while also matching their interests and requests.
6. A festival should organize volunteer orientation meetings, and provide volunteers with appropriate training and informative background materials.
7. A festival should provide volunteers with an enjoyable and safe working environment, arrange supervision where appropriate, and track volunteers' performance.
8. A festival should develop a formal acknowledgment and benefits program for volunteers, that recognizes their work and commitment.
9. A festival should develop conflict resolution strategies and train volunteers and staff to meet these guidelines, and set clear standards for dismissal.
10. A festival should solicit feedback and collaboration from volunteers, and consider each volunteer to be an equal member of the organization's team.

5) PLANNING VOLUNTEER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Normally, festivals plan all of their operations and administration around very specific and inflexible deadlines. The scheduling of particular presentations, screenings and other events must be completed by set dates in order to facilitate an organized and accessible event. By extension, to effectively incorporate volunteers into the production of a festival, particular deadlines must be established and adhered to, and these deadlines must coordinate fully with the entire organization's agenda and cut-off dates. Volunteer management theory identifies a repeating, five-step cycle that is helpful to consider when planning a critical path and working with volunteers.

Step 1: Planning

In planning their program, a volunteer manager should establish their own Critical Path that details important dates in the administration of the volunteer department that have attached to them particular processes, events and goals. This type of pre-planning will help to ensure that the volunteers are organized, properly trained and provided the best opportunities to perform successfully in their assignments. At the same time as writing their critical path, a volunteer manager should:

- create application forms and questionnaires
- develop a tracking system for volunteers' personal information, volunteer schedule and feedback
- consult with festival management and staff about volunteer needs and develop a program of volunteer positions, duties and assignments
- form and document appropriate policies and procedures
- develop a benefits program that will be attractive and appreciated by volunteers

After these preliminary steps have been taken, a volunteer manager is well positioned to commence the hands-on tasks associated with running a volunteer department.

Step 2: Recruitment

Volunteers, of course, do not appear out of thin air. They need to be solicited from the population at large, and this can be particularly challenging for a small or

nascent organization that has yet to develop inroads with associated communities. In order to successfully recruit volunteers, the festival should look for assistance from volunteer resource organizations (see Section 7) and other cultural institutions in the surrounding area. Very often, other organizations (especially other festivals who are in their off-season and do not have any current volunteer needs) will distribute to their volunteer pool a 'Call for Volunteers' on behalf of another festival.

Festivals with extremely limited resources do not necessarily need to spend money to promote or advertise in their search for volunteers. Various services can be leveraged (i.e. online bulletin boards, community centers, email lists) for little expense. Very often, potential volunteers will hear about the festival through publicity or word-of-mouth, and will contact the festival with the hope of volunteering. In these instance, the festival should have a pre-designed application form and questionnaire available for the candidate to complete and submit.

In the process of recruiting volunteers, staff should also give careful thought to what qualities, skills and experience would be held by their ideal volunteers. The answers to this can help to determine what other organizations and sectors should be targeted for recruitment efforts. It is also important to consider what the festival has to offer potential volunteers, and that recruitment efforts emphasize the reasons why volunteers might want to donate their time.

Step 3: Orientation and Training

After volunteers have been recruited, they need to be assigned to duties and given suitable orientation and training. As Best Practice #7 explains, a volunteer program will operate most efficiently and effectively when volunteers are provided with the proper knowledge and instructions required to perform their assigned tasks. It is also important to convey background information about the organization, including its history, scope of operations and its current mandate. Keeping volunteers apprised about all areas of the festival will often allow them to understand the relation of their work to a bigger picture, and help to increase morale amongst the volunteers.

Orientation and training sessions should also be designed to help volunteers feel that staff and management have confidence in their ability to complete their assignments. This is especially significant for volunteers who must interact with third-parties, like festival attendees and public audiences. Empowering volunteers with an appropriate

level of independence and trust will allow them to perform more effectively. Most importantly, volunteers should know that their supervisors, and the entire festival's staff and management, will be available to support or relieve them if any highly stressful situations arise.

