

VolunteerMatch

PUBLIC-USE API OVERVIEW

(REVISED 11/22/10)



What can I do with the VolunteerMatch API?

VolunteerMatch's JSON Public-Use API (Application Programming Interface) enables developers to integrate VolunteerMatch resources (search for volunteer opportunities or organizations) into their website or applications using criteria of their choosing.

The Public-Use API is for non-commercial use only. Please review terms of use here:

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

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

For example:

- A municipal website could show all 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 Bing Map or Google Maps mash-up could enable a maps-based browsing interface using the location information provided in the Public-Use API (city, state, zip code, country).
- A developer could integrate volunteer listings into a mobile application on the iPhone or Android.
- A mommy blogger could display volunteer projects that pertain to volunteering opportunities that are good for families.

Using the VolunteerMatch's API, you design, develop and maintain the User Interface and 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 refer to a volunteer opportunity, they will be taken to that listing on www.volunteermatch.org where they can see more information, create an account and complete their referral.

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

Beyond the Public-Use API, are you interested in learning about other tools and services from VolunteerMatch? We also offer hosted, co-branded websites and Commercial-Use APIs. The hosted, co-branded websites have built-in work-flow for registration, search, refer, reporting and event management. The Commercial-Use APIs enable users to register on your site, so users never need to come to VolunteerMatch, and these APIs include more detailed listing information and geo-code data. To learn more about these fee-for-services, please contact solutions@volunteermatch.org or visit www.volunteermatch.org/corporations.

Creating & Finding Volunteer Opportunities on VolunteerMatch

As you implement your API, consider this overview of how VolunteerMatch's service works. Organizations come to VolunteerMatch to post their volunteer needs in order to find people to extend their missions. Individuals come to VolunteerMatch to find volunteer opportunities.

1 Users

Nonprofits

Nonprofits and other approved organizations use VolunteerMatch to recruit volunteers. Specifically, the nonprofits create electronic versions of their volunteer opportunities. These electronic **opportunities** are called listings. A **listing** has a complete description of the volunteer opportunity, its location, the time commitment, the cause or interest area and more.

Volunteers

Volunteers search VolunteerMatch for volunteer opportunities, share information about those opportunities (via social media or email) and make **referrals** to opportunities that interest them.

2 Audiences

Public Site Users

Our public site (www.volunteermatch.org) is the area of VolunteerMatch that is open to all users searching for opportunities posted by nonprofit organizations. In order to post opportunities, nonprofits **register** with VolunteerMatch and in order to make a **referral**; a volunteer registers with our site. The nonprofit users posting opportunities on our site are **administrators**. Nonprofits can use free tools to post basic listings, or can upgrade to a **Community Leader** account for a nominal fee, which offers more robust features to help them connect with volunteers.

3 VolunteerMatch Features

Opportunity Listing

An opportunity listing is a description about a volunteer experience that is housed in the VolunteerMatch database. In order to create a listing (which volunteers find via a database search), administrators fill out the opportunity listing form. That information is indexed so volunteers can search for listings based on their relevant search criterion.

CONFIDENTIAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

This document is a general overview of VolunteerMatch's internal policies and procedures, which may change from time to time. The contents of this document are VolunteerMatch confidential information and do not constitute a representation or warranty of any kind by VolunteerMatch.

Search Results

Volunteers enter their Location and Keywords about the type of volunteering they are interested in, or the skills they would like to use. The keywords field is optional, the location field is required. Volunteers can also further refine their search using the ADVANCED SEARCH. When they click the SEARCH button, VolunteerMatch displays a list of volunteer opportunities matching their criterion. Volunteers can review the following details about the opportunity on the search results page:

- Title
- Description Excerpt
- Relevant Skills (if the opportunity skills match a keyword used in the search)
- Link to the organization on www.volunteermatch.org
- Cause Categories
- Volunteer Category Information
- Organization Ratings and link to Reviews.

This list of opportunities and organizations can be **sorted** by date, location, relevance and duration. Whenever a keyword is matched, it is highlighted in the search results.

Users can click on a specific search result to be taken to the opportunity detail page for that opportunity.

Referral

When a volunteer is interested in getting involved with a specific opportunity, the volunteer is directed to click the “I Want to Help” button from that opportunity’s detail page on the VolunteerMatch.org website. In order to continue, we confirm that the user is registered on VolunteerMatch or completes the registration process at this time. From there, the referral is made and an email with the volunteer’s information is sent to the nonprofit who posted the volunteer opportunity. An additional email is also sent to the volunteer, confirming that their interest has been passed on to the nonprofit.

Active and Inactive Listings

Active listings show up in the search results on VolunteerMatch. Listings can be active for up to 180 days. After 180 days of no activity by the nonprofit, the listing automatically becomes **inactive** unless the nonprofit administrator edits the listing expiration date. Inactive listings are those listings that have expired or were created and stored in a nonprofit administrator’s account to be activated in the future. Nonprofit administrators on VolunteerMatch receive email alerts when a listing is about to expire.