

SERVICE ANCHORS LADDERSHIP GUIDE



Welcome to the Service Anchors Laddership Guide! This document aims to serve as a reference manual as you ladder others and continue to deepen in your own service journey. It was created by the Volunteer Ladders Team, and should you have questions regarding any aspect of the guide or on your role as a Service Anchor you can reach us at vol-leads@servicespace.org anytime.

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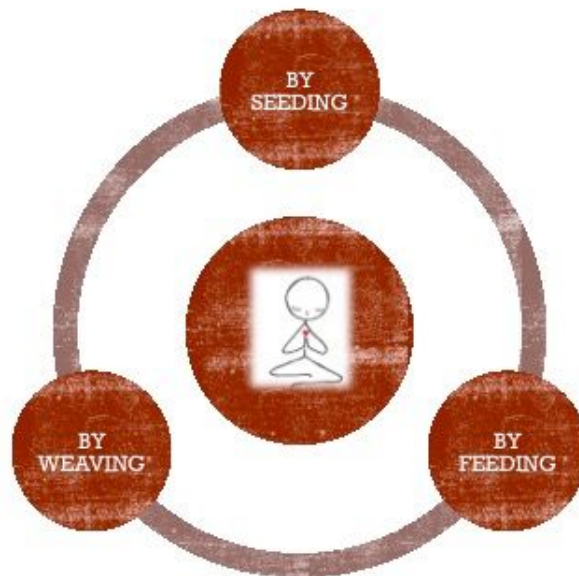
Who are Service Anchors?

The Service Anchors team is made up of volunteers who are deeply committed to ServiceSpace values and are currently leading or anchoring projects, activities, and communities of service. While committed to one or more well-defined roles within a specific team or community, Service Anchors also hold an awareness of the broader ecosystem, and are committed to nurturing it by:

- ❖ SUPPORTING each other and the broader structures we serve together in (whether through different roles, projects, processes or tools)
- ❖ PARTICIPATING in monthly service anchor calls
- ❖ SHARING stories on the feed, with our teams, and communities
- ❖ FACILITATING connections between people, projects, the community and the ecosystem

When looked at from a meta level, Service Anchors are Gardener-Weavers or Weaver-Gardeners :) And their core responsibilities fall into three easy to remember categories: Seeding. Feeding. Weaving :)

HOW DO WE SERVE?



SEEDING: THE PRE-VOLUNTEER PHASE

MAIN TASKS:

- Effectively [creating volunteer opportunities](#) that enable others to serve.
- Anchoring or supporting local circles/events that invite others to experience the ecosystem

CONTEXT: As Service Anchors we are responsible for “seeding”/identifying new service opportunities on our teams and in our communities, and helping to turn these possibilities into well-defined volunteer roles that people can sign up for.

All folks interested in volunteering with ServiceSpace currently follow three main steps:

1. Creating a Profile
2. Completing an Online Orientation and
3. Signing up for a Volunteer Role.

During this phase The Volunteer Coordination Team is the main point of contact, and they will hand off the potential volunteer to the appropriate Service Anchor depending on the role that they signed up for.

TOOLS: (mainly utilized by the Volunteer Coordination Team)

1. Online volunteer records
2. Tracking & Reporting Tools
3. Annual Reviews

SEEDING: (PRE-VOLUNTEER PHASE)



FEEDING: THE ON-BOARDING PHASE

MAIN TASKS:

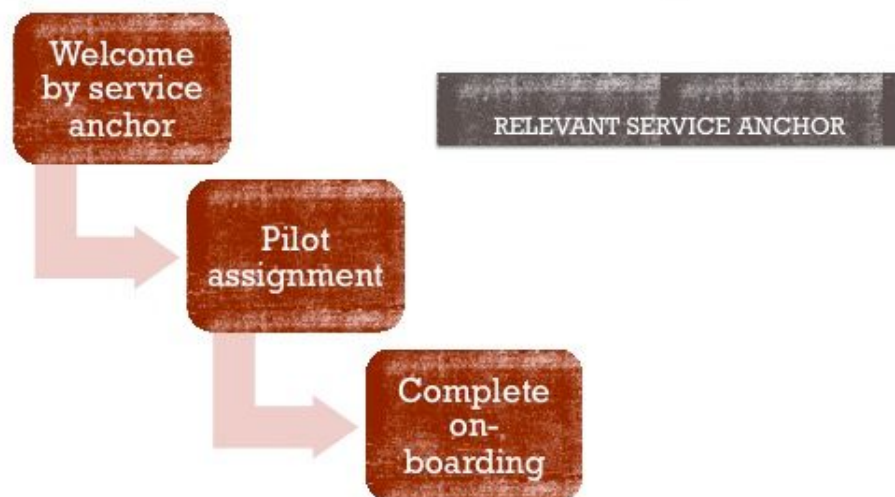
- Providing a meaningful [volunteer experience](#) for members of your team.
- Developing and maintaining [detailed documentation](#) to support the team's day-to-day functions.
- [Supporting the journeys](#) of the volunteers on your teams.

