VolunteerMatch

PUBLIC-USE API OVERVIEW
What can I do with the VolunteerMatch API?

VolunteerMatch's JSON Public-Use API (Application Programming Interface) enables developers to integrate VolunteerMatch resources (volunteer opportunities or organizations) into their website or applications based on the criteria they choose.

The Public-Use API is for non-commercial use only, and it is subject to the terms outlined in the API Access Agreement. Please review the terms of use here:

http://www.volunteermatch.org/legal/publicuseapi

For more information on our volunteer management and engagement tools and services for businesses, please visit http://solutions.volunteermatch.org

The API mimics the logic used on the VolunteerMatch website, enabling the same VolunteerMatch interaction in your domain.

For example:

- A municipal website could show all of the local volunteer opportunities within their city.
- A school district could show community volunteer opportunities that are marked by the nonprofit as great for teens.
- A Google Maps mash-up could enable a maps-based browsing interface using the location information provided in the Public-Use API (city, state, zip, country)
- A developer could integrate volunteer listings into a mobile application for iOS or Android.
- An innovative parent could display volunteer projects on her blog that pertain to volunteer opportunities that are good for families.

Using the VolunteerMatch's API, you design, develop and maintain the UI (User Interface) and UX (User Experience) for your site. This allows for VolunteerMatch data to integrate with the other pages and design elements through your search process.

However, once the user chooses to seek more information from the VolunteerMatch listing or expresses interest in a specific volunteer opportunity, they will be taken to the listing on VolunteerMatch.org where they can see more information, create an account and complete the connection.

As long as your application supports the exchange format used by the VolunteerMatch API (JSON), you can use the API.
Description of the VolunteerMatch Service

Here is a overview of how the VolunteerMatch service works that you might find helpful when implementing the API.

1 Nonprofits

Nonprofits and other approved organizations use VolunteerMatch to recruit volunteers. Specifically, the nonprofits register with us and fill out an online form to create a volunteer opportunity. Each opportunity has a title, location (physical or virtual), date, time commitment, description, cause area, skills needed and more. When a volunteer expresses interest in an opportunity, the administrator at the nonprofit gets an email with that user’s information. This is called a connection.

Nonprofits can access our basic services for free or they can upgrade to our premium service if they wish to post their listings on their website, repost their listings to keep them at the top of search results, add custom questions to their e-mail responses and more.

2 Volunteers

Volunteers search VolunteerMatch to find volunteer opportunities that match their availability, interest areas or the skills they possess. Once the volunteer finds a compelling opportunity, the volunteer clicks the “I Want to Help” button on the detail page which initiates the connection with the nonprofit.

In order to confirm the volunteer's information, the user is asked to register with us before sharing the information with the nonprofit. The nonprofit receives an email notifying it of the volunteer’s interest and the volunteer also receives an email confirming their message has been passed onto the nonprofit. As part of the registration process, the volunteer has the option to fill out a profile which includes the ability to add a photo, resume, skills, cause areas and other helpful information about that person’s volunteer interest.

3 Functionality Available in the API

The Public-Use API allows you to perform two main tasks: search for organizations and search for opportunities. Below is a representative list of parameters that applies to each of the calls.
Search Organizations:
- Cause Areas the organizations serves
- Organization description
- Keywords
- Location
- Mission statement
- Search radius
- Sorting criteria and order
- Number of results (default 20)

Search Opportunities:
- Cause area for that organization
- Organization name (can limit results to specific organizations)
- Date range for the opportunity
- Opportunity description
- Keywords
- Location or Virtual
- Skills required for that Opportunity
- Search radius
- Sorting criteria and order
- Number of results (default 20)

Tools to Help You Implement the VolunteerMatch Public-Use API

For a complete list of the available calls in the Public-Use API, please refer to the User Manual which should have been attached to your confirmation e-mail.

For API code examples, please visit our Github site.
https://github.com/volunteermatch/vm-contrib/tree/master/api-examples