When developing a critical path, a volunteer manager should make sure to schedule orientation and training sessions well in advance and, when feasible, give volunteers as much notice as possible and provide options for differently timed meetings to accommodate different schedules (i.e. a weekday evening or a weekend orientation sessions). Additionally, a volunteer manager should attempt to schedule meetings with other staff members who will be supervising volunteers. These sessions can allow a volunteer manager to remind staff about best practices they should follow when working with volunteers, and what processes they should follow if a conflict or dispute arises.

Step 4: Supervision and Evaluation

As volunteers perform their assigned duties, it is imperative to arrange for supervisors that each volunteer can speak to for help and instructions in their work. Additionally, and as Best Practice #8 explains, a festival can develop its volunteer program by mandating supervisors to take notes about their volunteers' performance. The ability to reference such historical data can be extremely helpful when volunteer managers must later schedule volunteers into new assignments.

Volunteers also benefit from feedback and evaluation. Should volunteers request it, a volunteer manager should be able and willing to provide a formal evaluation of their work and also provide references upon request. More basically, however, volunteers should be complimented when they are doing good work and they should be redirected and assisted if they are performing below expectations. Volunteers should also enjoy their duties and work environment; if they do not, they should be encouraged to speak with the volunteer manager to determine if it might be appropriate to shift them to another assignment.

Evaluation of the festival and its staff should also be conducted by the volunteer. By providing volunteers the opportunity to critique and offer feedback about various areas of the festival they are more fully integrated into the organization's community, and afforded a formal outlet for their opinions and ideas. Also, aside

from raising moral, gaining feedback from volunteers can be a highly productive way to ascertain 'front-line' problems with the administration and operation of the festival. Volunteers' ideas often provide unique perspectives and out-of-the-box approaches to problems, and can be a useful tool for management if acknowledged and examined.

Step 5: Recognition

Although volunteers are philanthropically giving their time and energy to a festival, a sustainable volunteer program must recognize these contributions through a variety formal and informal methods. At an interpersonal level, supervisors should be sure to thank volunteers one-on-one for their work. A festival's board and management should formally show appreciation for volunteers through board-approved declarations, public announcements at events and performances, and notes of acknowledgement in printed materials.

Additionally, a volunteer manager should attempt to organize 'thank you' events and parties for the volunteer corps; often it is appropriate to schedule such an event shortly after the end of the festival. Volunteers should be given the opportunity to participate in the festivals' activities, and often providing free or discounted access to events, venues, screenings and performances is good way to keep volunteers connected with the organization's artistic or cultural mission and to also reward them for their contributions.

By ensuring that each of these five-steps are incorporated into a critical path, a volunteer manager can form the template for a well organized volunteer program. If the volunteer manager, staff members and other supervisors are able to successfully convey their expectations to volunteers and are able to create an experience that volunteers find personally and professionally rewarding, the organization will be in a strong position to renew these five-steps for the following year, retain and attract the best volunteers, and operate an effective volunteer department at future editions of the festival.

6) Appendix

Appendix A: Hot Docs Volunteer Department Critical Path

Hot Docs' conducts most of its planning and preparation to work with volunteers over a 6-week period immediately preceding the festival, although other volunteer related work does happen year-round. The amount of time dedicated to recruitment, scheduling and training has expanded as the size of the festival and, accordingly, the number of volunteers that work with festival has increased. Below is the structure that Hot Docs has used for the past two years in planning the activities of the volunteer department. It represents the timeline of preparation needed to work with approximately 200 volunteers that contribute approximately 2500 hours worth of time.

