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# Relief Valve

Bridging the gap between volunteers and  
organisations in crisis situations

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**BY**

BIMA SATRIA

FOO JIA XIN

KENDRA WONG

SANYA SARDANA

TAN YONG BENG

# Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b>	4
<b>Introduction</b>	6
The COVID-19 Pandemic	6
COVID-19 in India	7
Transition to Second Wave of COVID-19 in India	8
<b>Problem Statement</b>	10
The Solution: Relief Valve	10
<b>Literature Review</b>	12
The Role of Civil Society	12
Volunteer Management	13
Paucity of Volunteer Management Literature in Crisis Situations	15
<b>Methodology</b>	16
<b>Solution</b>	17
Findings from Surveys and Interviews	17
Experiences of Volunteers	17
Experiences of Organisation Recruiting Volunteers	18
Relief Valve	20
Introduction to Relief Valve	20
How the Platform Works	20
Outreach to volunteers and organisations	20
Enabling volunteers to identify volunteer opportunities: The Volunteer's User Experience of the Platform	21
Enabling organisations to circulate volunteer opportunities: The Organisation's User Experience of the Platform	25
Volunteer-Matching	28
Financing the Platform	31
<b>Risks &amp; Limitations</b>	33
Volunteer recruitment	33
Quality standards	33
Accountability of the Prospective Volunteer and Organisation	34
Usage in non-crisis times	34
<b>Conclusion</b>	36
<b>Appendix</b>	37
1.1 Volunteer Survey Questionnaire	37
1.2 Organisation Survey Questionnaire	37
1.3 Volunteer Interview Questionnaire	37

1.4 Organisation Interview Questionnaire	37
1.5 Mockup Design	37
For Volunteers	38
Landing Page and Registration	38
Apply for Volunteering	43
Checking the organisation's profile	45
Training	48
For organisations	49
Registration for Organisation	49
Create a new volunteering opportunity	52

# Abstract

Relief Valve is a civil society-led initiative to bridge the gap between volunteers and organisations that need help in times of crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed a gap in the volunteer space: organisations needing urgent help face difficulties in getting sufficient labour with the required skill sets, while volunteers face challenges in finding the best role suited to their interests and abilities. *Relief Valve* is a fast-response solution which acts as a one-stop portal for role-matching during crises, to accelerate time-to-market for the various initiatives championed by civil society organisations. The aim is to render help more quickly, particularly in times of crisis, since the time saved in mobilising volunteers could help save lives. In the context of COVID-19, these can range from providing last-mile delivery of medical supplies to more remote areas, to educating citizens about preventing the spread of the virus, or managing its symptoms. This initiative seeks to align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

## Team member biographies



**Bima Satria** is a student of Masters of Public Policy (MPP) programme at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. Prior to graduate school, he worked at Indonesia's Ministry of Planning and National Development (Bappenas) for about two and a half years. He conducted a preliminary study on Indonesia's National Mid-term Plan, coordinated the allocation mechanism of the National Special Grant Transfer, and formulated policy responses in mitigating COVID-19's impact on SMEs in Indonesia. He is interested in policy instruments to alleviate poverty and reduce development disparities.



**Foo Jia Xin** is a student of Masters of Public Policy (MPP) programme at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. Prior to graduate school, she worked as a Division Lead in Silver Generation Office, Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) where she conducted qualitative assessment of seniors and implemented relevant policies. She has conducted research in urban poverty and WASH (Water, Sanitation and Health) in World Vision Lanka, and coordinated programmes for the intellectually disabled in HandsOn Shanghai. She is interested in numerous social issues and works towards creating an inclusive society for all.



**Kendra Wong** is a second-year Masters of Public Policy student at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. Prior to graduate school, Kendra was a Senior Executive at Singapore Airlines, where she has experience in communications and data analysis. Kendra also served with the Singapore Ministry of Health in the peak of the Covid-19 crisis in Singapore in 2020. In pursuing postgraduate education, she hopes to learn more about the nexus between national solutions and global policy challenges.



**Sanya Sardana** is a Data Scientist turned Monitoring and Evaluation consultant to India's largest education NGO, Pratham Education Foundation. She is currently pursuing a Masters of Public Policy at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. Sanya seeks to leverage her interdisciplinary training in data science and public policy to tackle society's most challenging problems. She is particularly keen on contributing to causes which mitigate the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on those who are most vulnerable.



**Tan Yong Beng** is a student of the Masters of Public Policy (MPP) programme at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. Prior to graduate school, Yong Beng was previously with Civil Service College Singapore, sharing Singapore's development experience with other countries. Yong Beng is interested in international development and enjoys good jokes so share a joke with him if you see him around.

# Introduction

## The COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic is a respiratory tract infectious disease caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), which originated from Wuhan, China and has spread globally, disrupting global economies and causing the collapse of many countries' public healthcare systems<sup>1</sup>. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard, as of June 2021, this pandemic has taken 3,840,000 lives with 177,108,695 confirmed cases<sup>2</sup>.

The coronavirus is highly infectious and is transmitted when human respiratory droplets which contain the SARS-Cov-2 virus particles are exposed to another person<sup>3</sup>. Human activities such as breathing, talking, and sneezing are activities that spread the virus. Due to the asymptomatic nature of the virus, it is impossible to detect and isolate an infected person without the aid of medical tools, and an infected person may transmit the disease during its asymptomatic stage.<sup>4</sup> While the majority of infected people recovered from the virus, studies suggest that people with underlying medical conditions or the elderly are at higher risk of dying from COVID-19<sup>5</sup>.

National governments around the world have taken one of two approaches to manage the pandemic - implementing strict nationwide lockdown to flatten the curve or achieve herd immunity with low restrictions<sup>6</sup>. There were trade-offs between the two options. Strict national lockdown severely disrupted lives and impacted the economy leading to a rise in unemployment along with other issues. The herd immunity option sought to protect the vulnerable population, elderly and people with comorbidities, while letting the coronavirus infect the population and letting them achieve immunity. Herd immunity was an attractive option to consider given that the infected only had mild symptoms. However, governments that implemented the herd immunity strategy had not prepared for a public health crisis of this scale and the rapid spread of COVID-19 caught them by

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<sup>1</sup> Lai, C. C., Shih, T. P., Ko, W. C., Tang, H. J., & Hsueh, P. R. (2020). Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and coronavirus disease-2019 (COVID-19): The epidemic and the challenges. *International journal of antimicrobial agents*, 55(3), 105924.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organisation (WHO) Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard. <https://covid19.who.int/>

<sup>3</sup> CDC (11 February 2020). "Scientific Brief: SARS-CoV-2 Transmission". *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*. Retrieved 10 May 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Rothan HA, Byrareddy SN (May 2020). "The epidemiology and pathogenesis of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak". *Journal of Autoimmunity*. **109**: 102433. doi:10.1016/j.jaut.2020.102433. PMC 7127067. PMID 32113704.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Jung F, Krieger V, Hufert FT, Küpper JH. Herd immunity or suppression strategy to combat COVID-19. *Clin Hemorheol Microcirc*. 2020;75(1):13-17. doi: 10.3233/CH-209006. PMID: 32538831; PMCID: PMC7458501.

surprise<sup>7</sup>. Hospitals were overwhelmed and there were not enough medical beds and supplies for everyone<sup>8</sup>.

Countries that chose lockdown and other mitigation measures had to endure more severe economic impacts. Negative supply shocks from lower production and disruption from the global supply chain were observed. Subsequently, there were also adverse demand shocks from the decreased income. These impacts cascaded to the financial and oil markets and led to higher unemployment and other adverse socio-economic impacts<sup>9</sup>.

Many countries have failed to manage the COVID-19 pandemic with rising cases and high death. India is among the worst affected countries in this pandemic due to its high population density in the cities and other contributing factors such as lack of investment in the healthcare system<sup>10</sup>. India is an important country in the Asia-Pacific region with its high population with India's recovery being integral to the operation of the global supply chain<sup>11</sup>. Hence this paper will focus on India to examine the proof-of-concept for *Relief Valve*, the proposed solution.

## COVID-19 in India

The first case of infection in India happened around 30th January 2020 in Kerala when Indian residents returned from Wuhan. Subsequent cases were imported from Italy and Dubai. The central government of India restricted travel visas and implemented travel advisory restrictions which required incoming travellers to observe 14 days of self-quarantine. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) proposed mitigation measures such as social distancing and the Epidemic Disease Act of 1897 was enforced to prevent inter-state infection<sup>12</sup>. With strict lockdown measures, India managed to keep COVID-19's first wave under control in early 2020 with authorities claiming a national recovery rate of 77% and fatality rate of 1.8%<sup>13</sup>. This came at huge social cost with massive urban to rural migration, disruption to education, public health programs, and rising unemployment and hunger<sup>14</sup>. With limited testing and lack of transparency

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<sup>7</sup> ibid

<sup>8</sup> ibid

<sup>9</sup> Pak A, Adegboye OA, Adekunle AI, Rahman KM, McBryde ES, Eisen DP. Economic Consequences of the COVID-19 Outbreak: the Need for Epidemic Preparedness. *Front Public Health*. 2020 May 29;8:241. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2020.00241. PMID: 32574307; PMCID: PMC7273352.

<sup>10</sup> Chatterjee, P. (2020). Is India missing COVID-19 deaths?. *The Lancet*, 396(10252), 657.

<sup>11</sup> Agrawal, S., Jamwal, A., & Gupta, S. (2020). Effect of COVID-19 on the Indian economy and supply chain.

<sup>12</sup> Ghosh, A., Nundy, S., & Mallick, T. K. (2020). How India is dealing with COVID-19 pandemic. *Sensors International*, 1, 100021.

<sup>13</sup> Chatterjee, P. (2020). Is India missing COVID-19 deaths?. *The Lancet*, 396(10252), 657.

<sup>14</sup> D.D. Dsouza, S. Quadros, Z.J. Hyderabadwala, M.A. Mamun

Aggregated COVID-19 suicide incidences in India: fear of COVID-19 infection is the prominent causative factor

*Psychiatr. Res.*, 290 (2020), pp. 17-20, [10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113145](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113145)

in the reporting of figures, it is debatable if India did manage to keep COVID-19 under control during the first wave of the pandemic.

## Transition to Second Wave of COVID-19 in India

With cases in India declining from September 2020, India was unprepared for the more infectious variant of the COVID-19 virus and the second wave of the pandemic. Unlike the first wave where older people were at higher risk, disproportionately more younger people were infected in the second wave due to the more severe symptoms from the migration delay and the infection through the work environment<sup>15</sup>.

Observers of the pandemic stated the following factors that contributed to the surge of COVID-19 cases in the second wave: (i) complacency after the first wave ebbed; (ii) failing to expand public healthcare capacity; (iii) lack of coordination between the public health government agencies; and (iv) the highly infectious *Delta Plus* variant of the virus.

India lowered its guard in the fight against COVID-19 after the announcement of the vaccination program coupled with the lower daily new COVID-19 cases in January 2021. The Indian government allowed mass election rallies, and gatherings for religious festivals in India where nearly 7 million people participated<sup>16</sup>. These events turned into super-spreader events which directly contributed to the sudden surge in the second wave of the pandemic in India.

India is the second most populated country with a large landmass which made it particularly challenging for the government to provide equitable access to healthcare for everyone even before the pandemic broke out. India has a mixed healthcare system with both public and private healthcare service providers<sup>17</sup>. The private sector serves mainly the urban residents in India, and provides mostly secondary and tertiary healthcare services. The public healthcare system consists of three tiers - primary, secondary and tertiary care systems<sup>18</sup>. The main function of primary health care is to serve the rural population through primary health centres (PHCs), and community health centres (CHCs). District and sub-district hospitals focus on specialist services. While India aims to provide access to basic healthcare for its population, the low healthcare expenditure of 1.5% of GDP does not adequately meet the needs of the nation<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/punjab-covid-deaths-rural-urban-7293303>.

<sup>16</sup> Choudhary OP, Priyanka, Singh I, Rodriguez-Morales AJ. Second wave of COVID-19 in India: Dissection of the causes and lessons learnt [published online ahead of print, 2021 Jun 16]. *Travel Med Infect Dis*. 2021;43:102126. doi:10.1016/j.tmaid.2021.102126

<sup>17</sup> Chokshi, M., Patil, B., Khanna, R., Neogi, S. B., Sharma, J., Paul, V. K., & Zodpey, S. (2016). Health systems in India. *Journal of perinatology : official journal of the California Perinatal Association*, 36(s3), S9–S12. <https://doi.org/10.1038/jp.2016.184>

<sup>18</sup> *ibid*

<sup>19</sup> Garg, Suneela, et al. "Strengthening public healthcare systems in India; Learning lessons in COVID-19 pandemic." *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care*, vol. 9, no. 12, 2020, p. 5853. *Gale Academic*



Prior to COVID-19, India's public healthcare system already suffered from significant gaps - public financing of health stagnated around 1% of GDP and out-of-pocket expenditure on health was over 60%; both the central government and most state governments had low allocations for health in their budgets. This expenditure was much lower than many other countries, including the BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa)<sup>20</sup>. The shortage of public health workforce, inadequate health care facilities, coupled with the sudden surge in demand for treatments for COVID-19 led to the breakdown of the healthcare system in India<sup>21</sup>.

The lack of coordination between healthcare agencies finds its roots in the Indian Constitution. Health care matters fall under state affairs and hence the central government is unable to coordinate with local governments to provide good-quality healthcare services to citizens<sup>22</sup>. Additionally, state governments have limited healthcare resources to scale up public health interventions and hence several states were overwhelmed in the second wave<sup>23</sup>.

The *Delta* variant of the COVID-19 virus which was first detected in India is more infectious than the previous three variants of the virus, and evidence suggests that this variant is more likely to require hospitalisation<sup>24</sup>. Hence, the increased transmissibility with the super-spreader events mentioned above exacerbated the spread of the virus leading to increased demand for oxygen and beds in India.

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OneFile, [link.gale.com/apps/doc/A647449384/AONE?u=nuslib&sid=summon&xid=f2f5c5a0](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A647449384/AONE?u=nuslib&sid=summon&xid=f2f5c5a0). Accessed 8 July 2021.

<sup>20</sup> Bala, S. (2021, May 17). *India's Covid crisis exposes deep-rooted problems in public health after years of neglect*. Retrieved from CNBC: <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/05/18/india-covid-crisis-shows-public-health-neglect-problems-underinvestment.html>

<sup>21</sup> *ibid*

<sup>22</sup> Kar, S. K., Ransing, R., Arafat, S. Y., & Menon, V. (2021). Second wave of COVID-19 pandemic in India: Barriers to effective governmental response. *EClinicalMedicine*, 36.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*

<sup>24</sup> Kupferschmidt, K., & Wadman, M. (2021). Delta variant triggers new phase in the pandemic.

# Problem Statement

The systemically weak India healthcare system was caught unprepared by the COVID-19 pandemic with a shortage of trained workforce, healthcare facilities and infrastructure, and an overwhelming patient load. The inefficiency, dysfunction, and acute shortage of the healthcare delivery systems in the public sector, compounded with the commercialisation and profit-driven model of the private hospitals, left much of the population vulnerable to the adverse effects of COVID-19.

Faced with this public health emergency, India needs to expand its trained workforce to provide basic healthcare information and COVID-19 measures, raise awareness amongst the public of these measures, deliver healthcare resources to states with the most urgent needs, conduct contact tracing, provide mental health support, and support the national vaccination program. According to the report from the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response, it was found that health systems that performed well during the COVID-19 pandemic were able to mobilise, train and re-allocate their health workforce<sup>25</sup>. These health systems were able to hire new staff and tap into existing networks of volunteers, medical trainees, and retirees.

The civil society in India is an insufficiently-tapped resource to meet this unprecedented demand for labour and can be leveraged to fill the gaps in India's healthcare system. Even before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, civil society has played an active role in filling up gaps in social support in India, such as providing food, education, and other social services.

## The Solution: Relief Valve

*Relief Valve* is a platform that mobilises, trains, and matches volunteers to meet the short-term labour demand of institutions during crisis situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic. India's under-investment in its healthcare system, coupled with the unpreparedness for the pandemic, uncovered gaping holes in the healthcare system which made it difficult to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic. Several essential services (such as dissemination of information to the public, contact tracing operators, and logistics) do not seem to have high skills requirements, and the government could have looked to civil society to provide these services.

*Relief Valve* seeks to circulate volunteer requirements from civil society organisations in order to rapidly mobilise volunteers who are a good fit for the role. Those seeking volunteer opportunities can also identify opportunities that align with their skill sets and areas of interest. *Relief Valve* will also assist with quick onboarding of the volunteer through training materials (such as online courses), which prepare the volunteer to deal with the crisis situation. For example one of such roles is managing helplines. The organisation can post this requirement on *Relief Valve*, which then draws on its database of volunteers to identify candidates with the requisite skills (for

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<sup>25</sup> Sirleaf, E. J., & Clark, H. (2021). Report of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response: making COVID-19 the last pandemic. *The Lancet*.

instance, knowledge of the regional language). The organisations can recruit suitable volunteers and use *Relief Valve's* training materials to rapidly onboard them.

*Relief Valve* streamlines and expedites the process by only accepting job functions that have minimal requirements. *Relief Valve* aims to expand to match job functions of higher skill requirements upon the success of this proof-of-concept.

# Literature Review

## The Role of Civil Society

The World Bank defines civil society as “the wide array of non-governmental and not for profit organisations that have a presence in public life, express the interests and values of their members and others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations<sup>26</sup>”.

Amid the massive disruption caused by the pandemic, non-government organisations (NGOs) stepped up to provide essential healthcare, food, sanitary items, filling the void when the state was slow to respond. Civil society has also played a crucial role in information dissemination on COVID-19 when official communication channels failed to provide accurate information<sup>27</sup>.

Within India, large organisations have stepped up to the fore to tackle the pandemic. With the help of volunteers, NITI Aayog (a government-affiliated think-tank) reached out to over 92,000 non-governmental and civil society organisations to boost cross-sectoral collaboration and provided food and hygiene kits, as well as support district administration for public health systems<sup>28</sup>. The *Rapid Rural Community Response* to COVID-19, a collective of over 60 NGOs, worked together to research the economic, nutritional, physical and mental health situation among rural residents; a single round of research involved a total of 11,766 households across 64 districts in India<sup>29</sup>. These efforts demonstrate the scale and potency of the civil society in India, in response to the pandemic and gaps of existing governmental institutions.

Civil society, being closely in touch with the ground, is equipped to address immediate needs surfacing from the pandemic such as mobilising and channelling resources, providing immediate relief such as food and water, running awareness campaigns, and addressing the issue of livelihoods<sup>30</sup>. They are often the first witnesses and responders to any crisis on the ground. However, organisations struggle to reach geographies, with villagers creating their own roadblocks to close themselves off in several villages which further restricted the movement of resources across the country.

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<sup>26</sup> World Bank <https://www.worldbank.org/en/about/partners/civil-society/overview>

<sup>27</sup> CIVICUS. (5 Nov, 2020). *Solidarity in the time of COVID-19: Civil society responses to the pandemic*. Retrieved from reliefweb: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/solidarity-time-covid-19-civil-society-responses-pandemic>

<sup>28</sup> Singh, A. (9 May, 2020). *Civil Society: The third pillar of strength in fight against coronavirus*. Retrieved from ETGovernment: <https://government.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/news/governance/civil-society-the-third-pillar-of-strength-in-fight-against-coronavirus/75642349>

<sup>29</sup> Sarin, A. (27 Apr, 2021). As second wave of Covid-19 hits rural India, civil society groups must be supported – and valued. Retrieved from scroll.in: <https://scroll.in/article/993265/as-second-wave-of-covid-19-hits-rural-india-civil-society-groups-must-be-supported-and-valued>

<sup>30</sup> Behar, A. (2 Apr, 2020). India needs to realise that Covid-19 is a disaster, not a law-and-order problem. Retrieved from scroll.in: <https://scroll.in/article/957923/india-needs-to-realise-that-covid-19-is-a-disaster-not-a-law-and-order-problem>

This project aims to supplement existing civil society efforts by improving volunteer matching to NGOs which depend heavily on volunteers to sustain efforts in the face of crisis situations. *Relief Valve* will complement existing civil society efforts, streamlining them into one platform for volunteer recruitment and training.

