Volunteering to Learn:

Enhancing the learning in university student volunteering

Website Launch

14th August 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

I would like to acknowledge that Murdoch University is situated on the lands of the Whadjuk Nyungar people.

I pay respect to their enduring and dynamic culture and the leadership of Nyungar elders both past and present.

The boodjar (country) on which Murdoch University is located has, for thousands of years, been a place of learning. We at Murdoch University are proud to continue this long tradition.

Reconciliation ACTION PLAN INNOVATE RAP

Murdoch UNIVERSITY

Our team

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Support for this project has been provided by the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching.
The views in this project do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching.

Our project

Specifically, the project is investigating

- the nature and goals of Australian university student volunteering programs,
- the learning outcomes desired and achieved by students who volunteer,
- expectations of both universities and host organisations, and
- available options for locating programs within universities.

Aim: Develop Good Practice Guides

Our approach

Pilot	Literature Review
Matrix	Interviews
Team analysis and development of GPGs	Reference Group workshop
ACEN Workshop Perth	Critical Friends
Team revision and refinement of GPGs	Road show

Volunteering to learn

Good Practice Guides

- What do we mean by "Good Practice"?

- What are the guides intended to achieve?

What guides do we have?

Concept Guides

- Terminology
- Learning

Good Practice Guides

- Students
- Host organisations
- University decision makers
- University program managers
- Employers

Key findings - Terminology

Two main differences of opinion were identified in this study.

There is debate around whether students are volunteering if

1. they receive credit for a unit of study, or
2. the activity is compulsory within a unit or course of study.

Systematic review of the literature found 75 terms in use
Desk audit across universities found over 300 entries. 8 models in place

Volunteering Australia new definition in 2015:

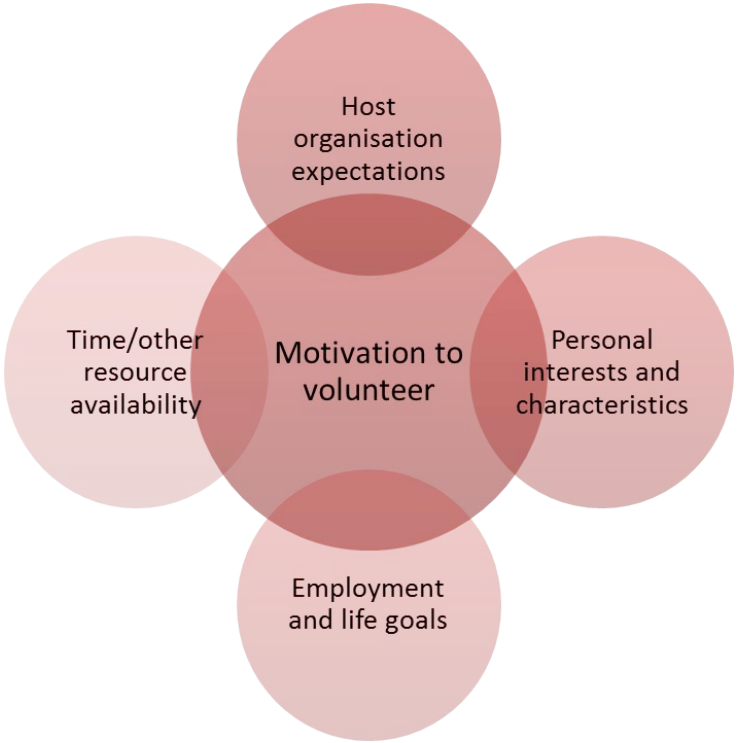
Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain.