Date	Task
Week 1	Volunteer Coordinator begins contract
	Begin recruitment: contact past volunteers, post and distribute festival's Call for Volunteers notice
	Establish tracking system for volunteers' info and skills
	Confirm details of Volunteer Departments critical path dates
	Confirm budget and plan for honorarium positions and for department expenditures (T-shirts, thank-you reception, etc.)
Week 2	Consult with festival staff and management to develop volunteer positions and working schedule of shifts
	Begin to organize Volunteer Sign-up and Orientation Meetings (venue, food, helpers, etc.)
	Contact past volunteers regarding 'Veteran' Volunteer Sign-up Meeting
	Contact new applicants regarding 'Rookie' Volunteer Orientation and Sign-up Meeting
	Confirm schedule and details of volunteer benefits
	Confirm all policies regarding volunteers (contracts, liability, reporting lines, conflict resolution, etc.)
Week 3	Finalize Festival volunteer positions
	Appoint or hire Assistant Volunteer Coordinators

	Assess number of returning and new volunteers against volunteer needs for festival; expand or retract recruiting efforts accordingly
	Begin work on information hand-out for Volunteer Orientation Meetings
	Work with staff and management to make sure guidelines for volunteer supervision are in place; review best practices for working with volunteers
Week 4	Update returning and new volunteers about forthcoming schedule of meetings and the festival
	Ensure that staff that supervise volunteers are given materials and instructions necessary to track volunteers attendance and performance
	Review with staff internal guidelines for conflict resolution or dismissal of volunteers
	Confirm agenda for Sign-up and Orientation Meetings.
Week 5	Hold Veteran Volunteer Sign-up Meeting
	Hold new Volunteer Sign-up and Orientation Meeting
	Distribute work schedules to volunteers
	Ensure that all volunteer have signed contract
	Organize, as needed, extra training sessions for volunteers with special and extraordinary responsibilities
Week 6	Festival begins
	Distribute volunteer rewards and benefits
	Ensure that volunteer sign-in is operating properly
	Monitor and addresses, as needed, performance of volunteers and supervisory roles of staff
Week 7	Festival ends
	Hold Volunteer Appreciation Party
	Conduct review of volunteer performances, enter into tracking system
	Solicit feedback from volunteers about their experiences
	Write final report with recommendation for next year's volunteer department

Appendix B: Hot Docs' informational brochures and handouts

Hot Docs produces several handouts for volunteers that are designed to keep them informed about the festival's activities and policies and procedures that pertain to them. Volunteers are more likely to be productive and enjoy their experience if they are well prepared with information appropriate to their task, and if they are given direction as to how they should perform and behave. Below are some examples of the text included in some of these of handouts.

i) "How to Festival as a Hot Docs Volunteer"

Here's some answers to frequently asked questions and other information that will help you have a great Festival!

BASICS

Be courteous to your fellow volunteers – show up on time, ready to work. Wear sensible shoes and dress for the weather - you may be asked to work outside and/or on your feet for parts of your shift. Safe storage space for personal belongings will not necessarily be available at all venues – please keep valuables to a minimum when coming to volunteer.

SHIFTS and HOURS OF OPERATION

The Rogers Industry Centre and most industry events will operate from 9:00 am until 6:00 pm from April 25th to May 4th, with the exception of April 25th, when the RIC opens at Noon, and May 4th, when it closes at 1:00pm. The first screening of the day can start as early as 11:30am and the last starts as late as midnight. Keep in mind that these hours do not include prep time. Check the sign-up sheets for exact shift times. Shifts are generally 4.5 hours long, but can sometimes be as long as 7.5 hrs.

TANGIBLE BENEFITS

Please see the separate sheet for an explanation of the benefits offered to volunteers.

Seeing films at the Festival: Please remember that you are not guaranteed to see a film while you are on shift. Volunteers are needed to remain in the lobby to answer questions and prepare for the next screening. The same applies for industry events.

VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION

All volunteers MUST register BEFORE their first Festival shift, at the Volunteer Office, 517 College St., Suite 420. At Registration, you will receive a copy of your shift schedule, screening vouchers, badge, t-shirt, and programme booked (if earned).

