

Virtual Volunteerism Study RSVP Program Director Survey

Informed Consent

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Dr. Jennifer Crittenden, a faculty member in the UMaine School of Social Work and Associate Director of Research, University of Maine. The purpose of the research is to explore the challenges, benefits, and opportunities of using virtual volunteerism strategies with older adult volunteers. You must be at least 18 years of age and a RSVP program director, coordinator, or in an equivalent program-related position to participate.

What Will You Be Asked to Do?

- You will be asked to respond to a 15-20 minute anonymous questionnaire about your experience with virtual volunteering and phone-based volunteering.**
- At the end of the survey, you will be redirected to a separate form and have the chance to sign up to assist with, and learn more about, upcoming program site interviews.**
- To avoid duplication of responses, please only submit one survey per RSVP program.**

Risks

- There are no risks involved in participating in this research beyond time and inconvenience to participate.**

Benefits

- While this study will have no direct benefit to you, you may find that you enjoy sharing your views on the topic of volunteerism. This research will also**

help build an understanding of virtual volunteering and management practices.

Compensation

- Those who reach the end of the survey will be offered the opportunity to enter a raffle for one of ten \$50 Amazon gift cards.
- Gift cards will be mailed or e-mailed based on winner choice.
- The raffle selection will be completed by September 30, 2023.
- Your raffle information will be stored separately from your survey responses.

Confidentiality All responses are anonymous. Do not enter your name in any of the survey response boxes. Your survey will be submitted directly to the University of Maine. The survey you submit and the information on it will be kept on file indefinitely. Only study personnel will have access to your individual survey information. A report of findings will be shared with RSVP programs nationally. Reports issued from the project will be presented in summary format so that individual programs cannot be identified.

Only the principal investigator (Jennifer Crittenden) and research team members will have access to the surveys that are submitted. Information from the surveys will be stored in a secure and password-protected shared file folder (Google Drive) maintained by the University of Maine.

You will have an opportunity to fill out a gift card form and submit it online through a separate link. You will be taken to this link once you submit the survey. This form will be stored separately from your survey information in a password-protected Qualtrics online survey account. Gift card entry information will only be used for the purposes of drawing gift card recipients (10 total) and will be deleted at the end of the drawing (approximately September 30, 2023). None of your responses will be linked to your personal information (like your name or address).

If you agree to be contacted with information about follow-up interviews, your contact information will be downloaded and stored in a secure and

password-protected shared file folder (Google Drive) maintained by the University of Maine until the end of the second year of this project (September 30, 2024).

Voluntary

- You can decline to take part in this survey.
- You can stop the survey at any time.
- You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer.
- Submitting a survey will let us know that you consent to take part in the study.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at 207-581-2495 or Jennifer.Crittenden@maine.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research Compliance, University of Maine, 207-581-2657 (or e-mail umric@maine.edu).

Clicking the “Finish” button to submit the survey implies consent to participate.

Background Questions

For this survey, we define virtual volunteering as volunteer work that is undertaken using internet-based technologies. This includes activities and job assignments that can be conducted completely off-site or can be used part-time to supplement on-site and face-to-face volunteering. During this survey, keep in mind that volunteering via phone calls is not considered virtual volunteering because it does not typically utilize internet-based technologies.

There is a separate set of questions at the end of the survey pertaining to phone-based volunteering.

What is your title/position within your RSVP program?

How long have you worked in your current RSVP role?

- ☐ Less than a year
- ☐ 1-4 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ 11-20 years
- ☐ More than 20 years

How long has your organization been an RSVP grantee?

- ☐ Less than a year
- ☐ 1-4 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ 11-20 years
- ☐ More than 20 years
- ☐ Don't Know

Approximately how many volunteers do you serve annually through your RSVP program?

What are the primary geographic area(s) that your RSVP program serves?
Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Rural
- ☐ Suburban
- ☐ Metropolitan area(s)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

What type of organization or agency do you represent? (please check one)

- ☐ Private non-profit
- ☐ DHHS or government-based
- ☐ Area Agency on Aging
- ☐ University or college affiliated
- ☐ For-profit
- ☐ Other (please specify):

What state or U.S. Territory are you located in?

Which RSVP program focus areas does your program address? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Disaster services
- ☐ Economic opportunity
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Environmental Stewardship
- ☐ Healthy futures
- ☐ Veterans and military families
- ☐ Community priorities (Please briefly specify):
- ☐ Other (Please specify)

Virtual Volunteer Survey Questions

This first part of the survey is about virtual volunteering, i.e., volunteering using the internet. Virtual volunteering for the purposes of this part of the survey does not include phone-based volunteer activities. Please answer these questions with internet-based volunteering in mind. There is a separate section of this survey that will ask about your use of phone-based volunteering.