## Volunteer Management

India has a huge population, and the scale of civic activism in the face of the pandemic bears evidence that there is huge potential in the impact of civil society. A key element is the means by which these volunteers are managed – which directly translates into the work that NGOs accomplish in their bid to tackle the pandemic.

This section will explore key segments of the cycle of volunteer management.

### 1. Recruitment and Selection

There is a wide pool of volunteers with diverse motivations, skill sets, and commitment levels. It is important for an organisation to foremost identify the profile of volunteers it seeks to target and attract. Broadly, individuals who have a personal, emotional, or community link, and looking for a chance to make a difference may be a good fit<sup>31</sup>.

The likelihood for an individual to volunteer in an emergency/disaster relief depends on social networks, community context, and personal identification with the event such as location, type, and those involved. Research also suggests that those who affiliate themselves with causes such as “fellow Americans in a common struggle” are more likely to volunteer for emergency/disaster relief work<sup>32</sup>. This is highly relevant to the context of India’s pandemic, where we have seen concerted efforts and spirit in a bid to tackle the wide-ranging adverse consequences of inadequate pandemic management.

Volunteer recruitment efforts will hence be focused within the immediate community that volunteers live in, due to the degree of connections that volunteers are likely to have, as well as the ease of access that volunteers have in response to urgent crises. This key indicator for recruitment will be facilitated through an algorithm set within the volunteer platform, which will channel volunteer opportunities based on volunteers’ geography.

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<sup>31</sup> Bonnicksen, B.C. (2003). New roles of volunteers in development. *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising*, 39, 5-21. Retrieved from Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

<sup>32</sup> Rotollo, T., & Berg, J.A. (2010). In times of need: An examination of emergency preparedness and disaster relief service volunteers. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 20(10), 1-11. doi:10.1177/0899764010369179

It is noteworthy that *Relief Valve* will not be conducting an active selection of volunteers, as this will be left to the discretion of NGOs. However, the platform will have indicators that can better facilitate efficient selection of suitable volunteers for particular volunteer opportunities – this includes language ability, due to the need for communication with particular communities in certain dialects, or their ability to drive, if transportation of logistics such as health kits is required.

The nature of the pandemic and resources needed from civil society is highly specific, and through streamlining the process of gathering information on the needs of organisations and society in the pandemic, *Relief Valve* facilitates better and quicker ease of selection of volunteers required.

## **2. Training**

Training for certain volunteer roles, such as response to an SOS call in the pandemic, is necessary. *Relief Valve* seeks to empower and better facilitate activism in civil society by matching suitable volunteers to organisations that require volunteers with certain skill sets. This will not only help volunteers acquire new skill sets, but also enables them to contribute more efficiently through the volunteering opportunity. The training that could be provided is further explored in the Solution Section below.

## **3. Retention**

Much of existing literature on volunteer management emphasises volunteer retention and reducing attrition. However, volunteer response in the case of the pandemic is more unique – the need for prompt, ad-hoc volunteer response is significantly higher than long-term volunteering commitments, though there are longer-term projects such as fund-raising initiatives. As such, the focus of *Relief Valve* centres on volunteer recruitment, selection, and training.

Nonetheless, if organisations should seek to recruit volunteers on a regular basis - even if it is on ad-hoc/irregular notice, efforts need to be placed into the retention of existing volunteers. This very much hinges upon volunteers' motivation. There are three main categories of motivation which propel volunteers: altruism, personal fulfilment, and personal growth (for example, career enhancement, skill-building, broadening social networks)<sup>33</sup>. It is important to ensure that the volunteer opportunity itself is a good match to the volunteer's notion of fulfilment; this falls upon the description of the opportunity by the NGO and the platform's match of volunteer to NGO. Organisations also need to provide sufficient training and skill sets through the opportunity. While *Relief Valve* seeks to provide onboarding training, subsequent development will be the NGOs' prerogative. Additionally, communication of expectations and commitment levels to volunteers, from the onset, is important in establishing a healthy understanding between the organisation and volunteers.

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<sup>33</sup> Proteau, L., & Wolff, F. (2008). On the relational motive for volunteer work. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 29, 314–355.

## Paucity of Volunteer Management Literature in Crisis Situations

There is a paucity of literature on volunteer management focused on crisis situations. Since *Relief Valve* focuses on volunteer recruitment during crisis situations, the team sought to understand more about the practices followed while mobilising volunteers in emergency scenarios. The needs of organisations and volunteers may be different in a crisis giving the time-sensitivity needed for mobilisation and preparation. Additionally, the dynamic nature of the situation presents challenges in undertaking volunteer recruitment activities in a systematic manner. Thus, the team conducted primary research through interviews and surveys to learn more about the first-hand experiences of those engaged in volunteer recruitment, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Methodology

Both primary and secondary research were conducted to learn more about volunteer management and recruitment. An extensive literature review on Volunteer Management was conducted to learn about the prevalent volunteer recruitment practices. This was followed by primary research, which entailed interviews on volunteering and recruitment experiences. This provided first-hand insights on the recruitment process and allowed for an understanding of the challenges faced in seeking opportunities and recruiting volunteers.

These findings were then used to design *Relief Valve*. Insights from interviews informed the platform design so as to ease the application process for both volunteers and organisations.

## Surveys and Interviews

Surveys were conducted amongst those with volunteer experience to understand how they seek out volunteer opportunities and the challenges faced. The survey sought to learn about their latest experience of applying for a volunteer opportunity by asking questions about how they came across the opportunity, the duration of the application process, the ease of applying and how well they think they fit the role (refer to Appendix 1.1: Volunteer Survey Questionnaire).

Personnel at organisations undertaking volunteer recruitment operations were also surveyed. The survey addressed questions related to volunteer roles, whether they were able to find volunteers with suitable skills and how they publicised volunteer opportunities. Respondents were also asked about the experience of recruiting volunteers following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (refer to Appendix 1.2: Organisation Survey Questionnaire).

In order to understand more about the volunteer recruitment experience, interviews were also conducted with volunteers (with extensive experience) and civil society organisations (including founders of non-profit organisations based in Singapore) who had volunteer experiences following the pandemic (refer to Appendix 1.3: Volunteer Interview Questionnaire; Appendix 1.4: Organisation Interview Questionnaire). The concept of *Relief Valve* was also discussed and the insights from this discussion were used to create a mockup of the platform to help visualise the end product.



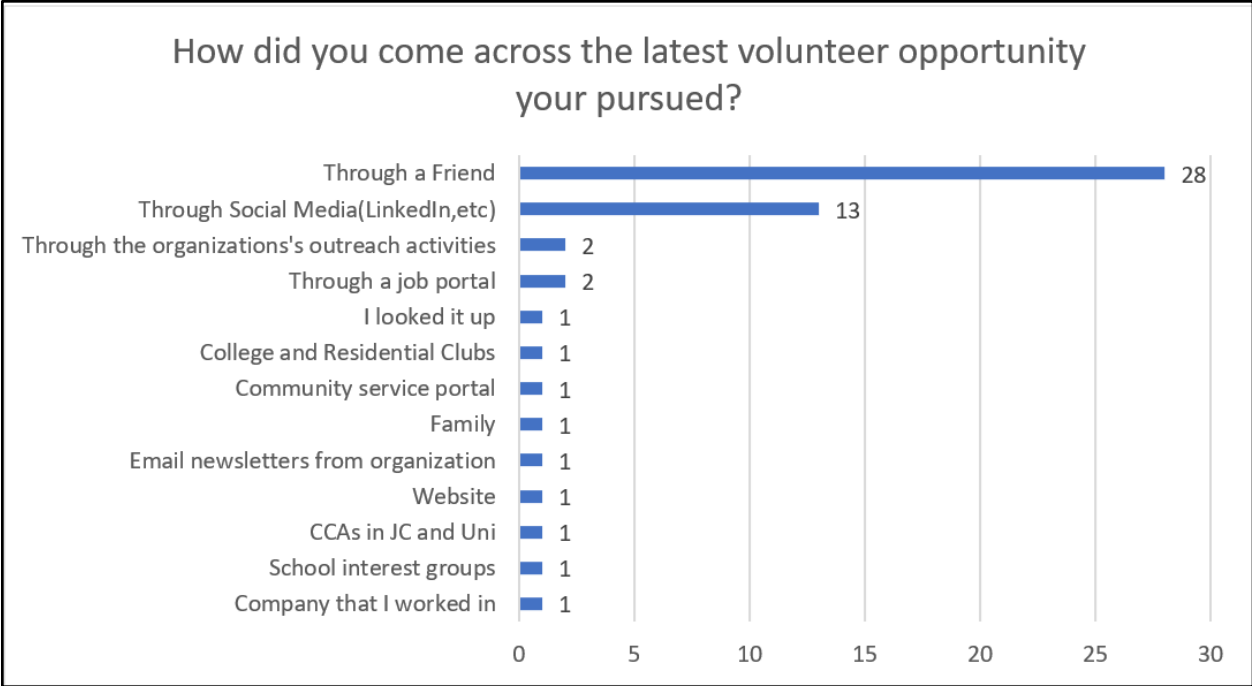
# Solution

## Findings from Surveys and Interviews

Thirty-six people with prior volunteer experience were surveyed along with three personnel from civil society organisations who had experiences with recruiting volunteers. Interviews with two volunteers were also conducted in order to gather details on their latest volunteer experience. Additionally, two people responsible for the volunteer recruitment operations of non-profit organisations based in Singapore were interviewed. Notable findings that emerged from the surveys and interviews are discussed below.

## Experiences of Volunteers

One major finding was that most volunteer opportunities were identified through peer networks. The top two modes of opportunity-seeking was through a friend (for 77% of respondents) and social media posts (for 39% of respondents) (Figure 1). The interviews with volunteers presented the same: one came across a volunteer opportunity through the WhatsApp group. The volunteer also mentioned that she was more comfortable pursuing opportunities that had been identified by her existing peer network. Other respondents also came across volunteering opportunities through their graduate program cohort's WhatsApp group. Having recognised that volunteers are more inclined to pursue opportunities that have been identified through their peer networks, the platform allows users to share opportunities amongst peers. The first is the "Recommend a friend" feature which allows one to share the opportunity with a friend. Additionally, if the person applying for the job has been recommended by a friend, it is also indicated to the organisation. Platform users also have the option to share volunteer opportunities via email and social media platforms such as LinkedIn and WhatsApp.



**Figure 1** Survey Results- How Volunteers Identify Opportunities: 77% (28/36) volunteers came across the volunteer opportunity through a friend.

## Experiences of Organisation Recruiting Volunteers

Interviews with organisations helped to advise the typical application process for recruiting volunteers, as well as how the volunteer recruitment process changed upon the pandemic onset. An interview with the founder of a non-profit organisation in Singapore revealed that applicants are required to submit a write-up and their CV as part of the recruitment process. The respondent also mentioned that their organisation had to promptly recruit volunteers after the outbreak of COVID-19 within a span of 1-2 weeks, as compared to a peacetime average of 3 weeks. Given the time-sensitive nature of emergencies, *Relief Valve* will shorten the application process by enabling organisations to design application forms according to their immediate needs, including the ability to request for write-ups.

Another co-founder of a volunteering platform highlighted the importance of a user-design perspective. In the case of *Relief Valve* which sought to recruit volunteers on short notice, he suggested utilising tools such as Whatsapp Business or Telegram Business which would notify potential, suitable volunteers of urgent volunteering opportunities. Due to the widespread use of these communication channels, this would facilitate a faster response from volunteers and match to organisations.

Volunteer recruitment operations were also discussed with representatives from a Shanghai-based non-profit organisation and an organisation from Singapore. The respondents

spoke about how they circulated volunteer opportunities mostly through word of mouth. Many of their volunteers were referred by existing volunteers; this served as a vetting process and inspired confidence in the credibility of the volunteer. The importance of leveraging peer networks for identifying volunteers was once again highlighted .

Respondents were also asked about the ideal features of a platform like *Relief Valve*. Recruiters spoke about the need for a more systematic application process, especially when faced with a large applicant pool. *Relief Valve* has filters that recruiters can use to identify applicants with the desired qualifications and skills, thus allowing for efficient sorting of volunteer applications. When asked about the kind of skills sought in volunteers in crisis situations, one respondent mentioned that it was important for volunteers to be able to efficiently work from home. Thus, *Relief Valve* will also provide training materials on effective work-from-home practices such as using collaborative tools like *Slack*.

# Relief Valve

## Introduction to Relief Valve

*Relief Valve* is a platform that meets the unexpected labour demand of institutions during national crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and other natural disasters. Crises are often unexpected and few countries have the resources to maintain the systems during peacetime. Furthermore, these institutions lack the coordination capability in times of need, and India's COVID-19 experience highlighted that there are multiple roles that need to be filled for the country to remain operational. *Relief Valve* is the stop-gap measure by matching civilians to the job functions necessary for the operation of the institutions.

## How Relief Valve Works

The platform connects the supply of volunteer opportunities (from civil society organisations) to the demand (from applicants looking to volunteer) in crisis situations. There are four major aspects of the platform:

1. Outreach to volunteers and organisations
2. Enabling volunteers to identify volunteer opportunities
3. Enabling organisations to circulate volunteer opportunities
4. Finding the best fit of volunteers and organisations through the matching algorithm

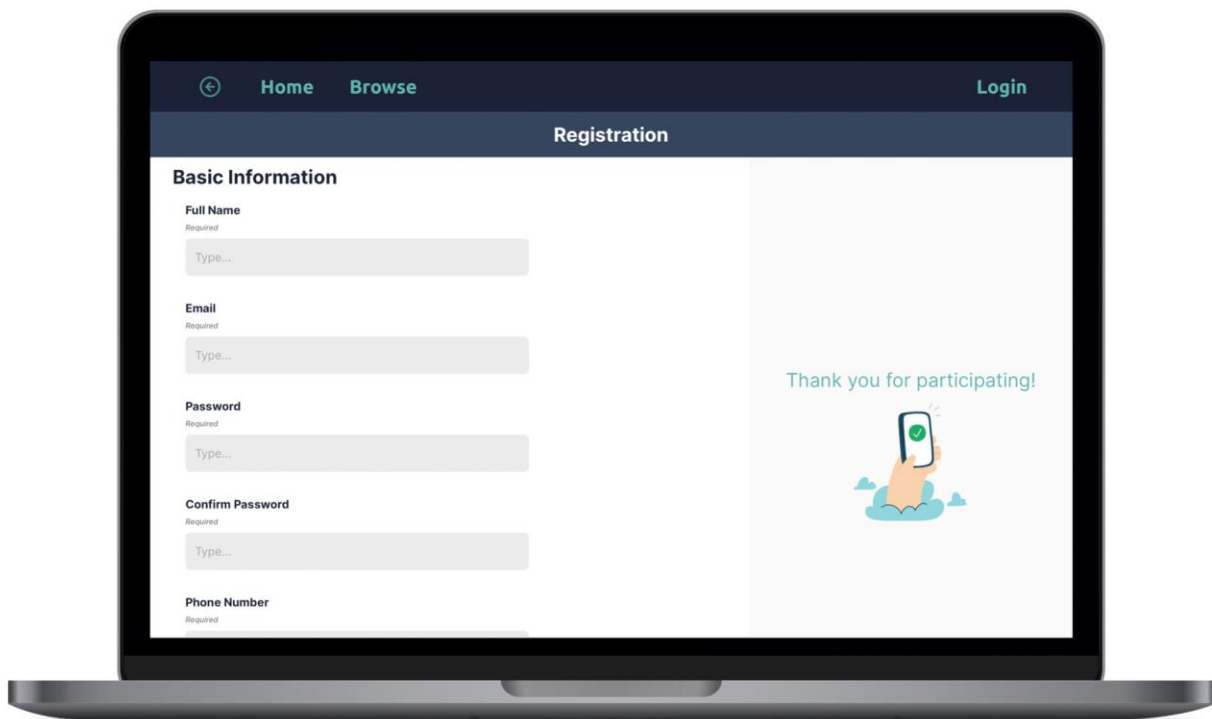
## Outreach to volunteers and organisations

Outreach activities (via social media and by publicising *Relief Valve* through peer networks) will be conducted to spread awareness about the platform amongst volunteers and civil society organisations. Volunteers and organisations will be encouraged to create a profile and share their details so that in case of a crisis situation, there is a ready database containing information about volunteers and organisations, which can ease the process of mapping volunteers to organisations.

## Enabling volunteers to identify volunteer opportunities: The Volunteer's User Experience of the Platform

### Sign-up and Volunteer Profile Creation

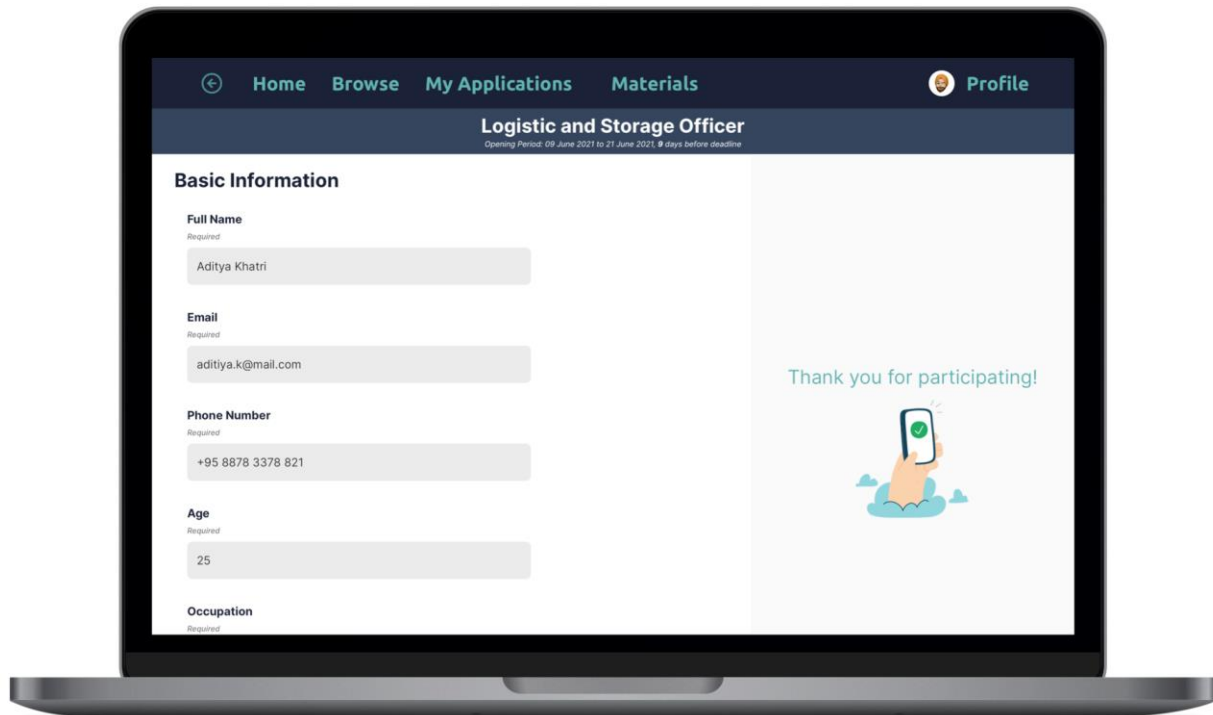
Volunteers will be required to sign-up and create a profile containing basic details such as age, education level, occupation, physical ability, and skills. This information will help to consolidate applicants looking to volunteer, which can be used to identify applicants for volunteer opportunities in times of crisis. Additionally, profile information will also ease the process of filling volunteer applications by auto-filling details from the volunteer profile on the application form.