VOLUNTEERING

Please show up fifteen minutes before your shift starts, and check-in with your supervisor. Always wear your name badge while on duty, and only when on duty. If you're working at the RIC, you should familiarize themselves with the various offices there, and the staff. At the cinemas and other venues, you should get to know

where everything is in and around the location (phones, restrooms, etc.). Keep on your person useful sources of information such as the Screening Schedule and the venue map. Always check in with your supervisor before leaving an assigned position for a break, and always report back at the agreed time. As a volunteer, you are not expected to deal with situations beyond your training – always refer any bigger problems to a staff person.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

We are all hosts of the Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival. Be friendly, reach out, and smile. Treat every guest and every request with importance. If they didn't need help, they wouldn't be asking. Even during a fleeting interaction you can smile and create a positive impression.

Be willing to help and be proactive. When you are attending a screening or event and you see that a fellow staff member, volunteer or guest needs help, offer to assist them.

Be respectful. Remember that each staff member or volunteer is working hard to make this a successful event. We all handle stress in different ways.

ENJOY YOURSELF!

There is work to be done, but we hope that you will have a fun experience doing it. Use humour to overcome challenges. Share your enthusiasm for the art form we are here to celebrate: DOCUMENTARIES.

ii) "Theatre Captains Info Sheet"

Responsibilities:

- Signing in volunteers as they arrive (see sample Shift Report Sheet)
 - Please note any late arrivals
 - Please note any Floater volunteers assigned to the theatre.
- Signing out volunteers when their shift is over.
 - Please note any early departures
 - All early departures must be approved by the Theatre Rep or the Volunteer Office
- Assisting Theatre Reps in assigning positions to volunteers, and rotating positions.
- Meeting with the Theatre Reps at the beginning of every shift to get special information for the screenings, and dispensing that information to all volunteers on shift.
- Assigning breaks to volunteers once the screening has begun and all tasks are completed.
- (Closing Captains need to assist the Rep with the exit of the last screening.
- Performing regular volunteer duties as assigned by Theatre Reps.
- Hand in the Shift Report to a Rep before leaving. Constructive comments about volunteer performances can be relayed to the Reps, but do not write anything yourself on the Shift Reports.

Policies:

- The Captain is to wear the Hot Docs T-shirt while on duty.
 - The Captain should not handle complaints or situations, but rather get a Rep (or the Box Office Captain depending on the nature of the problem) to deal with it.
 - The Captains' shifts start 15 minutes before the other volunteers, and finish either 15 minutes after the volunteers, or at the end of the last screening. Please be punctual so that you arrive before the first volunteer and are ready for their arrival. The captain cannot leave until all the other volunteers have signed out, and then after checking out with the Rep.
 - Captains need to thoroughly know the venue so that they can pass that information on to the volunteers:
 - Restroom locations
 - Entrances, exits, and traffic patterns
 - Payphones, emergency phones
 - Wheelchair accessibility, routes, and seating locations
 - First Aid kit and Fire pull stations
 - Location of theatre supplies and paperwork.
 - Location of supplies for cleaning auditoriums.
 - Space for storing volunteer jackets and things
 - Box office location and personnel
 - Venue management and staff and where to find them
 - Location of projection booth
 - Always be courteous, polite, and professional with volunteers. The Reps are the supervisors of all theatre volunteers, and the Captain is there to assist the Rep, not supervise the volunteers.
 - Please feel free to convey any questions, concerns, or recommendations about the Captain position to the Volunteer Office.
-

iii) "Hot Docs 2003 Volunteer Benefits"

PRE-FEST WORK

- All hours worked pre-fest count towards benefits.
- Volunteers doing a lot of hours of pre-Festival work (forty plus) will be given the option of getting a staff pass instead of vouchers, as well as a quantity of volunteer vouchers (so that you can bring guests).