Compulsory educational service learning (where students are **required** to volunteer as part of a course) is not considered to be volunteering

Key findings - Students

3 types of student volunteers:

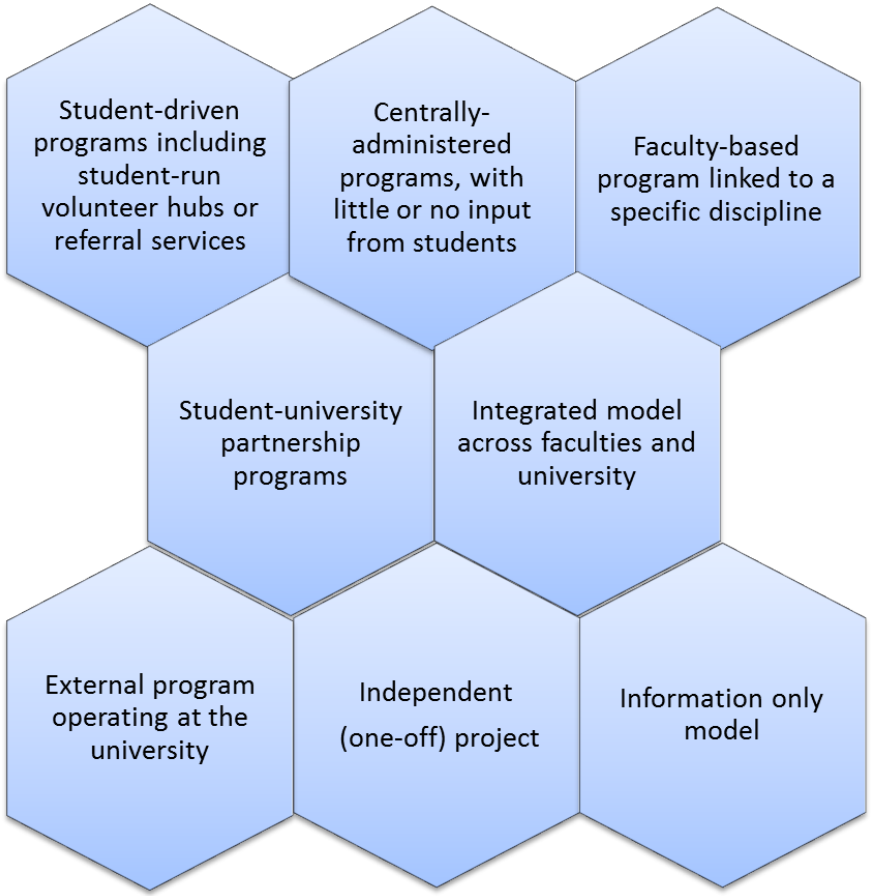
Academic
Facilitated
Independent



Motivation to volunteer		
Social	*Values*	*Employability*
To be active	To act upon values	For credit
For fun	To help others	To gain experience
To make friends	To support a cause	To add to their CV
Because their friends do	"It's expected "	To increase employability
	"It's what you do"	To develop skills
		To learn/practice English
		***Because it's required

Good communication at the start of the volunteering relationship will lead to better outcomes.

Key findings- Universities



Attention needs to be paid to:

Strategy and policy
Funding and support
Partnerships and relationships
Staff, students and hosts
Managing expectations

at the strategic level

AND

Recognition and feedback
Operational matters
Legal frameworks
Staff, students and hosts
Managing expectations

at the operational level

Key findings – Host organisations

Key findings for Employers

Importance of employing graduates with volunteering experience

- Engaged workforce
- Value congruence
- CSR involvement
- Attracting people with skills, values and experience