**Figure 2** Mockup design - new user registration

### Applying for Volunteer Positions

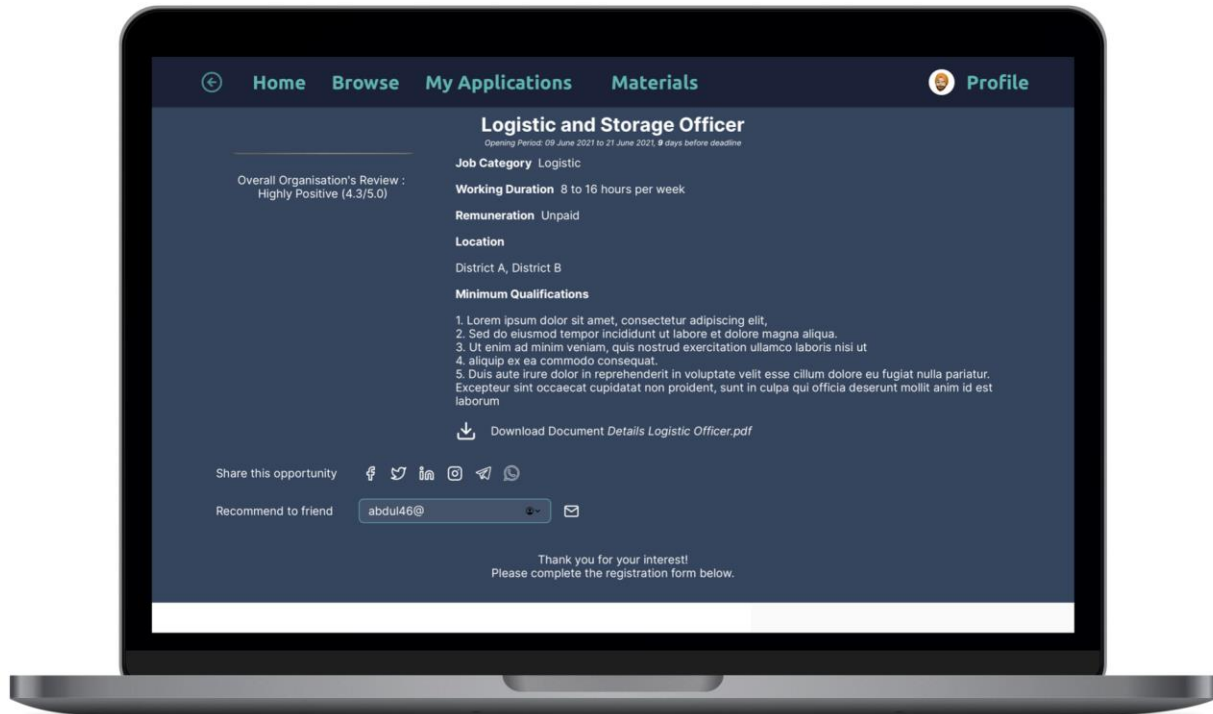
Volunteers can apply for volunteer opportunities through *Relief Valve*. The application form will auto-fill details from the volunteer’s profile. The application forms will be shared with the organisation looking to recruit volunteers. Additionally, details from the application form will be used to identify suitable volunteers for positions and these will be highlighted to organisations.



**Figure 3** Mockup design - volunteering application form with auto-fill feature

## Circulating Opportunities

Higher exposure to volunteer opportunities widens the pool of suitable candidates for the organisations. Volunteers have the option to circulate links of details of volunteer opportunities amongst friends through the “Share via social media” option, such as LinkedIn, Instagram and WhatsApp. The “Recommend a Friend” option allows volunteers to suggest suitable candidates from their social network for specific roles.



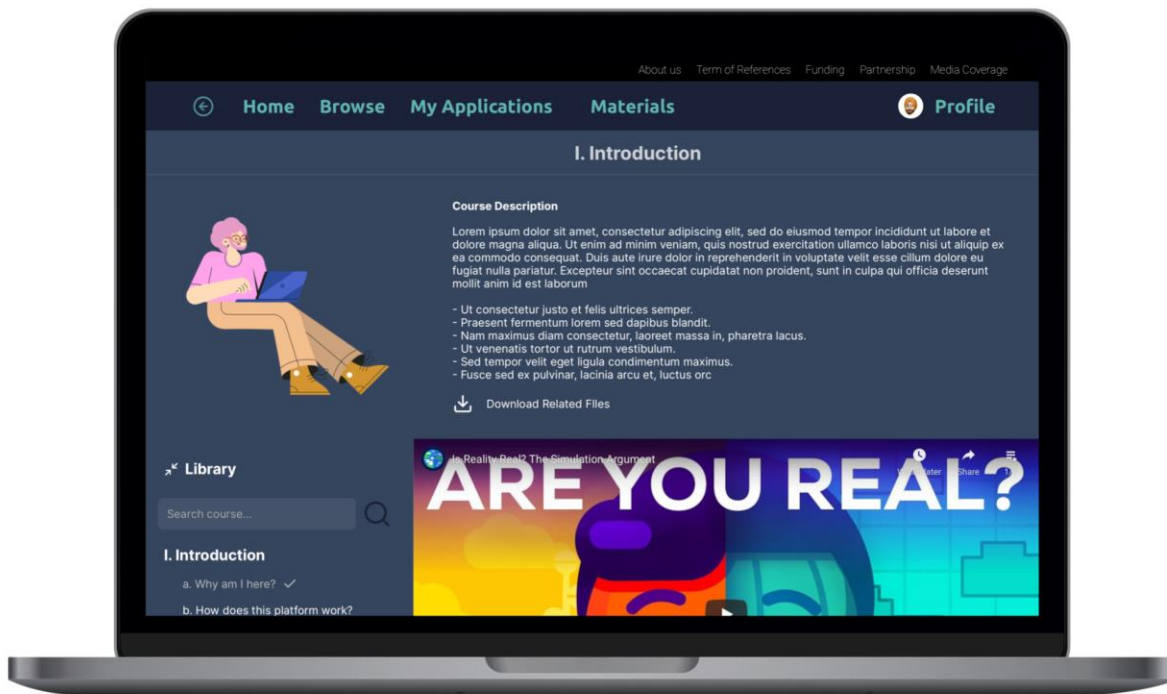
**Figure 4** Mockup design - sharing the volunteering opportunity

### Shortlist Alert

Volunteers will be alerted of opportunities that civil society organisations have shortlisted them for. This will be done through a Whatsapp notification. Upon accepting the offer, the organisations will receive an alert and the system would remove the post and send emails to other candidates to inform them of the filled position.

### Onboarding Training

After being recruited for the volunteer positions, volunteers will be given basic training on skills that will prepare them for the position. This will be done through the course material available on *Relief Valve*. The course materials are stored on a separate learning management system which is linked to *Relief Valve*. This learning management system would be able to track the progress of the volunteer. The volunteers have three days to complete the materials; alerts will be sent to both the volunteers and organisations to inform them of the progress. Only upon completion of the materials and a declaration by the volunteer, they would be able to proceed to perform the role. The organisation will receive alerts when the volunteer completes the materials and the organisation can proceed to send details of the jobs to the volunteers.

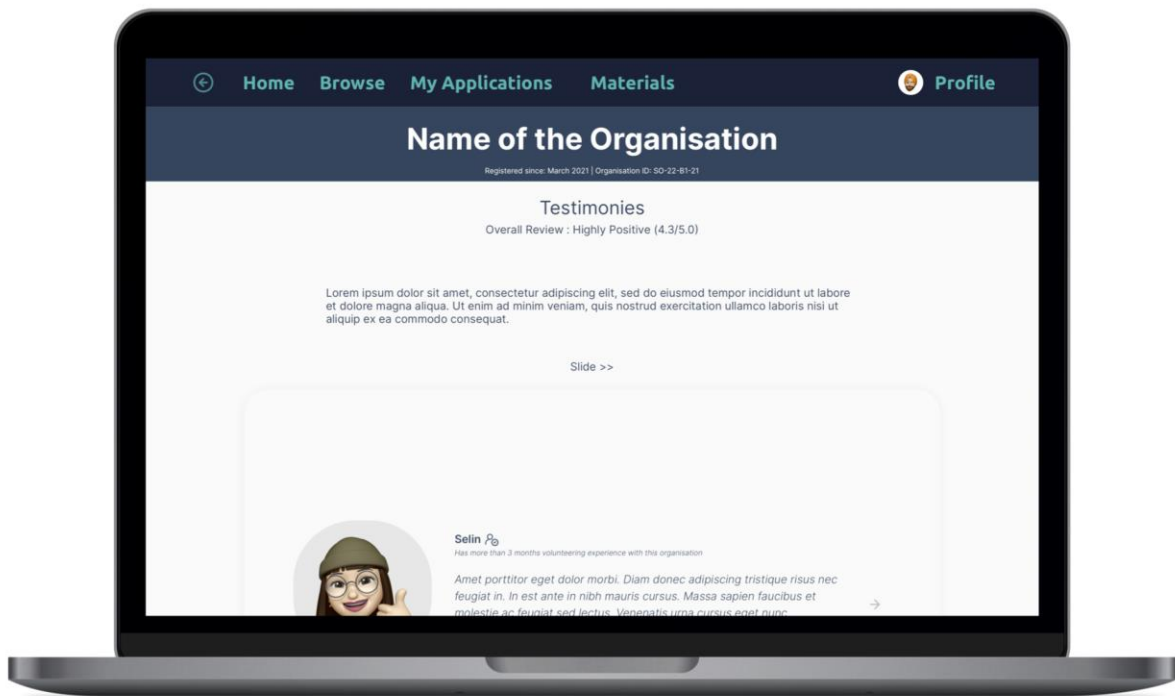


**Figure 5** Mockup design - accessing training materials

## Providing Testimonials for Fellow Volunteers

Volunteers also have the option to provide testimonials for other volunteers if they worked together previously. This will boost the credibility of volunteers and indicate the suitability of applicants for the role to organisations looking to recruit volunteers.



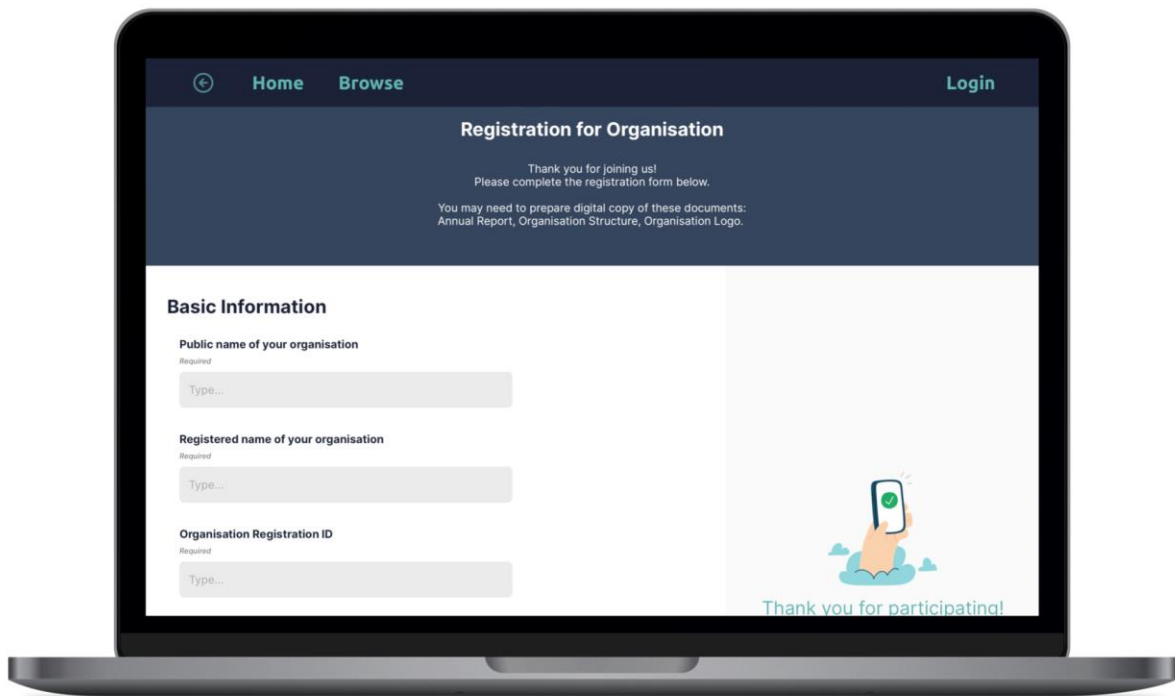


**Figure 6** Mockup design - former volunteers' review on the organisation's profile

## Enabling organisations to circulate volunteer opportunities: The Organisation's User Experience of the Platform

### Sign-Up and Organisation Profile Creation

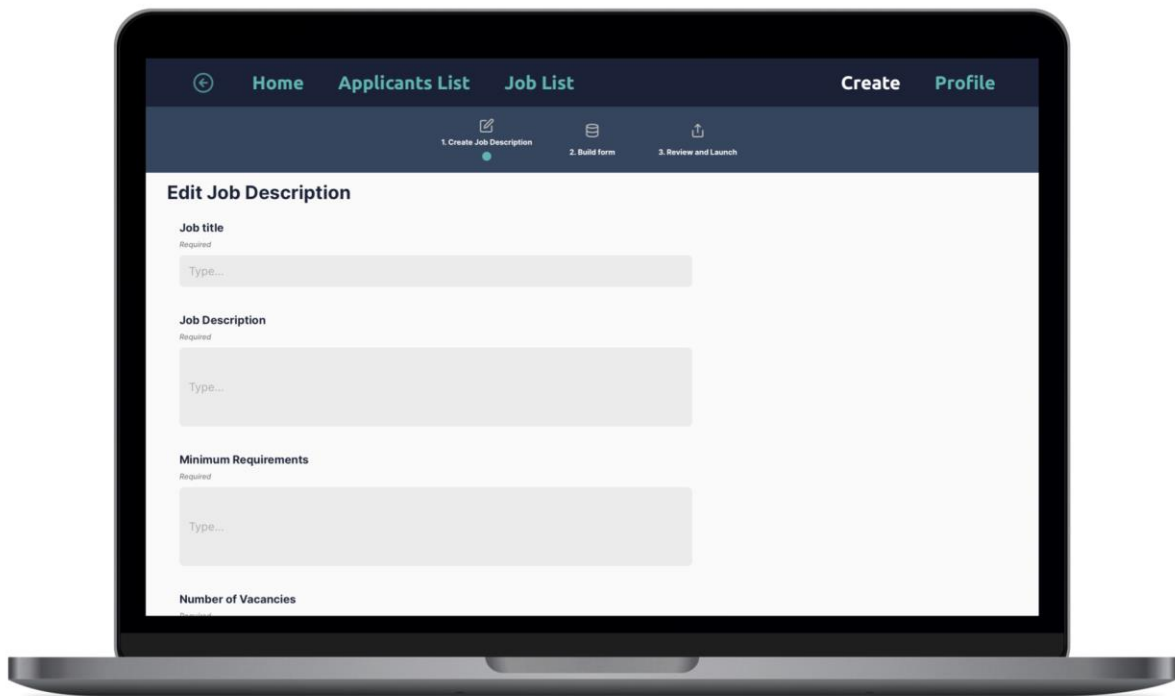
Organisations keen on utilising *Relief Valve* first need to conduct a one-time sign up for their corporate account. This process serves to legitimise and authenticate the background of the organisation, as the organisation will be required to include identifiers of its profile such as its registered name, official website, an abstract of its work, and point(s) of contact as well as individual contact details. These are administrative details that will not all be shown on the *Relief Valve* site interface, but kept as a log for back-end management and book-keeping.



**Figure 6** Mockup design - new organisation registration page

### **Creating a Volunteer Opportunity**

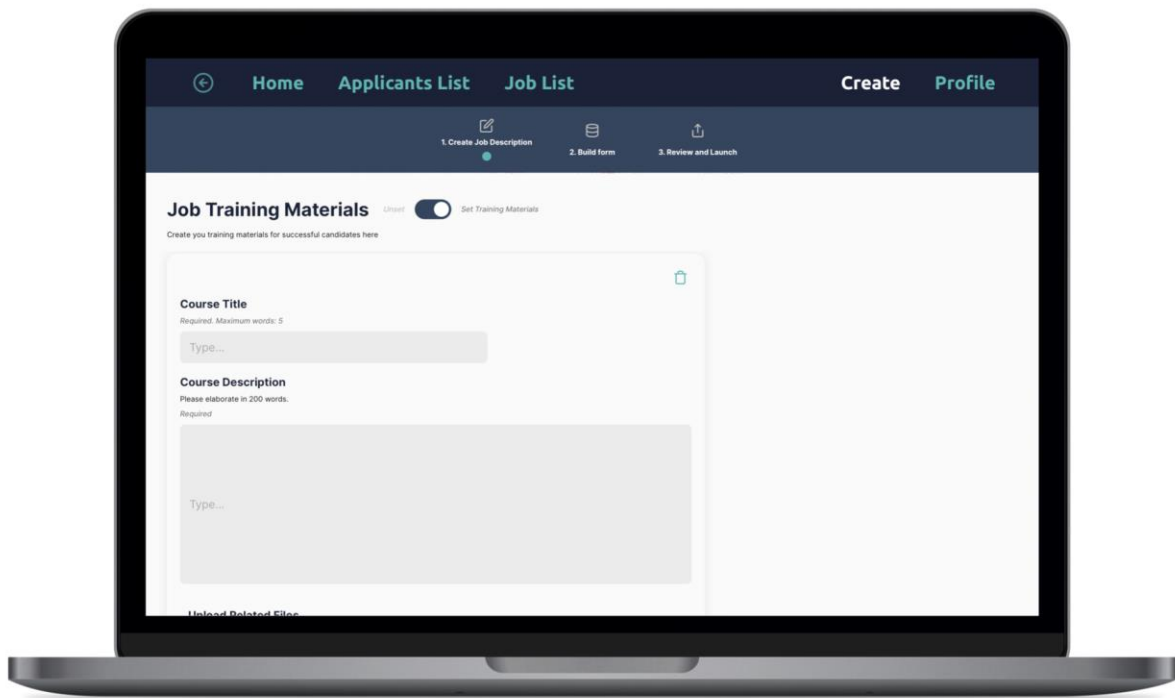
Once the organisation profile is built, the organisation will then be able to post its available jobs on the site by clicking on "Create Volunteering Opportunity". On this template, it can post more details and descriptions about the role available, including information that is required of the ideal volunteer such as desired skills or qualifications, location, and desired commitment level. They will also be able to set a candidates' filter in order to ensure that the matching algorithm only feeds their jobs to the most suitable volunteers. Once the job is posted, organisations only then need to wait for volunteers to respond.



**Figure 7** Mockup design - create new volunteering opportunity by the organisation

## Upload Job Training Materials

Organisations that require specific skill sets for their volunteers to have in a specific role are also able to upload training material on *Relief Valve* that is restricted to selected volunteers via “Job Training Materials”. These volunteers will be able to access these materials prior to their commencement of duty; *Relief Valve* acts as a one-stop portal for volunteers to manage their applications and undergo training. If organisations do not have their own specific material, they can choose to use *Relief Valve*’s repository of training material, which are consolidated from material currently available on public domains.



