Why volunteer?
There are a number of reasons why people decide to volunteer. For some, volunteering will add experience to their CV and thus improve their job prospects and employability; for others volunteering is fun, fulfilling and a good opportunity to network and make new friends; or you may view it as making a contribution to society through working with a non-profit organisation. Some people feel that by the end of their time studying for A-levels or a degree they need a break, and the idea of taking some time out appeals as a result. Volunteering during this time is a good way of building up experience, and ensuring that there isn’t a large period of inactivity on your CV.

Benefits of volunteering
There is a lot to gain from volunteering as it is regarded as valuable work experience which can provide you with skills and knowledge such as:

- Employability skills or competencies
- Commercial awareness
- Understanding of different types of work and what they involve
- A clearer idea about what type of job appeals to you
- Practical examples to support applications for graduate jobs
- Networking opportunities and the chance to make useful contacts
- The opportunity to apply academic knowledge and skills in the workplace

What sort of volunteering is there?
Volunteering can take many shapes and forms, and there are numerous opportunities to get involved in. You can volunteer alongside your course, or during your vacation. You can take time out and volunteer during a gap year, or you can go on expeditions and support field research. As a volunteer you should have some flexibility to tailor your commitment to your circumstances.

Things to consider
A selection of organisations offering or arranging opportunities in a large number of countries and in many types of work, or giving advice on the process of finding volunteering opportunities, is listed in the section below.

Please note that these are a selection of sites offering volunteering opportunities abroad, that we have reviewed and judged to be both reliable and of value to students. However, we do not have time to review every opportunity that is posted on individual websites, so you will need to make some judgement calls. Some things to consider are:

- Cost. Some organisations will ask you to pay a fee to take part in their programme. These will sometimes include costs you’d expect to pay, such as flights, accommodation and insurance, but some will also include high additional costs. Think about whether these costs are worthwhile, and don’t be afraid of shopping around other organisations and looking for a better value deal.
- Value of experience. Think about how useful the skills you’ll gain from a particular programme will be. While everything will return at least a few skills that will be useful for your CV, don’t assume that it will automatically aid your career plans in every sector. The not for profit sector is a particularly good example of this; an NGO may not consider a school building project in Africa as in any way relevant to a job application. You may find it useful to discuss this with a Careers Consultant if you’re planning to complete a volunteering programme to aid your career development. See http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/services/careers/Contact-Us.aspx to book an appointment.

General sites for volunteering internationally
AIESEC
www.aiesec.co.uk/students
The organisation offers voluntary and paid work placements in professional organisations, schools and charities.

Ethical Volunteering Guide
www.ethicalvolunteering.org
This site offers advice & information for people who are interested in international volunteering.

Global Vision International (GVI)
www.gvi.co.uk
GVI offers volunteers the opportunity to volunteer in over forty countries worldwide.

Idealist
www.idealist.org
Idealist is a site where people and organisations can exchange resources and ideas, locate opportunities and supporters.

Platform2
www.myplatform2.com
Platform2 offers a paid global volunteering scheme in a developing country.

Timebank
www.timebank.org.uk
Timebank has set up a free online directory of organisations looking for volunteers to work abroad.

UNA Exchange
www.unaexchange.org
UNA Exchange is a charity that sends volunteers to more than 50 different countries.

VSO
www.vso.org.uk
International development charity, which mainly offers longer-term placements for experienced people.

World Service Enquiry
www.wse.org.uk
UK charity that provides overseas placements, information
and career advice to people who want to volunteer or work in international development and aid, at home or overseas.

**Working Abroad**
[www.workingabroad.com](http://www.workingabroad.com)
An international networking service for volunteers, workers and travellers, which provides you with the information you need to get started. Via the website you can find various projects.

**Work and Volunteer Abroad**
[www.workandvolunteer.com](http://www.workandvolunteer.com)
A website listing unpaid internships and volunteer opportunities across the globe.

**WorldWide Volunteering**
[www.worldwv.org.uk](http://www.worldwv.org.uk)
WorldWide Volunteering provides access to information about a widest range of volunteering for all age groups throughout the UK and worldwide.

