



# Toolkit for Impactful Skilled Volunteering Programs

A GUIDE FOR SOCIAL IMPACT AND  
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT LEADERS

---

**team4tech**

# Toolkit for Impactful Skilled Volunteering Programs

## A Guide For Social Impact and Employee Engagement Leaders

Pro bono or skilled volunteering programs give employee volunteers the opportunity to share their skills with nonprofit organizations as a means of making a positive social impact while developing their own leadership capabilities.

Many companies include pro bono programs in their portfolio of employee engagement opportunities because their extended nature offers more meaningful personal and professional development for employees and makes more sustainable impact on nonprofits' organizational capacity than traditional volunteer programs.

International pro bono programs have the additional benefits of engaging employees from different regions as well as exposing them to new cultures and markets, which can lead to new product and customer insights.

Employee demand for skilled volunteering programs is high and increasing, so it is not surprising that the CECP (Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose) found that pro bono programs are growing to meet this demand and also help companies achieve their social impact goals.<sup>1</sup>

Team4Tech is a nonprofit organization that partners companies with nonprofits for immersive, global pro bono projects that engage employees, provide leadership development opportunities, and make a social impact. Based on the experience of working with more than 2,000 volunteers from more than 35 companies and 50+ nonprofit organizations, Team4Tech has created this toolkit to help companies develop pro bono programs.

### Business and social benefits of skilled volunteering programs<sup>2</sup>

#### Leadership Development

**96%**

of employee volunteers reported growth in leadership skills from their pro bono experience

#### Engagement and Loyalty

**66%**

of employee volunteers reported their pro bono project increased the likelihood of remaining at their company for at least three years

#### Product Development

**81%**

of employee volunteers report gaining insights of technology usage in emerging markets that they will use in their job

#### Social Impact

**90%**

of nonprofit staff report increased productivity due to their new skills

<sup>1</sup> Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose, Giving in Numbers: 2019 Edition.  
<sup>2</sup> Team4Tech volunteer surveys.

# Developing Impactful Skilled Volunteering Programs

A successful pro bono or skilled volunteering program must be well thought out and resourced. Projects that are well defined have a greater chance of realizing their intended impact. Carefully selecting both nonprofits and employee volunteers leads to mutual benefit. Ensuring metrics are in place from the start is critical to demonstrating long term impact. This toolkit is a starting place for companies considering skilled volunteering programs. The first step is to identify the objectives of the program. Testimonials from participating partners describing positive impact are below.

## DEFINING EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

Even with clear objectives, the challenge for companies is often executing and managing pro bono programs that benefit multiple stakeholders. These six questions can help define effective strategies to ensure there is mutual benefit and impact for all participants and organizations.

- How will you identify nonprofit partners?
- How will you select employee volunteers?
- How will you define the project scope?
- How will you ensure a positive and impactful volunteer experience?
- How will you ensure a sustainable benefit for the nonprofit partner?
- How will you measure if the program is achieving its key objectives?

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

“ I was able to stretch my leadership and influence skills, creative problem solving, and communication skills. I’ve been able to bring my experiences back and inspire others with what I learned.”

— David Lauder-Walker,  
Adobe

### ENGAGEMENT AND LOYALTY

“ We were drawn to Team4Tech because we needed a strategic partner who would be able to work with us to offer meaningful volunteer opportunities to our employees. Team4Tech’s robust programming allows us to show the real-world and measurable impact of our engagements and to connect volunteers from across the business.”

— Ed O’Brien Hogan,  
Zendesk

### PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

“ Each person gets to build technical and design thinking skills in a diverse environment and embraces their creativity and global mindset far beyond the end of the project.”

— Ben Thompson,  
Autodesk Foundation

### SOCIAL IMPACT

“ Team4Tech is helping us advance learning outcomes in multiple countries through technology integration and teacher training.”

— Joyce Adolwa,  
CARE USA

# Identifying Nonprofit Partners

For a skilled volunteering project to have an effective and sustainable impact, the nonprofit partner needs to have the resources and commitment to benefit from it. It is often a challenge for companies to identify and select strong nonprofit partners, especially globally.