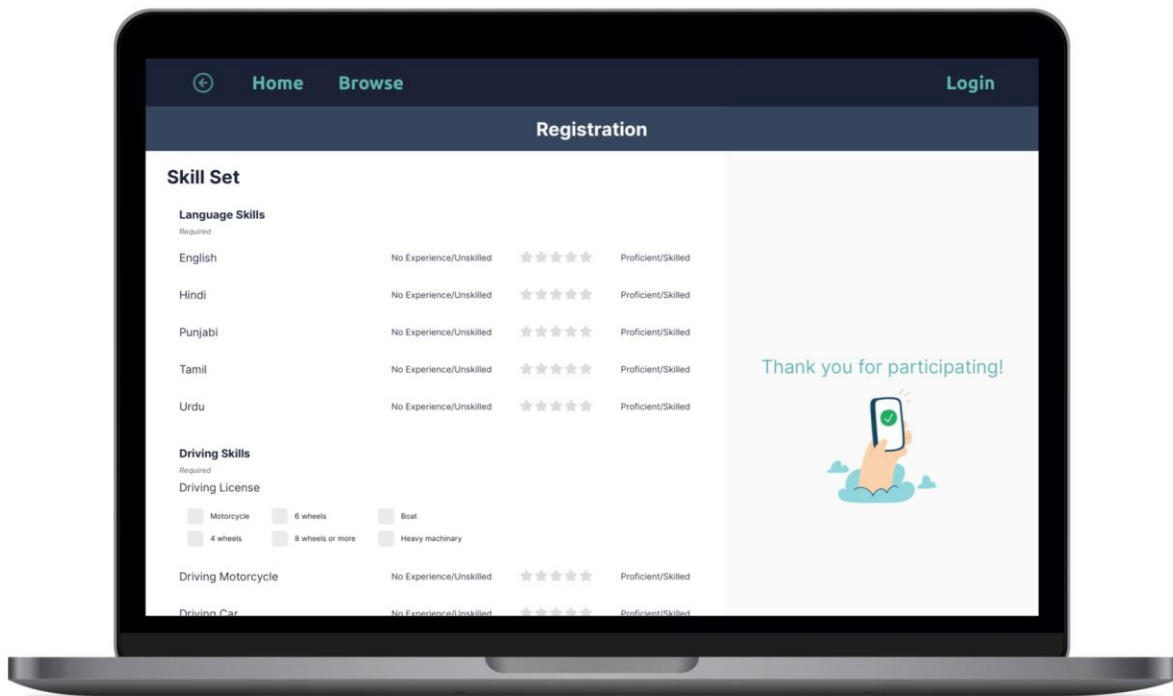
**Figure 8** Mockup design - uploading training materials by the organisation

## Viewing Volunteer's Application

Once there are applications, organisations will be notified on the website when they log in, and able to then navigate to view the volunteer's application. Subsequent engagement with the volunteer will then be carried out on the organisation's prerogative via its own channels.

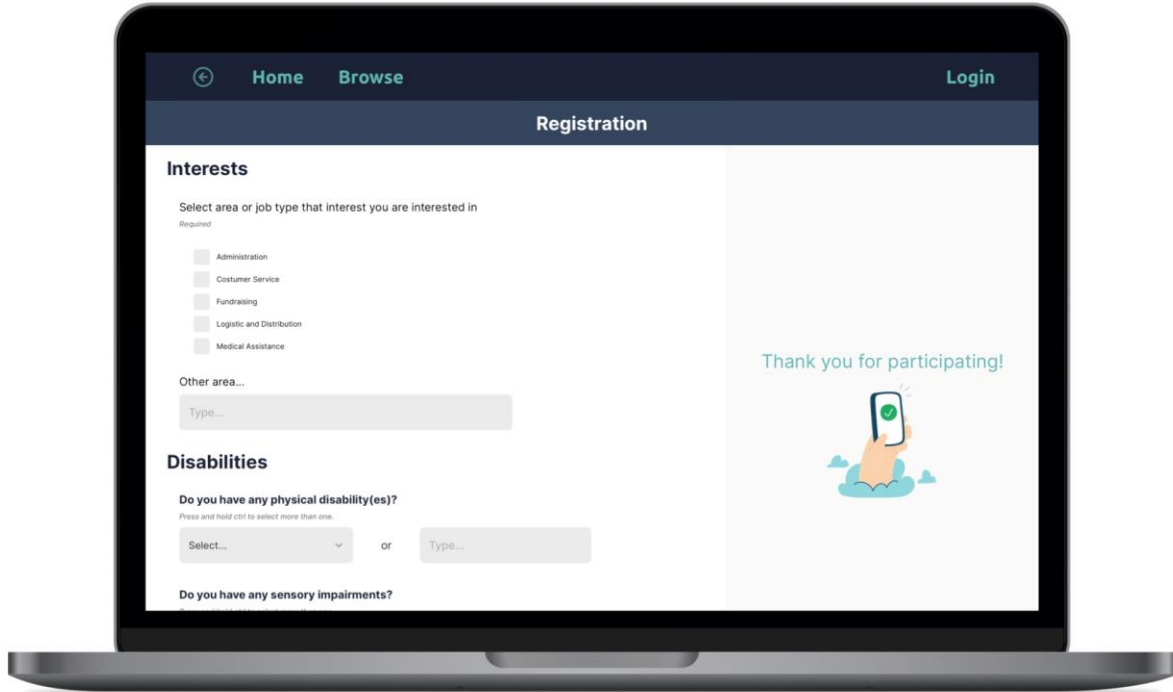
## Volunteer-Matching

An algorithm will be built into the system to facilitate effective matching of volunteers to organisations. Volunteers' profile details will be matched to organisations' opportunity details, where the platform will identify suitable volunteers based on their characteristics listed (location, languages spoken, skill sets etc), and highlight relevant opportunities to volunteers.



**Figure 9** Mockup design - collecting skills information on the user registration form

As this process is streamlined and targeted, potential volunteers will only receive notification of opportunities which are accessible and within their capabilities and interests; they will hence not be unduly loaded with all volunteer opportunities, and do not need to actively filter through opportunities in the search for suitable ones.



**Figure 10** Mockup design - collecting user's interests information on user registration form

As the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic has surfaced demand for volunteers for particular roles (namely delivery of logistics such as food, health kits and oxygen concentrators and communication of accurate information), these will be ready-made roles that organisations can indicate when registering a new volunteer opportunity. These will streamline volunteer-matching to roles that volunteers have indicated interest in. Organisations will also be able to create new opportunity roles for tasks which are more niche.

The algorithm will be regularly refined, and is intended to streamline processes and make volunteer-matching as prompt as possible. This is so as to enable swift civil society response to needs arising from the pandemic. Once a volunteer has responded to a volunteer opportunity, it will be indicated as such. This is to ensure streamlining and no undue delay in communications and staffing coordination.

## Financing the Platform

A rough estimate of the costs for financing *Relief Valve* was obtained after consulting an IT Professional. Since the platform is intended for use in a crisis situation, the IT infrastructure will need to support “High-scale and High-availability”. *Relief Valve* will operate at a “high-scale” since a high load of visitors to the platform on an hourly basis during crises is expected. However, the average number of visitors to the platform is expected to be low since under normal conditions, high traffic on the platform is not anticipated. Additionally, *Relief Valve* must be “high-availability”, meaning that it must be available since in a crisis situation, it cannot be inoperable for long (in case troubleshooting needs to be done). Accordingly, relatively high development costs were estimated since robust infrastructure will be required to support the “High-scale and High-availability” nature of *Relief Valve*. The key costs of this platform are as follows:

1. Cost of building and hosting the website

It is approximated that the building of the website will cost USD\$200<sup>34</sup>, with an ongoing cost of USD \$100 per month to host the website<sup>35</sup>. Cloud services of platforms such as Amazon Web Services (AWS) will be required and it is expected that additional servers will be required to manage the additional load on the website during a crisis situation.

2. Cost of sending out notifications of opportunities to volunteers through WhatsApp Groups

At the first stage of the project development, a message notification will be sent to volunteers through the Whatsapp Business App. This business app is free and has basic essential functions such as a business profile, a catalogue where an overview of volunteer opportunities can be listed, as well as features such as automatic messages, quick replies and Broadcasts (which is similar to a newsletter)<sup>36</sup>.

Should this be successful and effective in volunteer recruitment, and a financial stream for the platform stabilised, this platform can be upgraded to the Whatsapp Business API, which is scalable and can be adjusted for different company processes. Monthly fees range between USD\$49 and USD\$499 based on the provider, on top of a one-time implementation fee<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Website Builder Expert. (27 May, 2021). *How Much Does a Website Cost?* Retrieved from Website Builder Expert: <https://www.websitebuilderexpert.com/building-websites/how-much-should-a-website-cost/>

<sup>35</sup> Estimates have been obtained after consulting an IT professional.

<sup>36</sup> Whatsapp. (2021). *WhatsApp Business App*. Retrieved from WhatsApp: <https://www.whatsapp.com/business/?lang=en>

<sup>37</sup> Pisu, F. (25 Mar, 2021). *WhatsApp Business Pricing: What Costs You Can Expect*. Retrieved from Userlike: <https://www.userlike.com/en/blog/whatsapp-business-pricing>

### 3. Technical support

The services of a technical support company will be required to be on call 24/7 since the website can ill-afford downtime and all issues will need to be resolved in under an hour (given that platform is intended for use in a crisis situation). It is estimated that USD \$10,000<sup>28</sup> per month will be required to hire the services of a technical support company.

These costs will be supported by funds from donors, as well as nominal fees through organisations for *Relief Valve* subscriptions.



# Risks & Limitations

Given the highly dynamic developments of the pandemic, the nature of volunteer work correspondingly requires agility, flexibility, and responsiveness in order to ensure maximum effective aid. *Relief Valve* promotes best-fit volunteer matches between organisations and volunteers, through the publication of “jobs” on the portal, much like a job-matching engine. While the risks of volunteer management ultimately lie with the “hiring” organisation, *Relief Valve* seeks to reduce potentially inimical choices by providing greater transparency on both ends during the search and application process. To clarify, the risks and limitations discussed in this section focus on the risks involved in using *Relief Valve* rather than on volunteer risk management.

## I. Volunteer recruitment

To ensure recruitment of volunteers who are most suitable, the recruitment process should be similar to that of selecting paid staff. *Relief Valve* provides good starting ground for this by ensuring the best job match in terms of a volunteer’s expectations and the organisation’s requirements.

In requiring both organisations and volunteers to fill in detailed information that will increase the potential for best-fit job matches, *Relief Valve* runs the risk of narrowing the talent pool to such a small number that those with passion but insufficient training may self-select into the “reject” pool. That is to say, those who are keen but do not see themselves as sufficiently qualified, may fail to apply.

Therefore, organisations using this portal will be encouraged to be specific enough in the job skills that they are looking for but broad enough so that such potential applicants will not be turned away. In subsequent engagement with the prospective volunteer after shortlisting, the organisation must be able to communicate its expectations, standards, and policies clearly to the prospective volunteer in order to mitigate apprehension and reduce doubt on both ends before confirmation. This will primarily begin with how the job post is crafted in the portal. Communications from the *Relief Valve* management team to the organisation will be explicit in this aspect, in order to ensure organisations get the most out of the experience.

## II. Quality standards

While *Relief Valve* provides an avenue for better volunteer-to-job matching, ticking the checkboxes of an ideal volunteer list is only the first step. As the next step, interviews and training sessions are crucial in reinforcing the volunteer’s capabilities and understanding of the job required. Thus, both parties should not look towards *Relief Valve* as a one-stop-shop for their needs; rather, it should be used with the understanding that further volunteer engagement and specific training might be required in order to extract maximum productivity of the volunteer. For instance, organisations can provide recurrent training or refresher courses for long-term volunteers, while for short-term or ad-hoc volunteers who require less situational know-how and

expertise, organisations could give them a one-off quiz to ensure that their capabilities and understanding are aligned with organisational requirements. This will similarly be communicated to organisations in the onboarding process, so that expectations are managed and aligned with the intentions of the portal.

### III. Accountability of the Prospective Volunteer and Organisation

The focus of *Relief Valve* is primarily on helping organisations and volunteers come together in the best possible fit. *Relief Valve* aims to promote better volunteer-matching, which could have positive knock-on impacts like increasing feelings of satisfaction and hence the commitment to the cause within the volunteer. It also helps to ensure maximum competency of volunteers in the job they are matched with before the volunteer begins his duties, by requiring the volunteer to filter selectively for jobs based on very detailed criteria. This will help to sieve out the truly capable, which increases base fit for the job. Good results produced will further increase volunteer satisfaction, increasing the chance that volunteers will be in for the long haul.

Above, it has been mentioned that organisations need to be cognizant of the risks involved in using the platform to engage potential volunteers. Prospective volunteers, likewise, need to be aware of the risks involved in the use of *Relief Valve*.

Importantly, prospective volunteers and organisations still need to be aware that obtaining a role through *Relief Valve* does not equate to a guarantee that all their expectations of what the role entails will be met. *Relief Valve* serves as a platform for like-minded volunteers and organisations to work together to tackle society's most challenging problems; however, beyond the initial engagement, there is no involvement of *Relief Valve* in the hiring and tenure experience. In other words, organisations will still be in charge of their own recruitment, engagement, and release processes, while prospective volunteers can expect to serve the role as is required by the organisation. *Relief Valve* does not hold itself responsible for the eventual experiences of the volunteers and organisations, and any feedback not pertaining to the search and initial engagement processes must be held between the volunteer and the organisation themselves.

This will be communicated to users of *Relief Valve* during the initial sign-up stage, as well as a reminder when a match is made, in the form of pop-ups. The welcome email sent to a new user upon registration will also include this clause. This is to ensure that communications are enough to remind the user that the ultimate experience depends on the interaction between the organisation and volunteer, and thus that their actions will still make all of the difference in whether their experiences turn out to be a good or poor one.

### IV. Usage in non-crisis times

*Relief Valve* was designed to promote quicker, more efficient, and more effective volunteer-matching during times of crisis, when time is of the essence and skilled help is especially needed. Ideally, volunteers should already have specific skill sets needed for the role

such that little to no training or retraining is required, hence cutting the “speed to market” of the delivery of the role.

*Relief Valve* is a stop-gap measure for crisis and hence during peacetime, this platform would be underutilised. The overall outcome is for the governments to strengthen their system to be resilient during crises and not rely on stop-gap measures. *Relief Valve* would be obsolete in peacetime or under a strong system. Should there be prolonged periods of relative stability, there could be underuse of this platform, or even no web traffic given that no urgent help is needed. There is a risk of *Relief Valve* becoming obsolete due to under-utilization because of which this useful tool could be overlooked.

To mitigate under-utilisation, the website will also focus on more granular crises. While COVID-19 is a universal crisis that the world is grappling with and thus extensive help will be required in many specific areas ranging from medical aid to logistics, in peacetimes the website will also serve as a matching tool for more specific fields. For instance, should there be localised natural disasters that require short-term help from volunteers with specific skills, *Relief Valve* is able to step up as a quick and effective way for assistance to be engaged. To keep *Relief Valve* in top-of-mind awareness, regular communications via mailers and social media like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat will be utilised. This can be in the form of inspiring stories of volunteers and receivers of help, or insights into the management of *Relief Valve*, or even updates to *Relief Valve* to improve the user experience. These aim to engage past users, followers or subscribers constantly, such that when the time comes, there will be sufficient engagement of the platform even during times of peace.

# Conclusion

*Relief Valve* meets a current gap in the crisis space in India, where potential volunteers currently have no consolidated platform where they can go to assess all currently available volunteer opportunities needed in crisis management. As a result, organisations might face difficulties in recruiting sufficient volunteers who are both capable and committed enough to meet their requirements, especially for longer-term responsibilities. *Relief Valve* provides a platform which links the supply to demand, and with strict filtering capabilities, provides both parties with the best possible matches given their respective requirements and expectations.

*Relief Valve* is meant to be activated during the pandemic to assess the feasibility of its longer-term expansion to be activated during other crises. By matching volunteer capabilities and expectations with the best fit engagement, wastage of human resources can be reduced while simultaneously increasing the service levels provided by volunteers and organisations.

Given that this is an online effort, the expectation is for it to be eventually expanded from India to other countries within Asia and, subsequently, Europe, the Americas and the Pacific. The platform will be activated during crises big and small, and its digital nature means that there are low barriers to entry in the digital space, as it is shielded from protectionist measures, and is easily adaptable to each country's specific cultural and language requirements.

In sum, the conception of this project as a result of wanting to better serve the community with better volunteer matching in a time of crisis such as the pandemic, has the potential to traverse beyond country borders and expand outreach of services to the rest of the world. Especially in the digital economy, volunteerism and its intricacies must keep pace with the developments in the use of technology to better provide for those in need during times of crisis. Beginning with India, this project seeks to gain sufficient backing and support for expansion into other communities, specially tailored to fit the specific community's needs.

# Appendix

## 1.1 Volunteer Survey Questionnaire

The link to the Volunteer Survey Questionnaire is given [here](#).

## 1.2 Organisation Survey Questionnaire

The link to the Organisation Survey Questionnaire is given [here](#).

## 1.3 Volunteer Interview Questionnaire

The link to the Volunteer Interview Questionnaire is given [here](#). This was used as a guide for the discussion and was intended to facilitate a free-flowing conversation.

## 1.4 Organisation Interview Questionnaire

The link to the Organisation Interview Questionnaire is given [here](#). This was used as a guide for the discussion and was intended to facilitate a free-flowing conversation.

## 1.5 Mockup Design

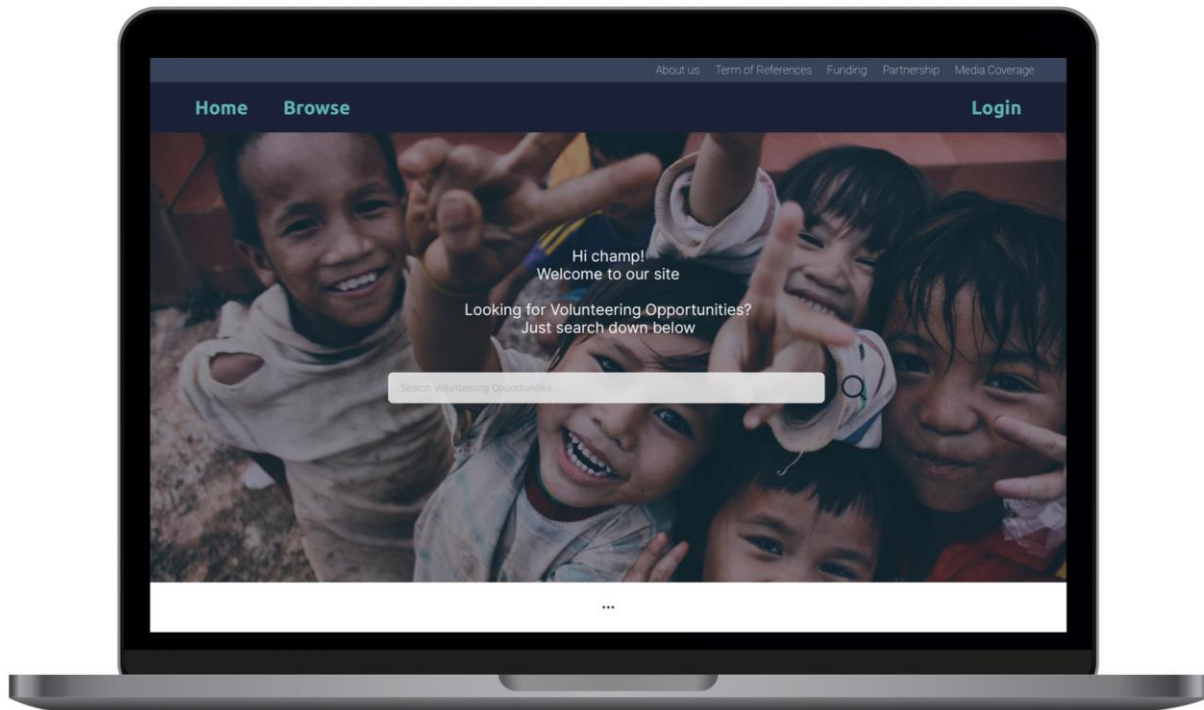
The interactive mockup design of the Relief Valve could be accessed through this link [bit.ly/reliefvalve](https://bit.ly/reliefvalve) or scan the QR code down below.

