

The web is making it easier than ever for busy professionals to share their time and expertise. Whether you have only a few hours a week to volunteer in your own neighbourhood, or are willing to travel to other continents to make a difference, here are some starting points for researching volunteering opportunities.

 **PEO: How to Volunteer**
www.peo.on.ca

To find out about volunteering opportunities within PEO, choose “Volunteering at PEO” at the bottom right of the homepage. Voluntary participation by members in governing and managing PEO affairs helps to make professional self-governance possible. Volunteers can serve on a range of the legislated, regulated or appointed committees listed on this page. Look to the bottom of the page for contact information.

 **Engineers Without Borders**
www.ewb.ca

This website will be of great interest to engineers who want to make a positive contribution while gaining expertise abroad. Engineers Without Borders focuses on developing local sector capacity to ensure sustainable solutions. From the orange drop-down menu,

Virtual volunteering: Resources and opportunities

choose “Overseas–Projects” to read synopses of current and past projects abroad. “Get Involved–Learn About Development” leads to a storehouse of indepth reading lists. You will see lists of recommended books and a large list of online resources on topics from appropriate technology to water and sanitation.

 **Volunteer Canada**
www.volunteer.ca

This is the premier Canadian website for all types of volunteering. Not limited to engineering, you can connect to projects from family volunteering to new Canadian volunteerism. To begin, choose “I Want to Volunteer.” You can then use the “Fast Find” to choose from an extensive menu. To find information papers, websites or studies relating to volunteerism, choose “Resource Centre.” Type a keyword or, further down, choose the type of volunteering experience, organization or event that interests you. To find a volunteer centre near you, go back to “Fast Find” and choose “Volunteer Centres in Canada.” Then, from the “Menu” you can pick “Volunteer Centre Locations.”

 **Online Volunteering**
www.onlinevolunteering.org

If you are interested in volunteering abroad—from the comfort of your home—this is the website for you. Described as “volunteers without borders,” online volunteering (OV) is an attractive, relatively new option that can allow expatriates to reconnect with, and provide help to, their homelands, or make volunteering possible where work schedules or home obligations would otherwise be prohibitive. Potential volunteers can use the “Search Assignments” link at the bottom of the main page to search from among 140 assignments currently posted by various organizations around the world. In the search form, enter criteria such as your general skills, languages, type of project you would like to support, and so forth. Back on the homepage, you can also browse the latest OV assignments, such as grants researcher for an environmental research project, or community libraries development.

 **UNITeS: United Nations Information Technology Service**
www.unites.org

UNITeS may appeal to IT professionals interested in helping to bridge the digital divide. Choose “About UNITeS” to enter the site, and then on the top menu choose “Projects.” You can then look at a list of profiles of current and past projects, arranged by country. Volunteers work directly with people and institutions in developing nations in building capacity of information and communications technologies (ICT) applied to human development. UNITeS promotes volunteerism as a fundamental element of successful ICT4D (information and communications technologies for development) initiatives.

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