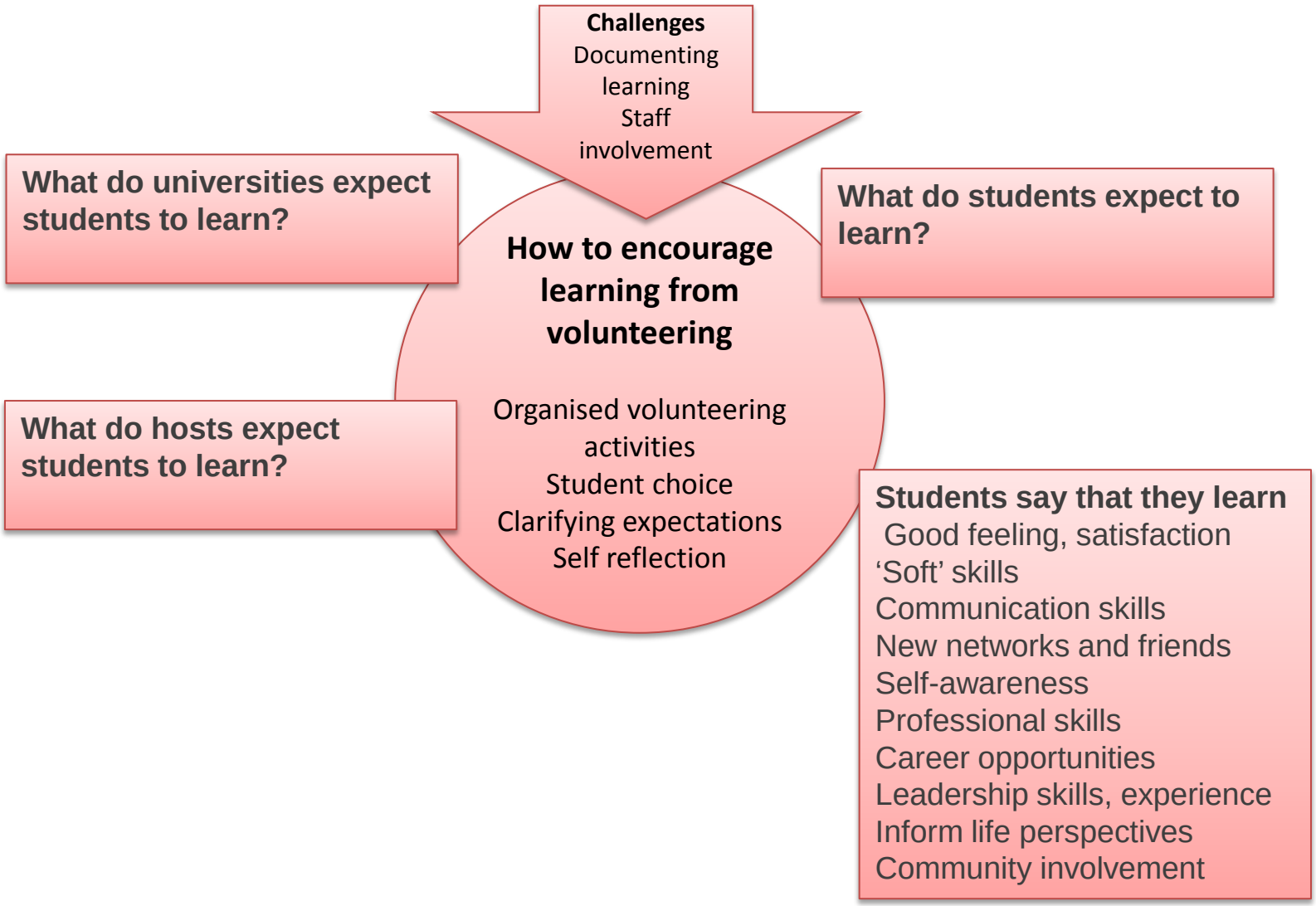
What to look for in potential employees' CV