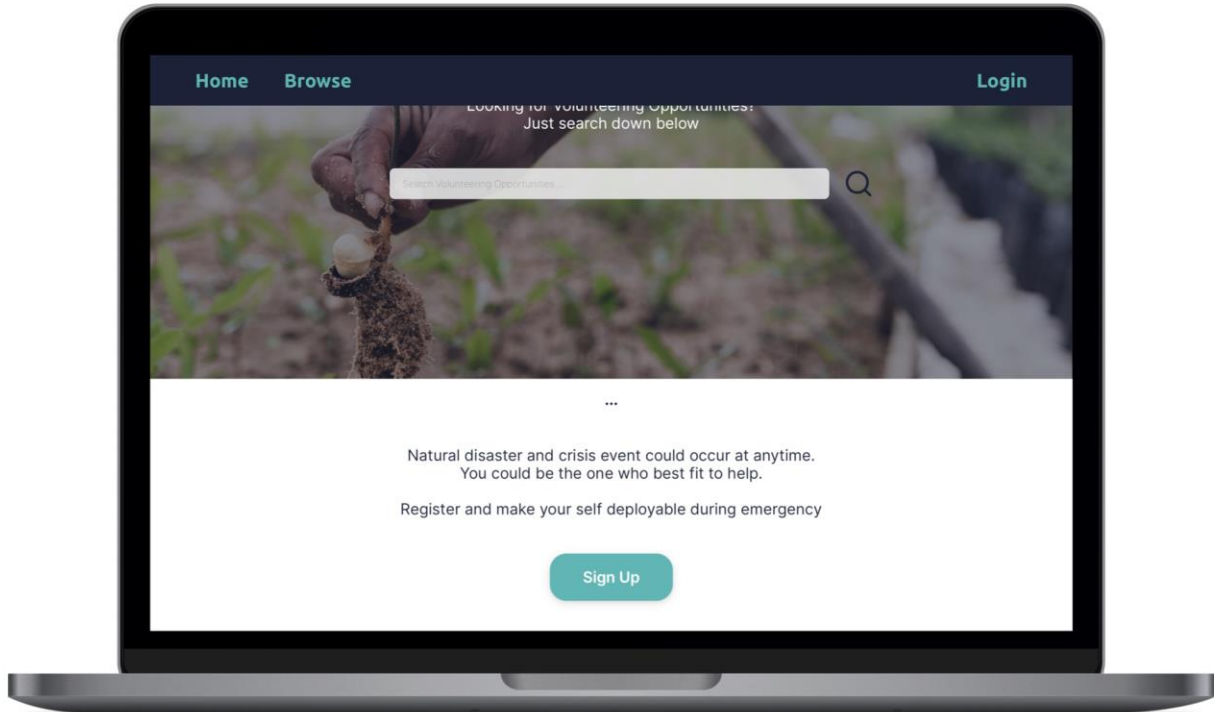


## For Volunteers

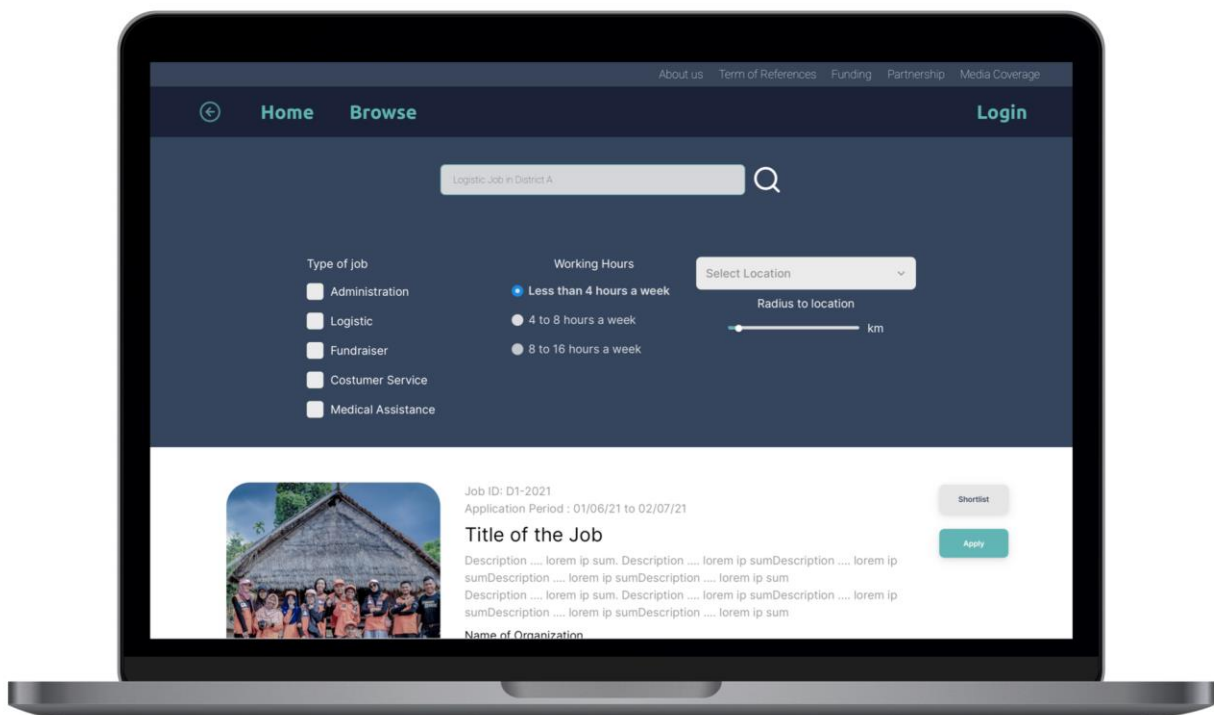
### Landing Page and Registration

The main goal of the platform is to maximise the exposure of volunteering opportunities to its visitors. General visitors will be directed to the landing page and can use the *search* button to explore the open vacancies.

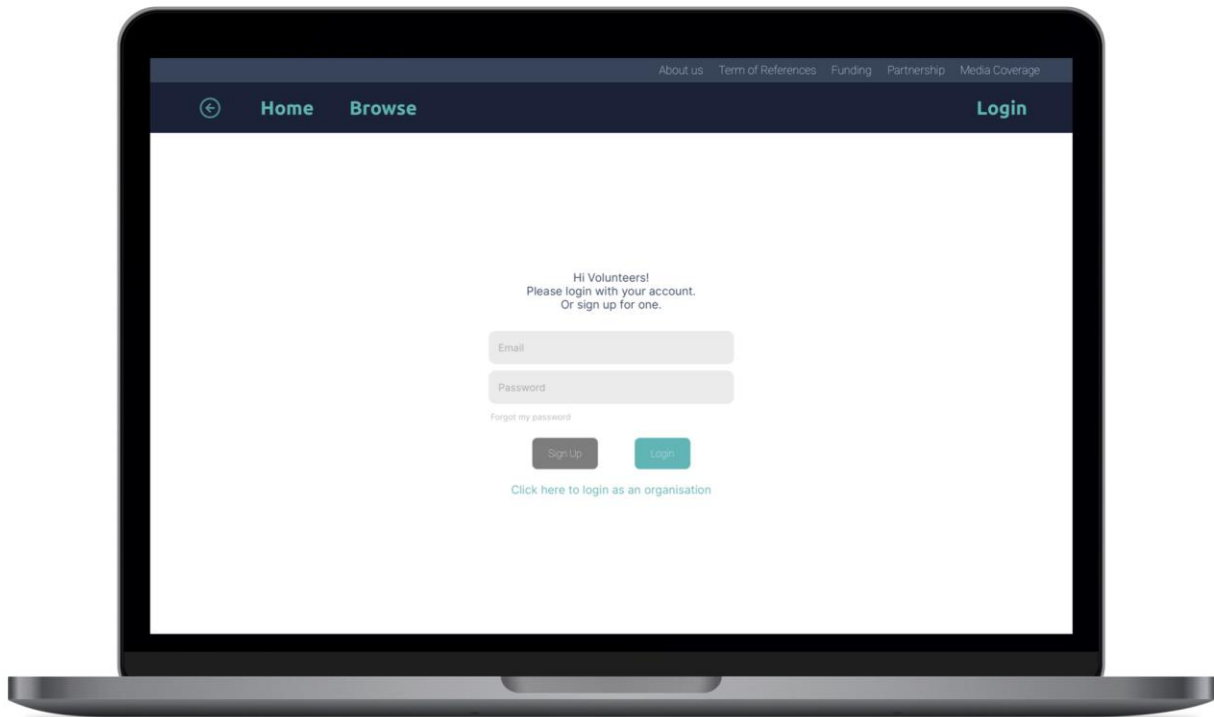




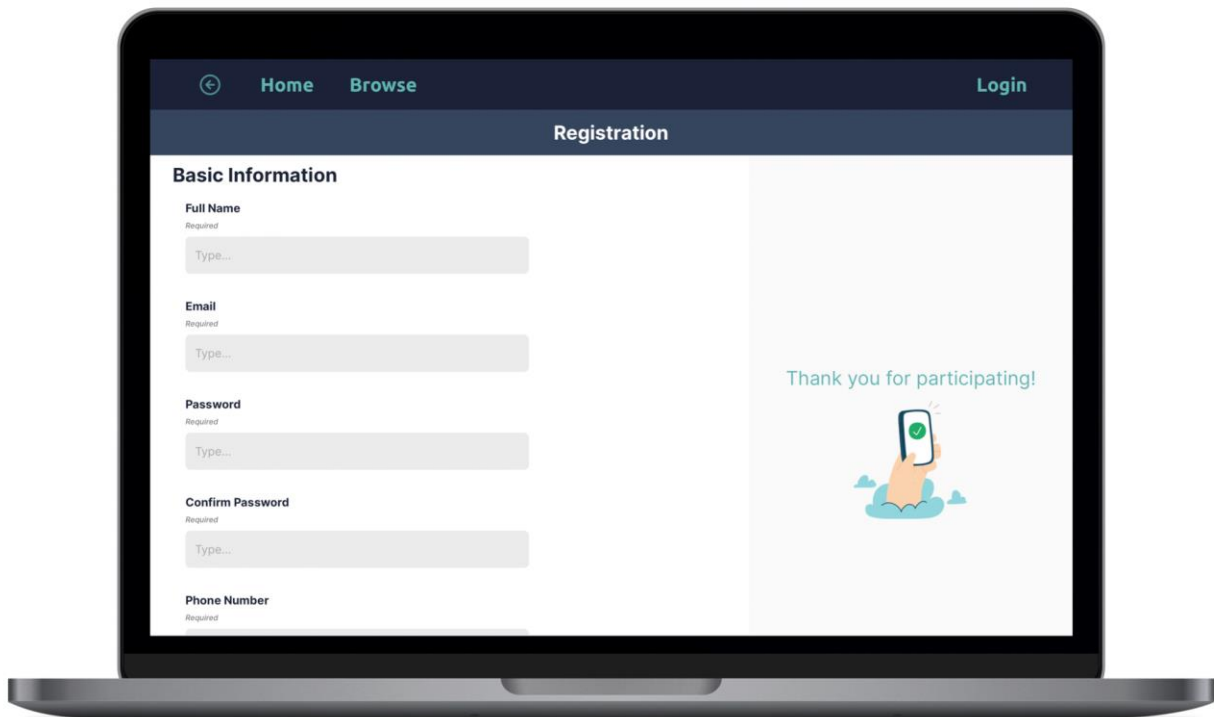
All the vacancies will be publicly available for general visitors. The *search* and *filter* feature will guide the visitors to specifically target volunteering opportunities available. The filter is based on the type of job, working hours and location preference.



Once prospective volunteers find an opportunity that they are interested in applying for and click on it, they will be brought to the login page. New volunteers will be asked to register for an account.



New registrants will be required to fill in personal details including their level of education, occupation, location of domicile, and various skills proficiency.







## Registration

### Education and Experiences

**Highest Education Level**

Required

**Major or Courses Taken**

Required

**Last Volunteering Experience**

Required

### Disabilities

**Do you have any physical disability(es)?**

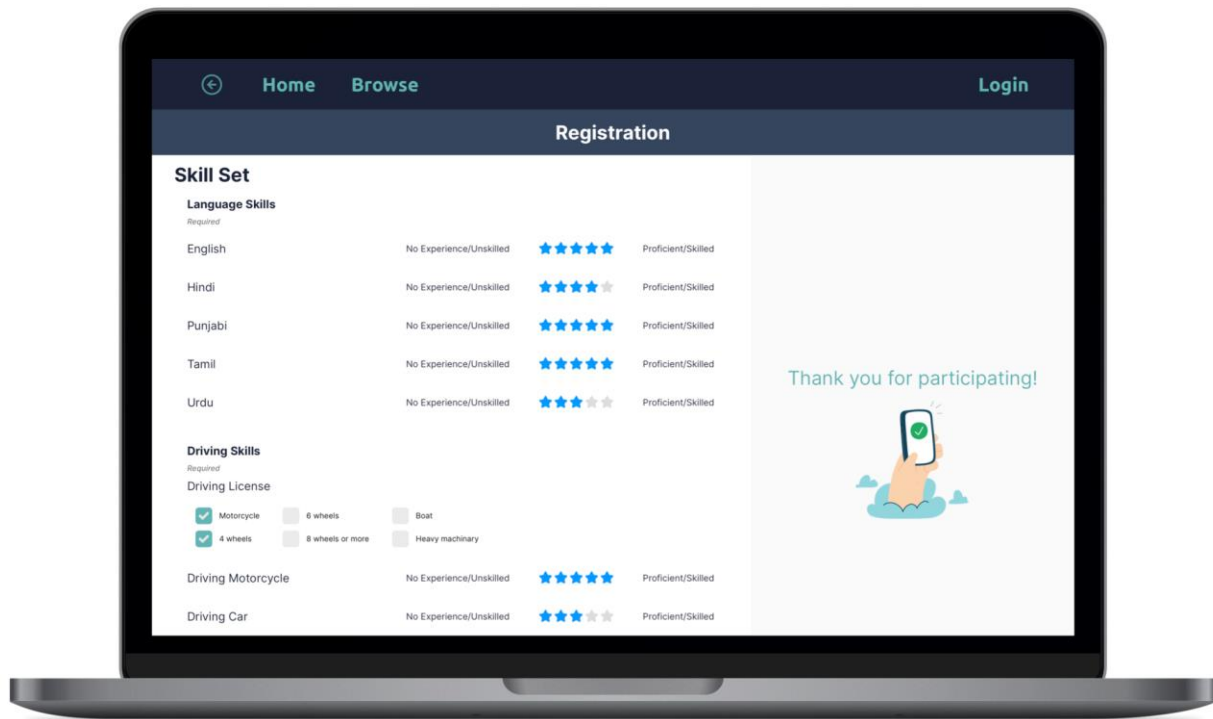
Press and hold ctrl to select more than one.

 or 

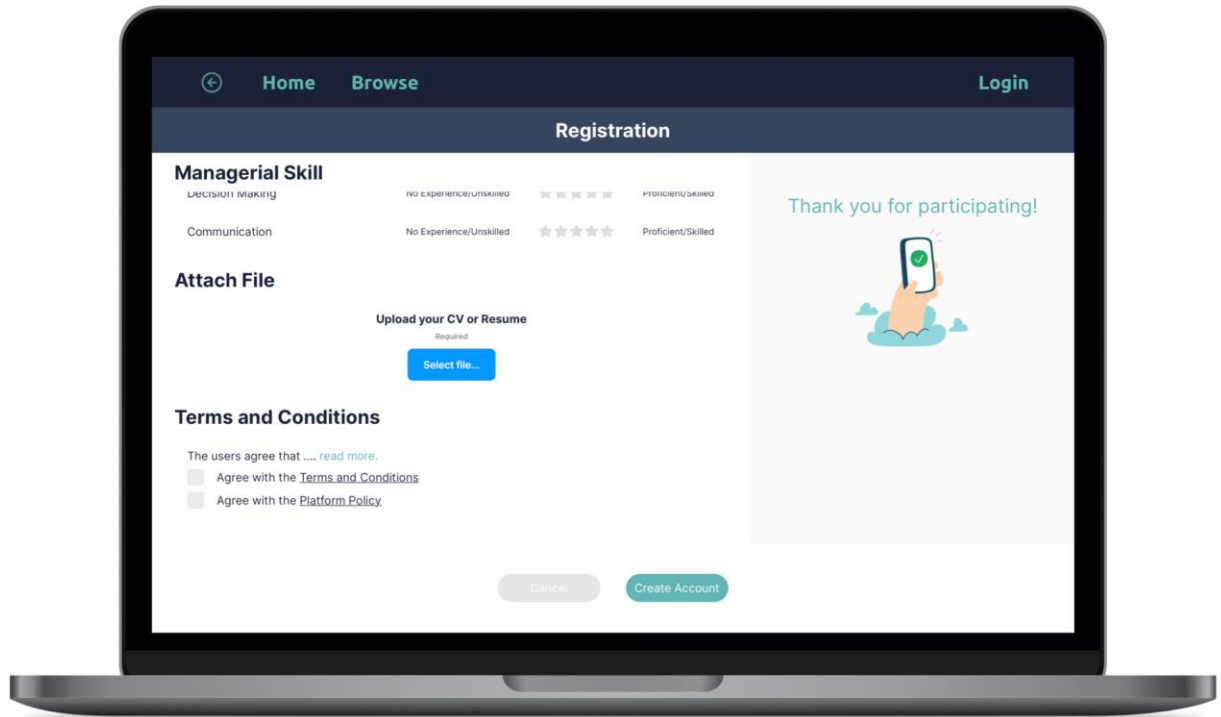
Thank you for participating!



The skill sets asked are determined based on suggestions from organisations and experience of the possible useful skills during a crisis or emergency that are typically needed from volunteers.

