

Designing a Volunteering Trajectory Towards Gaining Employment in The Netherlands

A Proposal from the Rotterdam School of Management

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Abstract

Volunteering is popularly considered in terms of its effect on volunteer organizations: their structures, processes, or objectives. However, a significant stream of academic literature has increasingly been dedicated to the nuances surrounding the effects of volunteering on volunteers themselves. This paper draws on such extant volunteering literature to illustrate and enhance several key positive effects of volunteering on the individual volunteer, specifically in regards to their employability. It is argued that an active consideration of such effects through astute and pertinent program design can maximize employability for volunteers while also securing indirect benefits for involved third parties and society at large.

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Introduction

Gaining sustained employment through volunteering initiatives has become a recognized policy component of many organizations. In fact, studies conducted on programs in the UK, US, and Italy all attest to the employment potential of volunteering (Antoni, 2009; Spera, Ghertner, Nerino, & DiTomasso, 2013; Zimmeck, 2010). In the United Kingdom, for example, volunteering has been seen as a potential solution to various social problems including unemployment since the 1960s (Sheard, 1996). Under the Volunteer Brokerage Scheme, multiple initiatives aimed at young adults were launched where the potential of volunteering to help gain employment was emphasized (Davis Smith, Ellis, & Howlett, 2002; Holdsworth & Quinn, 2010; Yarwood, 2005). Not just state organizations have recognized this perceived value of volunteering however. It is very common for education institutions such as schools and colleges to promote volunteering as a means to gaining employment, as well as volunteer agencies looking to recruit skilled workers (Gittel, Ortega-Bustamante, & Steffy, 2000).

However, the most important endorsement of volunteering as a means for gaining sustained employment comes from volunteers and employees themselves. Various academic studies attest to this (Gay, 1998; V, 2008; Wilson & Musick, 2000), where more than half of those volunteering in one study felt that volunteering had a positive impact on their chances of finding a job (Hirst, 2001). Another study conducted on employed volunteers showed that 25% believed that their volunteer work had helped them in obtaining their job (Hall et. al., 1998). Moreover, employers are also positive about the association, where 90% of employers in one survey mentioned that volunteering can enhance employment prospects and career progression (V, 2008). There is therefore significant academic and practitioner support for a relationship between volunteering and employment.

While a quantitative analysis on the correlation has yet to be satisfactorily conducted, exploration of the relationship between volunteering and employment has had significant qualitative academic support (Archer, Hollingworth, & Maylor, 2005; Baines & Hardill, 2008; Corden & Sainsbury, 2005; Erel & Tomlinson, 2005; Gay, 1998; Gillespie & King, 1985; Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1996; Janey, Tuckwiller, & Lonnquist, 1991; Jones, 2000; McDonald & Coffield, 1996; Moore & Whitt, 2000; Pancer & Pratt, 1999; Steinberg, 1999; Thompson, 1993; Tomlinson, 2010). A recent quantitative study in the United States, however, found that volunteering is associated with a 27% increase in odds of finding employment (Spera, Ghertner, Nerino, & DiTomasso, 2013). In addition, the study found that the probability increase remained consistent across each year of the study period, "suggesting that irrespective of economic conditions volunteering may add an advantage to those seeking employment" (ibid., p.23). Collectively, the academic body of literature on volunteering and employment imply a relationship between volunteering and employment as depicted in Figure 1, where volunteering is found to increase employability which in turn is assumed to influence employment probability.



Figure 1: Relationship Between Volunteering and Employment

This paper takes a closer look at this relationship and uses the findings as a basis for a sound proposal on designing a volunteering trajectory towards gaining employment in the Netherlands. The aim is to tackle pervasive unemployment – which is known to influence social sector dynamics and place a significant burden on the state – by proposing an employment program solution exclusively dependent on volunteering. Based on the substantial evidence that volunteering can lead to employment, stimulating sustained employment through astute and pertinent use of volunteer program design factors is considered a plausible approach to addressing pervasive unemployment. In this way, it is suggested that unemployment can be instrumentally addressed to the benefit of jobseekers as well as involved third party institutions such as volunteer organizations, private enterprises, and the state.

This paper is divided into three parts. Parts 1 and 2 address the relationship between volunteering and employment as shown in Figure 1. Specifically, Part 1 reviews the literature regarding the link between *volunteering* and *employability* through an in depth assessment of four beneficial effects of volunteering – experimenting, networking, learning, and signaling – and the preconditions necessary for such effects to occur. As such, it aspires to accurately establish the exact relationship between volunteering and employability. Part 2 addresses the relationship between *employability* and *employment*, where the argument is made for an instrumental approach to volunteering through *organizational design* in order to maximize employability, thereby converting the chance of gaining employment into an assurance of gaining employment. As such, it aspires to outline a method for controlling the probability between employability and employment. Design factors that can be instrumentally applied towards optimizing the beneficial effects of volunteering on social capital and human capital are subsequently extrapolated from academic literature and briefly outlined. Finally, a proposal is outlined in Part 3 concerning the instrumental design of a volunteer-based employment program in the Netherlands deliberately aimed at increasing employability for jobseekers and thereby maximizing the probability of gaining employment.

Part 1: From Volunteering to Employability

The relationship between volunteering and employability is explored here through a thorough review of academic studies with the aim of elucidating the benefits that volunteering can have on volunteers. The next sections thoroughly examine the academic support for the transitive property between volunteering and employability starting with an overview of the correlation and followed by an assessment of each relational element.

Transitive Property Between Volunteering and Employability

The concept of employability is defined as the capability of obtaining and maintaining employment (Hillage & Pollard, 1998). It is reliant on three sets of factors: individual factors such as skills and attributes or demographics, personal circumstances such as household circumstances or access to resources, and external factors such as demand factors or enabling support factors (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005). Generally, literature shows that volunteering can enhance volunteer employability through four positive effects that can be grouped under two categories: social capital and human capital (Becker, 1993; Franzen & Hangartner, 2006). That is, volunteering can become a trajectory to employment through the increase in volunteers' social capital – through the volunteering benefits of *experimenting* and *networking* – and human capital – through the volunteering benefits of *learning* and *signaling* (Spera et. al., 2013). Figure 2 illustrates this transitive property between volunteering and employability.

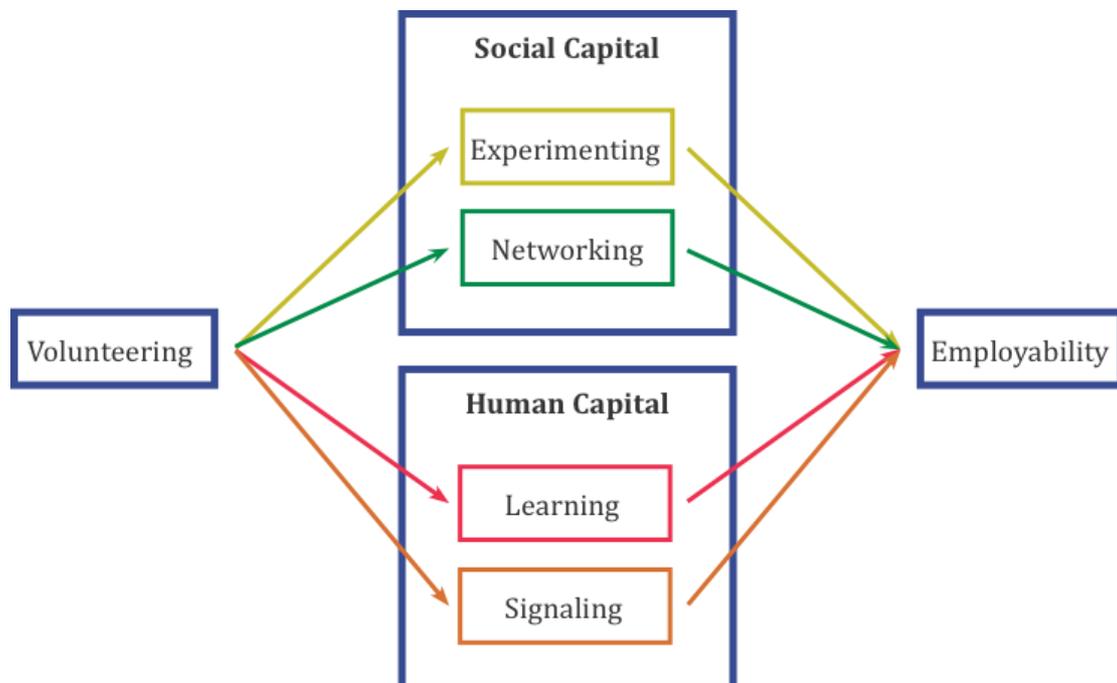


Figure 2: Transitive Property Between Volunteering and Employability

Social Capital

Research has shown that volunteering can provide significant social capital (see eg: Wollebaeck & Selle, 2002). Social capital refers to the aggregate or potential resources or benefits an individual has as linked to their network of relationships and membership in social structures (Bourdieu, 1985; Portes, 1998). In this way, it is a concept that relates strongly to sociological values of

participation and shared cooperation between individuals, groups, and communities, where value is placed in social networks (Ferragina, 2012; Putnam, 2000). This treatment of the concept is paramount as it focuses “on the benefits accruing to individuals by virtue of participation in groups and on the deliberate construction of sociability for the purpose of creating this resource” (Portes, 1998, p.6). In this way, volunteering is said to increase the social capital of individuals by subjecting volunteers to new and more social structures (Lin, Ye, & Ensel, 1999; Wuthnow, 1995; 1998). Such volunteering opportunities therefore deliver networking opportunities that ultimately provide resources for volunteers and allow them to experiment with varying social structures that broaden their career perspectives. As such, *experimenting* and *networking* are identified in this paper as the two most important positive effects of volunteering that are instrumental to increasing social capital as a means to enhancing employability. These are individually discussed in the following sections.

<p>Box 1: Enhancing Social Capital in the Netherlands</p> <p>In the Netherlands, a form of community service has recently been implemented nationally amongst educational institutions called the Maatschappelijke Stage. Since experimenting with the program in 2008, it is now mandatory since 2011 for secondary school students to complete 30 hours of community service to be eligible for graduation. The purpose of such regulation has been to develop social capital in the Netherlands and to stimulate volunteering behavior early in citizens’ lives with the intention of not only advancing civic engagement but also the social competencies of volunteers. Importantly, the Maatschappelijke Stage was designed and intended not to interfere with studies or other mandatory internship programs, which reviews show it has thus far managed to accomplish. Students and their educational providers are free to choose how and where they want to fulfill the volunteering criteria, but are provided with guidelines that suggest incorporating such service with learning objectives. Studies on the program have shown that such forms of service learning therefore emulate classroom knowledge and further motivate volunteers by challenging them with interesting and useful placements. The net result as measured by these reports is a substantial increase in civic engagement, where students often come into contact with new people, organizations, and even localities with which they would otherwise not have. In the course of such experiences, they build social networks as well as access to resources within their networks and an increased understanding of the importance of civic engagement in society. Of the participants thus far, 68% considered the experience valuable and 21% have continued their volunteering activities. Moreover, voluntary organizations as well as local businesses and municipalities have all benefited from the increased labor, interest, and collaboration, making the program a win-win-win according to the Minister of Education, Culture, and Science Marja van Bijsterveldt-Vliegthart. Nevertheless, the Second Rutte cabinet that was elected in 2012 has opted to terminate subsidies to the program starting in 2015, a decision that two-thirds of the students that have thus far completed their Maatschappelijke Stage consider an unfortunate decision that will deprive future students of a valuable civic opportunity. (Meijs, 2010; Van Bijsterveldt-Vliegthart, 2010; Vliet & Mossevelde, 2012)</p>

Experimenting

The concept of experimenting is self explanatory: a series of trials of fixed duration whereby individuals consecutively attempt to align their values and needs to those of the opportunities provided to them until an appropriate configuration is achieved. As a benefit of volunteering it also has obvious links to increasing social capital by exposing volunteers to numerous social settings. That is, volunteering has been found to offer individuals the opportunity to experiment with various social structures – some of which may be new to the individual – that ultimately lead to the development of the individual’s world and work perspectives as realized through the multiple social environments they are

likely to encounter (Brown & Zahrly, 1989; Handy & Brudney, 2007; Menchik & Weisbrod, 1987; Vaillancourt & Payette, 1986). Moreover, studies show that the very process of experimenting through volunteering enables the volunteer to assess different work environments and cultures and in so doing, evaluate which fields and roles are likely to be the most rewarding career prospects (McCarthy & McCarthy, 2006; Sanders & Lewis, 2005). As such, experimenting through volunteering increases the social capital of volunteers and can facilitate an individual's employability.

While the relation to employability is simple, however, the particular formats of volunteer experimenting are much more complex. This is because traditionally, experimenting through volunteering has been recognized as a means to enhancing human capital rather than social capital. The most recognizable formats towards such a purpose are in relation to educational institutions as a form of service learning, where schools and universities promote volunteering as a means to gaining or maintaining skills and competencies (Arrington, 2000; Handy & Brudney 2007; McCarthy & McCarthy, 2006). In the Netherlands, for example, it is common for high school students to embark on work placements such as job shadowing (see Box 2). University students also often experiment with internships to 'test the waters' of future employment opportunities – often with the aim of first developing their skills by putting learned theory into practice (Bronneman-Helmers, 2006; Kessels & Kwakman, 2006). Nevertheless, the de facto exposure to new social structures in such programs translates to an increase in volunteer social capital. More recently, moreover, the value of experimenting in enhancing social capital has become more prominent with studies indicating a growing trend towards – or rather a reality of – episodic volunteering (Edwards, 2008; Macduff, 1991; Safrit & Merrill, 2000).

