

Call for Proposals: 40 Years of Mainers Helping Mainers

For 40 years, Mainers have come together to support one another through service, generosity, and community connection. This year's conference celebrates that legacy while looking ahead to the future of volunteer engagement across our state. We invite you to share your knowledge, experiences, and innovative ideas to help strengthen and sustain volunteerism in Maine.

We are seeking interactive workshops, presentations, and skill-building sessions in the following focus areas:

Engaging Corporate Partners

Strong partnerships with businesses can expand your organization's reach and impact. We're looking for sessions that explore how to build, manage, and grow corporate relationships—from first connection to long-term engagement.

Topics might include:

- Planning and executing days of service
- Aligning corporate goals with community needs
- Preparing staff and sites for corporate volunteer groups
- Creating meaningful experiences that encourage ongoing partnership

Recommended presenters should:

- Have experience engaging corporate volunteer partners
- Have strategies around planning and executing corporate volunteer engagements
- Understand how to balance corporate partnerships with needs and capacity

Developing and Training Volunteers for Remote Opportunities

Remote volunteerism continues to open new doors for participation, but it also requires thoughtful planning and support. Sessions in this track explore the process from end to end in creating, managing, and evaluating remote opportunities and dive deep into the challenges of accessibility.

Topics might include:

- Designing effective remote roles
- Best strategies for identifying virtual volunteer opportunities in your organization
- Ensuring accessibility for volunteers with limited transportation or technology

- Engaging, training, and managing fully remote volunteers in roles such as citizen science, phone banking, mentoring, and administrative support

Recommended presenters should:

- Have experience in identifying/designing remote volunteer opportunities
- Have strategies on engaging volunteers in a remote space and managing those volunteers
- Understand how remote volunteering can reduce barriers to participation in volunteer opportunities and be able to speak to the benefits and challenges

Advocacy and Communicating Volunteer Impact

Telling the story of volunteer impact is essential for building support and advancing your mission. We're seeking sessions that focus on effective communication strategies with municipal, state, and federal partners, as well as philanthropic organizations.

Topics may include:

- Best practices for storytelling to engage your audience and generate sustainable engagement
- How to use social media and digital tools most efficiently
- Centering volunteer voices in a way that maximizes their stories and demonstrates impact that ultimately influences decision-making
- Creative communication methods for when digital media marketing is not effective

Recommended presenters should:

- Be knowledgeable of current social media and digital marketing platforms and technologies
- Understand the digital media landscape
- Have experience with storytelling in a variety of formats

New Mainer Volunteer Engagement

Maine has a vibrant immigrant population that may face barriers to access volunteer opportunities that more established Mainers do not. We are seeking sessions that focus on how we as the volunteer community can reduce these barriers to access and create infrastructure that is welcoming and sustainable for Maine's immigrant populations.

Topics may include:

- Common barriers to accessibility of volunteering for New Mainers
- Best practices for connecting with New Mainers to engage in volunteering
- Perspectives from New Mainers

Recommended presenters should:

- Have experience engaging New Mainers in volunteer opportunities
 - Be connected with New Mainer populations or be a New Mainer themselves that can speak to the experience
 - Understand the resources that New Mainers seek in order to be successful in volunteer opportunities
 - Have experience developing projects or opportunities that engage New Mainers
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Youth Volunteers Workshop

Statistics show that when people engage in volunteering from a young age they are more likely to continue to volunteer as they grow older. Volunteerism is linked to stronger community bonds, skill development, and may allow young people to engage in opportunities to help them. Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference is seeking a speaker to lead a workshop on Engaging Youth Volunteers. Topic areas include:

- How to engage & retain youth volunteers
- Challenges to managing youth volunteers
- Why youth volunteers are valuable to nonprofits
- Best practices to working with youth volunteers

Recommended presenters should:

- Have experience managing youth volunteers
 - Understand documentation needed for youth volunteers
 - Know how to recruit, engage, and retain youth volunteers
 - Be experienced in creating volunteer service projects or positions for youth volunteers
 - Provide mentorship and leadership skills to youth volunteers through job shadowing, workforce readiness, or other means that advance their goals
 - Recognize and celebrate their contributions
 - Ensure safety and supervision of young people
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Panel Discussion Opportunities

In addition to workshops, we invite proposals for panel discussions that bring together diverse perspectives and real-world experiences. Suggested panel topics include:

- **Volunteering Across the Lifespan**
Explore how to engage volunteers at every stage of life—from youth to older adults. Consider strategies for working with families, mid-career individuals, and retirees, and how to adapt opportunities to meet different needs and motivations.
- **Citizen Science Management**
Highlight successful models for recruiting, training, and sustaining volunteers in large-scale or remote efforts, such as environmental monitoring, public health initiatives, or community data collection. We are seeking organizations that have citizen science programs that use community volunteers to collect data for your agency. The discussion would include recruitment, role development, how your organization verifies the data, training structure, and communication methods.
- **Youth Engagement**
The Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference is organizations who utilize youth volunteers in their organizations to participate in a panel about best practices for youth volunteers. Discussion may focus on policies and procedures for onboarding youth volunteers such as documentation, applications, and parental consent as well as prioritizing safety and training; recruitment and engagement; roles and responsibilities that are age appropriate; and the difference between meaningful tasks and busy work.
- **Service in Higher Education**
Examine how colleges and universities promote service and civic engagement, support student involvement, and partner with communities to create meaningful impact. Topics of focus may include: leveraging student skills, managing community partner expectations, balancing school and service workload expectations, incentivizing student and institution involvement, increasing retention of young people in Maine.

We encourage proposals that are interactive, practical, and grounded in real experience. Whether you are sharing a proven model, a lesson learned, or a new idea, your voice can help shape the next chapter of “Mainers Helping Mainers.”

We look forward to learning from you!