### Examples of volunteering organisations recently recruiting

Here is a list of organisations that have promoted voluntary opportunities to King’s students in recent years:

- **Africa Sabbatical**
  [www.africasabbatical.com](http://www.africasabbatical.com)
  Africa Sabbatical is an organisation offering work experience, internships, career break and gap year opportunities in a variety of institutions within Ghana.

- **Azafady**
  [www.madagascar.co.uk](http://www.madagascar.co.uk)
  Voluntary organisation organising conservation and development projects in Madagascar.

- **Blue Ventures**
  [www.blueventures.org](http://www.blueventures.org)
  Marine conservation expeditions & volunteer diving expeditions.

- **BUNAC**
  [www.bunac.org.uk](http://www.bunac.org.uk)
  BUNAC is a not-for-profit organisation that helps sending young people on working holidays and volunteer projects.

- **Concordia International Volunteers**
  [www.concordiavolunteers.org.uk](http://www.concordiavolunteers.org.uk)
  A wide range of volunteer projects in the UK and overseas providing work experience for young people.

- **Coral Cay Conservation**
  [www.coralcay.org](http://www.coralcay.org)
  Work in coral reef and tropical forest conservation. You can join projects as a volunteer, researcher or specialist.

- **Cross Cultural Solutions**
  [www.crosseculturalsolutions.org](http://www.crosseculturalsolutions.org)
  Volunteer abroad programs for international community service.

- **The Daneford Trust**
  [www.danefordtrust.org](http://www.danefordtrust.org)
  The Daneford Trust offers funded placements in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.

- **Inspired Breaks**
  [www.inspiredbreaks.co.uk](http://www.inspiredbreaks.co.uk)
  Volunteering, gap year and career breaks

- **Inter Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE)**
  [www.icye.org.uk](http://www.icye.org.uk)
  ICYE is an ethical volunteering organisation with over 50 years of experience in international volunteering.

- **International Volunteer HQ**
  [www.volunteerhq.org](http://www.volunteerhq.org)
  IVHQ assists developing countries by providing volunteers to work in a variety of jobs such as teaching, medical work, HIV/AIDS awareness, women’s empowerment.

- **LemonGrass Volunteering**
  [www.lemongrass-volunteering.com](http://www.lemongrass-volunteering.com)
  LemonGrass is a Thai-based organisation offering volunteers the opportunity to teach English in Thai schools.

- **Operation Groundswell**
  [www.operationgroundswell.com](http://www.operationgroundswell.com)
  A not-for-profit organisation that aims to give backpackers a chance to work on projects while travelling.

- **Outreach International**
  [www.outreachinternational.co.uk](http://www.outreachinternational.co.uk)
  Volunteering, gap year and career break opportunities in a range of projects.

- **Peace Brigades International (PBI)**
  [www.peacebrigades.org.uk](http://www.peacebrigades.org.uk)
  An organisation whose volunteers provide protective accompaniment to local human rights defenders living in areas of conflict.

- **Projects Abroad**
  [www.projects-abroad.org](http://www.projects-abroad.org)
  Projects Abroad is an international volunteering organization.

- **Student Partnerships Worldwide (SPW)**
  SPW is an international development charity working in eight countries across sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

- **Unipal**
  [www.unipal.org.uk](http://www.unipal.org.uk)
  Unipal seeks to facilitate a two-way process of education; providing English teaching in Palestinian refugee camps.

- **Volunteers for Educational Support and Learning (VESL)**
  [www.vesl.org](http://www.vesl.org)
  VESL is a UK charity that provides volunteering opportunities in Sri Lanka, India and Thailand.

- **King’s CareerConnect**
  [www.kcl.ac.uk/careerconnect](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/careerconnect)
  King’s CareerConnect is our exclusive online career portal enabling students and recent alumni to engage with our services. Once logged in, you can access our vacancy board and search hundreds of part-time roles, placements, internships and graduate-level opportunities, book one-to-one careers or application guidance appointments, apply for exclusive King’s Internships and view our full events calendar to book attendance at our many events throughout the year.

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