SCREENINGS

- For every three hours worked, you are entitled to one screening voucher.
- Vouchers can be exchanged one-for-one for screening tickets.
- Vouchers will be distributed at volunteer check-in which will begin at noon on April 25 and can be done anytime before your first shift. It is not mandatory to show up on the 25th, but registration must be done before the first shift.
- The number of vouchers will be based on shifts signed up for pre-Festival – additional shifts during the Festival will be credited when signed up for.
- Vouchers may be redeemed upon receipt at the Main Box Office (Sonic Boom) or at the theatre box office on the day of the show.
- Vouchers are transferable – there is no ID required to redeem a voucher for a volunteer ticket or to use the volunteer ticket at the screening.
- Volunteer vouchers are good for screenings only, no industry events
- Volunteer Badge alone will not entitle the holder to anything.
- Volunteer vouchers are not good for tickets reserved for Industry pass holders.

T-SHIRTS

- T-shirts are offered to everyone, but there is a minimum three-shift commitment.
- T-shirts must be worn while on duty at the theatres and some other positions. Check with the Volunteer Office or your shift supervisor.

PROGRAMME BOOKS

- If sign up for five or more shifts, you are entitled to a programme book at volunteer registration

FOOD AND DRINK

- Occasional food and beverage will be provided, particularly for daytime shifts.

Due to limited capacities, we cannot offer access to industry events and official receptions as a volunteer benefit.

iv) "Hot Docs Quickie Things for Volunteers at Theatres to Remember"

1. It is important to be on time for your shift because the Theatre Reps and Captain give all the position duty descriptions at the "volunteer huddle" which happens shortly after the volunteer shift start time. Always check in with the Captain upon arrival.
2. Theatre Reps have the final say on which volunteers will be assigned to specific positions. Don't leave an assigned position without getting permission from the Captain or a Rep, unless you are relieved by another volunteer.
3. If there is any kind of medical emergency, get a rep immediately and please remain calm.
4. Do not guess at information. When in doubt, get a Rep or Box Office Captain to answer difficult questions.
5. If a customer is dissatisfied, please tell them you will get a Rep or a Box Office Captain to assist them. Patrons appreciate your promptness.
6. Know the films screening at your theatre during your shift. Always carry a copy of the Screening Schedule to help you answer questions. Know your venue (restrooms, emergency exits, wheelchair access, payphones, etc.) Take care of any equipment given to you by the Rep or Captain (flashlight, clicker, rush tokens) and be sure to return them to the Rep or Captain at the end of your shift or if you change positions.

Theatre Volunteers must wear the 2003 Hot Docs t-shirt while on shift. It makes it much easier for staff and patrons to spot you when your assistance is needed.

Event planning/organization	Sign language
Event Hosting	Working with children/youth
Film/video distribution and/or exhibition	Writing/journalism
Film/video production	Ushering
Fundraising	

Other skills:

Please list the areas or duties you are interested in volunteering for (e.g. driving, ushering, guest relations, etc.):

I am able/willing to do light physical labour (e.g. packing, lifting): Yes No

I have the following computer skills (check more than one if applicable):

MS Word	Graphic design
MS Excel	Website design
Databases	Network maintenance

I have the following language skills:

Arabic:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write
Cantonese:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write
Farsi:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write
French:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write
German:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write
Hebrew:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write
Hindi:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write
Italian:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write
Japanese:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write
Mandarin:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write
Russian:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write
Spanish:	None Some Functional Fluent Only Read and Write

Other languages:

If you have ever worked or volunteered as an interpreter, please indicate what languages you can interpret to and from English:

If you have previously volunteered for Hot Docs, please list your volunteer activities:

If you have ever volunteered for any other film festival(s), please list the festival(s) and your volunteer activities:

Please list any other volunteer experience you have, including references if possible:

Other comments:

ii) "Hot Docs Volunteer Feedback Form"

We would like to thank you once again for your help and support during the 2003 Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival. Each and every volunteer contributed significantly towards making Hot Docs 2003 a success on many different levels. Please fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it by email to volunteers@hotdocs.ca. Feel free to include any constructive suggestions regarding this year's Hot Docs.

This information will be used solely by the Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival to improve volunteer coordination and other aspects of the festival.

