

Abstract for review

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Corporate Foundations as catalyst for volunteering.

How to engage non-volunteers in volunteering?

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Abstract:

It is argued that workplaces can assist individuals in overcoming organizational and normative barriers that prevent people from volunteering (Hustinx & Meijs, 2011). Previous research has shown that volunteering via the workplace is related to volunteer activities beyond the corporate context (i.e. in private life) (Krasnapolskaya et al., 2015). Despite this interesting relationship between private volunteering and volunteering through the workplace, studies have yet to examine the potential of the workplace to act as a catalyst to activate inactive employees (i.e. non-volunteers). As it has yet to be examined why and how employees who are non-volunteers become active as volunteers through workplace volunteering programs, we study the following research question: Why do non-volunteers become active in volunteering through opportunities via the workplace and how can this be stimulated in this context?

To explore the main research question, the current study uses a mixed methods approach. We gathered quantitative data through an online survey distributed to all employees of the company (N=780, response rate is 21%). We ask questions on their demographic and job specific

characteristics, their barriers and stimuli to participate, their interest in social issues and their preferences in volunteer activities. We conducted a multinomial regression analysis to compare the non-volunteers to those who are active via the workplace, privately and both (i.e. dual volunteers). In addition, we collected qualitative data conducting 4 focus groups with in total 40 respondents.

The results partially confirm the hypothesis that the personal and job-related characteristics, volunteer preferences, attitudes towards corporate volunteering and organizational support of corporate volunteers differ from the other groups. Interestingly, despite some similarities between private volunteers and those who participate in corporate volunteering, the results of this study could imply that many assumptions that could be made about the characteristics, attitudes and preferences of community volunteers should not be projected onto the context of the workplace. It suggest that literature, models and assumptions about private volunteering should potentially not be simply applied to corporate volunteering, but that they should be carefully reconsidered within the specific context of the workplace. The qualitative data is yet to be analysed, but will help us deepen these insights.

Most important references:

Hustinx, L. & Meijs, L.C.P.M. (2011). Re-embedding volunteering: in search of a new collective ground. *Voluntary Sector Review*, 2 (1), 5-21.

Krasnapolskaya, I., Roza, L. & Meijs, L.C.P.M. (2015). The relationship between corporate volunteering and employee civic engagement outside the workplace in Russia. *Voluntas*, online first.