Team4Tech reviews all nonprofit partners who join our Community of Practice to ensure their work aligns with our mission. We also select a small group of these partners, that we call strategic nonprofit partners, who go through a robust vetting process. They join us in high-touch, 3-5 year relationships with in-depth support, annual matching grants, and immersive capacity-building projects. Strategic nonprofit partners regularly report on their progress toward fulfilling partnership goals.

Based on the experience of working closely with more than 50 strategic nonprofit partners in 21 countries, Team4Tech's selection rubric includes several key questions to identify the most promising partners for skilled volunteering projects.

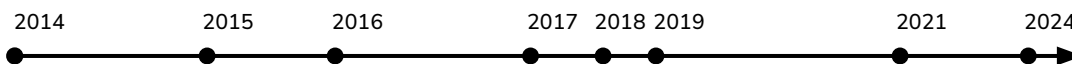
## KEY QUESTIONS

- Is the nonprofit's mission and target population aligned with the company's social impact focus?
- Does the nonprofit have a track record of successful impact and operational effectiveness?
- Is the nonprofit financially stable and sustainable?
- Does the nonprofit have a clear vision of how the project will help them build capacity?
- Is the nonprofit leadership and staff committed to investing the time and resources necessary to ensure the project's success and sustainability?
- Does the nonprofit have the ability to measure impact and report on metrics?

## Nonprofit Partnerships in Action



Since 2014, Team4Tech has connected global technology companies with LEAP Science and Maths Schools in the townships of South Africa to help improve the quality of education for students. Through technology solutions and teacher training workshops, Team4Tech's projects have helped build STEM education capacity and increase LEAP's impact, resulting in significant educational benefit for their students.



### DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS

Team4Tech projects have implemented functioning computer labs in all six LEAP schools and helped teachers and students to develop digital literacy skills.

### CORE SUBJECT SKILLS

To ensure a solid foundation in core subject skills, Team4Tech projects helped teachers identify and implement math and science applications in their classes.

### LIFELONG LEARNING SKILLS

Team4Tech helped LEAP build a makerspace and launch robotics clubs to help students build creative problem solving and collaborations skills.

### OPERATIONAL SKILLS

Team4Tech helped LEAP improve digital strategy, mobile learning, educational infrastructure, and data analysis. The projects laid the foundation for future growth and educational excellence.

# Selecting Employee Volunteer Teams

Many companies see significant interest in skilled volunteering programs from their employees. Some companies target specific employee groups—such as early career professionals or high potential leaders—with volunteer opportunities as a way to build leadership skills. Other companies use these programs to provide a diverse group of employees from different functions, regions, or levels of seniority opportunities to build inclusivity by working together on a common goal. Narrowing down the potential pool of volunteer applicants can be challenging. Based on our experience of selecting more than 2,000 volunteers, Team4Tech has refined an application and interview process to select participants that have the skills and mindsets to benefit from and contribute to the project.

## KEY QUESTIONS:

- Will employees apply or be nominated?
- What are the target employee groups?
- What selection criteria will be used to create a diverse team?
- How will managers be engaged in the process?



## EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN ACTION

Adobe is a leader in pro bono work and consistently sees strong demand from employees, only selecting 8% of applicants to participate in their programs. The program targets early- to mid-career professionals with opportunities to build job related skills while helping nonprofit partners build capacity. Since 2015, more than 40 Adobe employee volunteers have participated in Team4Tech projects. 100% of Adobe Team4Tech volunteers report they've gained skills they will use in their jobs. And 95% of them report that participating in the pro bono project influences their desire to continue working at Adobe.

# Defining an Impactful Project Scope

A well-defined project scope is key to a win-win skilled volunteering engagement. A few months before the project begins, the nonprofit needs to have clear, measurable goals that are well understood by the volunteer team. A full-time project manager is critical in helping define team roles based on volunteer skill sets, setting and tracking milestones for key deliverables, and perhaps most importantly, helping the team adapt when challenges unexpectedly arise. Many companies partner with Team4Tech because our Program Directors have significant expertise leading this work. They use a human-centered design process to scope and facilitate highly effective global volunteering projects that help nonprofits amplify their impact while providing volunteers a meaningful way to grow their leadership capabilities.