CONTEXT: Once a new volunteer has been handed off to the relevant Service Anchor, they go through a systematic on-boarding process that involves an initial welcome, a pilot assignment and then completion of the on-boarding process. While the details vary from team to team, the links above offer some best practices and guidelines in terms of how to welcome and help orient new volunteers to their particular roles, and also how to continuously nurture and support other volunteers on your team or in your community.

TOOLS AVAILABLE:

- **Manuals**
- **Email templates**
- **Team Feed**
- **Video Calls**
- **1:1 Check Ins**
- **Weekly/Monthly Metrics**

FEEDING (ONBOARDING PHASE)



WEAVING: LONG TERM LADDERING PHASE

MAIN TASKS:

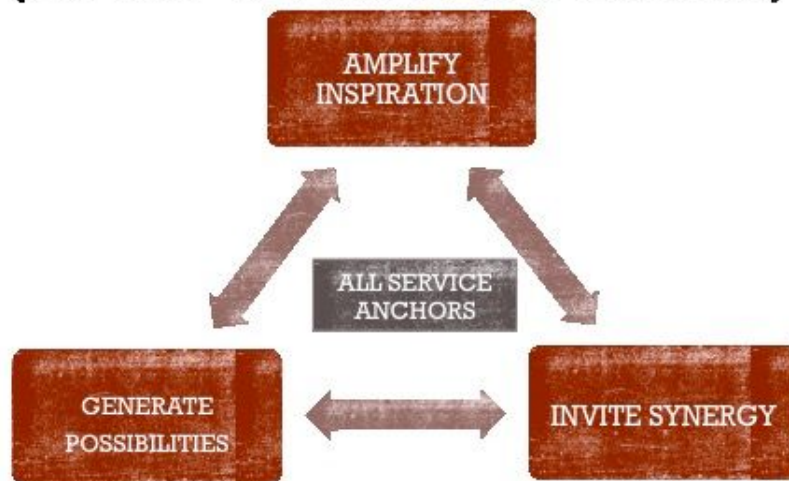
- [Sharing inspiration from your lens](#) to keep the ripples in motion and plant seeds of goodness.
- Generating new possibilities (in terms of local events, new projects or service activities for your team or community)
- Inviting synergy by finding ways to connect with the work of other teams and communities, and facilitating cross-connections with people across the ecosystem and outside of it.

CONTEXT: Regardless of what a Service Anchors defined role is within the ecosystem, they each also contribute in dynamic ways, each using their specific contexts and vantage points to weave threads together in ways that allow new possibilities and potentials in service to emerge.

TOOLS:

- **Anchor Feed**
- **Local Event + Invite Tools**
- **Monthly Video Calls**
- **Retreats**

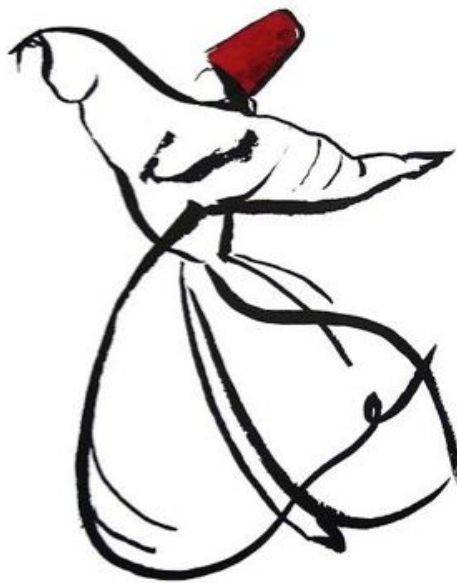
WEAVING (LONG TERM LADDERING)



Seed. Feed. Weave.

then...

