



# Guide to Choosing the Best CRM for Charity Volunteer Management

A Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system for a charity is a centralised database that manages all relationships, including donors, volunteers, and beneficiaries. For volunteer management, a CRM is crucial for tracking skills, scheduling, and ensuring legal compliance.

## Essential CRM Features for Volunteer Management

When evaluating a CRM, prioritise systems that can handle people management beyond just fundraising. Look for the following capabilities:

- **Customisable Profiles:** The ability to add specific fields like skills, vetting/background check status, emergency contacts, and training dates.
- **Time Tracking:** A simple way for staff or volunteers to log hours, essential for impact reporting and recognition.
- **Segmentation:** Tools to group volunteers (e.g. by location, role, or availability) for highly targeted communication.
- **Automation:** Automatic workflows for sending reminders, thank-you emails and annual data check-in requests.
- **Integration:** Compatibility with dedicated Volunteer Management Software (VMS) if the charity's needs become complex.

## CRM Recommendations

The "best" CRM depends entirely on your organisation's scale and budget.

### Best for Large & Complex Organisations

CRM System	Best For	Key Volunteer Management Note
Salesforce Nonprofit Cloud (NPSP)	Highly customised solutions; organisations with complex needs and a development budget.	The most flexible platform. Excellent for tracking detailed volunteer journeys, skill sets, and complex, automated workflows.

CRM System	Best For	Key Volunteer Management Note
Blackbaud Raiser's Edge NXT	Large, established nonprofits with significant fundraising and deep analytical requirements.	Very robust for handling massive amounts of data and can be configured to manage complex program or service delivery data, which includes volunteer tracking.

## Free, Open Source, and UK-Specific Options

CRM System	Best For	Key Volunteer Management Note
CiviCRM	Organisations with technical skills or a low budget that require deep, code-level customisation.	Free to use and can be tailored to match your exact volunteer workflow, application forms, and reporting requirements.
Charitylog / Beacon	UK-based charities that require simple, dedicated solutions with strong reporting for UK funders.	Often built with service delivery in mind, making them excellent for case management and tracking interactions with clients/volunteers.
HubSpot CRM (Free Tier)	Very small organisations with basic needs focused on digital marketing and simple contact management.	Great for centralising basic contact information and using automated email tools for volunteer outreach.

For more information or assistance with running a CRM, please get in touch with me:

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