



SCOUTS[®]
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RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN GUIDE

HOW TO RUN AN EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN





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World Scout Bureau,
Global Support Centre
Kuala Lumpur

Suite 3, Level 17,
Menara Sentral Vista, No 150
Jalan Sultan Abdul Samad
Brickfields, 50470
Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA

Tel.: + 60 3 2276 9000
Fax: + 60 3 2276 9089

worldbureau@scout.org
scout.org

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Background

There is no doubt that COVID-19 has immensely impacted everyone, including National Scout Organizations (NSO) worldwide. As most NSOs start to plan for resuming face-to-face activities, we want to inspire and support you in recruiting new members, by running a recruitment campaign. We need to make sure we have enough young people to run exceptional programmes, and ensure we have enough volunteers to run these activities safely and effectively.

Active recruitment is fundamental to growing your membership. Without new members coming through the doors, membership is unlikely to increase, and without the appropriate support in place, your new members are even less likely to stick around.

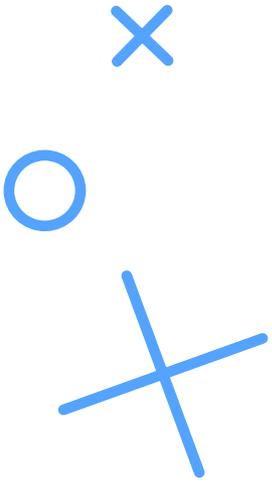
This guide aims to support NSOs in creating effective and successful recruitment campaigns. It provides a step-by-step guide, with practical tools to develop, deliver and evaluate your next recruitment campaign.

What is a recruitment campaign?

A recruitment campaign will look and feel different for each NSO, but at its core, it's about generating a lot of visibility and noise, either nationally, or in local communities, or both.

- You will be telling potential members or volunteers about
- what they will get out of Scouting
- the fun they will have
- the skills they will learn
- the opportunities available for volunteers who take part in Scouting
- the impact they can have on the lives of young people

You'll be helping them on their first steps in their journey in Scouting and making sure they get a warm welcome upon arrival. Hopefully, you will generate long term sustainability in your groups to continue recruiting new members or volunteers long into the future.



You will need to:

1. Set up a small team for membership recruitment
2. Create a plan
3. Identify where your gaps in membership are
4. Identify who you are trying to recruit
5. Reach out to those people
6. Grab their attention
7. Direct them to a local group
8. Make sure they receive a warm welcome to Scouting

Before you start, if you are looking to run a recruitment campaign, you don't need to do this alone. You can get advice and support from a WOSM growth consultant by placing a request through the WOSM [service platform](#).

SCANNING AHEAD

Running a recruitment campaign will take anywhere between three and nine months (or more) depending on what your NSO wants to achieve. Take the time to read through this guide, and all the recruitment campaign resources on the [WOSM website](#) so you know the areas you will need to work on before you get there!

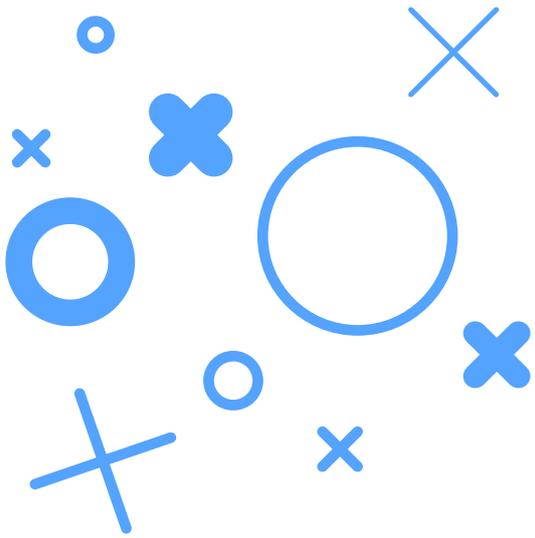
FORMING A TEAM

The first thing you need to do is assemble a small team to kick start the project. Your team should comprise two to three people who are passionate about recruitment or who have recruitment and/or communication experience. Begin by getting your team together to work out what will need to be done, to brainstorm initial thoughts and collect ideas and feedback from across your NSO.