“Stop weaving and watch how the pattern improves.” :)
-- Jalaluddin Rumi



DEEP DIVE - SEEDING

Creating Volunteer Opportunities

One of the aims of all of our projects is to provide volunteers with meaningful ways to selflessly serve in collaboration with other like-hearted people and to make helpful contributions to our work in the process. As your project evolves, new volunteer opportunities may naturally arise as the needs change on your team. Other times, you may interact with a new volunteer who is so deeply inspired by the project and you're able to create a volunteer opportunity to support his/her journey while contributing to the project in some way. :)

Setting Up New Volunteer Opportunities: For those Service Anchors who are leading projects and tasked with the responsibility to set-up new volunteer opportunities, you'll find detailed information in the appendix on [creating new volunteer opportunity listings](#) on the ServiceSpace site.

Setting Up New Events: For those who are hosting gatherings or other volunteer events locally instead of virtual opportunities, you will find it helpful to review this step-by-step guide on ["How to Create a ServiceSpace Event Listing"](#) using the customised tools on the ServiceSpace site.



DEEP DIVE - FEEDING

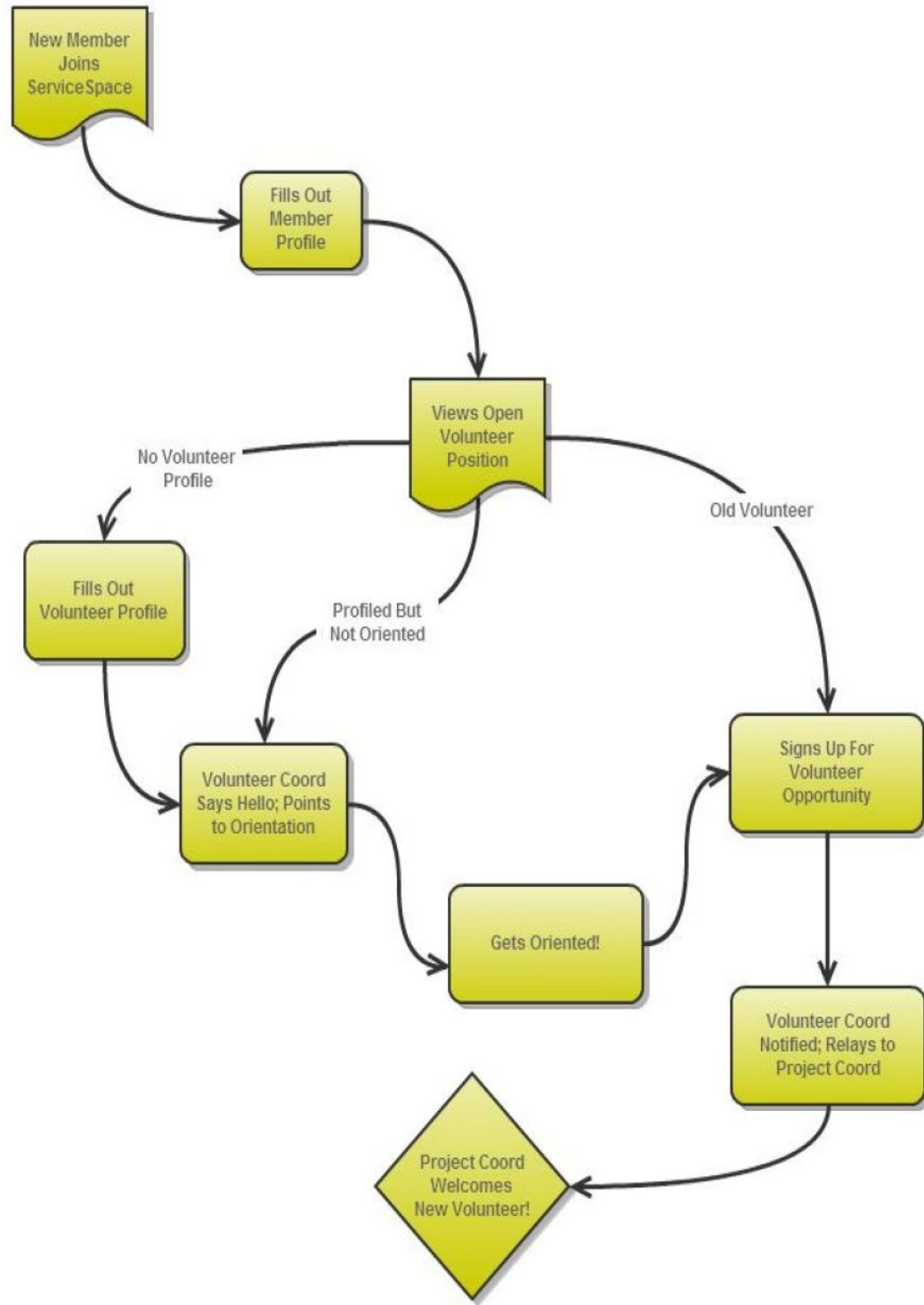
Facilitating a Meaningful Volunteer Experience