Box 2: Educational Experimenting in The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, various forms of experimentation exist within the education sector. Educational institutions recognize the value of exposing students to practical realities where they can test their learned knowledge and develop their skills. This is ultimately an exercise in human capital development. However, part and parcel with such development is a recognized impetus to students' social capital, due to their involvement with different social environments. In this way, students are able to quickly assess the career opportunities that align with their competencies. Such experimenting learning programs vary in duration and frequency, with on one side of the scale job shadowing and snuffelstages – multiple short-term placements in numerous work environments – and on the other end of the scale service learning programs such as *Duaal Leren* – yearly or half-yearly work placements that complement on-going education. Internships and the recently implemented *Maatschappelijke Stage* programs fall in the middle. The short-term end of the scale, is most akin to episodic volunteering as it is commonly voluntary and extraneous to formal education, whereas the long-term end of the scale can include remuneration elements and is incorporated into formal education initiatives. (Bronneman-Helmers, 2006; Lieshout, Van Der Meij, & De Pree, 2007; Meijs, 2010; Van Lokven, Heemskerk, Holkers, & Hettinga, 2004)

Episodic volunteering constitutes sporadic or short-term volunteering for self-contained and time-specific projects without an ongoing commitment (Macduff, 1991; Weber, 2002). Commonly, volunteers contribute their time at one-time events or during special times of the year (see Box 3). As such, agencies that use episodic volunteers incorporate task-based opportunities that accommodate many volunteers over short periods of time, preferably alongside traditional

volunteering opportunities that accommodate fewer volunteers over longer periods (Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Edwards, 2008; Macduff, Netting, & O'Connor, 2009). Moreover, multiple forms of episodic volunteering have emerged that amount to various types of experimentation. Macduff (2005), for example, utilizes frequency and duration to distinguish between 'temporary service', 'interim', and 'occasional' episodic volunteers. Meijs and Brudney (2007) further distinguish between what they term 'sweat' and 'specialist' episodic volunteers based on the either low or high quality of personal assets that such volunteers willingly contribute to the volunteering opportunity. Yet episodic volunteering also incorporates and utilizes other forms of short-term, voluntary experimentation such as virtual volunteering – through electronic means – and corporate volunteering – employee volunteering opportunities promoted by employers (Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Culp & Nolan, 2000; Handy & Brudney, 2007).

Box 3: Make A Difference Day NL

Make A Difference Day, recently re-named NLdoet in the Netherlands, is a national episodic volunteering movement that occurs annually as a one or two-day event. The goal of the movement is to mobilize as many people as they can into volunteering for a few hours on pre-set dates and to thereby indicate and stimulate the social and economic value of volunteering. The Oranje Fonds, MOVISIE, and Vereniging NOV organize the movement in cooperation with thousands of organizations across the country that provide volunteering tasks for the occasion. In 2013, a total of 310,000 people completed roughly 8,400 of such tasks in just a two-day period. (NLdoet, 2013)

Overall, therefore, volunteer experimentation manifests in many types of volunteering opportunities and methods. With this type of volunteering, the default focus is on developing social capital since the opportunities provided for experimenting volunteers – as well as the volunteers' own motivation for volunteering – are more focused on the recognition of socialization aspects of the opportunity than the human capital aspects; this is because the nature of such work is short, task-based, and requires minimal training or supervision (Hager & Brudney, 2004). The volunteering opportunity is thus psychologically construed as a new social experience rather than a skills-based commitment. Importantly, therefore, the common underlying experimentation platform has been increasingly recognized as valuable to the development of social capital.

Allison, Okun, and Dutridge (2002), for example, found that episodic volunteers are motivated by the social aspects of volunteering, finding enjoyment, religiosity, and team building to be especially important factors. Additionally, virtual volunteering allows many individuals to participate who would otherwise find it difficult thereby raising the volunteers' social capital (Handy & Brudney, 2007). In fact, all forms of volunteer experimenting through episodic volunteering enhance social capital, since such opportunities were ostensibly designed to accommodate developments in volunteer social needs or environments such as: an increasing rate in volunteer burnout due to life pressures and limited discretionary time, an emphasis on human touch and subsequent requirement for direct interaction tasks with beneficiaries, and involvement with a wider diversity of volunteers as newer circles of volunteers such as corporate volunteers are embraced by agencies (Safrit & Merrill, 2000). The social capital benefits of experimenting – being exposed to new social environments and structures, engaging with multiple work fields, work roles and

work cultures, and collaborating with increasingly diverse colleagues – can therefore substantially improve volunteer employability.

Networking

Networking is a commonly understood social consequence that materializes out of networks – formal or informal interactions between groups of people. Such situations carry an innate potential for the development of social capital as measured by the relationships created, the establishment of trust, and the formation of cooperation norms. Studies show that one way in which these three dimensions of social capital are stimulated is through volunteer networking (Ostrom & Ahn, 2003; Putnam, 1995).

Volunteer networking goes hand-in-hand with volunteer experimenting as they each have the propensity to reinforce each other. That is, through experimenting with multiple social environments, a volunteers' networks of social contacts is expanded and by actively networking with co-volunteers, the volunteer is essentially experimenting within alternative social dynamics (Muthuri, Matten, & Moon, 2009). However, where simple and fast exposure to such social structures and environments is sufficient under experimenting, the networking benefit of volunteering requires a deeper and longer investment. This is because the creation of social capital as a result of networking requires not only the development of contacts, but also of trust and norms of cooperation (Lowndes & Wilson, 2001; Muthuri et. al., 2009). Therefore, in regards to the aforementioned three dimensions of social capital, volunteer networking establishes contacts, trust, and cooperation norms. This is accomplished through two general forms of networking: bridging networks and bonding networks (John, 2005). Each type of networking has its own benefits that lead to an increase in employability through the enhancement of the dimensions of social capital, as will be discussed in the following sections.

Bonding networks stimulate the development of the trust and cooperation norms dimensions of social capital. Scholars define trust as the 'fabric' (Caldwell & Clapham, 2003) or 'bond' of society (Mele, 2003), and cooperation norms as the actions that are considered acceptable or unacceptable according to shared understandings (Muthuri et. al., 2009). Such bonding social capital constitutes a dense set of relationships that have psychological benefits for their members (John, 2005). For example, Chinman and Wandersman (1999) indicate that individuals gain solidary benefits – intangible social rewards such as recognition and respect from others through cooperation – as well as purposive benefits – perceptions of achievement through cooperation – through bonding networks. The operation of networks also confers advantages to volunteers by the enforcement of helpful norms such as trust and faith in procedural fairness (Schneider et. al., 2003). However, because bonding networks affect volunteer psychology, the creation of such social capital through volunteer networking can be affected by the quality of direct and indirect ties in the network (Granovetter, 1973). This means that in instances of poor bonding quality, poor social capital returns are also likely to be realized where groups may become characterized by parochialism and inertia (Muthuri et. al., 2009; Ostrom & Ahn, 2003).

On the other hand, studies show that when good bonding networks are fostered, networking can increase volunteer employability through the enhancement of bonding social capital. John (2005), for example, comments on the ability of bonding social capital to be transferred into good performance, which can be leveraged as a demonstration of dedication and perseverance to potential employers. Others indicate that bonding networks greatly influence individual motivations, where volunteers benefit from increased confidence and willingness to socialize and meet new people as a chance to develop their professional networks, thereby increasing their sphere of occupational influence (Muthuri et. al., 2009).

Bridging networks, on the other hand, stimulate the personal contacts dimension of social capital. Scholars define the subsequent bridging social capital as an expansion of the volunteer's links between social groups and the promotion of the exchange of information and learning (Bourdieu, 1985; John, 2005). The value of establishing this form of social capital is that networking thus becomes an act of resource mobilization, where individuals increase the diversity of their social contacts and thereby gain access to dissimilar resources outside their immediate and close networks (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999; Granovetter, 1995). According to this instrumental interpretation of the value of networks, these 'weak' ties matter because they facilitate goal attainment (Granovetter, 1973; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). Bridging social capital as a consequence of networking therefore depends on the volunteer's access to resources possessed by associates and the amount and quality of those resources (Portes, 1998; Spera et. al., 2013).

Considering the goal of employability, therefore, bridging social capital can potentially provide entry points into career opportunities through the transfer of information among associates (Spera et. al., 2013). In fact, many studies of labor markets attest to the value of bridging networks in the transmission of job information (Arrow & Borzekowski, 2001; Calvo-Armengol & Jackson, 2004; Granovetter, 1995; Montgomery, 1991; 1992; 1994; Topa, 2001). Jobseekers therefore gain an informational advantage as their bridging networks allow them to gather better information about the availability of jobs as well as job characteristics (Franzen & Hangartner, 2006; Granovetter, 1995). Studies show that volunteering is one method by which individuals whose current networks cannot provide such information can actively increase employment opportunities through networking and building bridging social capital (Spera et. al., 2013). Moreover, not only do bridging networks provide the opportunity to share resources, but they also do so through cooperation whereas any other way would have incurred extra cost (Muthuri et. al., 2009). In this way, bridging social capital results in highly efficient social networks, where information useful for employability is transferred at low search costs (John, 2005; Schneider et. al., 2003).

Of course, it is the combination of bonding and bridging networks and, subsequently, bonding and bridging social capital that leads to an overall enhancement in employability. Studies in the United States, Great Britain, Japan, and the Netherlands have shown that between 50% and 60% of jobseekers find

their jobs through social contacts (Corcoran, Datcher, & Duncan, 1980; Franzen & Hangartner, 2006; Granovetter, 1995; Marsden & Campbell, 1990; Staiger, 1990). Scholars therefore clearly link networking with increasing employability (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999; Knoke, 1988; Knoke & Adams, 1987; Montgomery, 1991; Schmitz & Schomaker, 1994; Smith, Ellis, & Howlett, 2002). Franzen and Hangartner (2006) add that due to the reduction in search costs via networking, jobseekers are more likely to find jobs faster, apply less often, and go through a lower number of job interviews. Other studies that focus on volunteering specifically add that such benefits emerging from networking are precisely why individuals choose to volunteer (Wilson, 2000). Finally, Calvo-Armengol and Jackson (2004) found that: volunteers are more likely to receive information useful to their employability as the employment status of their network connections improve; individuals are more likely to pass such information to unemployed connections rather than employed connections; and improving the employment status of one volunteer has positive external effects on other volunteers' expected future employment. Together, this emphasizes the value of volunteer networking in increasing employability through the enhancement of the dimensions of social capital.

Human Capital

Research has also shown that volunteering can provide significant human capital (see eg: Schram & Dunsing, 1981). Human capital refers to the aggregate competencies, knowledge, skills, and abilities embodied in the ability of individuals to perform labor so as to produce economic value (Becker, 1993; Mincer, 1958). Thus, human capital is a means of production that has a measurable economic return on investment (Becker, 1993). It conventionally

<p>Box 4: Enhancing Human Capital in the Netherlands</p> <p>Just as in the United States and Sweden in the 1970s and decades later in the United Kingdom and Germany, the Netherlands has also experimented with subsidized labor. The Dutch approach aimed at simultaneously resolving two social deficits, namely: 1. providing a platform from which long-term unemployed individuals could rejoin the work force and; 2. stimulate structural employment in the public and nonprofit sectors. Initiated in 1994 by Ad Melkert, the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment at that time, these 'Melkertbanen' ultimately aimed to develop the human capital of the long-term unemployed to increase their employability. In an attempt to meet both objectives of the program, jobs were created in public security, education, childcare, supervision, sport, and healthcare. Despite creating over 60,000 subsidized-employment opportunities and helping various groups of otherwise unemployable individuals rejoin the work force, the program was essentially scrapped in 2004 when multiple independent examinations revealed that only 6% of subsidized employees graduated to non-subsidized employment – partially as a result of too little human capital development – and the program was influencing labor dynamics at the bottom of the labor market by competing with regular employment opportunities. This showed that subsidized labor, while necessary for some groups of citizens, was on the whole not a plausible avenue for increasing the employability of long-term unemployed citizens, as the monetary intervention of the state disrupted market forces to an unsustainable level. Additionally, there was a lack of oversight in the instrumental design of the program, where shortcomings were realized in the development of human capital and the promotion to non-subsidized employment. (Arbeidsrechter, 2013; De Beer, 2003; Vlek, 1998)</p>
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refers to such competencies developed through education or work experience but has also been found to accrue through volunteering by facilitating volunteers in gaining or updating skills that are needed in the workplace (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Moreover, an elemental aspect of human capital is that it signifies

volunteers' respective skills to employers, providing a competitive advantage to the job-seeker by indicating to potential employers that they are skilled, motivated, and productive (Musick & Wilson, 2008; Spence 1973; 2002; Spera et al., 2013). Such volunteering opportunities therefore deliver learning opportunities that ultimately increase and communicate their abilities to potential employers. As such, *learning* and *signaling* are identified in this paper as the two most important positive effects of volunteering that are instrumental to increasing human capital as a means to enhancing employability. These are individually discussed in the following sections.

Learning

The development of new skills or the maintenance of existing skills through experiential learning is one of the main benefits of volunteering. In the United Kingdom, for example, almost 60% of volunteers consider volunteer work to provide opportunities to learn new skills (Smith, 1998). In essence, *learning* forms the crux of what is commonly known as human capital: "fundamental individual attributes such as cognitive complexity and the capacity to learn, together with the tacit and explicit knowledge, skills and expertise an individual builds over time" (Gratton & Ghoshal, 2003, p.3). Studies define the relationship between volunteering and human capital as the 'human capital model' or 'investment model, where individuals volunteer as a means of investing in their human capital capabilities (Bussell & Forbes, 2002; Day & Devlin, 1998; Menchik & Weisbrod, 1987; Mueller, 1975; Schram & Dunsing, 1981). Importantly, these models delineate two methods through which volunteering increases an individual's investment in human capital: by *maintaining* marketable career skills and/or by *developing* marketable career skills (Bussell & Forbes, 2002; Macduff, Netting, & O'Connor, 2009; Stukas, Worth, Clary, & Snyder, 2009).

The motivation factor underlining volunteering as a means to *maintaining* marketable career skills involves the depreciation of human capital over time. That is, studies show that market-oriented skills depreciate when individuals are out of the work force (Mincer & Polachek, 1974). In fact, depreciation of human capital for college-educated women can be as high as 4.3 percent per year and knowledge can quickly become obsolete unless updated (Gratton & Ghoshal, 2003; Mueller, 1975). There is therefore a very real desire of unemployed volunteers to repair or augment their human capital as a means to maintaining competitiveness in the job-market (Day & Devlin, 1998; Mueller, 1975). An individual's decision as to where they choose to volunteer therefore becomes important considering such a motivation, since the volunteering role and responsibilities will ultimately determine how they augment their human capital (Gratton & Ghoshal, 2003). Commonly, older volunteers are more motivated by the desire to remain active and productive as a means to maintaining faculties and skills than young people. Research postulates that this is because younger individuals have not had much time to acquire job experience and skills, whereas older individuals have attained skills, knowledge, and expertise during their entire lifetimes (Musick & Wilson, 2008; Schram & Dunsing, 1981).

