



Why do businesses need a budget for employee volunteering?

Companies or individuals should not have to pay to volunteer, however, where time and resources are needed to enable this volunteering to happen, charities and voluntary organisations should charge for this work to recover their costs.

At the ESV Network, a national network of voluntary & community organisations that help to facilitate Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV), we believe that charities that support business volunteers should be able to achieve full-cost recovery for the services they provide.

Services that help individual public volunteers are normally supported through grant funds. However, services providing support to corporate companies and their volunteers are rarely funded through public money or other grants from trusts and foundations.

This leaves a gap in funding as although there are willing volunteers, whose employers have generously given time away from their normal work, there are still costs in organising volunteering events and activities as well as for materials and equipment needed.

Most ESV services do not have funds or grants to carry out this work and must reclaim their service delivery costs from their corporate partners or will not be able to sustain their service and much needed volunteering and community support will cease to take place.

The ESV Network principles:

- We don't believe that companies should have to pay for these services simply because they are deemed to 'have money'.
- We recognise and appreciate that the company is already investing in the activity by releasing the employee volunteers in the first place.
- If a company is able to manage their own volunteering schemes in full (and does it well) then we very much applaud this and will happily promote the great work carried out, but if a company seeks support either from their host charity or from an ESV broker to do the volunteering then they should be prepared to pay for this service.
- We believe in value for money and excellent levels of service. As such, we encourage our members to price their services appropriately for the work they undertake whilst ensuring that costs are not prohibitive to companies wishing to take part.

Remember that in undertaking (or delivering) ESV we are all aiming to create positive 'win:win' relationships and, as such, if you are engaging a charity or broker make sure that you remunerate them for their time and effort.