When you get to stage one, you will begin to make a more concrete plan which will tell you who else needs to be involved, every step of the way. You will need help from people who are good at communicating your message, writing strong adverts, working with local groups, and people who are good at digital and social media, amongst others.

GETTING LOCAL BUY-IN

Engaging your local groups will be critical, as they will need to be able to welcome any new members. Work and coordinate with them to help them prepare for new members who will be about to join. The long-term success of your recruitment campaign will depend on your local groups' capacity to welcome and retain those new members. We suggest that at least three people on your team are dedicated to making sure your groups know what is going on with the recruitment campaign plans, and what they need to do to get ready.



Key stages



1. Plan & Prepare

In Scouting, we like to “be prepared”, and we are encouraged to always have a plan. Initially, your plan will probably be really simple. In your small team, you need to start writing down initial ideas, and answer some simple questions such as:

- Who is going to be a part of this project team?
- What key skills do we need to plan and implement an effective campaign?
- What capacity do we have inside the NSO?
- Where can we get help outside the NSO?
- How will we get our groups ready for a recruitment campaign?

Once you’ve pulled these ideas together, you are probably ready to start recruiting other members for your project team. Next, you are going to need to think about more detailed questions, and these will require more research:

- Where are the gaps in our NSO’s membership or volunteer roles that we are trying to fill?
- Which communities are growing, where is the potential?
- What is happening in society, and our communities outside Scouts?
- What are other charities doing to recruit members or volunteers, what is working for them?
- What communities and cultures are underrepresented in our NSO?
- If we did find new members, how easy is it for them to join Scouts?
- Can we make the joining process easier?
- Do we have all the skills that we need, or do we need to find support outside Scouting?

These questions are just the beginning. You should start by asking your team to think about other questions you may need to answer. Once you have answers to some of these questions, you can plan how you will reach, attract, and onboard new members or volunteers. Make sure to establish some success criteria so that in the end, you will know if your campaign is successful, or if there is anything you would do differently next time.



2. Reach Your Target

The second part of your plan is thinking about the reach that you have, and the reach that you want.

In Stage 1, you should have already looked at where you currently recruit most of your members and volunteers from; and identified if there is more you can do in this area. For many community-based Scout groups and NSOs, you can likely easily reach the parents and carers of your potential youth members and former youth members who are now adults. Do some of your existing groups already do this well? If so, how can you replicate this so other groups in your NSO can learn to do the same. Do groups have the right resources and advertising material to have great recruitment conversations with these potential members or volunteers? Reflect on what else they may need.

What about groups of people that Scouting or your NSO don't tend to reach? Through your research, have you been able to identify these people? Do you want to use your campaign to attempt to reach these people or these communities? If you are, how are you going to do that, and what messages do they need to hear for Scouting to be attractive to them? What would motivate them to get involved, and what would they need to get out of their Scouting experience?

In this step, you also need to give thought to how you will get your message out. There are many channels available that can be used to spread your message, but you need to consider which ones are right for your NSO, your communities, and the type of people you are trying to reach.

Suppose you are trying to reach more parents as the key to attracting Cub Scouts. In that case, more local communication could be more effective, and you should invest time and energy into making sure your groups have the right resources and skills to speak to parents about signing their children up or getting involved. If you are looking to reach new audiences, do you need to think about a broader advertising campaign you could coordinate centrally?

In either case, you should think about how you can make the most of the following tools:

- social media
- traditional media
- new broadcast media
- high-quality print materials
- helping groups create on-brand local materials,
- Local, regional or national events

You will also need to think about how you can use other organisations and partners to help you reach the communities you want to reach.



3. Attraction

Attract & Discover is about grabbing people's attention and interest and motivating them enough to get in touch with you, basically getting them to the front door of one of your groups. To get attraction right, you need to understand the people you are trying to recruit. Hopefully, you and your team have started to think about this as part of Stage 1 of this guide.

Think about your target audiences and map out what motivates these different people. Once you have a better understanding of those motivating elements, you can begin to craft a picture of Scouting that appeals to them. Scouting is a large and diverse movement, think about what parts of Scouting will appeal to which individuals. Once you know that, pick one or two of your target audiences and start to create the resources that might appeal to them.

