



Recruiting Help

Volunteers don't need to be a sailor or medical professionals to help someone get afloat. For those who simply enjoy messing about in boats, it's a great reason to continue doing just that!

Most worth-while activities are more successful with a team; Sailing for people with disabilities is no exception. Some groups employ staff including instructors to run their programmes who are supported by volunteers. Many groups are run entirely by volunteers. The reasons why people volunteer to help are as numerous as the volunteers themselves. So too is the range of ages from young students to the retired.

Two student helpers say, *'The reason we help is that we love boats. So if you enjoy sailing, why not help others to sail too?'* With little love of water, one reluctant wife says, *'I realised that if I was ever to see my sailing-crazy husband, I had to join in. Nowadays, I worry in case he should give it up I'd miss the fun and the friends.'*

In running a group you will need support both on and off the water – volunteers may be those who know how to sail/drive support boat etc, or individuals keen to learn the practical skills needed to rig and launch boats. They may want to work directly with sailors meeting and greeting, and assisting sailors to get ready (fitting lifejackets etc), or they may prefer to help communicating with sailors managing bookings etc between sessions and other 'behind the scenes' admin. Skills and interest in fundraising, managing accounts, and promotion are of course also valuable.

Identify key people – who can advise volunteers about what needs doing. Take time to communicate with volunteers and understand the skills and experience they have to share.

Specialist support - it may also be helpful to seek support from an interested medical professional such as an occupational or physiotherapist. Together with sailors, you can work out successful strategies and adaptations to meet the individual needs of sailors.

You will find potential volunteers in all areas of your community. Some potential groups to contact as a starting point:

- Members of your local yacht club
- Families and friend of sailors with disabilities
- Local branch of Volunteering NZ
- Local high schools (students completing Duke of Edinburgh Awards will be looking for volunteer opportunities to complete the volunteer component of their award)
- Local tertiary education establishment to connect with Sport and Rec/Education/Healthcare students who are looking for opportunities to gain experience.
- Local service groups – e.g. Rotary, Lions etc