1. Name (optional – please feel free to reply anonymously by mail or fax)
2. For 2004 and for the upcoming Doc Soup season (October – April), we would like to provide you with advance information about volunteer sign ups and pre-Festival work. Please indicate with an "X" whether or not you wish to be contacted by us in the future.
 - please keep me informed all year.
 - please only contact me about helping at the 2004 Festival.
 - please do not contact me in the future.
3. Positions and locations worked:
4. PLEASE GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK ON THE FOLLOWING AREAS:
 - a. The Website and the Volunteer application form:
 - b. The Sign up Session, or the Sign-up Procedure in General:
 - c. Training (Theatre Team Session, on-the-job, information sheets):
 - d. Supervisor - Volunteer Interaction:
 - e. The Registration Process (picking up badges and t-shirts and confirming shifts):
 - f. Volunteer Benefits:
 - g. Length of Shifts (the hours):
 - h. Number of volunteers assigned to the positions (Too few? Too many?):
 - i. Volunteer E-mails:
 - j. If you worked shifts at the theatres, please let us know how the Captain position worked:
5. What things did you really like at Hot Docs?
6. What was your worst experience at Hot Docs?
7. If you could make 3 improvements to the volunteer programme what would they be? Your ideas are valuable.

Thank you for your input and contributing to the success of this year's Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival. Changes in personal contact information can be submitted year-round to volunteers@hotdocs.ca.

iii) "Hot Docs Volunteer Commitment Contract"

Name:

Address:

City:

Postal Code:

Home Phone:

Other Phone:

(please indicate what number is for: work, cell, pager, etc.)

E-Mail:

I agree to volunteer for the 2002 HOT DOCS Canadian International Documentary Festival ("Hot Docs") for a minimum of 4 shifts.

If, for any reason I am unable to fulfill my commitments, I will give the Volunteer Coordinator at least 48 hours notice to try and find someone to cover the shift.

I understand that I am a representative of Hot Docs, and as such agree to abide by the organization's policies and procedures and the provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code.

If I prove to be incompatible with my position at Hot Docs, I understand that the Festival reserves the right to reassign or cancel any or all of my volunteer shifts.

I understand that Hot Docs is not liable for any damages or injuries I incur while volunteering for the Festival.

I will register as a Festival Volunteers at the Volunteer Desk, 80 Clinton St., 3rd Floor, before the start of my first shift .

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please use the form on the reverse to record the shifts you have signed up for. Before leaving the meeting, get a copy made of your Record of Shifts to keep, and hand in your signed Contract/Record of Shifts.

Appendix D: Hot Docs' Database structure and tracking systems

Hot Docs' tracks contact information, availability, skills, shift schedules and other information about its volunteers in a custom built database. This software was designed in-house using Microsoft Access. There are many off-the-shelf database and spreadsheet programs that may be sufficient to catalogue a small to mid-size festival's volunteer pool. Additionally, software specifically designed for human resource managers and volunteer managers also exists, although such packages normally are sold at a premium. The screen images below are provided to give a sense of how Hot Docs tracks volunteers, and how the festival organizes its data.

The screenshot shows a window titled "Volunteers" with a blue header. At the top, there are input fields for "NEW", "John", "Smith", a dropdown menu for "2004 Applicant", and a text box for "Most Recent Year of Volunteering:" containing "2002". Below this is a tabbed interface with "Info" selected. The "Info" tab contains several sections:

- Address:** A text box with "135 Example Street". Below it are dropdowns for "City" (Toronto), "Prov" (ON), "Postal" (M6J 3C5), and "Country" (Canada).
- Contact Info:** Fields for "Home" (416-555-5555), "Work", "Alternate", and "Email" (test@testemail.ca).
- Festival Availability:** A grid of checkboxes for "Weekday Mornings", "Weekday Afternoons", "Weekday Evenings", "Weekend Mornings", "Weekend Afternoons", and "Weekend Evenings".
- Rest Of Year Availability:** A similar grid of checkboxes for the rest of the year.
- Notes:** A text area containing the note: "2002: good volunteer but quiet, a couple of stumbles (late but not her fault, given unreasonable task), but generally reliable and conscientious".