The motivation factor underlining volunteering as a means to *developing* marketable career skills involves the economic payoff or return on human

capital investment. That is, econometric studies on volunteer behavior show that volunteering follows an investment motive if it results in new skills or work experience that can improve future earnings (Govekar & Govekar, 2002; Mesch, Tschirhart, Perry, & Lee, 1998; Prouteau & Wolff, 2006). In this view, the opportunity cost of volunteering is the time and economic or psychological return from alternative activities. Volunteering should therefore result in a human capital investment that leverages a return equal to or greater than such opportunity costs (Schram & Dunsing, 1981). In fact, various studies have found that volunteer work enhances individual earnings and therefore has a positive payoff (Prouteau & Wolff, 2006). Day and Devlin (1998), for example, found that volunteer incomes are roughly 7% higher than those of non-volunteers, although the study did not focus on unemployed volunteers. This means that the return to volunteering is not only the increase in human capital through the development of skills, but also the increase in potential market wage (Mueller, 1975). The increase in human capital as represented by various types of knowledge and skills therefore has a monetary value for which individuals are willing to forego earnings or other costs such as direct expenses to accumulate (Govekar & Govekar, 2002; Vaillancourt & Payette, 1986).

In this investment method, human capital is accrued either through accumulating demonstrable work experience or through the acquisition of new skills that complement the individual's existing stock (Day & Devlin, 1998; Menchik & Weisbrod, 1987; Mueller, 1975). Developing skills and work experience in order to increase future wages or employment opportunities therefore becomes an important motivation for individuals to volunteer, particularly for young individuals who can more easily obtain job skills and convert them into higher wages (Govekar & Govekar, 2002; Jones, 2000). Indeed, the motivation to volunteer as a means to developing new skills declines after the age of 43, when job-security is stable and relevant work-place skills have been developed on-the-job (*Americans Volunteer*, 1985; Prouteau & Wolff, 2006).

Maintaining and developing marketable career skills through volunteering is an example of 'experiential learning', where knowledge is created through the transformation of experience (Kolb, 1984). In this way, abstract concepts are translated into concrete examples and given contextual weight that motivate a form of learning that is highly involved (Ferguson, 1992; Kolb, 1984; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993). Therefore, when related to civic engagement as volunteering is, it is also referred to as 'involved learning' (Meijs & Elmar, 2009), and has been found to lead to the development of human capital (Porter & Kramer, 2002). That is, learning by doing translates declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge through an iterative process between applying personal skill routines to their domains of application (Anderson, 1982; Boyatzis & Kolb, 1995; Fitts, 1964). In the end, those skills that are directly relevant to volunteers' human capital needs and non-voluntary ambitions are developed and continually improved (Brown & Zahrly, 1989). This is why governments in some contexts such as Canada aggressively promote volunteering as a means of skill development and an investment in human capital (Safrit & Merrill, 2000). An example of experiential learning in the Netherlands is *Duaal Leren* (see Box 5).

Box 5: Duaal Leren, Experiential Learning in The Netherlands

A form of experiential learning in the Netherlands is Duaal Leren. Duaal Leren is a term used in the education sector to refer to learning trajectories in which students both study and work. In the Netherlands, this is a form of experiential learning that has traditionally been realized in higher education but is increasingly being implemented in high school curricula. There are a number of forms of Duaal Leren that oscillate between more time spent on either school or work, ranging from 20% work to more than 60% work. In the latter cases, remuneration and long-term contracts are often arranged while the former cases function as practical supplements to apply learned theory. Nevertheless, the objective of Duaal Leren as understood and implemented in the Netherlands is to allow students to gain experience outside of the classroom, provide them with valuable opportunities to apply theory to practice, and to develop their skills and competencies in relevant career fields. In so doing, experiential learning through Duaal Leren often constitutes the only direct and personal encounters that students have to make decisions that are more than hypothetical. (Lieshout, Van Der Meij, & De Pree; 2007; McCarthy & McCarthy, 2006; Van Lokven, Heemskerck, Holkers, & Hettinga, 2004)

In terms of skill development, various studies that evaluated the professional development benefits of volunteering have indicated that volunteering can be a route to experientially learning important job-specific 'hard' and people-focused 'soft' skills (Astin & Sax, 1998; Cook & Jackson, 2006; Hirst, 2001; Paine, McKay, & Moro, 2013). In terms of hard skills, for example, Cook and Jackson (2006) show that volunteering can develop highly transferable business and management skills. They cited an improvement in general management skills such as the ability to accommodate various management styles and levels, financial skills, project management skills, and problem solving skills. On the other hand, soft skills such as communication skills, teamwork and cooperation skills, conflict resolution skills, and coaching and mentoring skills have also been associated with volunteering (Astin & Sax, 1998; V, 2008). As such, there is a clear benefit to an individual's stock of human capital when engaged in volunteering as manifested through experiential learning.

This enhancement of human capital in terms of skills learned through volunteer experiential learning directly translates into increased employability. Studies show this to be true from both the perspective of the employee and the employer. Cook and Jackson (2006), for example, found that 50% of volunteers agreed that they had developed the top three particular skills mentioned by managers to be skills gaps, through volunteering. Other studies indicate that due to the development of skills that may be useful in a future career, volunteering is seen as a link to the job market where it helps individuals obtain employment and increase their position on the labor market (Anderson & Moore, 1978; Gora & Nemerowicz, 1991; Jones, 2000; Tomlinson & Erel, 2005). While the measurable economic return on human capital investment typically translates into increased earnings as shown above, it can therefore also be understood to lead to beneficial labor market outcomes, where volunteers become more attractive to and productive for employers (Spera, Ghertner, Nerino, & DiTommaso, 2013). In fact, although such experience has historically lacked credibility, many employers currently recognize and embrace the skills and experience that volunteers could contribute to their organizations, where: 94 percent believe that volunteering broadens skills and experience, 70 percent agree that volunteers are more capable of handling diversity and 48 percent agree that it increases employability (Cook & Jackson, 2006; Day & Devlin, 1998).

In the United States, employers often even accept volunteer experience in lieu of paid employment experience (Dicken & Blomberg, 1988; *Personnel*, 1984).

When looking at minorities in the labor force, such as the unemployed, there are also interesting findings linking the *learning* benefit of volunteering to an increase in employability. Rifkin, (1995), for example, shows that volunteering provides employment to the unemployed and that it is one of the few avenues available to them for the vital activity of augmenting or building human capital. This mirrors Mueller's (1975) earlier findings on out-of-work women who are inclined to engage in volunteering activities as a means to (re)entering the work force. Unemployed volunteers therefore consider such activities as a means to gaining experience and acquiring or maintaining human capital (Prouteau & Wolff, 2006; Vaillancourt & Payette, 1986). It is further postulated that it is the most active jobseekers as well as the higher educated jobseekers that volunteer the most, as they require more involvement to maintain their human capital. Nevertheless, learning through volunteering therefore clearly enhances volunteer employability by increasing the individual's human capital.

Signaling

An important aspect of volunteering is the capacity of voluntary action as a signal of a volunteer's valuable characteristics. This is known as *signaling*, and is a consequence of conspicuous consumption within social contexts. That is, according to Handy and Mook (2011), signaling is useful amongst social actors with information asymmetry as a shortcut to efficiently make judgments about one another, thereby forcing them to make deliberate decisions about their actions, behavior, appearance, etc. Such choices are found to directly affect actors' well-being and indirectly affect their social standing as a result of being observed by others (*ibid.*). Signaling therefore is an extremely powerful indicator within society and is inextricably linked to all social behavior including volunteering. The concept is derived from signaling theory, a behavioral economics perspective, and is often associated with prestige, reputation, or image. According to signaling models, the signaler should benefit by some action from the receiver such as being selected in favor of alternatives (Connelly, Certo, Ireland, & Reutzel, 2011). Realizing such benefits in the labor market, therefore, is based on the types of signals volunteering emits.

Signaling in relation to volunteering has been a point of debate in academic literature, where scholars often find that the paramount motivation for volunteering is as a service to others (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991; Handy et. al., 2010; Hustinx et. al., 2010; Winniford, Carpenter, & Grider, 1995). However, studies indicating that volunteering increases as government social welfare spending increases suggest that private benefits are also at play since the expectation is a reduction in volunteer service to others when the government provides such services (Duncan, 1999; Salamon & Sokolowski, 2001). Most scholars therefore subscribe to the view of volunteers as 'impure altruists', where a primary interest in public service is supplemented with a secondary interest in private benefits (Andreoni, 1989; 1990). Signaling is therefore considered one of the private benefits of volunteering.

Specifically, studies show that volunteering signals various unobservable yet desirable attributes of volunteers (Hustinx et. al., 2010). Many scholars argue that volunteering signals an investment in their human capital capabilities, as outlined previously under *learning* (Day & Devlin, 1998; Hustinx et. al., 2010; Menchik & Weisbrod, 1987). Such signals of human capital developed through volunteering include among others: leadership abilities, critical thinking skills, increased productivity, and conflict resolution skills (Astin & Sax, 1998; Astin, Sax, & Avalon, 1999; Handy et. al., 2010). In this way, volunteering serves as a signal of superior abilities and underlying qualities, particularly since it is thus regarded as investment behavior, where current resources and returns are foregone for future returns (Connelly et. al., 2011; Day & Devlin 1998; Ziemek, 2006). Moreover, Paine, Malmersjo, and Stubbe (2007) show that volunteering often can lead to long-term engagement with complex social issues that can lead to a quick realization of human capital benefits. Undertaking numerous volunteering opportunities therefore collectively signals substantial human capital investments (ibid.).

Another signal of volunteering is that of altruism. That is, volunteering emulates altruistic behavior and signals a propensity for such behavior to observers (Katz & Rosenberg, 2005). Being altruistic signifies pro-social behavior and a willingness to cooperate with others for the collective good (Carpenter & Myers, 2010; Hustinx et. al., 2010). Volunteering is therefore used as a proxy for the otherwise hard to determine characteristics of a desirable altruistic personality and human capital competencies (Hustinx et. al., 2010).

These signals have been found to be highly desirable by employers, as a means to distinguish amongst job applicants (Handy et. al., 2010). In other words, employers seeking as much information on applicants as possible recruit workers on the basis of such signals, where human capital signals as well as altruism signals are highly regarded as a means to identifying appropriate candidates (Connelly et. al., 2011; Katz & Rosenberg, 2005). Volunteering, which produces such beneficial signals, is therefore often utilized by employers as a proxy for such competencies and attitudes. In fact, signaling theory itself was formulated in seminal work on labor markets, which demonstrated that job applicants engage in certain activities as a positive signaling mechanism to reduce information asymmetry between them and prospective employers (Connelly et. al., 2011; Spence, 1973; 2002). In such cases, volunteering signals information about the unobservable qualities of the applicant and their ability to fulfill the needs or demands of the potential employer (Stiglitz, 2000). This is particularly beneficial to jobseekers in highly competitive environments, where scarcity of positions increases the need for volunteering signals in identifying volunteers as candidates of choice and therefore increasing their employability perceptions amongst employers (Handy et. al., 2010). Under highly competitive circumstances, moreover, volunteers with little work experience or who are returning to the job market may rely on the value of volunteer signals to retain a labor market value relative to other jobseekers (Ziemek, 2006). Simply put, signaling the status of an individual as a volunteer thus enhances their utility to employers (Handy & Mook, 2011).

Regarding human capital competencies, for example, it was previously illustrated how an increase in human capital enhances the employability of volunteers. The role of signaling such human capital competencies to employers is therefore a crucial element in the establishment of employability gains. An important aspect of signaling regarding human capital is therefore that it increases employability by increasing the visibility of the human capital building initiative – i.e. the volunteering activity (Carpenter & Myers, 2010). Indeed, labor market studies have found positive financial payoffs for volunteering, suggesting a positive human capital signaling value associated with giving time (Hackl, Halla, & Pruckner, 2007; Katz & Rosenberg, 2005). However, other studies indicate that this depends on the employer's signaling value of volunteering, which may fluctuate depending on economic and contextual factors (Handy et. al., 2010; Hustinx et. al., 2010; Ziemek, 2006). Where there is high signaling value of volunteering in society, there is also a high employability payoff of volunteering (Handy et. al., 2010; Hustinx et. al., 2010). "An employer faced with many suitable applicants may use volunteer experiences to infer skills, or even increased marginal productivity, thus enabling applicants to use their volunteering experiences as positive signals and to compete successfully, enhance career prospects, command higher salaries, and get better jobs" (Handy et. al., 2010, p.500).

In terms of altruism, on the other hand, there are a number of studies that indicate that employers find individuals who volunteer regularly and are therefore altruistic to be good organizational citizens "who will be more productive employees and likely to forgo their private interests for the sake of the organization" (ibid., p.500). Moreover, guides for jobseekers emphasize the altruistic signal of volunteering, indicating that recruiters like to see that applicants are involved in their community and that they are willing to spend time to help others (Orndorff, 2000; Schaefer, 2000). Katz and Rosenberg (2005) further accentuate altruistic signals of volunteering by arguing that altruistic individuals such as volunteers are characterized by employers as cooperative team-players who are not free-riders by nature and therefore highly productive. This has been confirmed by many scholars in organizational theory (see eg: Organ & Ryan, 1995; McNeely & Meglino, 1994; Penner, Midili, & Kegelmeyer, 1997; Podsakoff & Mackenzie, 1997; Sloat, 1999). There are therefore clear links between volunteering and employability through the benefit of signaling competencies and attitudes. Furthermore, since employers use volunteering as a proxy for such a personality type based on the altruistic signal, such individuals are thus more likely to be hired and to command a higher wage (Katz & Rosenberg, 2005).

Overall, this emphasizes the value of volunteering in increasing employability through human capital and altruism signaling. An integral aspect of the development of human capital through volunteering is therefore that it signifies volunteers' skills to potential employers as well as the employability benefits of their altruistic disposition (Day & Devlin, 1998; Spera et. al., 2013). Signaling as a benefit of volunteering therefore ultimately indicates an individual's investment in human capital and future employability (Ziemek, 2006).

Necessary Preconditions

There are a few preconditions to volunteering that must be met in order for the development of social capital and human capital to result in enhanced employability. That is, literature shows that the intensity of the link between volunteering and employability relies on a number of conditions, the configuration of which can maximize the effects of volunteer employability. These conditions are best formulated as aspects that influence volunteerability.