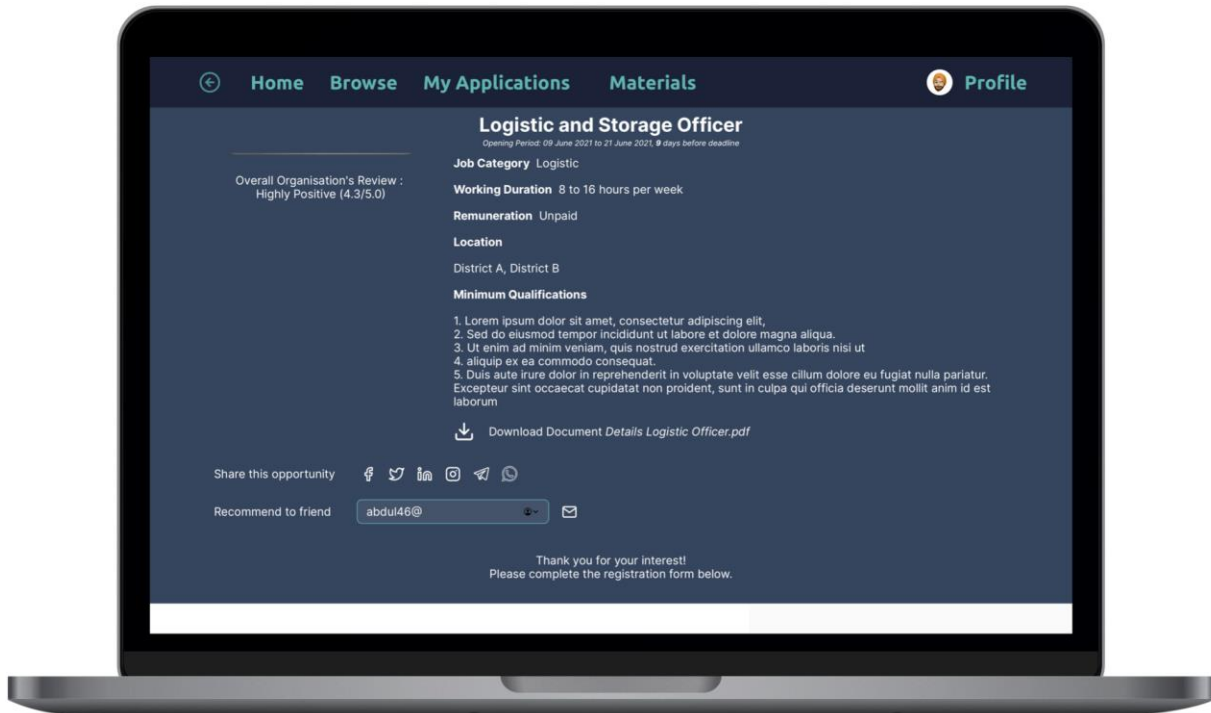
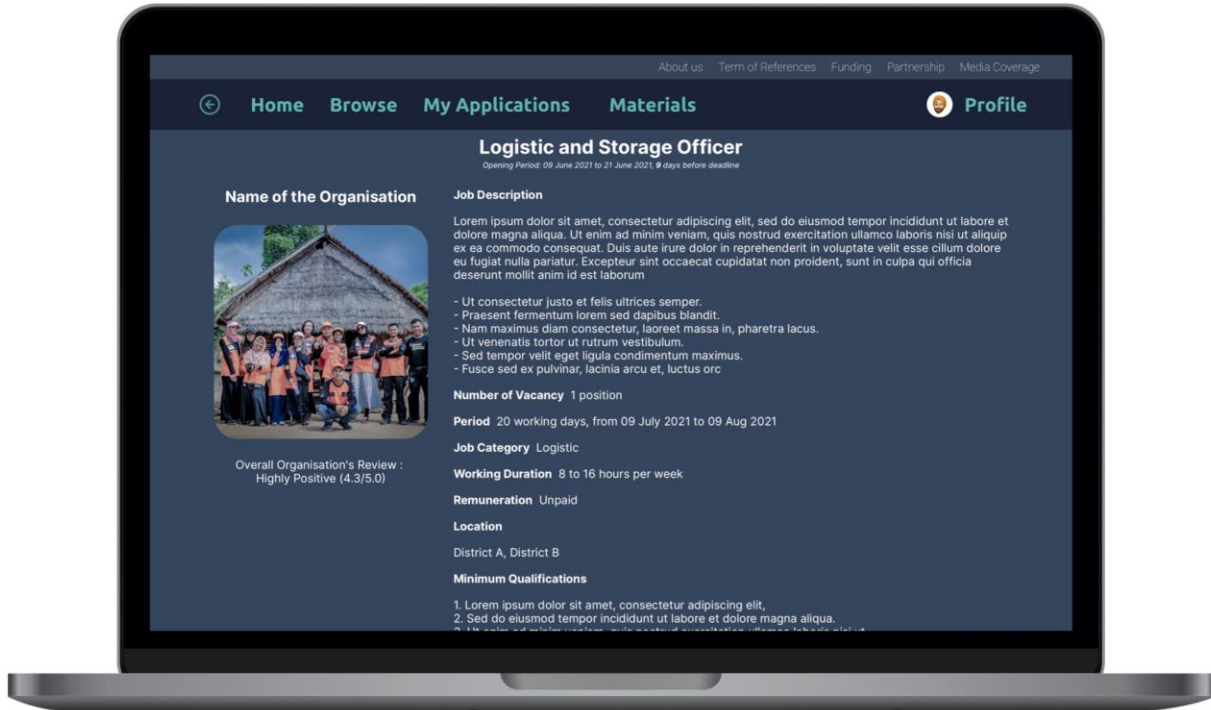


The extensive information and various volunteering related skills are asked during the user's first registration to build their profile and later for the volunteering matching algorithm. The personal data will be protected and stored within the platform. It will be solely used for matching algorithms and calling for volunteers during crises. The user has the right to delete or share their data with the respective organisation when applying to volunteering opportunities.

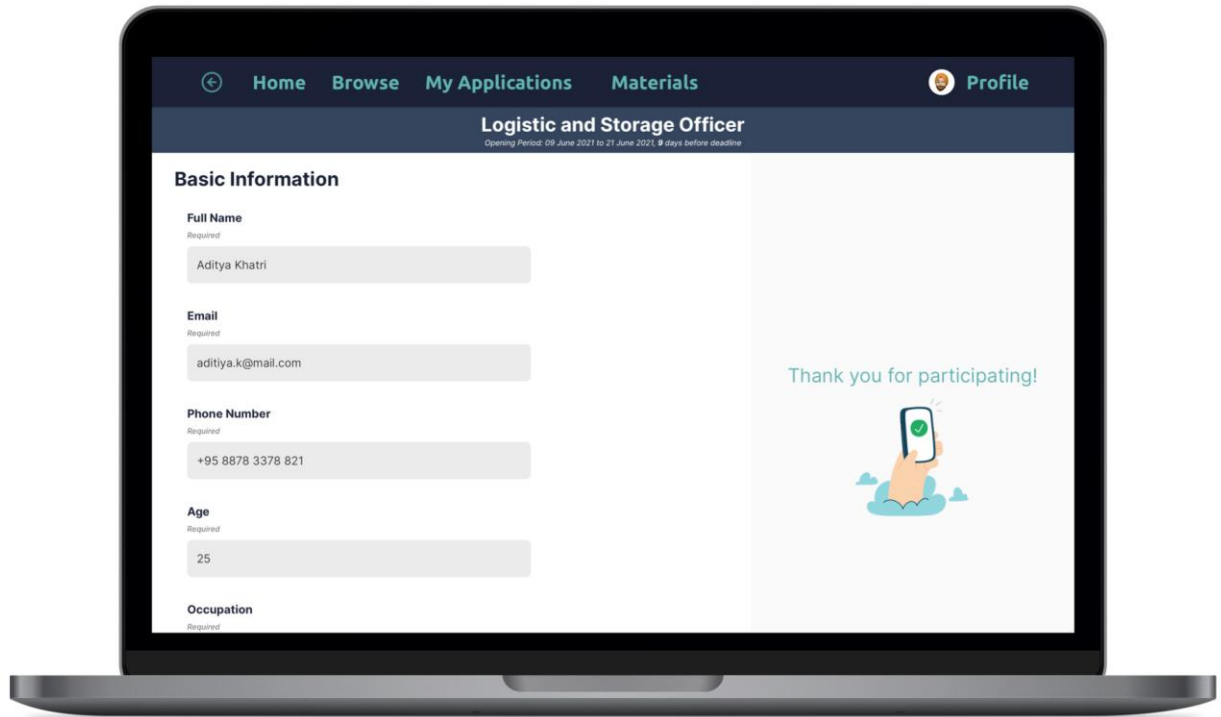


## Apply for Volunteering

Every volunteering vacancy will have detailed information that is accessible by all interested users. Users will also have the option to recommend the vacancy information to their social networks.

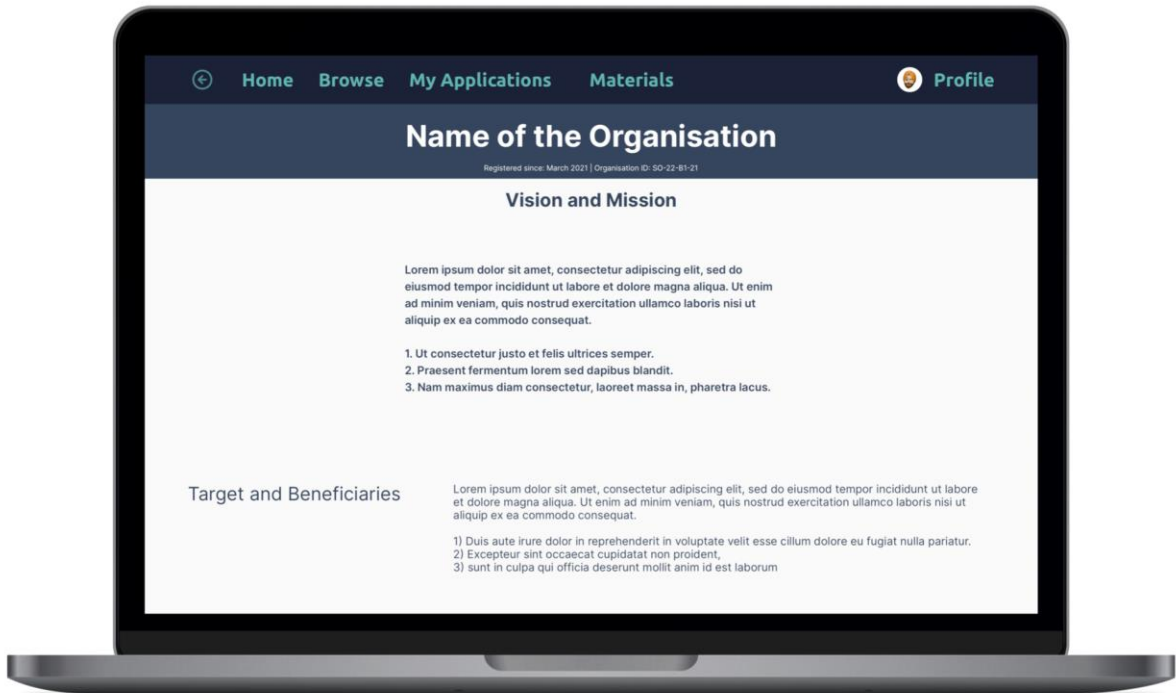
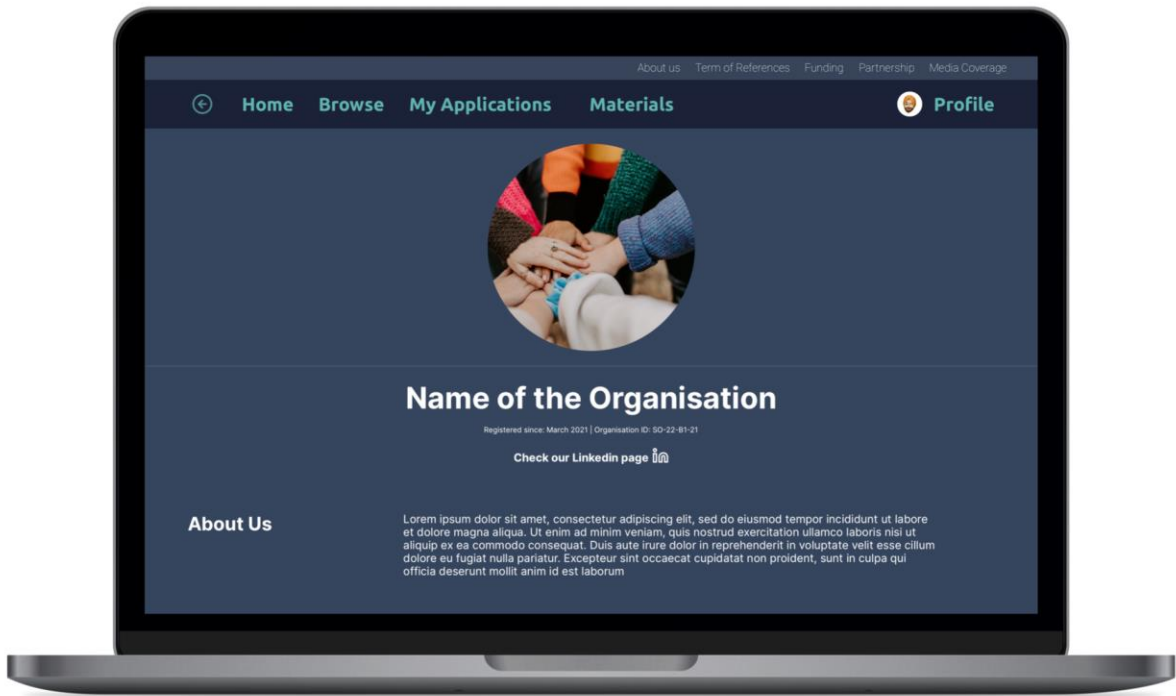


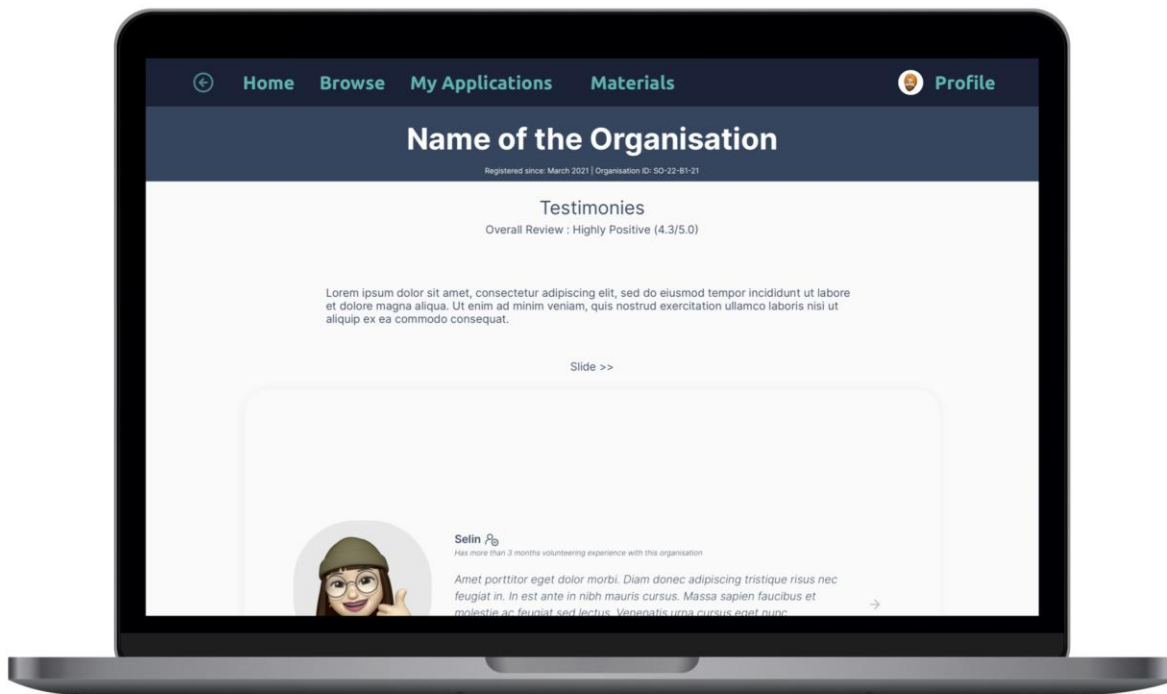
When applying for a volunteering opportunity, for a logged-in user, the application form will be pre-populated with the information from their initial registration. The user can edit the pre-populated information, and add on any additional information that the specific organisation requires.



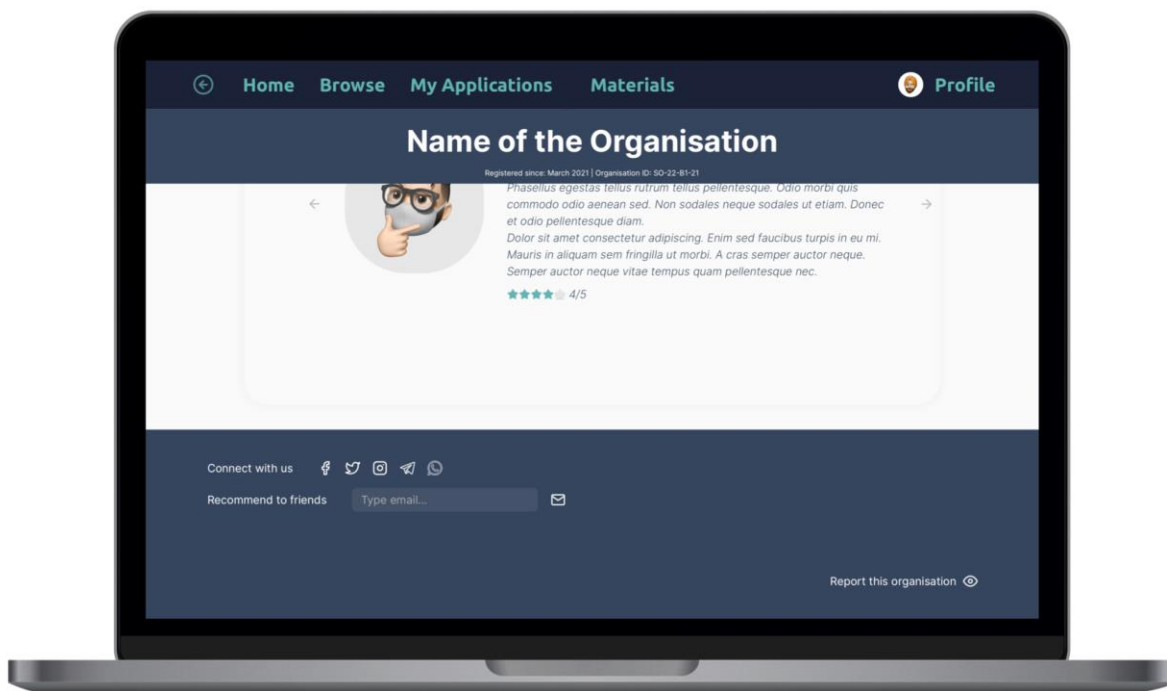
## Checking the organisation's profile

Users can explore the organisation's missions, activities, or impacts in the organisation's profile page. In addition, users can also use the organisation's profile to learn more about the organisation based on previous volunteers' testimonies or the organisation's official LinkedIn Page.