Below is a comprehensive overview of the ideal volunteer journey for new people who come into the ecosystem through the ServiceSpace site from when they first register as members to when they are active participants on projects.

- **Volunteer Registration:** ServiceSpace member registers as a volunteer by
 - (a) completing a volunteer profile and
 - (b) completing the 45-min online orientation
- **Sign-up for an Opp:** They search for available [volunteer opportunities](#) and express an interest in one that they connect with. The Volunteer Coordinator team receives a notification and gets in touch with the Service Anchor to let them know a new volunteer has signed up for a role on their team
- **Personal Contact:** The Service Anchor can then write to that volunteer personally with a general email that includes a few questions for them answer just to get a feel for their interest, inspiration, connection -- we've included [a sample email](#) in the appendix that we send to volunteers who sign up to be a Kindful Kids Newsletter Editor just to give you an idea.
- **Connect:** Once you receive their response and it seems like they are reasonably enthusiastic :), you can reply and set-up a 20-30 minute call with them (phone/skype/whatever works for you both). The purpose of this first call is just to connect with them so start by sharing a bit about yourself, your context in the SSp ecosystem, what inspires you, etc and this will invite them to open up about themselves too :) Tell them a bit about the project, about the team and about the purpose of the role. Then check-in to see if that all sounds good to them so far
- **Volunteer Journey:** Give them a quick overview of the flow for new volunteers...
 - Before you get involved with the role directly, we have a pre-homework assignment to help you get a good overview of the project/channel.
 - After you complete this pre-homework over the next 7-10 days, get in touch with me and we'll schedule a training call to go through the role in detail and get you started on your training period for a month.
 - We'll be in touch along the way to offer you feedback on how it's going and be available to answer any questions you have as well
 - After a month, we'll check back in to see what you think of the role, how it's going for you, and figure out if it's a mutual fit for the project and for you and decide how to take it from there. (This gives you and the volunteer an out right up front in the beginning in case it's not working out for whatever reason)
- **Pre-Homework:** After you share this overview, tell them about the pre-homework assignment towards the end of the call and send a follow-up email after the call with details about the homework assignment. We've included [a sample follow-up email](#) in the appendix sharing the pre-homework assignment from one team to give you an idea of what this can include. Ask THEM to contact YOU when they are done with the pre-homework and to share their findings in the next 7-10 days (eg. For the SpreadLove (Social Media) team, the pre-homework could be for eg. what were your 5 favourite social media posts on that channel from the past week and why; suggest 3 possible posts for that channel - one article/story/video, one quote with an image, etc).