Approximately what proportion of your RSVP volunteers are completing at least part of their volunteer work online through virtual volunteering?

- ☐ None
- ☐ Some but less than half
- ☐ About half
- ☐ More than half
- ☐ Almost all

If you are not currently using virtual volunteering, have you utilized virtual volunteering in the past five years with your RSVP volunteers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No ***See attached question set for programs that have never used virtual volunteering**

If you are not currently using virtual volunteering with your RSVP volunteers, what barriers keep you from offering virtual assignments? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Lack of knowledge for how to start using virtual volunteering
- ☐ Lack of staff training for virtual volunteering
- ☐ Lack of volunteer training resources for virtual volunteering
- ☐ Lack of participant/service recipient training resources for engaging virtually
- ☐ Lack of funding resources for the costs associated with virtual volunteering
- ☐ Lack of or difficulty obtaining technology (laptops, smart phones, iPads, etc.) for volunteers
- ☐ Lack of or difficulty obtaining technology (laptops, smart phones, iPads, etc.) for service recipients/participants
- ☐ Lack of access to internet for virtual volunteers
- ☐ Lack of access to internet for participants/service recipients
- ☐ Lack of necessary staffing
- ☐ Volunteers are uncomfortable with technology
- ☐ Participants/service recipients are uncomfortable with technology
- ☐ Volunteers prefer to volunteer in-person
- ☐ Participants/service recipients prefer to be in-person
- ☐ Concerns with performance, dependability, or overall abilities of virtual volunteers
- ☐ Other (Please specify)

Were you offering virtual volunteering to your RSVP volunteers before the start of the Covid-19 pandemic?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

For the next set of questions, please review the statement provided and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

Covid-19 has been/was a major reason behind the use of virtual volunteering within our RSVP programming.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

Covid-19 increased the number of virtual RSVP assignments offered.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

Which of the following virtual volunteer opportunities have you offered?**Select one response per category.**

Tutoring/mentoring/literacy programming (for any ages)

Companionship/friendly visiting/visits to reduce isolation

Community health education (e.g., insurance education/health/nutrition, caregiver education, addiction, and disease)

Workforce development/employment preparation services

Disaster preparedness education

Computer/technology instruction

Exercise/fitness instruction

Financial services including tax preparation/financial education/scam prevention

Administrative/clerical work

Other (Please specify)

Please select the RSVP volunteer assignments you would like to use virtual volunteers for but have not done so yet. Select all that apply.

- ☐ Literacy program (including early literacy and adult literacy)
- ☐ Tutoring/mentoring (for any ages)
- ☐ Companionship/friendly visiting/visits to reduce isolation
- ☐ Community health education (e.g., health/nutrition, caregiver education, addiction, and disease)
- ☐ Health insurance education
- ☐ Employment preparation services
- ☐ Disaster preparedness education
- ☐ Computer/technology education
- ☐ Exercise/fitness instruction
- ☐ Tax preparation services
- ☐ Financial education/scam prevention
- ☐ US citizenship preparation services
- ☐ Ombudsman services
- ☐ Administrative/clerical work
- ☐ Board/committee assignments
- ☐ Other (Please specify)
- ☐ N/A-Do not desire to use virtual volunteering further/beyond current assignments.

How have you recruited for RSVP virtual volunteers? Please select one response for each recruitment method.

| | Yes | No |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Web and social media (such as website postings, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Online volunteer recruiting service or database (e.g., VolunteerMatch.org, Create the Good) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Word of mouth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| In-person recruitment at events, information fairs, meetings, etc. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Print advertisements (newspaper postings, brochures, newsletters, flyers, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Email announcements/e-mail newsletters | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other (Please specify) <input type="text"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Are these recruitment methods for virtual volunteering similar to those used to recruit in-person/on-site volunteers?

- ☐ Yes, we use similar recruitment methods for both virtual and in-person volunteer recruitment
- ☐ No, we use different recruitment methods for virtual and in-person volunteer recruitment
- ☐ Other

What proportion of your virtual volunteers are currently volunteering completely online (meaning no in-person/on-site tasks)?

- ☐ None
- ☐ Some but less than half
- ☐ About half
- ☐ More than half
- ☐ Almost all
- ☐ N/A Do not currently use virtual volunteering

Which method(s) of communication have you used to communicate with your RSVP virtual volunteers? Select a response for each category.

| | Yes | No |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Personal email | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Texting | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Video conferencing - such as Zoom or Skype | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Group email distribution | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Social media - such as Instant messenger | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Phone calls | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Face-to-face conversation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Mail/physical mailings | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other _____ | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="text"/> | | |

Benefits & Challenges

What are some benefits you have found with using virtual volunteering?
Select all that apply.

