



Becoming a CITA Volunteer

enabling charities to achieve IT excellence

CITA welcomes all IT professionals who are able and willing to support our mission to provide UK charities with access to affordable, trustworthy and independent technology services.

The Charity IT Association (CITA) was founded in 2016 for the purpose of enabling all charities to be able to access expert IT help and support. CITA introduces volunteers with relevant IT skills and experience to charities who want or need to improve their technology capabilities.

Our vision is to have a world in which charities can harness the full potential of technology to increase their impact for good and this is achieved by providing charities with access to affordable, trustworthy and independent technology services in order to allow them to achieve their own strategic mission.

“Our CITA volunteer, has made a huge difference to our charity. He was incredibly thorough in his IT recommendations and their implementation.” Family Counselling Trust

Why volunteer with CITA?

CITA volunteers help charities harness the full potential of technology to increase their impact for good. Whether undertaking this as an individual or as part of an organisation’s CSR programme, CITA volunteers have supported over 700 charities and have committed over 7,000 hours of pro bono work to make a positive impact on how charities work with technology.

98% of volunteers are willing to participate further with CITA and 73% of volunteers have participated in more than one volunteering activity

Volunteers choose the charities, projects, where and when they work, and can determine their own timescales according to their availability. This helps to ensure that CITA can match the right volunteer skills, experience and availability to the needs of a specific charity.

CITA values the time, talent, and passion our volunteers contribute to help charities run more efficiently through technology review, advice and delivery.

CITA volunteers benefit from gaining greater experience and exposure to IT issues and concerns, as well as knowing that they are indirectly helping people in need of charity support. As part of the CITA Community, volunteers can network with fellow volunteers, charity members and partners to share experiences and discuss best practice.

The CITA volunteer programme also helps organisations and employees through improved Corporate Social Responsibility activity. The CITA CSR Scheme allows organisations to support CITA by encouraging staff to volunteer as part of their CSR initiatives.

CITA will provide you with guidance and support and suggest volunteer opportunities that match your location, skills and availability.

“Our volunteer patiently helped us work through our key risks and identify practical steps we could take to use our new cloud system with confidence.” Step by Step

What will I have to do?

CITA provides a wide range of services that help charities overcome the challenges of using and managing IT, delivered by volunteers:

CITA Review Services

Independent advice on effective IT: CITA volunteers will help charities to identify and qualify potential IT projects and initiatives that will support their strategic and operational objectives. Typically a half day assignment plus feedback / reporting.

CITA Advisory Services

Helping charities through an IT project: CITA volunteers will help charities to define, plan and manage an identified IT project, from scoping to completion. The volunteer can offer invaluable advice on procurement and help to properly draft an RFP for services to ensure all bases are covered. Typically several days, over several weeks duration, plus feedback / reporting.

CITA Delivery Services

The right skills for a successful IT project: Once a charity has defined and planned the IT project, CITA volunteers will provide the technical skills needed to fulfil the project. The project will be managed by the charity or another CITA volunteer. Typically several days, often over a longer duration, plus feedback / reporting.

Skills that charities particularly look for include:

- Consultancy
- Cloud strategy knowledge
- Coding
- Data management
- Data security
- Integration / migration knowledge
- Project management
- Web / analytics

Volunteering can be as short as a half day CITA Review, or run over several days or even months for a complex project. You get to choose where, when and with which charities you'd like to work.

"The free IT consultancy offered by CITA allowed Respect to assess its IT needs and plan for the future. The volunteer was friendly, knowledgeable and offered advice suitable to Respect's needs and size. I would recommend the service to anyone." Respect

How do I volunteer with CITA?

Applying to become a CITA volunteer is a relatively simple process:

- The volunteer registers interest on the CITA website
- The volunteer uploads their CV and/or LinkedIn profile

- A Simple tick box selection details skillset and geographic preferences
- CITA will then review and approve the application and the applicant is welcomed as a CITA volunteer.

Once registered, you will have access to the CITA Members' Site in which all charities looking for support are detailed, and the volunteer can register interest in a project/s. CITA also sends out regular emails that will notify volunteers when new charity requests that match their specified skills and location are advertised.

"I was really grateful to bounce ideas off the volunteer and the charity is better off for his advice." Rhema Partnership

FAQs

What training will I receive?

CITA will carefully match you to charities that have expressed a requirement for the specific skills and experiences that you will have told us about, so training should not be required.

Whilst CITA provides no training, we do offer guidelines, built from other volunteers' experiences, and share best practice in terms of approach, behaviour and traps to avoid!

Do I have to fulfil a certain number of assignments each year?

There is no requirement to undertake a minimum number of activities – and no ceiling on how many!

What if my circumstances change and I can't commit to supporting CITA?

CITA recognises that careers in IT can ebb and flow and that availability will vary accordingly. If you find you cannot commit to supporting CITA, you can either alter your preferences to opt out of further contact, or you can decline any invitations to engage with future assignments until you are ready to volunteer again.

What if I don't want to work with a charity / on a project I am engaged with?

Please let CITA know as soon as possible and we will arrange for an alternative volunteer to take over the project. We would ask that you help and support the new volunteer in terms of making the handover as seamless as possible.

What if my skills don't match the needs of the charity?

If this is the case, please let CITA know as soon as possible and we will arrange an alternative volunteer to take over the project. As noted above, we would ask that you help and support the new volunteer in terms of making the handover as seamless as possible.

In addition, we would like to understand how the mismatch happened – did the charity's needs change, or were they misinterpreted? Or is our record of your current skills out of date?

Will I get paid?

No. All volunteers are expected to work pro bono (ie free of charge). Where there are travel and subsistence costs, these may be recoverable from the charity – but you would need to agree this in advance, directly with the charity.

CITA does make a nominal charge to some charities (above a certain income threshold) to recover our administration costs.

Can I promote my own business as a volunteer?

No. CITA volunteers are regarded as independent and vendor agnostic. You should not use your position whilst volunteering to promote any self-interests.

What checks are made when I register?

CITA will endeavour to check that all CITA volunteers are professional, trustworthy, have the required skill levels and appropriate experience. We check these values in several ways – through reviewing LinkedIn and other social media channels and, on occasion, by requesting references.

“The advice and recommendation were very useful; we are in a much better position to take decisions and make changes.” CMV Action