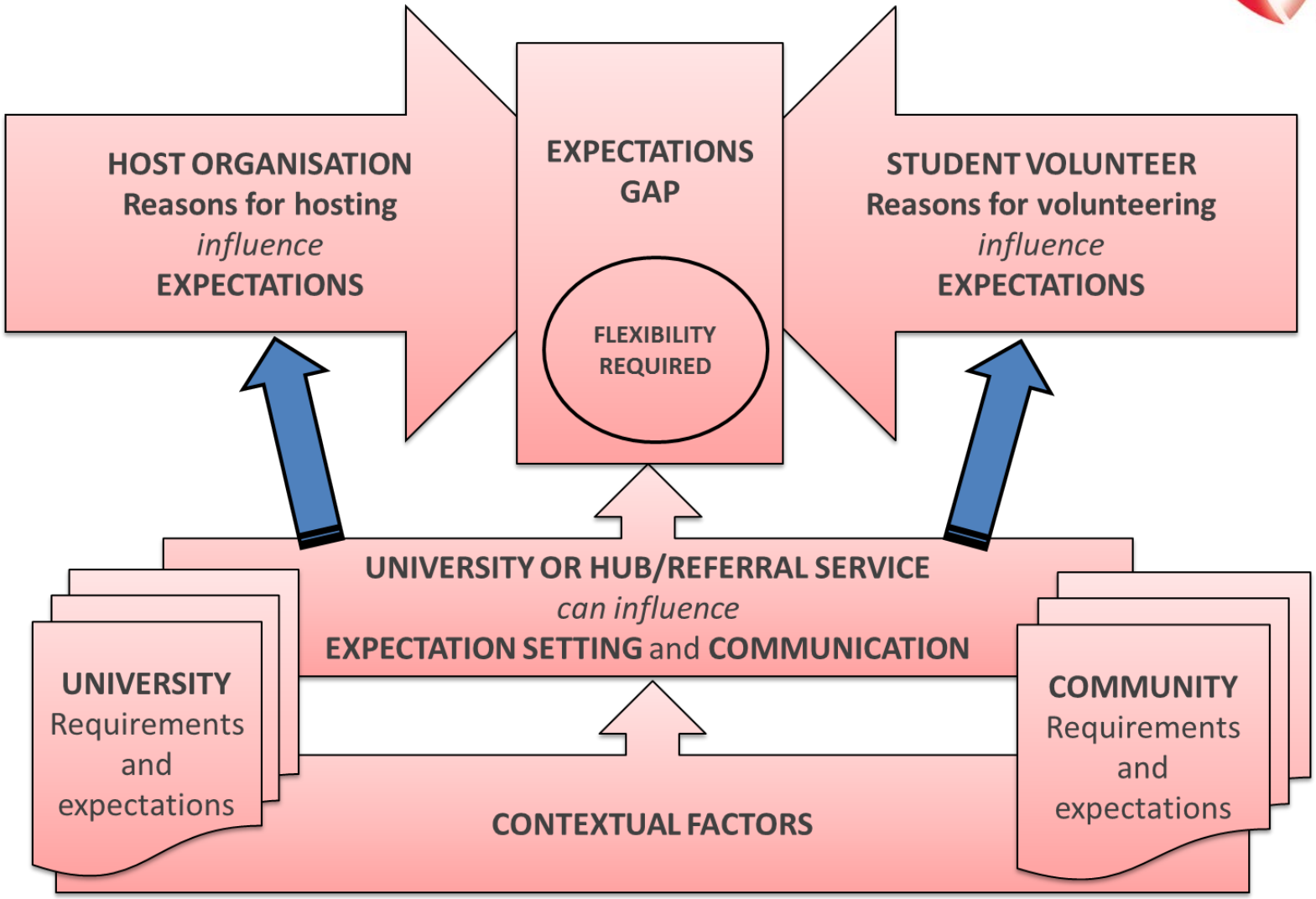
- What did they do?
- Type of volunteering
- Leadership roles
- Skills developed
- Experiences
- Grants

Questions which look into the volunteering experience

1. Tell us about your volunteering experience in the university. Where did you volunteer? For how long? How often?
2. What kind of roles did you undertake in your volunteering? What tasks and responsibilities did they include?

Key findings about Learning




HOST ORGANISATION
Reasons for hosting
influence
EXPECTATIONS
EXPECTATIONS
GAP
FLEXIBILITY
REQUIRED
STUDENT VOLUNTEER
Reasons for volunteering
influence
EXPECTATIONS
UNIVERSITY OR HUB/REFERRAL SERVICE
can influence
EXPECTATION SETTING and COMMUNICATION
UNIVERSITY
Requirements
and
expectations
COMMUNITY
Requirements
and
expectations
CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

Controversies & contradictions

- "Voluntary"
- Who benefits?
- At what point is it exploitation?
- Who "owns" the program?
- Where do activism and politics fit in?
- Myths and Mysteries
  - Why would employers not value experience gained volunteering?
  - If all students volunteer, will 'different' be sought somewhere else?

Feedback and Evaluation
Preparation and Planning
Relationship Building
Expectation Formation and Matching
Communication

www.murdoch.edu.au/projects/volunteeringtolearn/

Thank you
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A little something from the Murdoch Volunteer Hub

http://www.the-guild.com.au/volunteering-hub/murdoch-volunteering-ambassador-program/