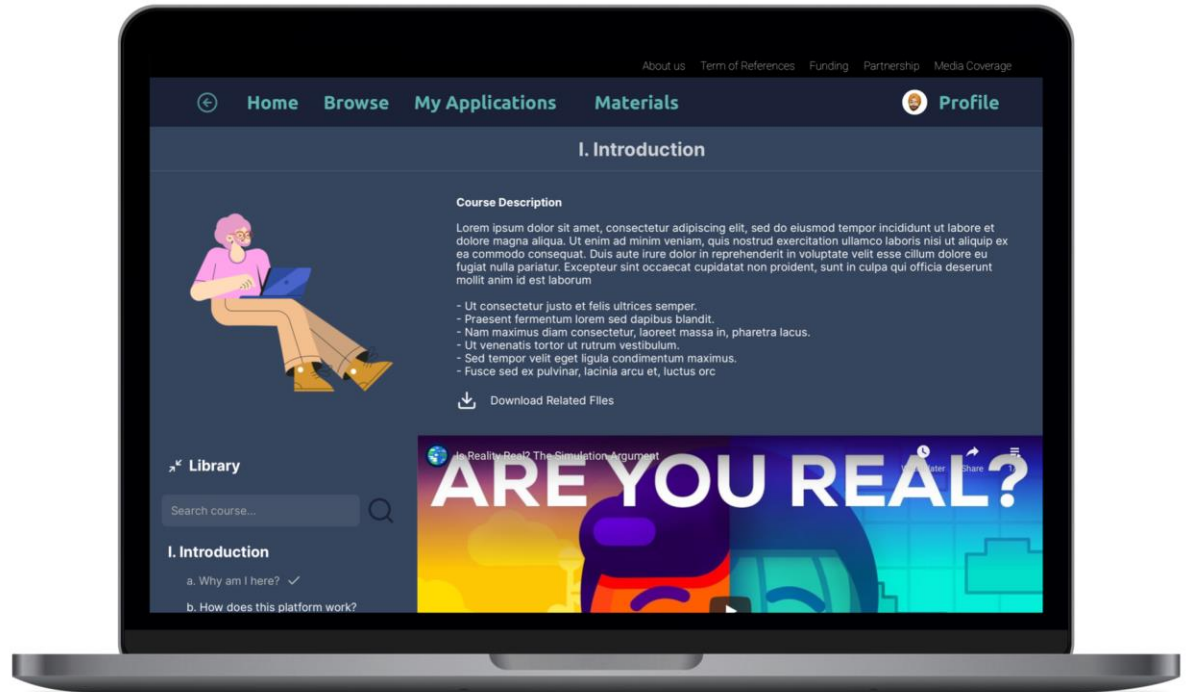


Users will be able to see testimonies from previous volunteers who have volunteered in the organisation. Users can also give their reviews of their former volunteer organisations openly or anonymously.



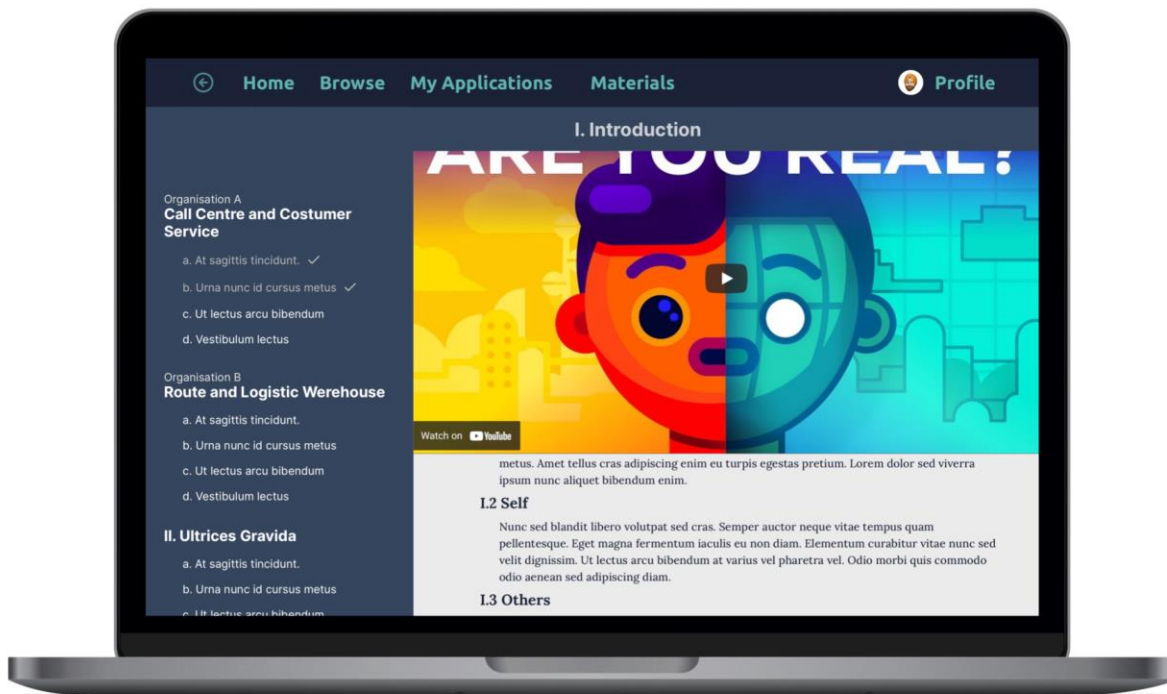
## Training

Users could access free training materials from the platform that are provided by the platform and by the organisation. The training materials could be basic tutorials for certain skills or other relevant materials about volunteering. The training materials will either be developed by the in-house education department or curated materials from external resources.



Users can access training materials from the organisation once they accept the offer of volunteering. All materials either from the platform or from the organisation are accessible through the user's personal library.

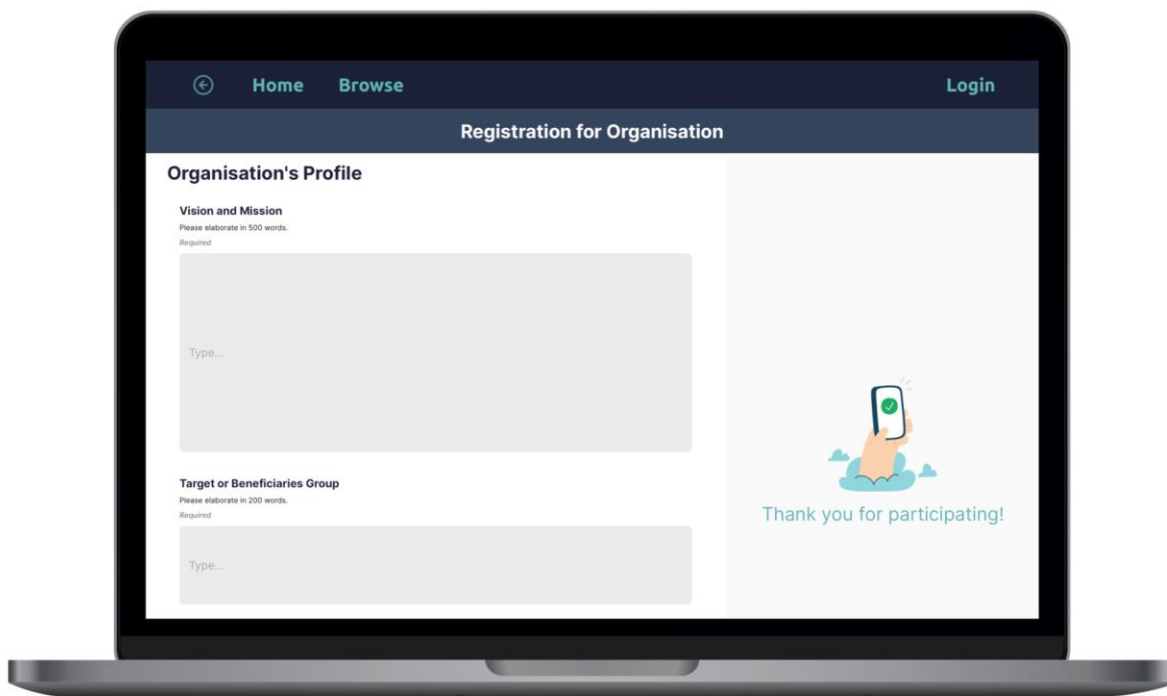
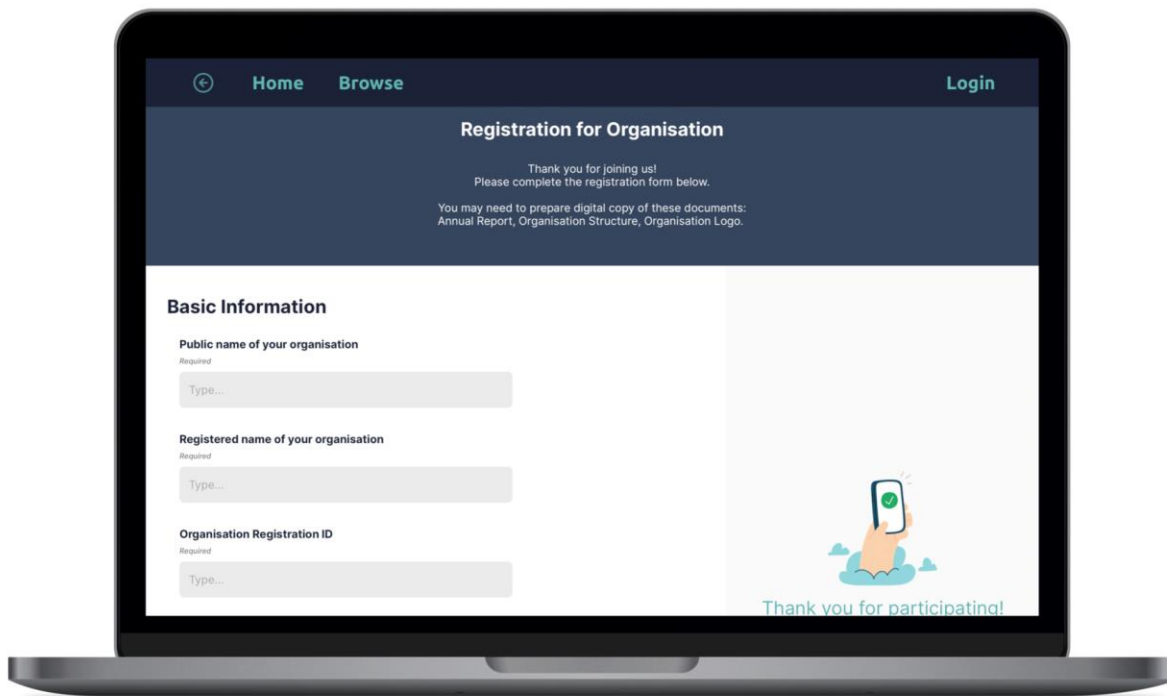




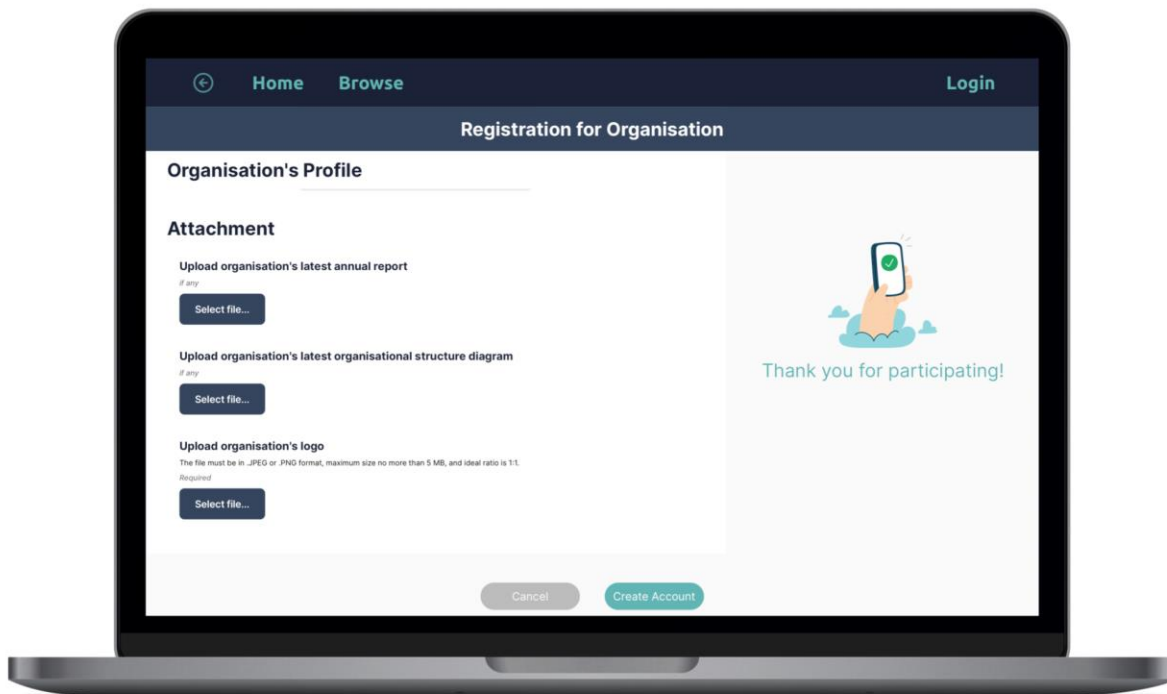
## For organisations

### Registration for Organisation

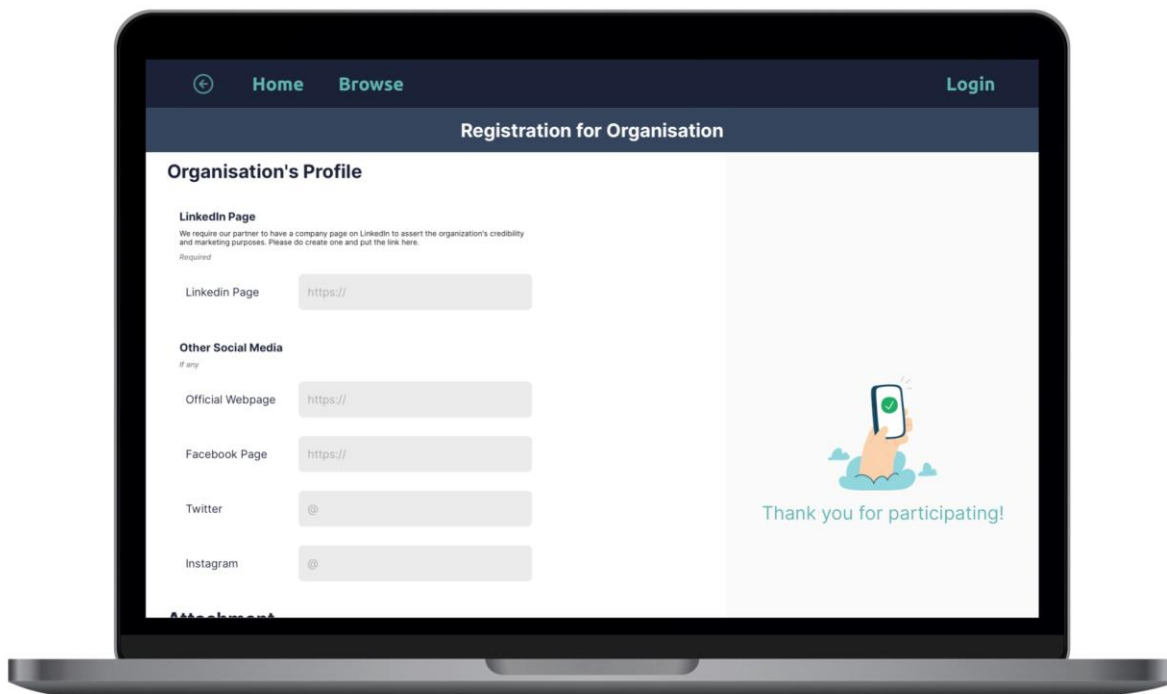
The organisation will register online by completing a series of questions such as organisation identity and contact, profile and activity, and social media. The profile and activity will be made publicly available in the organisation's profile which could be edited at any time later.



The platform also requests the organisation to upload its annual report and organisational structure for verification purposes. The verification of an organisation will be assisted by qualified personnel.