At the bottom right of the form is a "Back to Main Menu" button. At the very bottom of the window is a record navigation bar with the text "Record:" and navigation icons.

Volunteers [X]

NEW | **John** | **Smith** | Active | Most Recent Year of Volunteering: 2003

Info | General Skills | **Computer/Language** | Experience | Shifts | Flags

I have a valid driver's license: I have access to an automobile:

I have experience/skills in the following areas (check any categories that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting/bookkeeping	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Event planning/organization	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office/clerical work
<input type="checkbox"/> Audio/Video technician	<input type="checkbox"/> Film/video distribution and/or exhibition	<input type="checkbox"/> Reception/answering phones
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box office/client service	<input type="checkbox"/> Film/video production	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Set Decoration
<input type="checkbox"/> Carpentry/construction	<input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/> SignLanguage
<input type="checkbox"/> CopyEditing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of Toronto Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Ushering
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customer/guest relations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Layout/Design	<input type="checkbox"/> Working with children/youth
<input type="checkbox"/> Event Hosting	<input type="checkbox"/> Marketing/public relations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writing/journalism

Other Skills:

Please list the areas or duties you are interested in volunteering for (e.g. driving, ushering, guest relations, etc.):

I am able/willing to do light physical labour (e.g. packing, lifting):

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Record: [Navigation icons] 19 [Navigation icons]

Volunteers [X]

NEW | **John** | **Smith** | Active | Most Recent Year of Volunteering: 2003

Info | General Skills | **Computer/Language** | Experience | Shifts | Flags

I have the following computer skills (check more than one if applicable):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MS Word	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design	Other Computer Skills <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> MS Excel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Web Site Design	
<input type="checkbox"/> MSAccess	<input type="checkbox"/> Network Maintenance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Database Software		

I have the following language skills (check all applicable categories):

Arabic: <input type="text"/>	Hindi: <input type="text"/>	Other Language Skills: <input type="text" value="Fluent Tagalog read/write/speak"/>
Cantonese: <input type="text"/>	Italian: <input type="text" value="Some"/>	
Farsi: <input type="text"/>	Japanese: <input type="text"/>	
French: <input type="text"/>	Mandarin: <input type="text"/>	
German: <input type="text" value="Fluent"/>	Russian: <input type="text" value="Fluent"/>	
Hebrew: <input type="text"/>	Spanish: <input type="text"/>	

If you have ever worked or volunteered as an interpreter, please indicate what languages you can interpret to and from English:

[Back to Main Menu](#)

Record: [Navigation icons] 19 [Navigation icons]

Volunteers

NEW **John** **Smith** Active Most Recent Year of Volunteering: 2003

Info | General Skills | Computer/Language | Experience

Temporary Flags

Assign Filter

Flag 1

Flag 2

Flag 3

Flag 4

Flag 5

Active

Applied 2003

To Be Contacted

Awaiting Response

Reapplied 2003

2004 Applicant

Inactive

Promoted to Paid

Not Recommended

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Record: 19

Volunteers

NEW **John** **Smith** Active Most Recent Year of Volunteering: 2003

Info | General Skills | Computer/Language | Experience | Shifts | Flags

Day Worked	Supervisor	Task	Shifts	Hours
Friday, May 02, 2003	Royal Theatre F	Captain	10:30 am - 5:15 am	7
Thursday, May 01, 2003	Isaac Meyer Oc	Industry Programme	8:30 am - 11:30 am	4
Wednesday, April 30, 2003	Darryl Dinn	Doc Shop	1:30 am - 6:30 pm	5
Tuesday, April 29, 2003	Royal Theatre F	Captain	10:30 am - 5:15 pm	7
Monday, April 28, 2003	Darryl Dinn	Doc Shop	1:30 pm - 6:30 pm	5
Thursday, April 10, 2003	Cindy Lewis	General Office Work	10:00am - 4:00pm	6
Wednesday, March 19, 2003	Scott Campbell	Data Entry	11:00am - 3:30pm	4