You will need to think about which communities you want to reach, how you persuade families to get involved, running great open days and events, and promoting Scouting in schools and other organisations.

What is important is that you try to get the right messages to the right potential members. You also need to consider how you will train the existing volunteers to "pitch & present Scouting" in an exciting way and attract potential new members. Remember to put as much energy into training your volunteers as you put into giving groups resources.



4. Welcome & Onboarding

Once you've captured someone's interest and brought them to the front door, the next job is to make sure the local group gives them the best possible welcome. Remember that people might still be curious at this stage, and not quite sure Scouting is for them yet. We need to give them a warm welcome, show our genuine interest but also give them a little time to get to know us and understand how we operate. Once they have visited a couple of Scout meetings and activities, we need to ask them if they are willing to join as a member or in the case of volunteers we need to inquire what role or task they may be interested in. We also need to be honest with volunteers about some of our rules, our training for adults and the processes we go through to keep young people safe.

When they decide to join, it's important to act fast. Once they have agreed to register with us, the worst thing we can do is make them wait or set up a convoluted registration process. We need to act while they are still highly motivated. As an NSO, you need to make sure you have clear and efficient appointment and onboarding processes that are supportive rather than obstructive; to ensure that new volunteers or members are actively involved as soon as possible.

It's worth noting that sometimes during a volunteer recruitment campaign, you don't find people to fill the roles you are trying to recruit. While you can ask, you should never try and force a volunteer to do a role they aren't interested in (they aren't really a volunteer then!). Just because you haven't currently got a vacancy for the sort of role a volunteer is interested in, definitely doesn't mean you should turn them away. Make space for them in your group and NSO.

Your role as an NSO is to work with your groups to make sure they have the 'welcoming' culture and attitudes as well as the right skills, training and processes in place before the active part of your recruitment campaign begins.



5. Review

To ensure the next membership recruitment campaign is even more successful, you will need to undertake a few reviews. Firstly, your NSO must review the overall process and result, and the sort of questions you could ask are:

- Did it work?
- Did we achieve our objective?
- Did we exceed expectations or underperform?
- What worked, what didn't?
- What did we learn?
- What would we do differently next time?
- When is the next time to try this?
- Did we do enough to support our groups?
- What was the most effective way to attract people?
- Did any digital systems work as intended?
- What percentage of people we attracted started volunteering with us?
- How many of those volunteers have started their training?
- How many of those volunteers are still with us?

Secondly, it is helpful to identify a number of the groups that participated, to set up a focus group to review how it went locally. They should be asking many of the same questions, and their review and learnings should feed into the national picture of the NSO's campaign. Make sure you share in advance how you plan to review and capture your groups' thoughts before the campaign begins to collect the right information as they go through the campaign when it is live.

Don't forget to come back to your groups and new members after 3-6 months. Are they still involved in Scouting and are happily engaged in different roles? Was the initial campaign success sustainable? You may even consider taking it one step further - are you able to measure the impact of your recruitment campaign on your current and new members, NSO, community?

EVEN IF YOUR RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN WAS A HUGE SUCCESS, THERE ARE ALWAYS THINGS TO LEARN!



Summary

This guide has been a very brief tour around what it takes to develop an effective recruitment campaign. Each NSO is different, and every campaign will look different, depending on your target, your ambitions and your local context. But hopefully, this has helped you to start thinking about how your campaign might take shape. As we said initially, start by forming a small team, and get them all to read through this guide. Then get together and start sharing your thoughts and start shaping your plan.

If you would like some direct support, remember that WOSM and our growth consultant team stand ready to support you in your growth journey. You may request this support through the WOSM Services platform.

We wish you the very best of luck with your campaign, and of course, if you discover new ideas that will help other NSO's, please do let us know!

GOOD LUCK!



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World Scout Bureau,
Global Support Centre
Kuala Lumpur

Suite 3, Level 17,
Menara Sentral Vista, No 150
Jalan Sultan Abdul Samad
Brickfields, 50470
Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA

Tel.: + 60 3 2276 9000
Fax: + 60 3 2276 9089

worldbureau@scout.org
scout.org