- ☐ Brings in new or different types of volunteers.
- ☐ Reduces the risk of Covid-19 transmission
- ☐ More efficient/saves time
- ☐ Increased convenience/flexibility
- ☐ Offers access for a wider range of participants/service recipients
- ☐ More accessible for those with mobility or health concerns
- ☐ Eliminates geographic barriers
- ☐ Volunteers learn something new
- ☐ Increased or new social opportunities
- ☐ Increased confidence with technology
- ☐ Other (Please specify)

What challenges have you encountered using virtual volunteering? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Lack of staff training for virtual volunteering
- ☐ Lack of volunteer training resources for virtual volunteering
- ☐ Lack of participant/service recipient training resources for engaging virtually
- ☐ Lack of funding resources for the costs associated with virtual volunteering
- ☐ Lack of or difficulty obtaining technology (laptops, smart phones, iPads, etc.) for virtual volunteers
- ☐ Lack of or difficulty obtaining technology (laptops, smart phones, iPads, etc.) for virtual participants/service recipients
- ☐ Lack of access to internet for virtual volunteers
- ☐ Lack of access to internet for participants/service recipients
- ☐ Lack of necessary staffing
- ☐ Volunteers are uncomfortable with technology
- ☐ Participants/service recipients are uncomfortable with technology
- ☐ Volunteers prefer to volunteer in-person
- ☐ Participants/service recipients prefer to be in-person
- ☐ Concerns with performance, dependability, or overall abilities of virtual volunteers
- ☐ Other (Please specify)
- ☐ N/A-We have not experienced challenges

Management

Have you developed/did you develop any new partnerships to support virtual volunteering (such as partnerships with technology experts, volunteer training experts, government agencies/resources, other non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, etc.)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, please briefly describe those partnerships including the types of organizations and what they might provide.

Are virtual volunteers given any different or additional volunteer recognition compared to your in-person/on-site volunteers you work with?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, please describe.

Which, if any, of the following training methods have you provided to your RSVP virtual volunteers? Select a response for each category.

| | Yes | No |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Live virtual trainings (webinar/Zoom) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Live group in-person trainings | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Pre-recorded video trainings | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Self-paced training modules | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Digital instruction manuals/guides | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Printed instruction manuals/guides | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| One-on-one in-person instruction | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| One-on-one phone instruction | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other (Please specify) <input type="text"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Are these training methods for virtual volunteering similar to those provided to your in-person/on-site volunteers?

- ☐ Yes, we use similar training methods for both in-person and virtual volunteer training
- ☐ No, we use different training methods for in-person and virtual volunteer training
- ☐ N/A

Which, if any, of the following virtual training methods have you provided to your participants/service recipients/program beneficiaries? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Live virtual trainings (webinar/Zoom)
- ☐ Live group in-person trainings
- ☐ Pre-recorded video trainings
- ☐ Self-paced training modules
- ☐ Digital instruction manuals/guides
- ☐ Printed instruction manuals/guides
- ☐ One-on-one in-person instruction
- ☐ One-on-one virtual instruction
- ☐ One-on-one phone instruction
- ☐ Other (Please specify)
- ☐ Training is not provided

Satisfaction with Virtual Volunteering

For the next set of questions, please review the statement provided and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

Virtual volunteering is an effective tool for addressing the needs of RSVP volunteer assignments:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

How satisfied have you been with the skill set of the RSVP virtual volunteers you have worked with?

- ☐ Not at all satisfied
- ☐ Slightly satisfied
- ☐ Moderately satisfied
- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Extremely satisfied

Overall, how satisfied are you with the RSVP virtual volunteer assignments you have managed?

- ☐ Not at all satisfied
- ☐ Slightly satisfied
- ☐ Moderately satisfied
- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Extremely satisfied

Forecasting & Other Insights

To what extent do you see your RSVP volunteers using virtual volunteering in the future as compared to your current use of virtual volunteering?

- ☐ Significantly less in the future
- ☐ Somewhat less
- ☐ Staying the same
- ☐ Somewhat more
- ☐ Significantly more

Are there any other insights you would like to share about your experience

with virtual volunteering?

Phone-based Volunteering Questions

Based on recent research interviews with RSVP programs, we know that some RSVP programs consider phone-based volunteering to be an important remote volunteering option. This next set of questions is about phone-based volunteering, separate from virtual volunteering discussed in the prior questions.