## KEY QUESTIONS:

- What are the nonprofit's long-term goals and success metrics?
- What are the key project deliverables to help achieve the long-term goals?
- Who are the target beneficiaries?
- Who will lead and manage the project team?
- Who will need to be engaged from the nonprofit partner?
- What team roles, budget, and resources are needed?



## IMPACTFUL PROJECTS IN ACTION

Team4Tech has led two pro bono projects with Autodesk in which employee volunteers applied their skills and Autodesk software to help Build Change, a nonprofit working to reduce human and economic losses due to earthquakes in developing countries. The projects reduced time to survey and model houses from 40 to three hours, increasing the nonprofit's capacity to retrofit houses, saving homeowners money and potentially saving thousands of lives in earthquake-prone Nepal and Colombia. The Team4Tech projects also helped Autodesk build employee engagement and loyalty. 100% of employees who participated reported the project increased their likelihood of remaining at Autodesk for three or more years.

# Facilitating a Transformative Volunteer Experience

Employee volunteers can gain multiple benefits from their skilled volunteering experience, including professional and personal development and finding renewed purpose in their work by using their skills to make a meaningful impact. Skilled volunteering projects offer tremendous opportunities for professional development by taking individuals out of their comfort zone, allowing them to develop and practice key leadership capabilities, encouraging reflection on their experience, and helping them share what they've learned with their colleagues when they return. Team4Tech has carefully crafted a global, immersive skilled volunteering experience that prepares employees to develop impactful solutions for nonprofits while creating opportunities for tremendous professional and personal growth through practice and facilitated reflection.

## KEY QUESTIONS

- What are the key leadership capabilities and mindsets that are important for employee volunteers to develop?
- What content and training will the volunteers receive?
- How will the project be scoped to be within the volunteers' capabilities but challenging enough to stretch them beyond their comfort zone?
- How will employees reflect on their experiences to derive meaning and solidify learning?
- How will employees share what they learned from their experience with colleagues?

## LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES DEVELOPED THROUGH TEAM4TECH PROJECTS



“ The Team4Tech pre-project preparation was a great warm up. The weekly readings and discussions presented opportunities to think outside the box and were a strong anchor.”

— Suhrbi Tiwari,  
Adobe

“ Our evening reflections on-site with Team4Tech supported our growth by diving deeper into this experience. What a powerful, empowering time.”

— Malika Neha Lynn,  
Cadence Design Systems

“ As we often hear from our employees, my Team4Tech project was life-changing. It made me a better leader and a better person.”

— Colin Mead,  
Pure Storage

# Measuring Impact and Outcomes

Among different types of corporate volunteer programs, pro bono projects have the most potential to create deep, lasting impact for nonprofits, companies, and employee volunteers. Measuring impact beyond the number of hours volunteered is challenging for most organizations. Team4Tech identifies metrics with the nonprofit partner based on the goals of the project over a planned three to five-year collaboration. Nonprofit staff are surveyed to measure project effectiveness, and twice a year, they report on outcomes and strategize with Team4Tech to continue to grow the impact. Employee volunteers are surveyed twice after the project to measure the impact on key corporate metrics such as leadership development, employee engagement, and loyalty. Some companies also choose to survey managers on the growth they've seen in their employees as a result of their project experience.

## KEY QUESTIONS

- What metrics will be used to measure short term project impact?
- How will long term impact on the nonprofit's capacity be measured and reported?
- How will employee engagement and leadership development be measured?

## READY TO GET STARTED WITH SKILLED VOLUNTEERING? TEAM4TECH CAN HELP.

As a leader in the sector, Team4Tech has worked with more than 2,000 employee volunteers from more than 35 companies to design impactful pro bono programs, benefitting 50+ nonprofit partners in 21 countries. Based on this experience, Team4Tech can provide guidance and insights to develop a successful program that meets the needs of the corporate partner, while ensuring employees have a meaningful leadership development experience and nonprofit partners benefit from capacity-building support.

**REACH OUT**

[info@team4tech.org](mailto:info@team4tech.org)

**LEARN MORE**

[team4tech.org](http://team4tech.org)

---

**team4tech**