Volunteerability, as presented by Meijs and colleagues (Meijs et. al., 2006a; 2006b), refers to the willingness, capability, and availability of individuals to volunteer, where an increase in such elements leads to an increase in volunteering. Such factors are a prerequisite for any voluntary activity and therefore determine the extent of voluntary action regardless of purpose. Each factor is influenced by various aspects, which in turn can be enhanced as shown in Table 1. The configuration of such aspects of volunteerability therefore varies significantly between individual volunteers or groups of volunteers and can fluctuate. Literature suggests that for the purpose of developing volunteer employability, particular configurations of volunteers' willingness, capability, and availability determine the strength of the correlation between volunteering and employment (Paine, McKay, & Moro, 2013).

Elements	Aspects	Enhancements	Configurations
Willingness	Influenced by social norms, individual attitudes and values, psychological motives, perceptions of volunteering as rewarding and feasible.	Can be enhanced by different incentives, mainly by improving volunteers' reputation in society, providing intrinsic benefits, and reducing free riders.	Volunteer motivation must be to actively improve social capital and human capital as a means to improving employability.
Capability	Influenced by the skill set and knowledge required for volunteering in a specific role or organization.	Can be enhanced by training and guidance.	Capability of volunteers must be developed to align with human capital needs of employers.
Availability	Influenced by the availability of time and emotional commitment to volunteer despite juggling between jobs, family, education, friends, and leisure.	Can be enhanced by combining volunteering with jobs, family, education, friends, or leisure.	No necessary configuration as there is no relevant influence of availability on jobseekers.

Table 1: Elements, Aspects, and Enhancements of Volunteerability and Necessary Configurations for Employability

Adapted from: Haski-Leventhal, Meijs, & Hustinx, 2009.

Of these, willingness is the most important factor. Specifically, volunteering has been found to mostly improve employability when the motivation for volunteering was employment related (Paine et. al., 2013). As an influencer of willingness, the motivation to volunteer must therefore be to actively improve

social capital and human capital as a means to improving employability (Spera et. al., 2013).

Regarding capability, studies from the demand side of volunteer employability – that of employers – show that employers only fully acknowledge the importance of volunteering when it relates directly to the role being applied for (V, 2008). This means that the employability of volunteers is only increased if the capability of volunteers is developed to align with the human capital needs of employers.

The availability element of volunteerability is much more difficult to address regarding its influence on the development of social capital and human capital to enhance employability. Commonly, studies make a distinction between employed volunteers, unemployed volunteers, and volunteers that are not in the labor force to determine the influence of volunteering on employability (Spera et. al., 2013). This paper focuses on unemployed volunteers, or jobseekers, for which literature shows that the availability element of volunteerability has very limited influence on the relation between volunteering and employment. This is not surprising considering that the employment-related motivation to volunteer subsumes a high degree of emotional availability and the unemployment status of the volunteers largely removes the obstacle of finding time.

Part 2: From Employability to Employment

The relationship between employability and employment is explored here with the aim of elucidating the influence that design can have on modifying employability into employment. The next sections examine this argument for a modifying effect of program design on employment starting with an overview of the correlation and followed by brief assessments of optimal design configurations for each design factor.

Design Modifier Between Employability and Employment

Employability is not an assurance of employment in itself. It is merely a measure of the probability of gaining employment of a job-applicant through their social capital and human capital competencies. However, considering that volunteerability varies, can be enhanced, and therefore also manipulated, this paper proposes that volunteerability and specifically the benefits of volunteering that are required for the enhancement of employability amongst unemployed volunteers can be instrumentally designed for. That is, it is argued that an instrumental approach to volunteering is required whereby volunteering can function as a means to gaining employment.

The literature analysis of the benefits of volunteering in Part 1 – experimenting, networking, learning, and signaling – imply that there are many adjustable factors that enhance social capital and human capital and that adjusting these factors is likely to influence the extent to which volunteer experiences increase employability and lead to eventual employment. The logical conclusion, then, is that a deliberate manipulation of such factors through conscientious design can constitute an instrumental approach to enhancing the employability of volunteers. In this view, *organizational design* becomes the operative concept that modifies the relationship between employability and employment. In other

words, the social capital and human capital necessary for employability that is formed during volunteering can be optimized through astute and pertinent organizational design, thereby significantly modifying the probability of gaining employment. In this way, as shown in Figure 3, it is the organizational design of the volunteer program that determines the extent to which volunteering leads to gaining employment, where the program that appropriately utilizes design to optimize the transitive property between volunteering and employability alters the chance of gaining employment into an assurance of gaining employment. Simply put: instrumental program design increases the probability that employable volunteers gain employment.

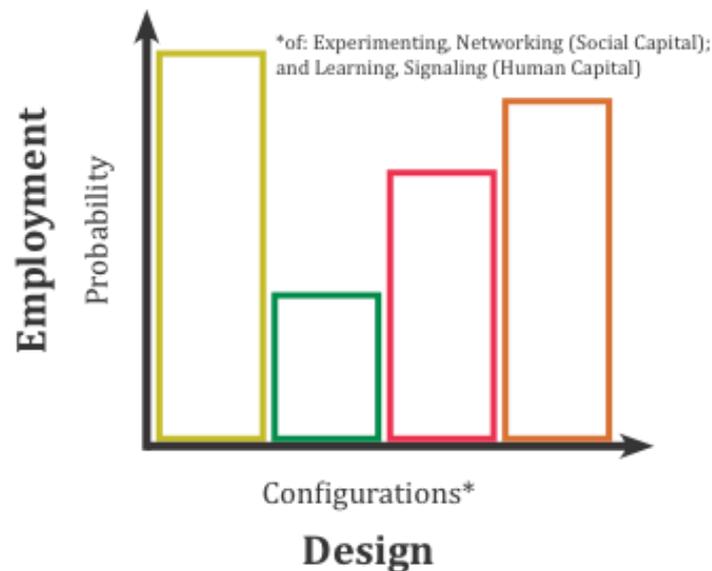


Figure 3: Design Modifier Between Employability and Employment

Design Factors

With such a diverse offering of volunteer benefits, opportunities, and manifestations, there is an equally diverse range of practical methods through which employability is fostered in volunteer programs. Nevertheless, when looking at the academic literature on the various forms of social capital and human capital such as those described above that have been realized in volunteer programs, it is possible to identify a number of common design factors that are found to maximize the employability of volunteers. Determining the most appropriate program for gaining employment would therefore involve an assessment of such factors and the subsequent selection of the most effective configuration of factors for increasing employability through volunteering.

The following sections briefly assess the design factors found in academic literature to most effectively optimize human capital and social capital through the volunteering benefits of experimenting, networking, learning, and signaling. An outline of these optimal volunteer program configurations is provided according to the following areas of volunteer program development: volunteer responsibilities, recruitment and selection, orientation and training, utilization and supervision, and evaluation. While there are no clear-cut divisions between these areas, an attempt has been made to divide the factors as such in order to

illustrate their influence in gaining employment for volunteers by maximizing volunteer employability. In the accompanying tables, the design optimizations are deduced from given academic sources, or are otherwise hypothesized.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Looking at literature on volunteer employability, studies show that the tasks or activities assigned to volunteers in volunteer programs have five common design characteristics:

1.Task Duration & Frequency: Refers to the length of time attributed to volunteer tasks as well as the number of times the volunteer works on the task.

2.Types of Activities: Refers to the variation and composition of the assigned tasks as well as other important conditions associated with the activities.

3.Complexity of Assignments: Refers to the extent of mental, physical, or emotional involvement required of volunteers for each task.

4.Task Significance: Refers to the importance of volunteer responsibilities to the volunteer organization's objectives, core competencies, and operational requirements.

5.Exposure/Contact Through Tasks: Refers to the types and extent of contact volunteers have with other stakeholders of the volunteer organization.

These program design characteristics are assessed in Table 2 in relation to the volunteering benefits that enhance employability: experimenting, networking, learning, and signaling. Table 2 therefore illustrates how to maximize each benefit through the design of volunteer responsibilities in volunteer programs.

		Experimenting	Networking	Learning	Signaling
Volunteer Responsibilities	Task Duration & Frequency	Tasks with flexible duration and frequency consigned to a generally low number of hours - a day or two per week - that have clear start and end dates. (Bronneman-Helmers, 2006; Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Paine, Malmersjo, & Stubbe, 2007)	Highly interactive duration and frequency to facilitate emotional intensity and involvement and to develop trust bonds. (Muthuri, Matten, & Moon, 2009; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002)	Longest duration of tasks possible - averaging 30 to 50 hours - with high contact frequency between the volunteer agency and the volunteer. (Astin & Sax, 1998; Mabry, 1998; Melchior, 1997; Paine, Malmersjo, & Stubbe, 2007; Yelle, 1979)	Human capital signals emanate from both short and long term tasks, the former signaling gained competencies and the latter diverse experiences. (Handy et. al., 2010)
	Types of Activities	Flexible, high-recognition activities that are rotated amongst volunteers. Examples include agency work that has been redesigned into smaller, routinized work segments or event-based activities. (Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Paine, Malmersjo, & Stubbe, 2007; Macduff, Netting, & O'Connor, 2009; Safrit & Merrill, 2000; Van Baren et. al., 2011)	Tasks that allow for a diverse scope of multiple interactions and a high number of overlapping affiliations. (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002).	Varied tasks and assignments with responsibilities tailored to volunteers. These are well-organized, supported by management, and adhere to job-related situations. (Brown & Zahrl, 1989; Roza & Meijs, 2014)	Activities that are highly visible and related to human capital and social capital development. (Hustinx et. al., 2010; Katz & Rosenberg, 2005)
	Complexity of Assignments	Repetitive tasks that are low-skilled yet effectively use volunteer talents where possible. (Handy & Brudney, 2007; Macduff, 2004; Safrit & Merrill, 2000)	<i>Assignments with reduced complexity that encourage socialization.</i>	Volunteers have a participative decision-making role where they contribute to the design and planning of assignments and subsequently are endowed with substantial responsibility, autonomy, and accountability. Tasks are commonly challenging and demand volunteer creativity and resourcefulness. (Cook & Jackson, 2006; Grant, 2012; Morgan & Streb, 2001; Safrit & Merrill, 2000)	<i>Tasks requiring an intense utilization of a number of skills that can be leveraged through signaling.</i>
	Task Significance	Assignments that are aligned with the vision and mission of the volunteer organization, yet constitute much of the grunt-work. (Safrit & Merrill, 2000)	<i>Greater impact tasks that can generate more exposure for volunteers.</i>	Assignments that are meaningful and significant to the volunteer agency, and thus often have substantial impact on the volunteer organization and its beneficiaries. (Grant, 2012; Pajo & Lee, 2011)	<i>Tasks related to core competencies of volunteer organization have stronger signals.</i>
	Exposure/ Contact Through Tasks	Activities with multiple points of contact, where volunteers: collaborate in job-sharing and teamwork through groups; have direct contact with beneficiaries where possible; and gain support and encouragement from long-term volunteers and staff. (Edwards, 2005; Macduff, 2004; Paine, Malmersjo, & Stubbe, 2007; Safrit & Merrill, 2000)	Activities aimed at building strong networks, where volunteers increase horizontal social exposure through team challenges and business exposure through vertical contact with corporate volunteers. (Muthuri, Matten, & Moon, 2009; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002)	Contact aspects of tasks allow for good communication channels horizontally with fellow volunteers as well as vertically with staff. (Cook & Jackson, 2006; Roza & Meijs, 2014)	Contact with beneficiaries provides most visibility as well as broad exposure through group assignments. (Katz & Rosenberg, 2005; Roza, 2013)

Table 2: Optimal Program Design of Volunteer Responsibilities

Recruitment and Selection

Looking at literature on volunteer employability, studies show that the recruitment and selection processes regarding volunteers in volunteer programs have two common design characteristics:

1. Screening Procedures: Refers to the processes and criteria used by volunteer organizations during selection and placement by aligning volunteers with the organizations' labor needs.

2. Supply and Demand Control: Refers to the methods by which volunteer organizations attract volunteer interest as well as the types of volunteers targeted.

These program design characteristics are assessed in Table 3 in relation to the volunteering benefits that enhance employability: experimenting, networking, learning, and signaling. Table 3 therefore illustrates how to maximize each benefit through the design of recruitment and selection processes in volunteer programs.

		Experimenting	Networking	Learning	Signaling
Recruitment and Selection	Screening Procedures	Establish the need for episodic volunteers then consider the varying volunteer needs, goals, motivations, and interests in screening procedures while being mindful of costs. Task screening is important for assignments involving contact with beneficiaries, clients, or donors. (Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Edwards, 2005; Handy & Brudney, 2007; Macduff, Netting, & O'Connor, 2009; Sanders & Lewis, 2005)	In screening, align the social needs and values of prospective volunteers with the volunteer organization's social benefits. (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999; Lowndes & Wilson, 2001)	Consideration of volunteer preparedness for assignments as well as their commitment to organization and cause. (Keller, Nelson, & Wick, 2003; Cook & Jackson, 2006)	Setting tough entry requirements magnifies signal exclusivity. (Connelly et. al., 2011)
	Supply & Demand Control	Embark on targeted marketing and volunteer sharing initiatives with third parties to increase episodic appeal, cater to different volunteer investments in causes, and increase volunteer diversity. (Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Edwards, 2005; Paine, Malmersjo, & Stubbe, 2007)	Sharing volunteers with third parties and demanding diverse volunteer backgrounds, goals, and preferences increases network opportunities and scope. (Wollebaek & Selle, 2002)	<i>Setting diversity criteria and demanding volunteer skill fit with tasks leads to the development of a range of human capital skills.</i>	Diverse volunteer sociodemographic variables emphasizes volunteering signal visibility post-experience. (Ziemek, 2006)

Table 3: Optimal Program Design of Recruitment and Selection Processes

Orientation and Training

Looking at literature on volunteer employability, studies show that the orientation and training processes regarding volunteers in volunteer programs have two common design characteristics:

1.Orientation Components: Refers to the information provided to new volunteers when they enter the volunteer program.

2.Direct or Indirect Training: Refers to the manner in which volunteer organizations contribute to the development of their volunteers in order to effectively meet both parties' needs.

These program design characteristics are assessed in Table 4 in relation to the volunteering benefits that enhance employability: experimenting, networking, learning, and signaling. Table 4 therefore illustrates how to maximize each benefit through the design of orientation and training processes in volunteer programs.