- If you don't hear back from them after a couple of weeks, drop them a little reminder email to check-in on how things are going and if they have any questions.
- They'll usually reply one of two ways (a) apologising for the delay and saying they are going to respond shortly or (b) apologising for being MIA and saying that they realised they may not have enough time for this role.
- Either is fine of course, but just good to know at this early stage, especially if they are backing out, so that you are not spending too much time and energy ramping someone up who doesn't have the commitment and connection needed for the role.
- **Live Training Session:** For those who do complete the pre-homework, set-up a training call with them and email them the role guide (more on guides later) ahead of the call and ask them to review it beforehand. Then during the call, walk through the guide adding colour and context where helpful for the volunteer, answering their questions real-time along the way.
- **Trial Period:** After the training session, let them know you'll start the 4-6 week trial period and be specific about exactly what you'd like them to do during this trial period for the role. Let them know you'll be giving them feedback along the way and that it's not personal, just helpful tips based on what you and the team have seen has worked well, so they don't feel bad in case you're giving them a lot of feedback :)
- **Be Responsive:** It's really important that Service Anchors are responsive during this initial training period, especially in offering positive feedback on things they are doing well, while also offering tips on how to improve what they are doing where necessary.
- **Checking In:** After they've had enough time to try out the role, schedule another check-in call to give them a chance to reflect and to share their experiences so far. If it's not going well, they'll probably already have an idea based on the feedback you're providing along. If this is the case, tell them you think perhaps another role in the SSp ecosystem might be a better fit and reconnect the volunteer with the Ladders team (vol-leads@servicespace.org). However in most cases, once you've gotten this far, it does work out and you're smooth sailing from here on :)
- **Ongoing Connection/Inspiration**
 - **Introductions:** New members joining offer you the perfect excuse to blast everyone on the team with an email :) Send out a note introducing new people as they join, and telling them about all of the others who are on the team already (so they know the amazing community that are now a part of), inviting them to help welcome the newest addition to your team. Try to include profile photos, if possible, to bring the team to life :) We've included a [sample introduction email](#) in the appendix in case helpful to you.
 - **Monthly Team Calls:** Many teams in SSp have found it extremely helpful to have monthly team calls for 90 minutes just to check-in and see how everyone's getting on and exploring themes/topics that are relevant/new to the team. There are many free tools like Google Hangout, Skype, etc that you can use for your team calls, and if you need help with more ideas please email vol-leads@servicespace.org.
 - **Team Feed:** This is a great place to share team specific updates, inspiration, recaps of team calls, etc to keep everyone connected and feeling in the know across the team.
 - **Team Emails:** It's great to share emails with your team for example where others have shared gratitude for your offering to the world, or when there's a question people write in with where it would be nice to gather collective wisdom from the team to respond. We should proactively think of meaningful reasons to be in touch to keep everyone connected and feeling inspired :)

ServiceSpace Volunteer Flow



Developing and Maintaining Detailed Team Documentation

Over the years, we've found well-documented detailed guides to be enormously helpful in getting people up to speed on a new role they are undertaking and to serve as a reference for ongoing volunteers as well. Guides also ensure that no role in the ecosystem is dependent on a particular person doing it or a particular Anchor leading that project -- anyone should be able to step in to help out with a role when there is sufficient documentation in place.

Some tips on writing team role guides, in case helpful:

- Create one complete guide per each distinct role on your team
- Clearly structure the document with headings and subheadings to make it easy for anyone to follow along and find whatever parts they may be looking for
- Start by providing the person with context about the role, how it fits into both the project team as well as the broader ServiceSpace ecosystem
- Be detailed in your descriptions of both the responsibilities associated with a role as well as the processes to follow to do whatever it is the role does on a regular basis
- Provide screenshots, whenever helpful, to make processes easier to follow
- Include an FAQ type section where you include what to do if you need to step away from the role, whether permanently or temporarily, how to communicate with others on the team, how to make the most of the tools available on the ServiceSpace site as well as sources of inspiration they might like to visit in the ecosystem.
- Provide contact information for relevant people they may need to be in touch with

Sample Team Guides

You'll find several [examples of detailed role guides](#) from other teams in the appendix. If you have any questions, of course feel free to email the Ladders Team.

Supporting Journeys of Volunteers

Supporting the ongoing journeys of volunteers on your team is one of the most important responsibilities of Service Anchors. Above all, people like to feel connected to you and to their fellow teammates, and they like to feel a sense of belonging to the broader community.



There are many things Service Anchors can do to support the journeys of volunteers on their team from when they first sign-up to once they are already on board -- here are a few examples based on what has worked well for the KindSpring team.



DEEP DIVE - WEAVING

Supporting Fellow Service Anchors



We all need inspiration and connection to thrive in a service environment and one of the most important ways we receive this is through each other's support!

Ongoing interaction with fellow Service Anchors can be maintained by sharing your presence and stories through monthly updates on the Service Anchors feed, monthly video calls to check-in with each other on various happenings in the ecosystem and annual retreats. Monthly video calls are generally scheduled for the first Monday of every month at 9am PST, so that you can diarise them and plan ahead.