Do you currently use phone-based volunteering with your RSVP volunteers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If you are not currently using phone-based volunteering, have you utilized phone-based volunteering in the past five years with your RSVP volunteers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please select the types of phone-based volunteering assignments you have offered to your RSVP volunteers. Select all that apply.

- ☐ Tutoring/mentoring/literacy programming (for any ages)
- ☐ Companionship/friendly visiting/visits to reduce isolation
- ☐ Community health education (e.g., insurance education/health/nutrition, caregiver education, addiction, and disease)
- ☐ Workforce development/employment preparation services
- ☐ Disaster preparedness education
- ☐ Computer/technology instruction
- ☐ Exercise/fitness instruction
- ☐ Financial services including tax preparation/financial education/scam prevention
- ☐ Administrative/clerical work
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ N/A-We do not offer phone-based volunteering

Were you offering phone-based volunteering to your RSVP volunteers before the start of the Covid-19 pandemic?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ NA-We have never offered phone-based volunteering

Are there any other insights you would like to share about phone-based volunteering?

Survey Questions for Programs Who Never Used Virtual Volunteering

Sample

If you are not currently using virtual volunteering with your RSVP volunteers, what barriers keep you from offering virtual assignments? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Virtual volunteering does not fit our specific needs
- ☐ Lack of knowledge for how to start using virtual volunteering
- ☐ Lack of staff training for virtual volunteering
- ☐ Lack of volunteer training resources for virtual volunteering
- ☐ Lack of participant training resources for engaging virtually
- ☐ Lack of funding resources for the costs associated with virtual volunteering
- ☐ Lack of necessary tools for virtual volunteer management
- ☐ Lack of or difficulty obtaining technology for virtual volunteers
- ☐ Lack of or difficulty obtaining technology for participants
- ☐ Lack of access to internet for virtual volunteers
- ☐ Lack of access to internet for participants
- ☐ Lack of organizational partnerships
- ☐ Volunteers are uncomfortable with/avoid technology
- ☐ Participants are uncomfortable with/avoid technology
- ☐ Lack of interest in virtual volunteering among volunteers
- ☐ Volunteers want to be in-person
- ☐ Participants want to be in-person
- ☐ Concerns with performance, dependability, or overall abilities of virtual volunteers
- ☐ Communication difficulties with virtual volunteers
- ☐ Other
- ☐ N/A-We have not faced barriers that have kept us from using virtual volunteering

Please select the RSVP volunteer assignments you would like to use virtual volunteers for but have not done so yet. Select all that apply.

- ☐ Tutoring/mentoring/literacy programming (for any ages)
- ☐ Companionship/friendly visiting/visits to reduce isolation.
- ☐ Community health education (e.g., insurance education/health/nutrition, caregiver education, addiction, and disease)
- ☐ Workforce development/employment preparation services
- ☐ Disaster preparedness education
- ☐ Computer/technology instruction
- ☐ Exercise/fitness instruction
- ☐ Financial services including tax preparation/financial education/scam prevention
- ☐ Administrative/clerical work
- ☐ Other (Please specify)
- ☐ N/A-Do not desire to use virtual volunteering further

For this next section, please review the statement provided and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

How interested are you in using virtual volunteering in your RSVP program going forward?

- ☐ Not interested at all
- ☐ Slightly interested
- ☐ Moderately interested
- ☐ Very interested
- ☐ Extremely interested

Virtual volunteering is an effective tool for addressing the needs of RSVP volunteer assignments:

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

Are there any other insights you would like to share about the topic of virtual volunteering?

Phone-based Volunteering Questions

Based on recent research interviews with RSVP programs, we know that some RSVP programs consider phone-based volunteering to be an important remote volunteering option. This next set of questions is about phone-based volunteering, separate from virtual volunteering discussed in the prior questions.

Do you currently use phone-based volunteering with your RSVP volunteers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If you are not currently using phone-based volunteering, have you utilized phone-based volunteering in the past five years with your RSVP volunteers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please select the types of phone-based volunteering assignments you have offered to your RSVP volunteers. Select all that apply.

- ☐ Tutoring/mentoring/literacy programming (for any ages)
- ☐ Companionship/friendly visiting/visits to reduce isolation
- ☐ Community health education (e.g., insurance education/health/nutrition, caregiver education, addiction, and disease)
- ☐ Workforce development/employment preparation services
- ☐ Disaster preparedness education
- ☐ Computer/technology instruction
- ☐ Exercise/fitness instruction
- ☐ Financial services including tax preparation/financial education/scam prevention
- ☐ Administrative/clerical work
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ N/A-We have not offered phone-based volunteering

Were you offering phone-based volunteering to your RSVP volunteers before the start of the Covid-19 pandemic?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Are there any other insights you would like to share about phone-based volunteering?