		Experimenting	Networking	Learning	Signaling
Orientation & Training	Orientation Components	Short orientation - 15 minutes or index cards - focused on punctual clarification of volunteer role, responsibilities, guidelines, and limitations of tasks. (Edwards, 2005; Handy & Brudney, 2007; Macduff, 2004)	Orientation aimed at internalizing the volunteer organization's network structures and social values. (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Lowndes & Wilson, 2001; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002)	Accentuate the results-orientation of the volunteer organization, whether tangible or intangible, as well as the aim to seek concrete experiences and test volunteer ideas. (Grant, 2012; McCarthy & McCarthy, 2006; Roza, 2013)	<i>Orientation on the communicative value of high visibility.</i>
	Direct or Indirect Training	Minimal training required for effective volunteer contribution. (Handy & Brudney, 2007)	Encouragement of solidarity and reciprocity through facilitating volunteer socialization initiatives regarding: attitudes and behavior, perceived benefits and costs of relationships, and emotional attachments. (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002)	Provide necessary tools and guidance for assignments as well as trainings where necessary. Facilitating discussions on volunteer perceptions and processing of experiences increases internalization of learning. (Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2000; McCarthy & McCarthy, 2006; Sanders & Lewis, 2005)	Facilitation of volunteer signal frequency, diversity, and consistency. (Connelly et. al., 2011)

Table 4: Optimal Program Design of Orientation and Training Processes

Utilization and Supervision

Looking at literature on volunteer employability, studies show that the utilization and supervision processes regarding volunteers in volunteer programs have three common design characteristics:

1.External Utilization: Refers to the how the volunteer organization utilizes, supplements, and portrays its volunteer program in relation to third parties.

2.Volunteer Administration: Refers to the resource management efforts implemented by the volunteer organization in organizing its volunteer program.

3.Supervision Needs: Refers to the action requirements of volunteer management in delivering, monitoring, and guiding volunteers in its volunteer program.

These program design characteristics are assessed in Table 5 in relation to the volunteering benefits that enhance employability: experimenting, networking, learning, and signaling. Table 5 therefore illustrates how to maximize each benefit through the design of orientation and training processes in volunteer programs.

		Experimenting	Networking	Learning	Signaling
Utilization & Supervision	External Utilization	Establish partnerships and cooperations with: state agencies to receive recognition, subsidies, and promotion regarding experimenting volunteer benefits; and involving private institutions to attract interest and credibility. (Bronneman-Helmers, 2006; Handy & Brudney, 2007; Paine, Malmersjo, & Stubbe, 2007)	Establish third party partnerships such as joining high-profile coalitions to supplement networking benefits. (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999; Yarwood, 2005)	Cooperate with third parties to stimulate broad support for program such as through state-sponsored planned learning initiatives. (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs, & Hustinx, 2009; Sanders & Lewis, 2005)	Facilitate high visibility efforts through various mediums such as publicizing success stories or attaining certification for volunteers or support from credible third parties. (Brown & Zahrl, 1989; Carpenter & Myers, 2010; Connelly et. al., 2011; Roza, 2013)
	Volunteer Administration	Adapt administrators' team-building and communication competencies towards a task-based volunteer program with flexible expectations of volunteer commitment. Volunteer processesing capacity needs to accommodate drop-ins and irregular volunteer contributions and link episodic volunteers with staff and long-term volunteers to ensure organizational acceptability of program. The investment of financial and human resources in developing episodic opportunities also requires the incorporation of risk management such as ensuring a complementary rather than a substitutive experimenting volunteer program. (Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Edwards, 2005; Handy & Brudney, 2007; Paine, Malmersjo, & Stubbe, 2007; Safrit & Merrill, 2000)	Enhance retention benefits for volunteer alumni such as corporate volunteer opportunities to enhance social network reach. (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999; Lowndes & Wilson, 2001)	Invest necessary resources such as setting up committees for external partnership planning as well as for internal implementation of planned learning program. (Sanders & Lewis, 2005)	Develop signal capacity of volunteer program administrators including capabilities in assessing signal frequency, diversification, consistency, and costs. (Connelly et. al., 2011)
	Supervision Needs	Provide competent program management that is non-authoritarian and requires low supervision and resource investment. (Safrit & Merrill, 2000)	Allow for the compromise of current efficiency to enable spontaneous socialization opportunities. (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999)	Ensure voluntary ethos remains intact through safeguarding autonomy, maintaining low social pressure, and monitoring obligated or mandatory participation scenarios. (Blyth, Saito, & Berkas, 1997; Meijs et. al., 2009; Raskoff & Sundeen, 2001; Stukas, Glary, & Snyder, 1999; Tschirhart & St.Clair, 2008)	Safeguard volunteering signals by discouraging extrinsic motivation such as stipends while promoting intrinsic motivation such as altruism. (Carpenter & Myers, 2010; Handy et. al., 2010)

Table 5: Optimal Program Design of Utilization and Supervision Processes

Evaluation

Looking at literature on volunteer employability, studies show that the evaluation processes regarding volunteers in volunteer programs have three common design characteristics:

1. Agency Diligence: Refers to the efforts of volunteer organizations in maintaining volunteer program effectiveness and adjusting accordingly.

2. Impact Monitoring: Refers to how a volunteer organization measures the influence of its volunteer program in delivering on volunteer needs and organization objectives.

3. Volunteer Reflexivity: Refers to the methods by which volunteers evaluate the implications and benefits of their experiences within the volunteer program.

These program design characteristics are assessed in Table 6 in relation to the volunteering benefits that enhance employability: experimenting, networking, learning, and signaling. Table 6 therefore illustrates how to maximize each benefit through the design of evaluation processes in volunteer programs.

		Experimenting	Networking	Learning	Signaling
Evaluation	Agency Diligence	Heed necessary reporting adjustments associated with changing needs of organization for episodic volunteers. (Paine, Malmersjo, & Stubbe, 2007)	Assure variability and revisability of program by monitoring and conforming to contextual changes in social dynamics. (Lowndes & Wilson, 2001)	Diligence of volunteer learning is preserved through the implementation of program changes based on volunteer feedback and current learning theory. Additionally, volunteer accreditation such as through providing references enhances the credibility of volunteer human capital. (Cook & Jackson, 2006; McCarthy & McCarthy, 2006)	Maintain vigilance regarding countersignals such as feedback from volunteer alumni or third party needs and adapting to changes. (Connelly et. al., 2011)
	Impact Monitoring	Monitor volunteers by collecting volunteer numbers and hours and measuring their organizational impact. (Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Paine, Malmersjo, & Stubbe, 2007; Safrit & Merrill, 2000)	Continuously evaluate the social benefits of the program and monitor network formation. (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999)	Providing volunteers with performance feedback stimulates volunteer efforts and program impact. (Grant, 2012)	Improve and maintain the visibility of the measured impact of volunteers. (Safrit & Merrill, 2000)
	Volunteer Reflexivity	Encourage informal, non-costly discussion and reflection reports on volunteer assessment of program including perception of alignment with volunteer aspirations. (Arrington, 2000; McCarthy & McCarthy, 2006)	Have volunteers informally review and internalize socialization developments between tasks. (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999)	Frequent written reflection and discussions on learning experiences, goals and objectives, and program recommendations internalize concrete experiences. (Ash, Clayton, & Atkinson, 2005; Koliba, 2004; Mabry, 1998; Shumer, 2004; Yarwood, 2005)	<i>Feedback and reflection on program experience provides volunteers with signal attributes.</i>

Table 6: Optimal Program Design of Evaluation Processes

Part 3: Program Proposal for The Netherlands

Given the transitive property between volunteering and employability as discussed in Part 1, and the design modifier between employability and employment as illustrated in Part 2, there is a strong academic recognition and understanding of how volunteering can lead to employment. These findings form a sound basis for a proposal on designing a volunteering trajectory towards gaining employment in the Netherlands. That is, an employment program solution exclusively dependent on volunteering is thoroughly investigated in this part of the paper as a method for stimulating sustained employment and thereby tackling pervasive unemployment. This is first done on a micro level through the astute and pertinent use of the design factors outlined in the previous sections where a configuration is created which best optimizes social capital and human capital for volunteering jobseekers. Subsequently, such a volunteer program is discussed on a macro level to indicate the roles and responsibilities of various primary and secondary stakeholders as well as the benefits to each.

Micro Implementation Structure

This section investigates the proposed Volunteer Program at the micro level. This means that the inner workings of the program – its *basis, phases, and stages* – are discussed in relation to its strategic and operational needs that will optimize the dimensions of social capital and human capital – *experimenting, networking, learning, and signaling* – and therefore volunteer employability. Figure 4 illustrates the proposed Volunteer Program and will be deconstructed in the following three sub-sections: Program Basis, which outlines the strategic core and focus of the program; Program Phases, which emphasizes the polarity of the two-phase program; and Program Stages, which details the characteristics of the seven steps of the program. In this way, the program is approached from a bigger-picture view and then delved into deeper with each progressive section.

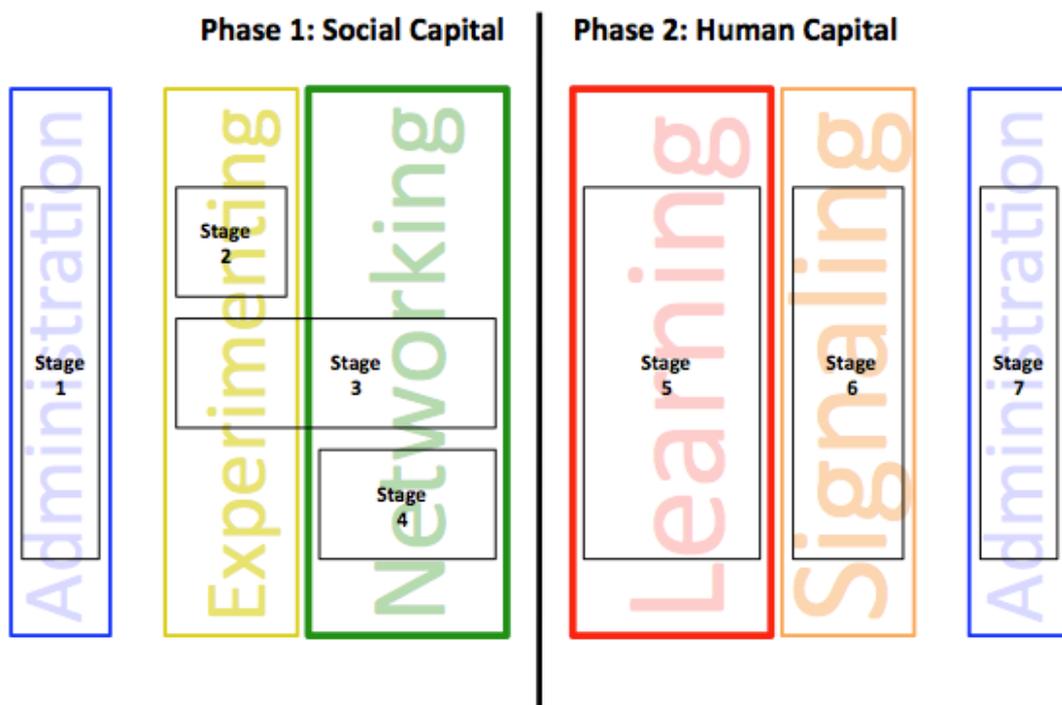


Figure 4: Proposed Volunteer Program

Program Basis

The crux of the Volunteer Program is undoubtedly the parts that stimulate networking and learning. This is because networking and learning correlate most with the development of social capital and human capital respectively. That is, networking internalizes social capital development through diverse socialization initiatives and learning stimulates human capital development through concrete experiences. Subsequently, these two benefits of volunteering require the most attention, as they must be well organized to adequately leverage volunteering towards employment. This means that a substantial amount of human resources and capital resources should be allocated to the program stages that fall under these benefits. Without astute organization or sufficient resources in these areas, therefore, the program may not deliver sufficient social capital or human capital development necessary for increasing volunteer employability and maximizing their probability of gaining employment.



Figure 5: Networking and Learning Basis of Proposed Volunteer Program

Experimenting and signaling, as shown in Figure 5, are peripherals of the Volunteer Program. The program stages that develop these benefits, while vital, require less resources and organization. In this way, experimenting functions as the opening of the program; the initiation or the orientation. It requires plenty of coordination between participating organizations but should generally be designed to be flexible and have low impact on social capital and human capital development. Its primary function is as a means through which volunteers familiarize themselves with various aspects of volunteering and align their personal objectives with those of volunteering opportunities. In this way, it is predominantly the precursor to networking in that it develops social habits but also slightly to learning in that it specifies learning ambitions.

Signaling, on the other hand, occurs as a consequence of a well-designed and well-executed program. This is because signals are inherently bound to the level of social capital and human capital development of the program. Signaling the enhanced employability of volunteers to prospective employers therefore relies on the actual development occurring through the networking and learning

aspects of the program. When the Volunteer Program is well designed, therefore, it will also deliver the strongest signals. In this way, it can be seen as the validating mechanism of the entire program. However, as will be explained in later sections, this does not mean that it is an inactive program area; there are numerous managerial options that can influence the signaling aspect of the program.

Overall, astute and pertinent design of program stages that leverage networking and learning benefits is crucial to the success of volunteer programs designed towards gaining employment. These are supported by peripheral program benefits: experimenting, whose program stages function as precursors; and signaling, whose program stage functions as a validating mechanism.

Program Phases

The proposed Volunteer Program is divided into two phases as shown in Figure 6. As with the basis of the program, here too a clear distinction is made between the social capital and the human capital development of the volunteers during the program trajectory. That is, Phase 1 is predominantly concerned with the development of social capital while Phase 2 is predominantly concerned with the development of human capital. The distinction is important, as each carries its own fundamental design elements and parameters as will be briefly outlined below.

