

www.rtpi.org.uk

**RTPI
Volunteering**



Supporting your employees to volunteer with us: How you can benefit

Registered charity number: 262865
Scottish registered charity number: SC 037841



RTPI

Royal Town Planning Institute

Benefits for Employers

Each year just over 4% of our members volunteer their time, energy and enthusiasm to support activities across the Institute.

They do this to support the profession, and raise the awareness of planning and its role in shaping the places in which we live and work.

As an employer, supporting employees to volunteer for the RTPI can demonstrate your commitment to staff, their development and wellbeing. Your organisation could also benefit professionally from experience gained whilst volunteering. Other significant benefits of supporting your employees to volunteer for us include:



RTPI Volunteers at Skills London careers event.

- ❖ **Skills development and CPD (Continuing Professional Development) for your employees**
- ❖ **Increased staff morale, retention and recruitment**
- ❖ **Links to customers and opportunities for growth**
- ❖ **Corporate Social Responsibility**

“As a volunteer on the Regional Management Board I’ve enjoyed the opportunity to take a more strategic role in the direction and delivery of the RTPI activities in my area. My knowledge of planning topics has improved greatly as I’ve discussed topics I wouldn’t necessarily engage with during my day job. I’ve built a strong network of contacts and improved a range of management skills which will no doubt be useful in my career.”

Town Planner, large built environment consultancy

Benefits of Volunteering with RTPI

Skills development and CPD (Continuing Professional Development)



Planning Aid England volunteers providing advice on Leeds allocation consultation.

RTPI volunteers get involved with a variety of activities and gain experience not necessarily available to them in the workplace.

Volunteers chair meetings, attend committees and take on tasks and roles outside their day to day responsibilities.

These roles help volunteers develop key “soft skills” including communication, negotiating and leadership which are identified as CPD priorities for planners.

“Volunteering for Planning Aid England has been fundamental for me to start understanding the UK planning system and getting into the job market. Through planning legislation examinations, workshops, research activity and practical assistance; I quickly gained the basics of UK planning and the first real interviews came and the job arrived.”

Planning Aid Research Volunteer

Increased staff morale, retention and recruitment

Providing staff with time out to gain experience of different areas of interest and learn new skills through volunteering is a way of demonstrating your commitment to their development at no extra cost to your organisation.

“Professionally, it has been hugely beneficial; getting experience of a wider range of planning issues than in my day job; the volunteering work counting towards my CPD requirement; and gaining the transferable skills required for committee working such as interpersonal skills, project management and negotiation which has been invaluable experience.”

RTPI Regional Chair

This has a knock on effect within your organisation. Alongside skills gained, volunteers stand to gain confidence and a sense of achievement. This can lead to improved staff morale, retention and make your organisation more attractive to high calibre candidates, an important benefit given the current shortage of planners and the challenges this presents for recruitment.

Stronger links with customers, clients and stakeholders

Your organisation will be seen as a key player within the sector, making an active contribution to the planning community and influencing the future of the industry. This will enhance your reputation within the industry as a dynamic, forward thinking, responsible organisation and strengthen relationships with key stakeholders and enable the development of partnerships and possible new ways of working.



Young Planners Meeting

“Through volunteering on the young planners committee, I have greatly improved my organisation skills through arranging CPD and social events. I’ve built contacts with senior planners across the region who have come to speak at our events and ultimately raised my own profile across the region and UK. ”

Young Planners Conference Lead 2017

Corporate social responsibility

Many employers have a published commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR is often seen as an important way to increase competitive advantage, protect and raise brand awareness and build trust with customers and employees.

Supporting employees to take up volunteering opportunities that are consistent with the values of your organisation can help contribute to CSR whilst also helping your employees develop new skills.

“Volunteering for the RTPI has been of immense benefit to the young planners in my service. It has given them a broader perspective and helped to develop their professional and technical skills. It has also built their confidence and helped them to develop the softer, personal skills that are also essential for taking on more senior roles within the profession.

I would recommend that all employers support the personal and professional development of their young planners and encourage them to take advantage of the opportunities available to them through the RTPI.”

Strategic Planning Manager at a County Council

Supporting your staff to volunteer

As an employer, here are few tips about how you can encourage your employees to volunteer for the RTPI.

Make your staff aware of your organisation's commitment to fostering and supporting a volunteer culture.

Set up a Policy on Employer Supported Volunteering: Consider;

- What your organisation wants to achieve through volunteering
- How your needs as an organisation can be united with the RTPI?
- How the scheme should be communicated and promoted? e.g. could it be raised as part of development discussions as well as promoted on your organisation's website.

Use Performance Development Reviews to:

- Discuss whether volunteering could help meet employees individual aspirations and development needs
- Review with employees who have taken up volunteering opportunity their experience, what they have learnt and any other benefits they feel they have gained from being a volunteer.
- Note benefits of volunteering for future employee's development.

Want to find out more about volunteering opportunities with the RTPI?

Here is a list of just some of the opportunities available at the RTPI – across the Nations and Regions and in London

- Governance Roles, including:
 - Board of Trustees Membership
 - Committee Panel roles
- Activity Based Roles, eg:
 - Planning Aid Volunteer
 - Policy work: Better Planning Volunteer
 - Ambassador for Careers, Education and professional Development
- Young Planner Roles
- Ambassador for Careers, Education and Professional Development

For a full list of volunteer opportunities, please visit our RTPI website at www.rtpi.org.uk/membership/get-involved



For more information please visit:
rtpi.org.uk/membership/get-involved



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