

CHARTER OF EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PRINCIPLES AND SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT OF COMPANIES' EMPLOYEES

Preamble – role of the Charter and purpose of its development

Interest in employee volunteering programmes in Poland is constantly growing. This is mainly the result of increased awareness of the benefits it brings to the employee, the company and the community. The significant role of volunteering (also employee volunteering) in counteracting the COVID-19 pandemic also contributes to this growing interest. New methods of support and development arise (grant programmes, training, applications checking competence development, platforms matching volunteers to organizations).

However, the core values and principles of a good employee volunteering programme are not precisely determined by the community of companies, and they are key to its identity and care for its future quality. Especially now, on the 35th anniversary of the UN General Assembly's establishment of the International Volunteer Day (5 December) which falls this year, it was worth taking up the task of developing and announcing the Charter of Employee Volunteering. This task was performed on the initiative of the Pro Bono Leaders Coalition which supports the development of employee volunteering.

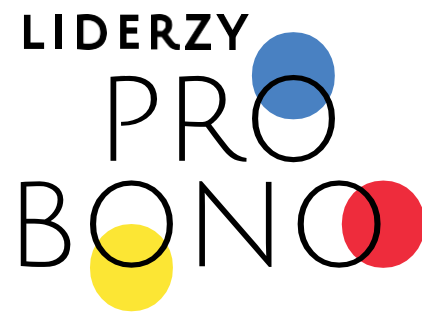
We show the connection between employee volunteering and, for example, family volunteering, e-volunteering, competence volunteering or volunteering developing in such areas as: healthcare, the natural environment, local development, sports, education. We are convinced that under the Pro Bono Leaders Coalition we will also work out guidelines and solutions necessary for those who want to launch employee volunteering in their companies or start cooperation with NGOs.

Employee volunteering brings huge benefits to all the engaged parties. Therefore, the tasks of the Pro Bono Leaders Coalition initiative included researching the key values and benefits of the employee volunteering and the conditions necessary to implement it, at the same time respecting the rights of the volunteers and cooperation based on dialogue with NGOs and local communities, as well as consulting with the community of companies and NGOs.

The first key stage, i.e. developing the Charter, has already been performed by the Pro Bono Leaders Coalition. The content of the Charter was prepared by representatives of companies that are members of the Coalition, experts and volunteers, and it was consulted with the largest organizations of employers and organizations supporting the development of volunteering.

The Charter presents the definition of employee volunteering, the terms and conditions of conducting it and lists the benefits it may bring to local communities, employees and employers.

The second stage, which still has to be reached, will consist of promoting the Charter to popularize employee volunteering and encourage companies to conduct such programmes. The first step is the announcement of the Charter of Employee Volunteering Principles during the 8th conference of the Pro Bono Leaders Coalition, on 1 December 2020.



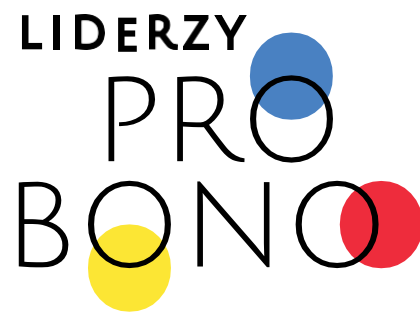
CHARTER OF EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PRINCIPLES AND SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT OF COMPANIES' EMPLOYEES

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING is voluntary, unpaid work on behalf of others, performed by employees and supported by their employer. The employer and the employees, as well as their partners, intentionally engage in volunteering, being aware of the responsibility they have for the persons whom they serve. Inclusion of employee volunteering in a company's internal documents, such as strategies, plans, labour rules, is an expression of the company's intentional involvement in volunteering.

Employee volunteering can take many forms of organizations and actions. It may be an organized programme which is part of the company's strategy of commitment and social responsibility, which may be joined by willing employees. It may also be a system of support by the employer, using various tools and down-up initiatives of a company's employees. It may also cover cooperation with partners from outside the company, such as NGOs. Volunteering may be organized by a company, its employees or a third party, such as a NGO.

Employee volunteering bases on the employees' commitment but may also include other people, such as the employees' relatives and friends, collaborators of the company or employees of its subsidiaries.

Under employee volunteering the employees share their time, skills and competences with those in need and social beneficiaries. Employee volunteering brings benefits to its recipients – communities and NGOs – as well to the employees and employers.



BENEFITS FOR THE EMPLOYEE

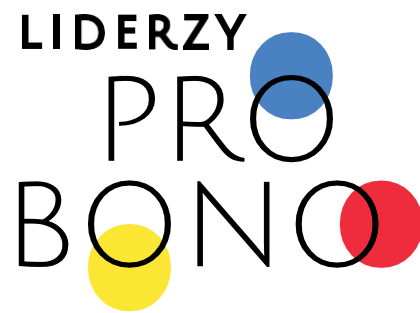
- the feeling that you have an impact on the environment and changing the world for the better;
- satisfaction from helping – giving someone your energy, knowledge, support;
- developing hard and soft competences – also those useful in professional work – and experience;
- acquiring new contacts;
- opportunity to cooperate with others;
- expanding horizons, developing passions and interests;
- time usefully spent;
- experiencing different emotions;
- looking at the world and your life (professional and private) from another perspective;
- being a hero for others or for yourself;
- educating on important social issues;
- increased satisfaction from work in a company that supports volunteering and social actions.