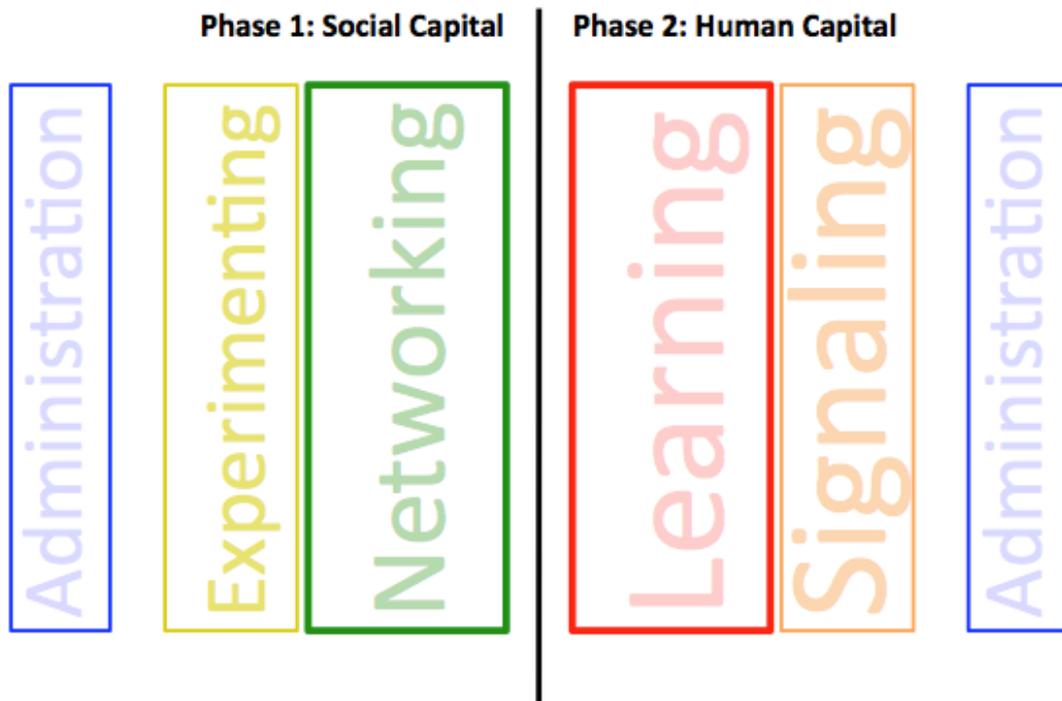


Figure 6: Two Phases of Proposed Volunteer Program

Phase 1: Social Capital Development

The first phase of the proposed program evolves around interactions and interactivity. This means that volunteers are expected to complete multiple tasks and develop overlapping social affiliations. This first phase therefore

compromises the stages that fall under experimenting and networking. There is a difference, however, between the parameters of each benefit where experimenting requires the execution of numerous tasks while networking requires the interaction with numerous groups of people. As shown in the Program Basis section previously, coupling the stages under these benefits would optimally leverage the social capital benefits necessary for increasing volunteer employability and maximizing their probability of gaining employment.

It is suggested that volunteers undergo at least 20 days of these numerous experiences in a two-month time span. The duration of volunteering is therefore low while the frequency is high in this phase of the program. As such, many organizations need to be involved in this phase of the program in order to increase the diversity of tasks and people that volunteers can interact with. Moreover, as volunteers will be rotated across tasks and organizations, there needs to be sufficient coordination between participating organizations to efficiently facilitate their movement.

Generally, Phase 1 is characterized by a flurry of activity of low duration and high frequency in a two-month time span in order to optimize social capital development towards gaining employment.

Phase 2: Human Capital Development

The second phase of the proposed program evolves around knowledge and competency building. This means that volunteers are expected to complete job-related assignments that signal their capabilities. This second phase therefore compromises the stages that fall under learning and signaling. There is, however, a clear emphasis on learning in this phase since the signaling benefit of the Volunteer Program functions more as a validating consequence of the program as explained previously. Nevertheless, the stages under these benefits optimally leverage the human capital benefits necessary for increasing volunteer employability and maximizing their probability of gaining employment.

It is suggested that volunteers undergo at least 60 days of intense, challenging, and participatory experiences in a three-month time span. The duration and the frequency of volunteering are therefore high in this phase of the program, as inferred by long-term assignments. Such concrete experiences should be done in one or two organizations only and the entire three-month block can be repeated if necessary at new organizations. As such, only a few organizations per group of volunteers need to be involved in this phase. However, it is crucial that they recognize and implement the significant investment of resources and commitment necessary to successfully leverage the benefits for both volunteers and themselves.

Generally, Phase 2 is characterized by committed activity of high duration and frequency in a three-month time span in order to optimize human capital developments towards gaining employment.

In conclusion, there are therefore clear distinctions between the phases of the proposed Volunteer Program, where each phase carries its own fundamental design elements and parameters. Notably, the first phase requires more organizations but less organizational commitment and has activities with much shorter durations while the second phase requires fewer organizations but more organizational commitment and has activities with much longer durations. However, these distinctions between phases can only be made according to such general parameters, as there is a significant overlap between networking and learning; not only do they collectively form the crux of the program as shown previously, but the development of human capital can also occur during Phase 1 stages just as the development of social capital occurs during Phase 2 stages. Nevertheless, the phases provide a general overview of the scope of the proposed Volunteer Program and their respective characteristics, which encompass the stages that leverage the benefits of volunteering towards employment.¹ These stages are discussed in detail next.

Program Stages

Based on the literature findings, this paper proposes seven stages to the Volunteer Program as shown in Figure 7. Each stage is generally consigned to a single-purpose benefit of developing either social capital or human capital although the actual benefits accrued may interlace. As such, the stages directly relate to the design factors and configurations outlined in Part 2 where: Stage 2 focuses on the experimenting benefit of volunteering, Stage 4 focuses on the networking benefit of volunteering, Stage 5 focuses on the learning benefit of volunteering, and Stage 6 focuses on the signaling benefit of volunteering. Stages 1 and 7 constitute the top and tail activities of the program and are therefore administrative rather than benefit oriented. Stage 3 is a transition stage between Stages 2 and 4 and therefore shares characteristics of both experimenting and networking.

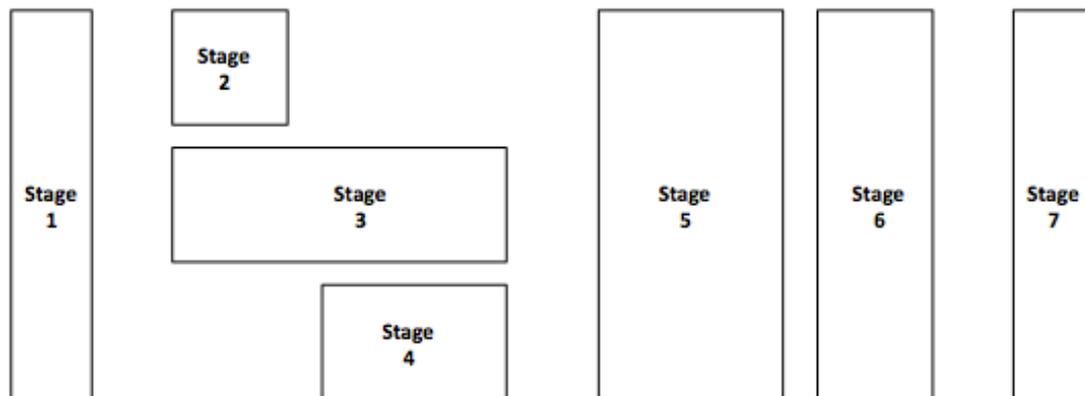


Figure 7: Seven Stages of the Proposed Volunteer Program

¹ The roughly six-month program is designed to be highly intensive because such a considerable commitment is necessary to gain social capital and human capital benefits. The signaling value, for example, reduces if the program is stretched too long. Moreover, if properly supported through stage 6 activities, the net result will be a higher turnover of jobseekers into paid employment. It is therefore better to design an intense six-month trajectory for jobseekers that can subsequently quickly gain employment than to stretch the program to a year and pay unemployment support for the entire duration.

For the sake of repetition, the findings of Part 2 are not repeated here for each stage but should be adhered to by program administrators and organizers; they provide ample indication on how to strategically and operationally address each volunteering benefit and therefore how to design Stages 2, 4, 5, and 6. This particular configuration is therefore the most convenient and simple utilization of the design options for optimizing the social capital and human capital benefits of volunteering. It should be construed as a suggestion, as more complex programs that cross-utilize different benefits within stages can undoubtedly be designed and implemented as well.

Instead, this section will focus on providing: a general overview of the purpose and characteristics of each stage accompanied by a storyline scenario that hypothesizes the trajectory for a potential volunteer; and a chronological overview of operational decisions for each stage including the division of administrative responsibilities for the program.

Program Arc

A summary of the program is provided below and condensed into Table 7. As is shown, each stage has a specific purpose, duration, and frequency, as well as other unique characteristics. For specifics on responsibilities in Stages 2 through 6 refer to Table 2 in Part 2 of this paper.

Phase	Stage	Purpose	Duration	Frequency	Volunteers per Organization	Organizations per Stage	Assignment Type	Task Example
1	1	set-up	7 days	at beginning of program	-	-	program requirement decisions	participant recruitment and selection
	2	experimenting	5 days	over 2 months	high	high	routinized, low skill	handyman assistance
	3	experimenting /networking	10 days		high	high	routinized, teamwork	help at festivals
	4	networking	5 days		high	high	social, group	assistance at fundraising events
2	5	learning	45-60 days	over 3 months	low	low	challenging, job-related	marketing or sales assistance
	6	signaling	6 days	3 times throughout program	-	-	workshops	CV building and interviewing
	7	revision	14 days	at end of program	-	-	program revision	volunteer-organization matching adjustments

Table 7: Summary of Program Characteristics

Stage 1 – Program Setup: Organizers make key decisions on operational requirements regarding program elements such as volunteers and third parties in Stage 1, which therefore constitutes the legwork that program organizers must accomplish before the program can get under way. Once the program is operational and routinized, this should take no longer than a week depending on the number of volunteers eligible for the program and the number of participating organizations and available assignments. Examples of decisions include: recruitment and selection of volunteers and participating organizations, initial orientation of volunteers, etc.

Box 6: Welcoming john

John, our unemployed volunteer, is recruited into the program via a state unemployment agency and is selected based on his willingness to volunteer as a means to developing his social skills and perhaps putting his basic IT talents to use. He is sent an orientation package from the program that informs him of his acceptance into the program, as well as the mission, vision, and objectives of the program and an overview of the program stages and expectations.

Stage 2 – Experimenting: All participating volunteers are divided amongst numerous organizations and assignments and conduct 5 routinized, low-skilled tasks at 5 different organizations over 5 days. Their objective is to test different types of labor and work environments, and to align their ambitions with volunteering opportunities.² Volunteers should be able to discern the types of labor and environments that best suit their needs and ambitions. Examples include: community-bus driving, handyman assistance, hospitality roles, etc.

Box 7: Testing the Waters

John starts the 2-month Phase 1 with five varying assignments at five different organizations covering five days in total. He is assigned various low-skilled tasks based on his profile such as: helping install registers in retail, recycling electronics at the hard rubbish depot, and organizing files at a local clinic. This shapes his ideas about the work environments he operates well in and those that he does not.

Stage 3 – Experimenting/Networking: For 10 days, volunteers continue to conduct multiple assignments at different organizations as in Stage 2 albeit at varying durations from two to four days. However, on top of testing different types of labor and environments, more focus is added in this transition stage to socialization aspects of the work. As such, tasks that require group work or contact with multiple stakeholders such as beneficiaries, clients, or donors are included in the rotation. Examples include: help at festivals, class assistance, buddy projects, tour guide support, etc.

Box 8: Forming an Opinion

While continuing with the experimenting tasks, John starts to form an appreciation for team-based work. He receives the chance to work at a local school as an assistant to an IT teacher for a few days and enjoys working with both the staff and the students. In his evaluation of the experimenting phase, John says that he is glad to have tried different things to know what he does and does not like. He believes it has given him confidence in defining his goals.

² As mentioned in a recent academic paper (Kamerade, 2013), it is vital to tailor volunteering opportunities to the needs of both jobseekers and the demands of employers. That is, the types of skills learned by volunteers should be transferable to workplace environments and should be relevant to the work ambitions of the volunteer and the needs of potential employers in their industry.

Stage 4 – Networking: Phase 1 is completed with a 5-day focus on networking in Stage 4. Here, volunteers are given assignments that exclusively depend on teamwork, where they must develop overlapping affiliations with as diverse a population as possible. This means that short assignments that can accommodate socialization even at the expense of efficiency are reserved for this stage and the duration may vary from 1 to 5 days. Volunteers aim to expand their networks through contact with corporate volunteers, management of volunteer organizations, employees of private organizations, and beneficiaries, clients, and donors. Examples include: basic assistance at fundraising events, catering at corporate workplaces, corporate volunteer assistance, etc.

Box 9: Connecting

John is assigned a group assignment at a local nonprofit organization (NPO) to organize a small aspect of an upcoming fundraising event. They are responsible for welcoming guests, cloakroom duties, and nametags. John's role is at the check-in where he ensures attendees are properly logged in to the computer. He makes friends with fellow volunteers as well as NPO staff and meets many new people during the social drinks at the end of the fundraiser.

Stage 5 - Learning: Phase 2 evolves predominantly around Stage 5, where volunteers are selected for specific placements in only a few organizations for 45 to 60 days over a 3 month period. This means that organizations are matched with the skills and ambitions of volunteers, where both parties jointly construct the parameters of job-related assignments. The aim is to develop the skills and competencies of volunteers through intensive and challenging work experiences where they have responsibility, accountability, and autonomy. Examples can include any function or role involving managerial or administrative tasks such as marketing, logistics, sales, secretarial, coordination, etc.

Box 10: The Placement

After reviewing John's goals and evaluation of his experiences thus far, program organizers suggest John as a candidate for a number of assignments at various organizations needing IT support staff. One in particular is interested in John and agrees to a 45-day placement. John is assigned a mentor in the department and does various challenging support tasks for IT staff. He doesn't have much say at first but is learning a lot and making valuable connections. Towards the end of the placement, he is asked if he would like to head a small project with a few other volunteers, which he happily agrees to. After completion, he receives feedback on his skill development and a recommendation from his mentor.

Stage 6 – Signaling: Although signaling is a validating consequence of the program and in many ways determined by the extent to which the previous stages are successful in meeting their objectives, there are a number of initiatives that organizers can undertake to further strengthen positive signals. Stage 6 therefore encompasses a number of tasks conducted both at the end of the program and during previous stages that aim to facilitate volunteer signal frequency, diversity, and consistency. These are crucial to enhancing the employability of participants because they facilitate the jobseeking efforts of the

volunteers by translating their experiences into employment-related evidence. For example, two-day workshops for participants may be provided on networking between Stages 3 and 4, workshops on work-place communication between Stages 4 and 5, and workshops on CV building and job interviews after Stage 5. Importantly, signaling at the end of the program should include tangible and credible accreditation such as references or certificates of completion.³ Moreover, job-seeking support should be established in conjunction with local state authorities to maximize volunteer opportunities for employment.