Sharing Inspiration from Your Lens: Keep the Ripples in Motion

As Service Anchors, we are all deeply involved with anchoring projects, communities and activities in the ServiceSpace ecosystem and as such, we have a unique lens from which to share inspiration with others. Our inboxes are filled weekly with inspiring stories from volunteers, from readers of our newsletters, from others who have experienced deep shifts in the community and want to express their gratitude for space that we hold and the list goes on. Our days and months are filled with first-hand experiences with volunteers, interactions with inspiring people in the community and the unfolding of our own personal journeys of service both within and beyond the ecosystem.

In our roles as Service Anchors, it's our responsibility to share this inspiration available from each of our unique lenses with others throughout the ecosystem to inspire others and nourish their journeys in some small way. We all know how many times we've been inspired by personal shares on the ServiceSpace feed, or blog posts about gatherings hosted on the other side of the world or even simple everyday moments of goodness that people share, so we need to step it up and share the inspiration surrounding us and make it accessible to others in order to support them in the same way we've been supported by all these beautiful stories over the years.

There are different ways you can be mindful of sharing inspiration with others in the ecosystem more broadly and within your own teams.

- **ServiceSpace Feed/Blog:** The feed is a great place to share deep stories of transformation, small personal moments of inspiration (yours or others you've interacted with), and highlights from your corner of the ecosystem in terms of new developments with your project, etc. If you plan to share a slightly longer write-up, click on "Blog" before you start typing and you'll be given more formatting options for your post. You can find more detailed information on how to post feeds/blogs here on this [Guide to Posting on SSp Feed/Blog](#), including how to [Add Photos](#) or [Links](#).
- **With your Teams:** See above section on facilitating a meaningful volunteer experience -- specifically the ["Ongoing Inspiration" section](#) -- for lots of ideas on how to share inspiration with the team and how to find reasons to keep everyone connected in the spirit of service.

Laddering Anchors, Fellows and Volunteers

The Ladders Team's purpose is to support the volunteer journeys of everyone across the SSp ecosystem and especially the Service Anchors! You can contact the team at vol-leads@servicespace.org.

The functions of the team include:

- Being the first point of contact for all people who sign-up for a volunteer opportunity on the SSp site
- Overseeing volunteer management across the teams in the SSp ecosystem and ensuring ongoing engagement is effective, meaningful and inspiring
- Organising annual Laddership retreats, virtual project retreats, and monthly calls to hold space for Service Anchors to support each other's journeys
- Conducting annual Project Surveys and subsequent individual follow-ups with relevant Service Anchors
- Conducting annual Volunteer Surveys and subsequent follow-ups with respondents
- Making ongoing updates and changes as they relate to volunteer management processes to accommodate the changing needs of the ecosystem

There are many ways the team can support your role including:

- Helping to identify possible new volunteers for roles that you are recruiting for on your team
- Supporting you in developing guides for your team by offering feedback
- Helping to place a volunteer who might not have worked out on your team in another team
- Brainstorming processes in your team to help make things flow more smoothly

In addition, we've seen the benefits of [Laddership Circles](#) in supporting journeys and this team intends to integrate these learnings into proactively laddering our own ServiceSpace volunteers in inspiring ways. In addition to looking after volunteers from when they register, to when they sign-up to volunteer, to annual check-ins and follow-ups when they've been placed, this team's expanded intention also includes offering a variety of opportunities throughout the year to engage with community and learn from SSp's thought leadership through hosting calls, etc. As part of this intention, we are planning to alternate the audience of the monthly calls down the road so that some calls will be Service Anchors calls and others will include broader pools of volunteers including Service Fellows and new Volunteers.

APPENDIX

Appendix A: How to Create a New Volunteer Opportunity Listing

It only takes a few minutes to set-up a new volunteer opportunity on the ServiceSpace website thanks to all the handy technology and online tools we have available to us.