BENEFITS FOR THE EMPLOYER

- team integration based on values;
- improved communication within the team;
- development of employee competences;
- discovering natural leaders;
- increasing creativity;
- strengthening a responsible position;
- building positive relations;
- additional injection of positive energy for the team, incentive to act;
- gaining new tools to build organizational culture;
- gaining new forms of employee recognition;
- increased commitment and identification of the employees with the company;
- positive and in line with the expectations of the present image of a socially engaged company – real actions, not just PR;
- contribution to building a civic society;
- building local partnerships with social organizations;
- strengthening the social impact generated by the company;
- building trust among clients and partners;
- increasing the loyalty of the company's clients.

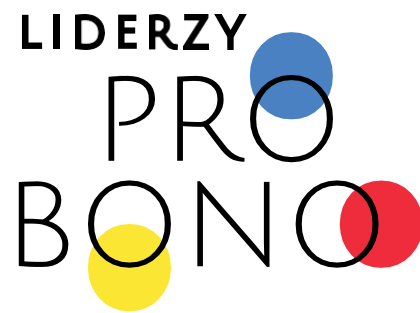
BENEFITS FOR THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION:

- positive change in the local community;
- solving real problems and satisfying current needs;
- more social friendliness;
- activation of the local community and its leaders;
- development of social entrepreneurship;
- mutual transfer of knowledge and new competences between the business and social organizations;
- building partnership that provide a sense of security;
- creating socially responsible capital – building shared responsibility for society;
- creating new committed communities;
- spreading the organization's mission, expanding the support network and promoting the organization's mission;
- support in publicizing a given social issue;
- overcoming negative stereotypes;
- mutual demonstration of opportunities for development and achieving success;
- giving hope for a "brighter tomorrow".



FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPALS OF EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

1. Employee volunteering is **always voluntary**, which means that the volunteers act of their own free will. The employer cannot make an employee serve as a volunteer.
2. Participation in employee volunteering **cannot be part of the employee's business duties**. The employer cannot remunerate in any way, e.g. by promoting, increasing the employee's salary for their volunteering – the principle of equal treatment of employees remains binding.
3. As a rule, volunteers work in their free time and not while on their job. The employer, in agreement with the employee, may set the principles regarding the business and volunteering work balance, e.g. grant additional leave or days off work for volunteering purposes, or enable such activities during working hours.
4. **Volunteers do not receive remuneration for their voluntary work**. The employer sets the rules for covering the costs of volunteers' work such as costs of transport or necessary equipment.
5. **All of the company's employees may participate** in employee volunteering, as well as other people such as the employees' relatives and friends, the company's collaborators or employees of its subsidiaries.
6. The employer himself or in cooperation with his partners is responsible for organizing employee volunteering, determines its purpose, principles and conditions of the work on behalf of others, including the rights and obligations of all stakeholders.
7. Employee volunteering **cannot be directly aimed at promoting and selling** the company's goods or services.
8. Employee volunteering **is first and foremost aimed at satisfying the needs of local people and communities**, and not at pursuing political, business or religious purposes.
9. Before acceding to employee volunteering each employee should be informed by the employer of the purposes, principles and conditions of employee volunteering, in particular of the respective rights and obligations.
10. The principles and conditions of voluntary work on behalf of others constituting employee volunteering **must take into consideration respect for the rights and dignity of the volunteers** and the persons who benefit from their work.
11. The basic duties of volunteers are **diligent performance of their voluntary work and abiding by the principles set by the employer**.



FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPALS OF EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

12. Volunteers' basic rights comprise:

- a) working on behalf of others in safe and hygienic conditions;
- b) obtaining information on health and safety hazards related to the work performed and the principles of protection from potential hazards;
- c) constant contact with the coordinator of the volunteers' work;
- d) resignation from employee volunteering at a time enabling the volunteer to perform current obligations or to transfer them to another volunteer;
- e) covering employee volunteers during their voluntary work with accident insurance;
- f) receiving feedback relating to voluntary activities from the volunteers' coordinator;
- g) receiving written confirmations of employee volunteering activities;
- h) participating in work on preparing the company social responsibility report in the part relating to employee volunteering.

13. The employer's basic duties relating to support of employee volunteering, direct or in cooperation with partners, are as follows:

- a) ensuring safety and appropriate conditions and tools for work on behalf of others;
- b) preparing volunteers for working on behalf of others by presenting full information on the planned activities under employee volunteering;
- c) supervising the volunteers' work, including appointing the person coordinating their work;
- d) responding to the volunteers' queries, proposals and conclusions relating to the provision of voluntary services;
- e) monitoring the volunteers' work, evaluating its effects and its influence on the local community;
- f) preparing an offer of voluntary activities – coordinating the activities or enabling the performance of down-up initiatives;
- g) creating a favourable environment for the pursuit of volunteers' initiatives: manager the involvement and evaluation of activities;
- h) developing and publishing the principles of employee volunteering;
- i) communicating the actions taken under employee volunteering ;
- j) issuing a written confirmation of the services provided by a volunteer;
- k) building employee awareness about volunteering activities and their impact on social change.

A document including such elements as examples of various forms of employee volunteering, definitions, examples of supporting employee volunteers by the employer will be developed in the future and will constitute an Addition to the Charter of Employee Volunteering; it will be updated in line with the development of employee volunteering.

The content of the Charter was prepared by representatives of companies that are members of the Pro Bono Leaders Coalition, experts and volunteers, and it was consulted with the largest organizations of employers and organizations supporting the development of volunteering.