Box 11: Communication

During the program, John signs up for three workshops: one on networking, one on negotiation, and one on CV building and job interviewing. Each strengthens his confidence and abilities in the respective areas. Because of their timing, he is able to put his learned theory into practice almost immediately. By the end of the program, John has had many opportunities to consistently communicate his competencies and ambitions to interested parties. Upon completion of the program, John receives a certificate that includes signatures from all the organizations he has volunteered at.

Stage 7 – Program Revision: Organizers review the program based on feedback provided by volunteers and participating organizations in Stage 7, which therefore constitutes the administrative revision necessary to continually improve the efficacy of the program and develop it further. This stage, which could take 2 to 3 weeks, may merge with Stage 1 once the program is operational and routinized so as to ensure immediate implementation of changes. Examples of feedback include: revision of selection procedures, revision of participating organization types included, etc.

Box 12: Program Outcome

Together with program staff and staff from a state unemployment agency, John is earmarked for a number of IT jobs. While interviewing for them, however, a contact he made during the fundraising event in the networking stage of the Volunteer Program offers him a starting position in their IT department, which he accepts. At the end of the program, John provides feedback on the pros and cons of each stage. Program organizers work towards implementing his feedback in the next round.

Program Operationalization

At the risk of repeating the design factors in Part 2, this section briefly indicates the various operational decisions that are required for each stage; the tables in Part 2 provide further operational decision details for each of these areas of Volunteer Program development. Figure 8 illustrates as coherently as possible the chronological order of these decisions.

³ It is important that program organizers establish demand-side intervention to frame volunteering as a route to employment (Kamerade, 2013; Paine, McKay, & Moro, 2013). That is, they should actively work to overcome employers’ prejudices towards volunteering by signaling the employability value of volunteering.

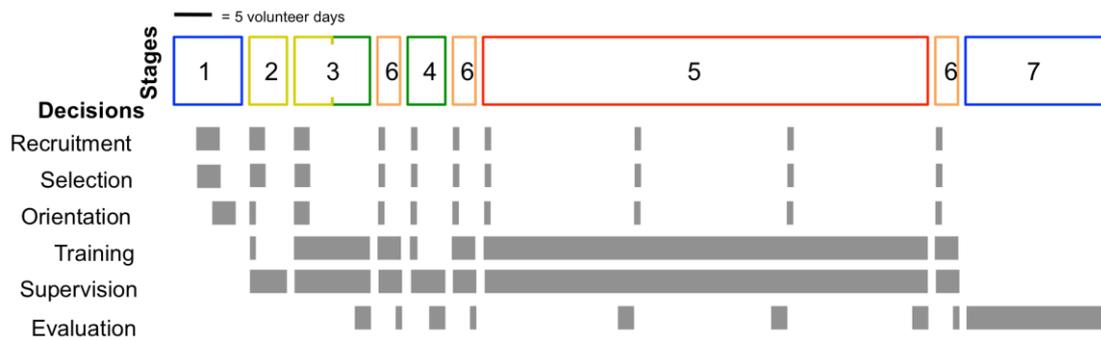


Figure 8: Timeline and Operationalization of Program

Recruitment, Selection, & Orientation

All stages except Stage 7 require initial recruitment, selection, and orientation decisions and actions. Stage 1 is especially important as the decisions in these areas of program development will carry throughout the trajectory. That is, the volunteers attracted, chosen, and informed at the beginning of the trajectory will undergo the entire program which makes decisions at this stage particularly important. Program administrators should therefore aim to attract and include as diverse a range of volunteers as possible. This is because literature shows that diversity is also a recommended design commonality of each stage and would therefore go a long way to developing the social capital and human capital of volunteer participants throughout their entire trajectory. Moreover, besides orienting volunteers on the scope of the program, its mission, vision, and objectives, efforts should be made to internalize this bigger picture at the outset as volunteers will undergo additional stage-specific orientations throughout the program and may become confused along the way. This can be accomplished through an orientation information pack or through arranging a few orientation days.

At each consecutive stage operational decisions and actions in these areas of program development are also made, albeit with differing intensity. Stage 5, for example, requires significant energy and resources in ensuring fit between organizational assignments and volunteer skills as well as for orienting the participant in their new work role. For Stages 2 and 3 on the other hand, very little orientation is required as well as limited recruitment or screening since tasks are standardized and low-skill. Naturally, the Stage 6 workshops will require recruitment, selection, and orientation procedures based on volunteer willingness to participate as well as their existing competencies in topic areas.

Training & Supervision

Only the non-administrative stages require training and supervision, since only these stages include continuous interaction between participating volunteers and organizations. These are the stages that directly relate to the volunteering benefit sought and training is therefore highly specific to such benefits, whether experimenting, networking, learning, or signaling. However, there is generally a distinction between formal and informal training and supervision that occurs throughout these stages. Informal training and supervision occurs unofficially, where volunteers learn through observation or experience and are considered supervised simply by being accompanied by others. Formal training and

supervision occurs officially, where volunteers learn from training staff and are supervised by mentors or coordinators. Formal and informal training and supervision can differ depending on the task or organization but generally follow a pattern throughout the Volunteer Program where the earlier stages are more informal and the later stages more formal. Volunteers in Stages 2, 3, and 4, for example, will generally be expected to carry out their simple assignments without the need for additional formal training and under the supervision of fellow volunteers or, sometimes, coordinators. Volunteers in Stages 5 and 6, on the other hand, will officially report to managers or mentors and will undergo considerable on-the-job training from such supervisors as well as informal learning.

Evaluation

Each volunteering benefit requires at least one evaluation round where volunteers and participating organizations can assess their experiences and reflect on any developments they've made. Such evaluations usually occur at the end of each stage except for Stage 2, whose evaluation extends to the end of Stage 3 since experimenting continues until that point. In addition, all Stage 6 workshops should include evaluations and reflections to improve the workshops as well as the signaling tools available to volunteers. These stages should typically utilize informal reflection mechanisms such as surveys and group discussions. Monitoring volunteer numbers, hours, and impact may be a useful exercise for administrators in Stages 2, 3, and 4 in order to demonstrate the beneficial impact of the program and thereby generate a positive image of the program among third parties.

Only Stage 5 has multiple evaluation rounds that align with every volunteering placement participants are given during the 3-month period. The reflection mechanisms for Stage 5 should be relatively formal as in work environments, involving peer-to-peer reviews, feedback reports, journaling, and written evaluations.

The evaluation at Stage 7 is also crucial as it reflects the experiences of participating volunteers and organizations and provides a trove of data from which to improve program offerings. In this way, the success of the program is enhanced. Moreover, organizers should maintain a vigilant eye on changes in contextual needs regarding the labor market as well as employer demands. This will allow the program to be shaped according to current labor needs and ensure that volunteer graduates are relevant options for recruiters.

Administrative Responsibilities

In the above operationalization of the program, it is still unclear as to whether the participating organization administrations or the Volunteer Program organizers are responsible for the design and implementation of operational decisions. This will depend on the types of organizations that are involved, their commitment to the program in terms of human and capital resources, and the available resources for Volunteer Program organizers. It is suggested that the division indicated in Table 8 is maintained in managing the program, although close collaboration is of course essential in all program stages.

	Organizers of Volunteer Program	Administrators of Participating Organizations	Jointly
Recruitment	stages 1, 6		stages 2, 3, 4, 5
Selection	stages 1, 6		stages 2, 3, 4, 5
Orientation	stages 1, 6	stages 2, 3, 4, 5	
Training	stage 6	stages 2, 3, 4, 5	
Supervision	stage 6	stages 2, 3, 4, 5	
Evaluation	stages 6, 7		stages 2, 3, 4, 5

Table 8: Administrative Responsibilities of Volunteer Program

Regardless of which administrators have the responsibility at each stage, organizers should consider the program as a whole at the outset of initiation. This means that they should assess commonalities across the needs of each consecutive stage in the program and formulate the best possible operational requirements regarding program elements such as volunteers and third parties at the *beginning* of the program. One of the main design commonalities emergent from Part 2, for example, is the need for third party collaborations to increase visibility, resources, and credibility. Visibility in particular is a necessary requirement for all volunteering benefits to optimize social capital and human capital development. Administrators should therefore be mindful of the types of organizations and tasks that have been made available for the program when considering volunteer recruitment, selection, orientation, training, supervision, and evaluation processes. The discussion on the micro implementation structure in this section implies the extent to which state, private, and volunteer organizations will need to collaborate to ensure the success of a volunteering trajectory towards employment. The next section on the macro implementation structure of the proposed Volunteer Program elaborates on these interactions

Macro Implementation Structure

This section investigates the proposed Volunteer Program at the macro level. This means that the outer organization of the program within the local context is discussed in relation to various stakeholder groups: the state, public institutions, voluntary organizations (henceforth: NPOs), and private organizations (henceforth: businesses). Before discussing the proposed arrangement of the Volunteer Program in the Dutch context, a brief description is given of the current or traditional employment model. In this way, the main differences between the models as well as their costs and benefits are accentuated. The benefits of including the Volunteer Program are subsequently discussed according to each stakeholder group.

Traditional Model

The current arrangement of addressing unemployment in the Netherlands is simplified and illustrated in Figure 9.

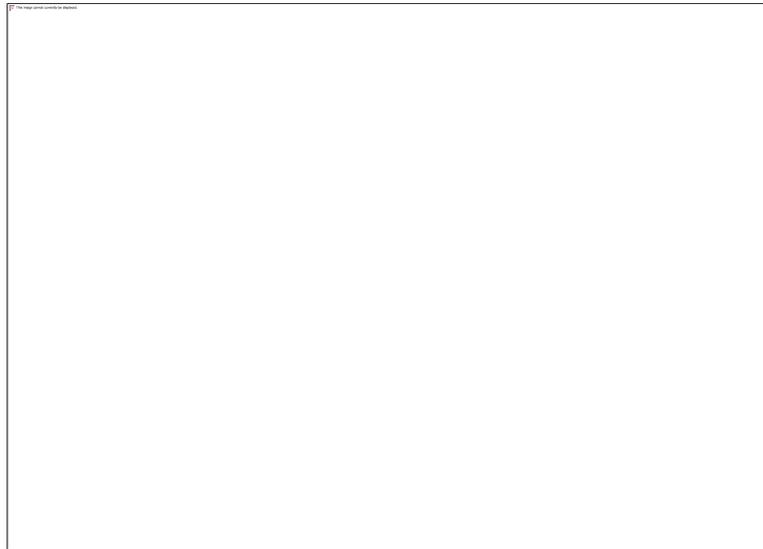


Figure 9: Traditional (Un)Employment Model

The state provides subsidies in the form of unemployment benefits (1) to job-seeking citizens who are registered with the UUV, the state unemployment agency. Over 20 billion euros are spent annually by the state to fund the activities of this public institution, of which 1.5 billion is used for agency purposes and the remainder expended as unemployment benefits to roughly 1.2 million people (UUV Focus, 2012; 2013). The UUV is responsible for monitoring the job-seeking activities of unemployed citizens in the labor force and, where necessary or requested, to facilitate their chances of gaining employment. The Central Statistics Bureau estimated that roughly 7000 subsidized jobseekers gained employment per month in 2013 (CBS, 2013). The vast majority of jobseekers find employment in businesses (2), which pay an annual tax rate of roughly 20% to 25% depending on revenue (3) and have a duty to their owners to grow their businesses and generate greater returns, which often require additional labor (KPMG, 2013; UUV Focus, 2013).

Proposed Model

The proposed arrangement of addressing unemployment in the Netherlands introduces the Volunteer Program and NPOs and is illustrated in Figure 10.

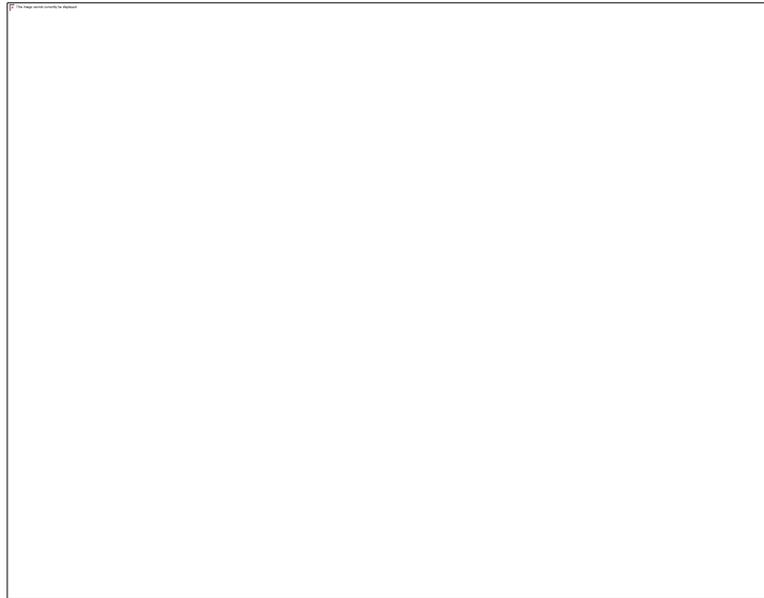


Figure 10: Proposed (Un)Employment Model

Here, the state diverts a percentage of its unemployment benefit funding to cover the operational costs of the Volunteer Program (1), of which an amount is eventually passed on to participating NPOs (2). Jobseekers are subsequently recruited as volunteers into the program (3), gaining social capital and human capital through experiences at participating NPOs and/or businesses. The result of participation in the Volunteer Program is an increase in employability and the probability of gaining employment, thereby increasing the amount of jobseekers that find employment (4). This eventually reduces the unemployment benefit costs of the state to a fraction of its size (5), and potentially leads to an increase in corporate taxes due to private sector growth (6).

Figure 11 considers the transactions between the Volunteer Program and NPOs and businesses in more detail.

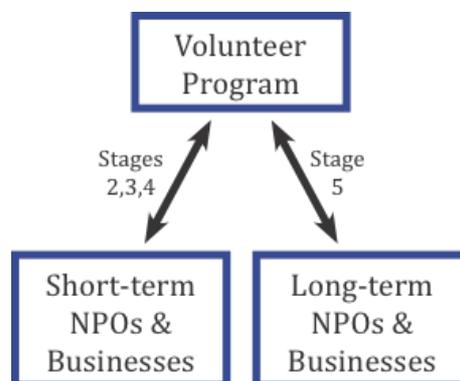


Figure 11: Detailed Relationship Between Program, NPOs, and Businesses

There is a clear distinction between short-term commitments and long-term commitments in terms of their relationship with the Volunteer Program. Specifically, NPO and business participants that only have the resources or the willingness for short-term commitments of volunteers on a rotational basis will only be involved in Stages 2, 3, and 4 of the program. On the other hand, NPO and business participants that have the resources to support long-term volunteer commitments through long-term assignments will only be involved in Stage 5 of the program. The difference between these types of organizations is not only the responsibilities that volunteers have, but also the different needs of the organizations and their ability to accommodate certain types of volunteers.