1. Click on My Teams and go to your team's homepage
2. Click on the "Team" tab along the top menu of your team's homepage
3. In order to create and manage volunteer positions you must be listed in the "Admin Circle" for your team. If you aren't already, please email vol-leads@servicespace.org before proceeding.
4. At the bottom of the page you'll see a section called "Volunteer Positions" and at the end you can click on a link that says "Create a New Volunteer Position".
5. Fill in the relevant information which any new volunteer will want to know about the volunteer role and click on Create New Volunteer Position to complete the process.
 - a. **Description:** In this section, it's helpful to include specifics about what the volunteer would be doing, along with the number of hours each week they would need to commit and anything else they need to know about that role like specific skills needed.
 - b. **Frequency:** For a new position, you'll be choosing between Recurring or One-Time.
 - i. "Recurring" - If you can accommodate more than one volunteer for this role, you can select "Recurring" for now -- once you've reached capacity for a role you can go back and edit the status of the volunteer role to "paused" which means it will no longer be listed on the volunteer opportunities page.
 - ii. "One-Time" - If, however, you have capacity for one person to do this role, you can select "One-Time" and as soon as one person signs up for the role, it will remove the listing from the volunteer opportunities page. Keep in mind that if a volunteer signs up and then ends up not working out, you will need to go back and edit the status of that volunteer position to activate it again (you don't have to fill out all the details again) so that it will reappear on the volunteer opportunities page for others to sign up for.

Appendix B: Sample Emails to Volunteers

Sample Intro Email - Kindful Kids Newsletter Editor Role: (responses to this initial email help you to gauge how pumped up they are and what inspires them; in this particular case, the person never even replied to this email, so good to have something simple like this to gauge their interest) :)

Dear [Name],

Thanks so much for your interest in the Kindful Kids Newsletter Editor Role!

A few questions to get a sense of your interests and what inspires you :)

- What inspired you to express an interest in this role?
- Are you familiar with the Kindful Kids Weekly Newsletter, if so, how did you hear about it?
- What hopes do you have for future generations of children?

I really look forward to hearing from you and exploring this role with you :)

In the spirit of service,

[Your Name]

(on behalf of the Kindful Kids Volunteer Team)

Sample Email - After initial intros, sharing the pre-homework before training session:

Dear [Name],

It was great to connect with you and learn more about what inspired you to join ServiceSpace and sign-up for this particular role.

To get started with your pre-homework, sign up as a member of Smile Groups on the KindSpring site, if you haven't already, and spend some time reading through the stories people have shared and then also spend some time reading through the stories which the Editors Team has published to the public site which are [located here](#). This will help to give you a sense of the quality of stories we typically publish and the nature of the stories -- they typically focus on kindness in action, as you'd probably imagine :) So, while others may share nice reflective pieces about love and life, for the purposes of the public site and our new visitors, we keep the theme of the stories focused on kind acts, typically shared in the form of a personal story. They don't have to be the best story you ever read, but they do need to be focused on the topic at hand :)

After you've spent some time going through the stories and contributing to Smile Groups, it will be helpful for you to read through [this detailed Editing Guide](#) that we've put together to orient new volunteers to this role. It will provide you with a really comprehensive overview!

Have a read through the above and drop me a line with any thoughts/questions you might have.

Each member of the team typically tries to edit a minimum of 2-3 stories each week and more if you feel moved to do so :) Once you get started, I typically offer you feedback on the first couple of stories (probably just to reassure you that you're doing some wonderful editing) :) The duration of the role is really for as long as you would like to continue, but ideally at least 4-6 months.

The editing team receives a report each week which has links to the stories that everyone on the team published that week, just in case you're curious to see what's coming through the pipeline.

If you have any questions along the way, feel free to get in touch. Based on all of this, if you think you'd like to try out the role, drop me a line when you're ready to start, and I'll ask our tech team to get you set-up for your trial period :)

In service,
[Your name]

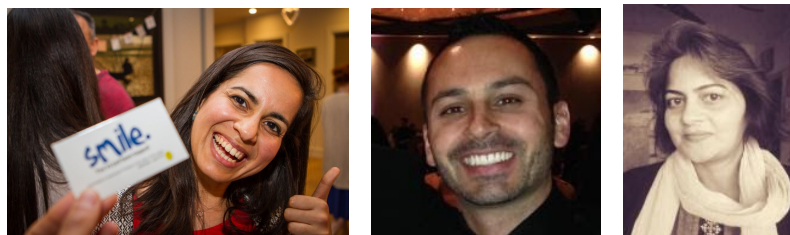
Sample Email - Introducing New Team Members of the Kindful Parenting Challenge

Dear [Names],

Hope you're all doing well across the world in California (Amir), London (Anjali) and Pune, India (Neeti)! :)

Meet the A-Team :)

I'm so excited that you are all feeling inspired to put your hearts together to develop content for a Kindful Parenting Challenge to share with the community around the world! Each of you brings such different contexts and experiences from your lens, so it will be beautiful to see what collectively emerges.