Record: 1 of 7

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Record: 19

7) ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

a) Publications & Books

i) *The Volunteer Management Handbook*

Tracy Daniel Connors

John Wiley & Sons

1999, 407 pages

ISBN: 0471371424

ii) *Handling Problem Volunteers: Real Solutions*

Steve McCurley and Sue Vineyard

Heritage Arts Publishing/VMSystems

1998, 60 pages

ISBN: 0911029478

iii) *Volunteers: How to Get Them, How to Keep Them*

Helen Little

Panacea Press

1999, 117 pages

ISBN: 1928892019

iv) *Better Than Money Can Buy: The New Volunteers*

Joseph Kilpatrick

Innersearch Publishing

1996, 201 pages

ISBN: 0931029015

v) *Volunteer Management: Mobilizing All the Resources of the Community*

Steve McCurley, Rick Lynch

Heritage Arts Publishers

1996, 236 pages

ISBN: 0911029451

b) Online Resources

- i) The Not-For-Profit Toolkit <http://www.nfptoolkit.ca>
Develops resources and software programs for charitable and not-for-profit organizations, including volunteer management software.
- ii) Energize Inc. <http://www.energizeinc.com>
A referral and information sharing network for volunteer managers from across the world. The site also posts articles and notes on volunteer theory, in addition to a large listing of other volunteer web resources.
- iii) e-Volunteerism Journal <http://e-volunteerism.com>
Regularly updated on-line journal with articles and postings about volunteer theory, along with submissions by professional volunteer managers.

c) Volunteering Networks and Organizations

- i) Association of Volunteer Administration <http://www.avaintl.org>
P.O. Box 32092
Richmond, VA USA
23294
- ii) Volunteer Canada <http://www.volunteer.ca>
430 Gilmour Street
Ottawa, ON
K2P 0R8
- iii) Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Centre <http://www.pointsoflight.org>
1400 I Street, NW Suite 800
Washington, DC USA
20005
- iv) Canadian Administrators of Voluntary Resources <http://www.cavr.org>
300 Earl Grey Drive, Suite 101
Kanata, ON
K2T 1C1

8) ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Hot Docs recognizes that volunteers are the lifeblood of presenting organizations within the film and video sector as well as other sectors in the cultural milieu. Given the sheer volume of voluntary personnel affiliated with our organizations and the reasons for their involvement within the cultural sector, we have good reason to appreciate the work of volunteers and to further professionalize policies and practices in specific relation to this human resources function.

Hot Docs thanks the hundreds of volunteers who have donated their time, skills and energy to the festival. Their feedback and involvement in the growth of the festival have been essential.

Hot Docs also gratefully acknowledges the work and innovation of Ron Koperdraad, who has been critical in advancing Hot Docs' operations through effective volunteer management practices. Many of the materials included in this manual were developed by Ron, and many of the Best Practices were ideas that he put into practice at Hot Docs before we recognized them as Best Practices. Hot Docs is also thankful to Bob McCarthy, Volunteer Manager of the Toronto International Film Festival Group. Bob has provided extraordinary leadership in the community and has helped to guide responsible and equitable volunteer policies at many other festivals, including Hot Docs.

This manual was made possible through the generous support of the Cultural Careers Council Ontario (CCCO). The CCCO is a sectoral council representing Ontario's cultural industry. Its role is to ensure the continued existence of properly trained professionals in order to maintain Ontario's leadership as the centre of Canada's cultural industry. CCCO represents artists, cultural workers and organizations in Ontario's cultural sector. Through CCCO, the sector works to strengthen the creation, distribution and preservation of cultural products by building a skilled, innovative and resilient workforce. The CCCO may be contacted at:

Cultural Careers Council Ontario
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