As such, the Volunteer Program may need to incentivise some of the transactions in order to gain a large enough network of participant NPOs and businesses. Monetary incentives may be the most influential but should be used cautiously as there are studies abound indicating that they might incentivise the wrong behavior or develop unforeseen externalities. Nevertheless, some of the funding to the Volunteer Program from the state may be allocated towards developing a network of participating NPOs, where short-term NPO participants are reimbursed on a small standard rate per volunteer placement and long-term NPO participants are incentivised on a larger fixed contribution per volunteer placement. For businesses, the most fruitful incentive would be for the state to issue tax rebates on condition of participation in the Volunteer Program, where short-term business participants are granted a small standard rebate per volunteer placement and long-term business participants are granted a substantial fixed percentage rebate on taxable revenue per volunteer placement. The idea of this division between short and long-term participants is to encourage participation in the Volunteer Program on the whole, but to not undermine long-term participation in the process.

Non-monetary incentives are also powerful options and can include publicity, marketing, and PR benefits as leveraged through partners or sponsors of the program, or beneficial recognition of participation during subsidy or grant applications.

Stakeholder Benefits

Considering the proposed program's need for collaboration among multiple stakeholder groups, there must subsequently be significant benefits to each group to ensure their participation and program success. Indeed, in addressing the pertinent social issue of unemployment, each stakeholder group significantly benefits from participation in a volunteering-based trajectory towards gaining employment. This section outlines these benefits in accordance with five stakeholder groups – volunteers, program organizers, volunteer organizations, public institutions, and private institutions – that are categorized as either primary stakeholders or secondary stakeholders.

Primary Stakeholders

The stakeholders in this category are directly involved with the proposed program as either its target participants – unemployed volunteers – or its administrative entity – the program organizers.

Volunteers

In terms of the jobseekers entering such a volunteering program, this paper has clearly outlined the human capital and social capital benefits of volunteering and their relation to employability and gaining employment. Jobseekers that are recruited or selected for such a program would have the primary objective of finding sustained employment and the secondary objective of developing personal attributes. Clearly then, the benefits to such volunteers of joining a volunteering trajectory towards gaining employment is firstly the employment outcome, and secondly the added skills, experiences, and networks forged during the process. Naturally, jobseekers would have to consider the opportunity cost of volunteering in such a program but it is the benefits of volunteering as outlined in Part 1 that ultimately tip the scale for jobseekers in favor of such a program.

Program Organizers

The benefits to program organizers are based on their objectives of minimizing the cost of unemployment for the state by facilitating employment amongst jobseekers. As such, the extent to which they can effectively and efficiently increase volunteer employability will determine the extent to which they achieve said objective. This will predominantly be based on the strength of the program network with participating third parties that they can construct. That is, a larger number of participating NPOs and businesses will ensure a larger number and variation of tasks available for volunteers to develop their human capital and social capital. Naturally, the quality of the network is equally important, since better assignments that meet the needs of each stage of the program will deliver more human capital and social capital returns to the volunteer. Moreover, such a network would allow cross-pollination of ideas and strategies between participating third parties particularly regarding recruitment and selection and may therefore indirectly affect employment rates. Bringing together businesses and NPOs as well as public institutions in such a forum would in itself therefore be a benefit to program organizers. Overall, program organizers would benefit the most from changing current workforce dynamics and extant employment paradigms towards including volunteering as an effective strategy for gaining employment; by doing so, they will not only have justified the existence of the program, but also altered the labor force by providing jobseekers with a proven and widely supported approach for gaining employment.

Secondary Stakeholders

The stakeholders in this category are both directly and indirectly involved with the proposed program as either recipients of program volunteers – volunteer organizations, private institutions – or as beneficiaries of program outcomes – public institutions.

Volunteer Organizations

The NPOs that collaborate with the program by providing volunteer assignments receive numerous key benefits from their participation. First and foremost, they gain access to a continual source of volunteers that can meet all their volunteering needs, based on the assignments or tasks that need to be accomplished. This means that NPOs will no longer have to fret about meeting laborious work requirements, as such tasks can be fulfilled in Phase 1 of the

program by unemployed volunteers. In Phase 2, NPOs can similarly utilize the program volunteers to fulfill their medium-term labor requirements. The easier access to a greater number of volunteers that the program offers is therefore a substantial benefit that is further facilitated by the role of the program as a conduit for volunteer sharing amongst participating organizations. If, for example, a volunteer completes an assignment in a for-profit organization during Stage 5 and is then assigned to an NPO as a second assignment in Stage 5, that NPO can utilize the skills, knowledge, and networks that the volunteer brings with them from their previous assignment. In this way, the rotation of volunteers between participating organizations is an especially beneficial aspect for volunteer organizations. Moreover, such a pool of resources is likely to be highly diverse, leading to the possibility of efficiently attracting volunteers who reflect the larger diversity of culture, socioeconomic status, and age within a given context. Such diversity is often sought by volunteer organizations to increase their appeal within society and amongst beneficiaries as well as in meeting funding requirements. For these volunteering reasons alone, participation in such a program would be elemental to both small and large volunteer organizations.

There are also multiple indirect benefits that this stakeholder group would receive by participating in the program. As shown in Figure 10, for example, most participating voluntary organizations would likely receive funding from the program to offset the additional expenses associated with taking on a larger volunteer workforce. This may stimulate internal efficiency, whereby volunteer administrators improve on the economical implementation of volunteer labor. The potential result is a net financial gain as well as improved volunteer administration capabilities. Another example of an indirect benefit to volunteer organizations is the image boost that such NPOs can expect to gain from participation in the program. Not only simply because the additional volunteers would aid them in achieving their own objectives, but also because participation would increase their 'brand' recognition amongst other stakeholder groups. Furthermore, utilizing their participation in a program that essentially helps the unemployed is also a strong PR message that can be leveraged during fundraising initiatives. When applying for state funds, their participation in such a program may even be leveraged to their advantage in application processes, either officially or unofficially. Overall, volunteer organizations therefore stand to gain substantially in many direct and indirect ways from participation in such a proposed volunteer employment program.

Private Institutions

The benefits for private institutions of participating in such a program are similar to those of volunteer organizations. For example, businesses can profit from free labor when used for menial tasks in Phase 1 of the program or when volunteers are used in Phase 2 of the program to test new areas or ideas for which there is often low budgetary allocation. For many private institutions, therefore, volunteers cannot only lower labor costs but can also boost company innovation. Such a benefit would be particularly welcomed by small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that contend with smaller revenues and lower economies of scale.

Another clear benefit for private institutions of participating in such a program is as an avenue of employee recruitment and selection. That is, businesses can choose to hire those volunteers that are deemed beneficial to the company upon completion of their assignment. Indeed, this is a fully intentional outcome of the program. There are a number of desirable benefits for the private institution of hiring employees in such a manner. First, recruitment through employee referrals by employees with whom volunteers work with is a less expensive screening process than more formal selection methods (Montgomery, 1991). Coupled with immediate access to the program's database of information on a trove of diverse jobseeking candidates, such procedures can potentially reduce recruitment costs. Second, research shows that volunteer jobseekers are in effect more desirable employee candidates as they are considered good organizational citizens who are more productive employees and are likely to forgo their private interests for the sake of the organization (Organ, 1988). If the proposed Volunteer Program screening and selection is well managed by program organizers, then the probability of encountering such candidates is greatly increased for participating private institutions.

In addition, businesses will enter a network of like-minded organizations including NPOs with whom they can reciprocate voluntary activities. This means that private institutions will be able to more effectively place their own employees as corporate volunteers considering their exposure to a large network of NPOs. Other indirect benefits may ensue, where for-profit and not-for-profit organizations could align areas of common interest and collaboration such as under CSR policies or community involvement. Ultimately, participation in the program would therefore also provide a brand recognition boost amongst their own stakeholder groups as well as the stakeholder groups of the program. For many businesses, such PR and image benefits would be priceless.

Public Institutions

As mentioned under the benefits for program organizers, the primary objective of the proposed Volunteer Program is to facilitate jobseekers in gaining employment through volunteering, thereby reducing unemployment costs to public institutions. Figures 9 and 10 depict two such public institutions – the state and one of its subsidiaries, the UWV – and their role in the employment cycle. While both institutions share the same primary objective, they each gain slightly different benefits as will be explained below.

In sponsoring the Volunteer Program, the state receives numerous macro-economic benefits that meet its fiduciary duties. First, the program should result in a perceptible reduction in unemployment amongst jobseekers at a net gain; unemployment benefit costs should reduce to a fraction of its size and most likely offset all Volunteer Program costs. Indeed, there are various cases of public policy debates in Europe and America where volunteering is being discussed as a possible tool to improve job market re-entry chances of the unemployed whilst simultaneously reducing state welfare schemes (Greenberg, 1991; Ziemek, 2006). Second, the program will increase collaboration between sectors, thereby stimulating cross-sector pollination processes in areas such as innovation, efficiency, and accountability. In fact, some key studies indicate that such

collaboration efforts often result in win-win scenarios for all parties involved (see eg: Haski-Leventhal et. al., 2009; Roza & Meijs, 2014). Third, the program would revitalize the nonprofit sector (NPS). It is commonly understood that an active and vibrant NPS is a vital component of a functioning democracy, where governments are essential in that they shape the conditions that affect the development of social capital (Lowndes & Wilson, 2001). As such, the human resources and capital resources that are channeled to participating NPOs through the Volunteer Program would provide a continuous artery of support and promote civic engagement nationally. In terms of the Netherlands, the program would therefore provide an organized platform to re-embed volunteering and social cohesion into societal discourse and go some way to countering current social exclusion and individualization trends (Van Baren et. al., 2011). Finally, the Volunteer Program would deliver on such macro-economic benefits as outlined above in a sustainable manner. This means that the benefits accrued are guaranteed on the long-term and expected to increase over time. As the program generates noticeable results, for example, more interest is expected from NPOs, businesses, and jobseekers, thereby becoming a self-developing mechanism. The aims and objectives of the program are therefore self-enforced as the interest in program participation expands. Coupled with the various benefits gained through participation mentioned per stakeholder group above, the implication is that such gains are likely to be realized regardless of the health of the economic environment, whether in expansion or recession. This is because elements of the program such as social capital development are in essence recession-proof (Franzen & Hangartner, 2006).

In terms of the UWV, the state unemployment benefit agency, the benefits are relatively straightforward. Their objective is to find employment for jobseekers. Jobseekers that undergo the Volunteer Program and gain employment therefore directly meet the objectives of the UWV. In a sense, the UWV outsources work-placement to the Volunteer Program by diverting jobseekers towards developing more social capital and human capital. This is incidentally another strong benefit for the UWV, where jobseekers also become better employment candidates through their participation in the Volunteer Program. Those that do not find work directly after participation in the program and return to the UWV will have higher skills and experience and therefore be easier and faster to process. Coupled with the network of participating organizations in the Volunteer Program, jobseekers will find work faster, need to apply less often, and need to go to fewer interviews before gaining employment. This in turn will reduce the operating costs of the UWV since they process fewer candidates at a more efficient pace. The final net benefit is a reduction in state unemployment costs.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to tackle pervasive unemployment – which is known to influence social sector dynamics and place a significant burden on the state – by proposing an employment program solution exclusively dependent on volunteering. In doing so, this paper has taken a closer look at the relationship between volunteering and employment – where *volunteering* leads to *employability* which leads to *employment* – using the findings as a basis for a sound proposal on designing a volunteering trajectory towards gaining employment in the Netherlands.

Specifically, Part 1 reviewed the literature regarding the link between *volunteering* and *employability* through an in depth assessment of four beneficial effects of volunteering – experimenting, networking, learning, and signaling – and the preconditions necessary for such effects to occur. This investigation of the relationship between volunteering and employability thus conclusively supported the social capital and human capital benefits of volunteering for jobseekers.

Having deconstructed the relationship between volunteering and employability, Part 2 turned to the as yet assumed link between *employability* and *employment*, arguing that an instrumental approach to volunteering through organizational design maximizes employability, thereby converting the chance of gaining employment into an assurance of gaining employment. Design factors that can be instrumentally applied towards optimizing the beneficial effects of volunteering on social capital and human capital were subsequently extrapolated from academic literature and briefly outlined.

Finally, a proposal was outlined in Part 3 concerning the organizational design of a volunteer-based employment program in the Netherlands deliberately aimed at gaining employment for jobseekers. In this way, it was postulated that unemployment can be instrumentally addressed to the benefit of unemployed volunteers as well as involved third party institutions such as volunteer organizations, private enterprises, and the state.

While from an academic standpoint more research is needed to test the correlations within the volunteering to employment model, the significant support for volunteering as a means to gaining employment as recognized amongst numerous global initiatives and public policy debates as well as the testimonial evidence of jobseekers and employers is substantial enough to warrant the implementation of such a proposed volunteering program. In doing so, one of the principal propositions of this paper is that sufficient care is taken in designing such a program in order to ensure that jobseekers' increased employability translates effectively into gained employment. This therefore requires an appropriate investment of human resources and capital resources at the outset, but should nonetheless result in a net gain in the long run. Indeed, the multiple benefits gained from such a program not only by the jobseekers themselves, but also by private institutions, public institutions, and volunteer organizations, indicate that such a program would achieve a win-win situation for all stakeholder groups and that such benefits would accumulate over time. As

a risk management protocol, it is however advised that a pilot program be first established to measure the extent to which employment is realized. Incidentally, such a project would also enable researchers to more accurately test the relationship between volunteering and employment investigated in this paper and therefore allow for an ongoing assessment of the value and utility of committing to a full-scale volunteering program; incorporating benefits for yet another stakeholder group, scholars.

In conclusion, gaining sustained employment through volunteering is a recognized mechanism for tackling pervasive unemployment. Considering the contextual factors of the Netherlands, including trends such as individualization in cross-sector collaboration and declining national social capital, designing a volunteering trajectory towards gaining employment in the form of a state-sponsored Volunteer Program is therefore highly recommended considering the diverse benefits it would deliver to all the involved stakeholder groups.

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