- **Anjali (London)** - Anjali is a really inspiring school teacher here in London, who I met for the first time at a one-day [retreat at our home](#) that she had attended in 2015 when Nipun and Satish Kumar engaged in a beautiful dialog. She hosts a Kindness Club at her school, where she invited kids to explore how to practice kindness! We reconnected at the first of several events that took place during [Nipun's recent to London](#) visit a few months ago and discovered we shared a passion for sharing the spirit of service, kindness, generosity and love with children. We've collectively planted seeds to host Kindful Kids circles for children here in London to share inspiring stories, do acts of service together and create a community of noble friends among the next generation :)
- **Amir (California)** - Amir is a good friend of mine from my university days at Berkeley and

was recently part of our [summer Laddership Circle](#), where he deepened his journey of cultivating the values of compassion, stillness and generosity in small ways in so many aspects of his life including work and home. He can be found starting Gratitude Walls at at 200-person company he works at along with going on hikes and cycle rides through beautiful natural surroundings in his neighbourhood with his two sons :) And, I just serendipitously discovered while browsing through the ServiceSpace website that he and his wife Ami (also a dear friend from Berkeley) are hosting an [Awakin Circle at their home](#) in Pacifica next week!

- **Neeti (Pune, India)** - Neeti is a mother of a teenage son and a wonderful soul, who connected with Nipun after serendipitously reading entries on his [walking pilgrimage](#) blog and then was in for a surprise when he told her he was in India and invited her to join him and others at a circle in Pune! Since that day, Neeti has been a regular part of several [service retreats and gatherings in Pune](#) and Moved By Love (aka. ServiceSpace India :) initiatives around the country and every Tuesday since December 2012, Neeti, her husband Sanjeev and 19 year-old-son Yash, have also been hosting [Awakin Circles](#). She's often found holding space for others while doing small acts with great love, deep compassion and a warm stillness -- you'll be inspired to read about [Neeti's recent act of love](#) for a dear friend who was very ill and how she was there for her in her final days, in such beautiful ways. I had the joy of being with Neeti at the recent [Gandhi 3.0 retreat](#) in India, and watching her quietly infuse her love into every little thing she did as part of the volunteer team who hosted the gathering with such grace.

So all in all, we have an incredibly inspiring team -- a mother, father and teacher, an amazing group of people to put together a Kindful Parenting Challenge! :)

Scheduling a Video Call

To kick things off, I thought it would be really nice to try to schedule a video call with all of us together so we can hold circle, learn about what inspires each of us to contribute in this way and come up with ideas together for the Kindful Parenting Challenge! Timings will be a bit tricky, as we've learned over the years, to schedule a call that works for all of our time zones, but typically the best time for these three zones seems to be the morning time in CA, early evening in London and late night in India :)

Please take 2 minutes to complete [this quick poll](#) so we can find a date/time next week when we can all circle up to kick things off! :) Before the call, I'll circulate a few additional links to information that will be great to review before we meet.

Ahead of the call, it would be lovely if you feel inspired, to share something about yourself and perhaps what moved you to volunteer in this particular role.

Looking forward to seeing you all on a call soon!

With gratitude,

[Your name]

Appendix C: Sample Volunteer Role Guides

Below are some sample guides from the KindSpring team in case helpful in structuring your role guides.

- **Kindful Kids Editor**: This role is part of the Kindful Kids team and helps to curate content for KK newsletters.
- **KindSpring Community Weaver**: The Community Weavers Team is made up of a handful of active Smile Groups members, who are super involved in sharing their own stories of kindness, adding smiles/comments to the stories that others share and sending out welcome notes with Karma Bucks to new members of Smile Groups to make them feel connected to the community.
- **KindSpring Story Editor**: This role edits stories shared in Smile Groups to post them to the public site.
- **Voice of KindSpring**: Serves as the anonymous voice of the website and is the main role that interfaces with the outside world -- responding to all incoming emails :)
- **KindSpring: Screening New Shipping Volunteers**: This guide outlines the process to screen new volunteers interested in shipping smile cards.
- **KindSpring: Smile Card Shipper**: a guide for all new volunteers who will be shipping Smile Card orders remotely

