

The Value of Heritage Organization's Volunteers: An Oregon Heritage Commission Volunteer Study

Ways to use this study

Share the value of heritage and your organization from a volunteer perspective, using the Oregon Heritage Commission's recent [report](#). Consider all of the people who should hear the message of your good work.

- Elected officials: city council, county commission, state and federal legislators, mayors, governor, etc.
- Local government: city, county
- Tourism organizations: Travel Oregon, local and regional tourism organizations
- Business organizations: Chamber of Commerce
- Volunteer and Service organizations: Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, etc.
- Membership
- Board

Understand value volunteers get from working in heritage organizations.

- Support your existing volunteers
- Appreciate your existing volunteers
- Recruit new volunteers

Evaluate and improve your volunteer program

- Understand the needs of volunteers
- Review structure and tools of your volunteer program

Value of Heritage through the Volunteer Experience

To share the value of heritage through the volunteer perspective, see the following messages developed using the [Value of Heritage Message Platform](#).

Opening Message: Connect with people's broad values and aspirations to peak their interest.

- People want to feel connected to their community.
- People share their time and skills with organizations and missions they care about.
- Volunteers want organizations to function effectively.

Impact Message: Create excitement and optimism about the future, and make the case for supporting your work by illustrating what you make possible in the world.

- Heritage organization’s opportunities provide volunteers with an enhanced sense of community and belonging to place.
- Heritage organizations offer uniquely localized heritage preservation experiences for volunteers.
- Volunteers are driven to provide invaluable skills and time to heritage organizations.

Approach Message: Once you have captured interest use an approach message to link the opening and impact messages to your work. Explain how you do your work and how you are working toward realizing your vision. You can do this broadly by synthesizing your organization’s mission statement, or more specifically by sharing the goal of your current project.

- We provide our volunteers with an enhanced sense of community through sharing history tours with visitors and students.
- We offer access to local history experience to our volunteers who work in collections and research.
- Our volunteers ensure our mission success giving _____ hours in the last year.



Example: Newsletter, city council testimony, etc.

People want to feel connected to community and *[insert organization]* provides this opportunity!

A new state study of Oregon heritage organizations and their volunteers determined that heritage organizations provide vital opportunities for volunteers and that volume of volunteer work demonstrates the value of these organizations to the community.

According to the study, the primary benefit for volunteers was an enhanced sense of community and belonging to place. Our organization focuses on *[insert mission focus]* and this mission provides a unique opportunity for volunteers to dig deep into our community’s history and share it with others. Our volunteers *[insert roles for example... provide direction on boards and committees, learn local history through collections management and research, protect historic resources, provide expertise for our operations, connect with the community giving through tours and programming]*. All the while, building their own sense of place.

We are incredibly grateful for our *[insert number]* volunteers who provided critical work to help achieve our mission. They not only gave *[insert number]* hours of work this year, but they also donated funds and promoted our work. We count on their effort and skills for a stronger organization. We are glad to provide the place for them to engage, provide a positive impact, make friends, and preserve and share local history.



Example: Social Media

A recent study by the Oregon Heritage Commission asserts the value of heritage organizations because they offer localized opportunities that provide volunteers with an enhanced sense of community and belonging to place. We hope that is the case for our amazing group of *[insert number]* volunteers. They gave over *[insert number]* hours this year. Thank you volunteers!