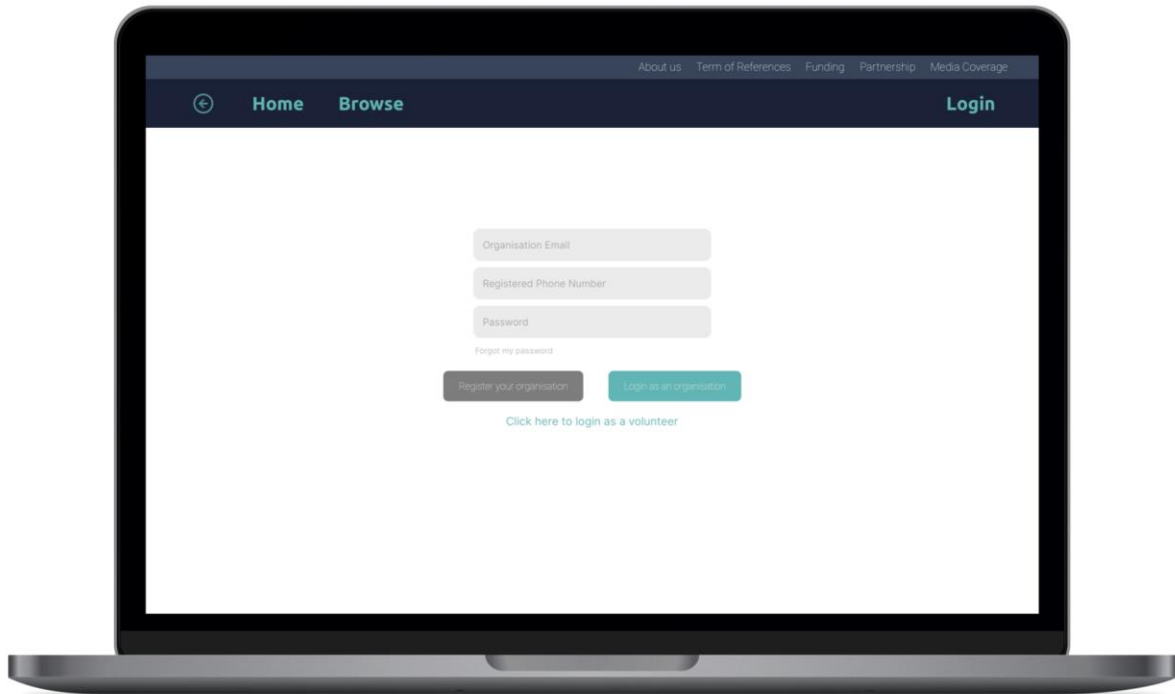


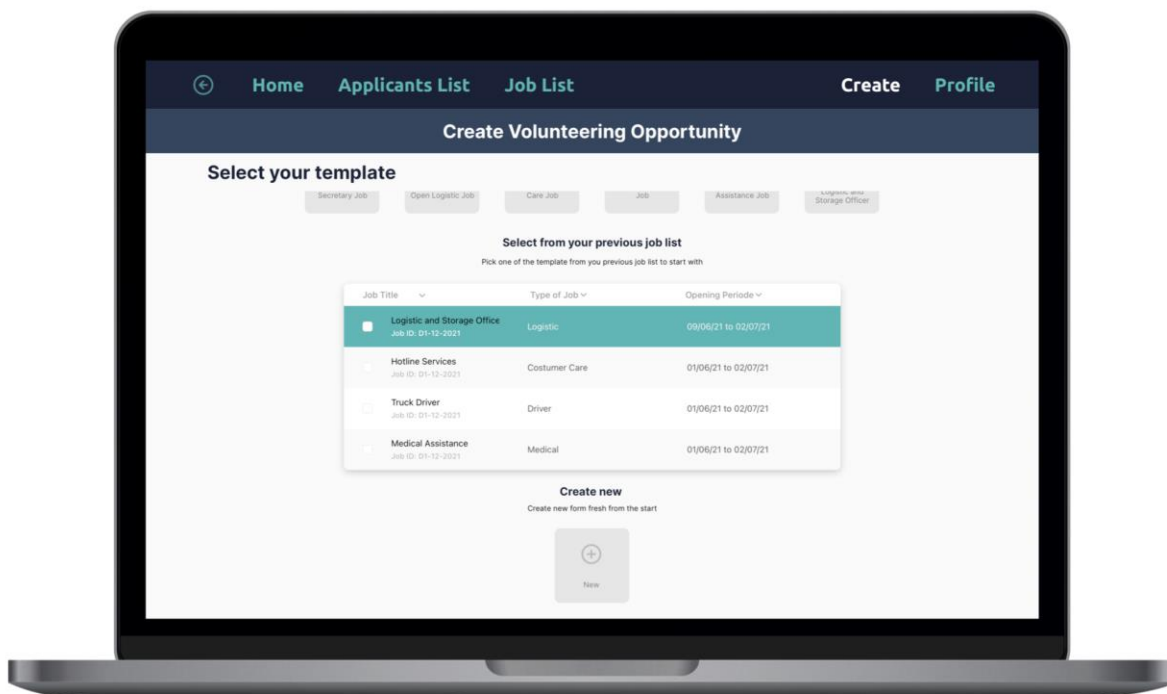
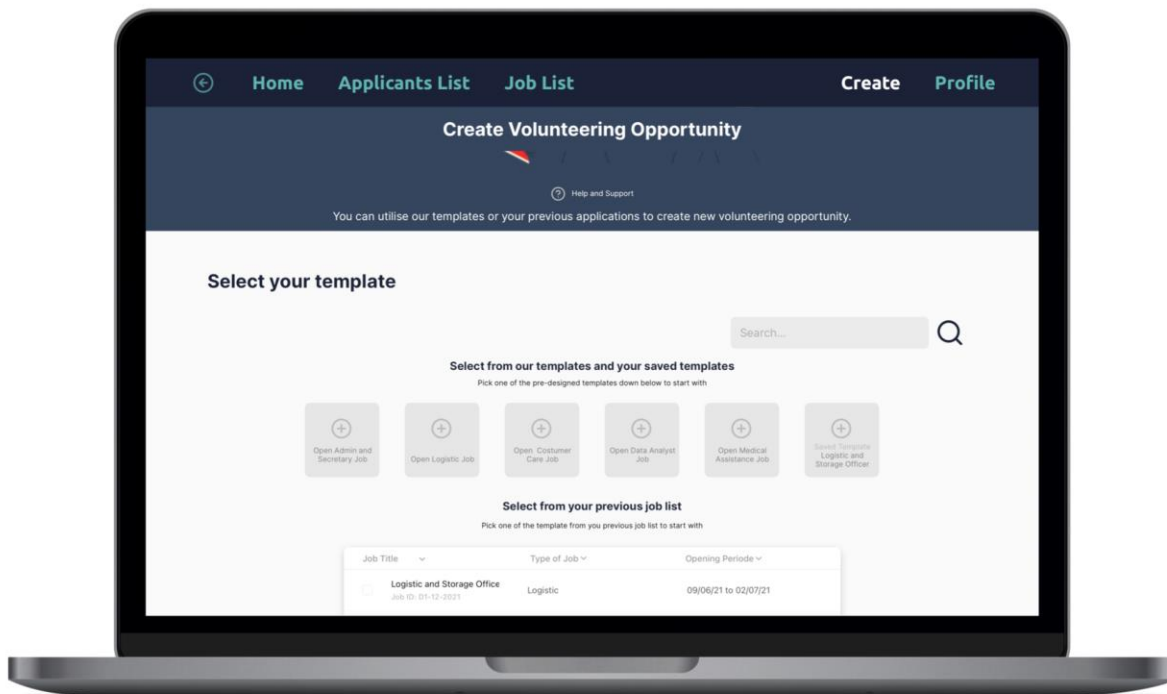
The platform will utilise LinkedIn, an established professional social network, to build a credible public presence for the organisation. The organisation is encouraged to create an official LinkedIn company page that allows volunteers to tag and explore their connection with the organisation.



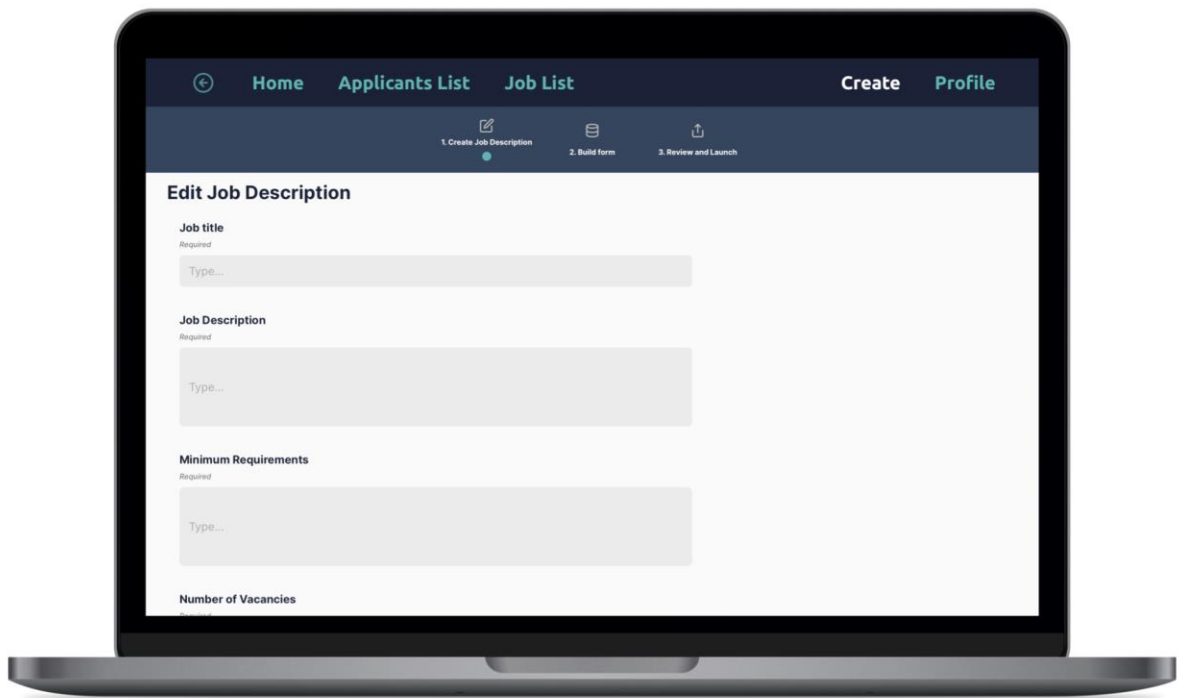
## Create a new volunteering opportunity

Once the organisation is logged in, it will be directed to create a volunteering opportunity which consists of a job description and registration form. The organisation can choose one of the predesigned templates or saved templates from their previous volunteering opportunities. This template would allow the organisation to save time in building and publishing volunteering opportunities, especially during a crisis. The organisation can also create a new template from scratch, which can be saved to be recycled or reused later.

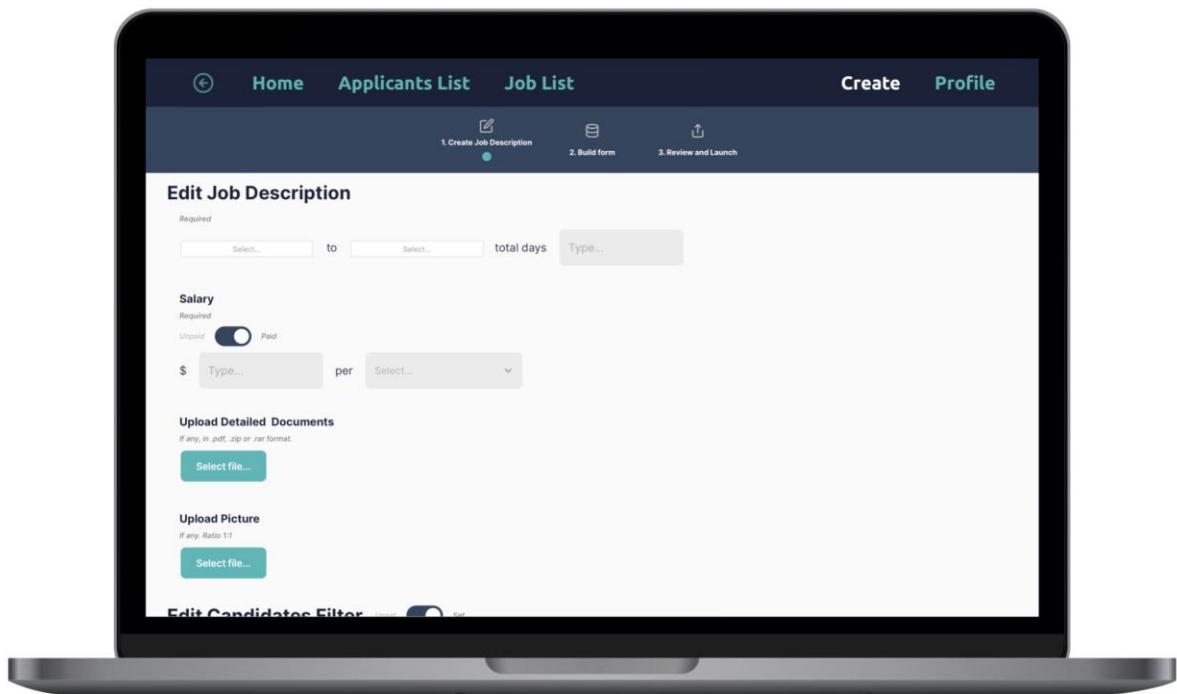




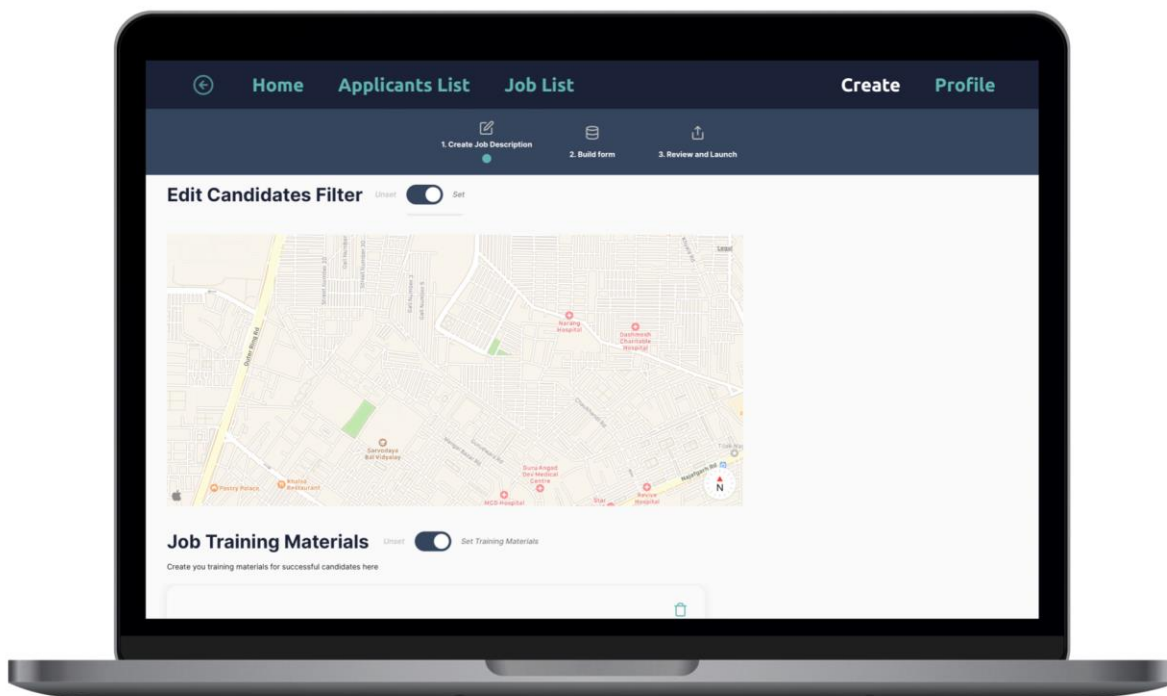
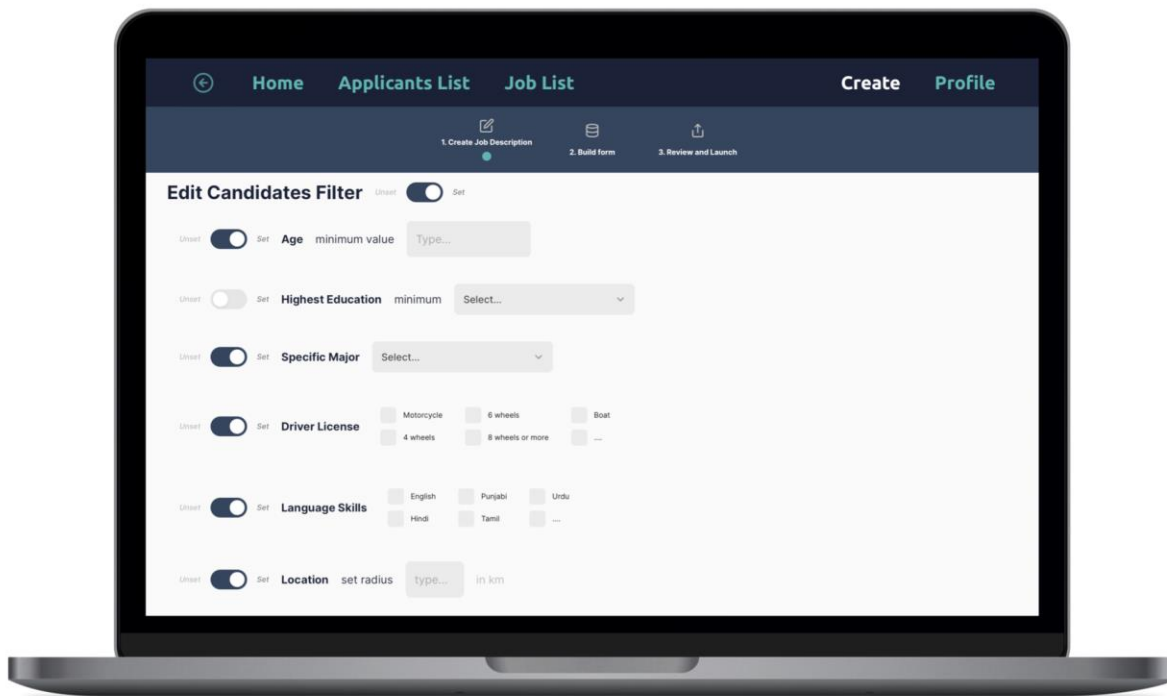
The organisation must provide all necessary information regarding job title, job description and minimum requirements in creating a job description. This information will be useful in order to make the opportunity more searchable and discoverable by the users.



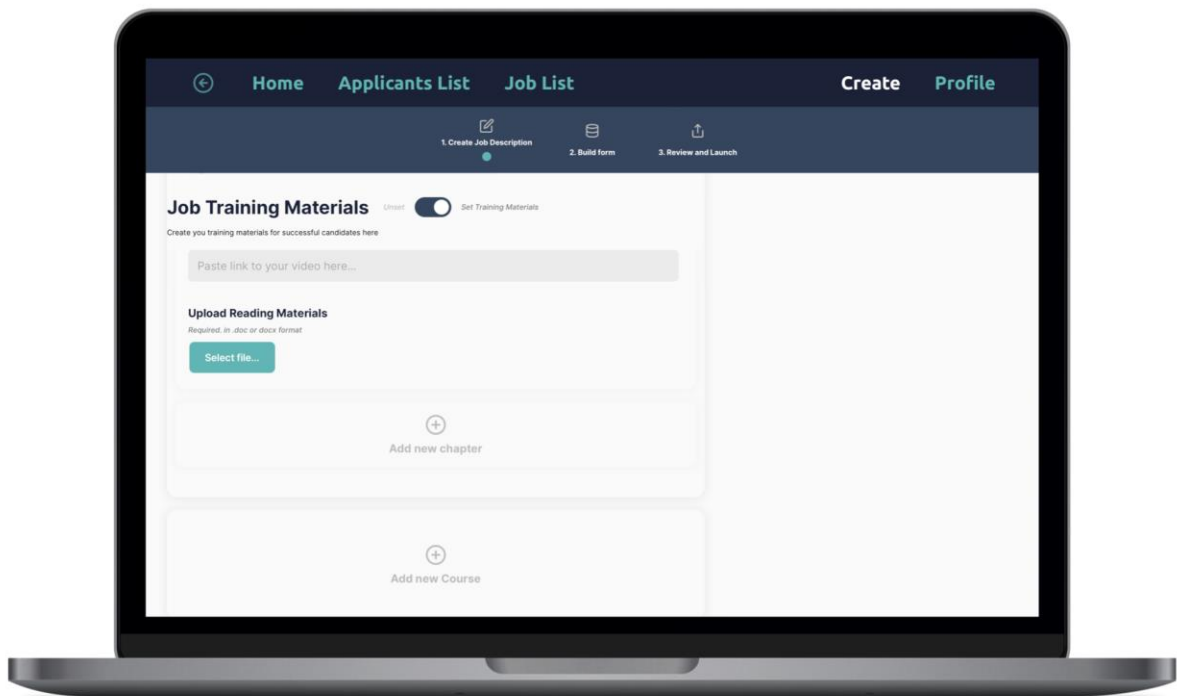
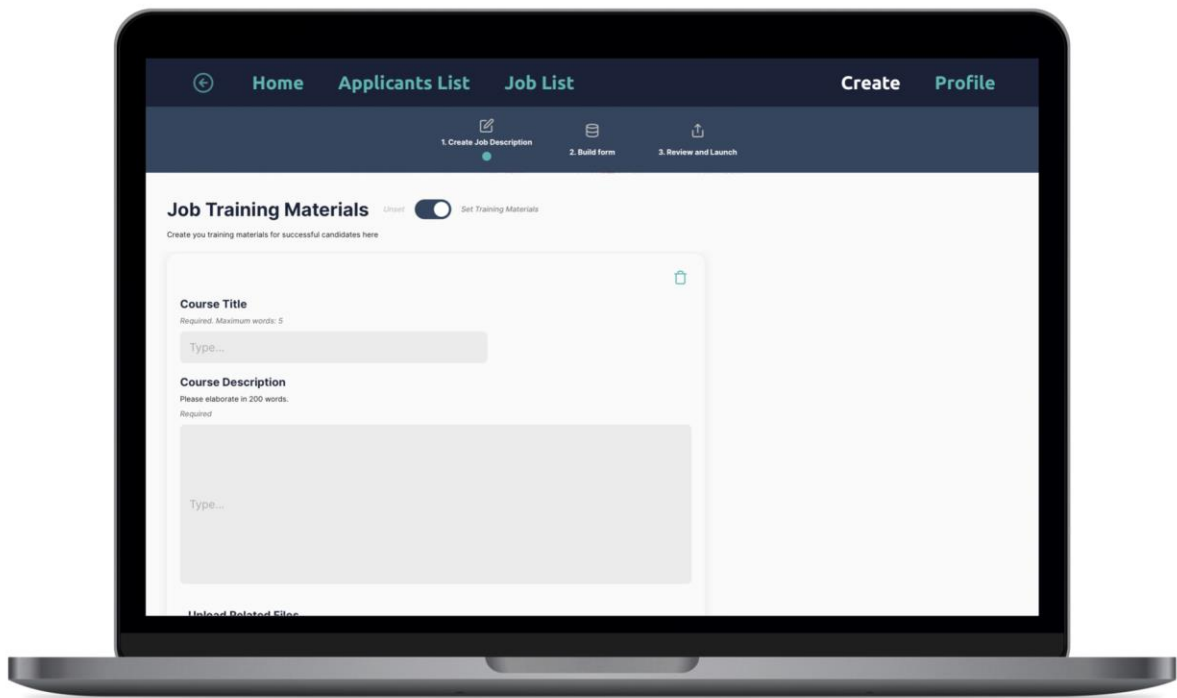
The organisation can also put more detailed information in a document or files to be uploaded.



The organisation can also set up a candidate filter to make the volunteering opportunity only discoverable for a selective demographic characteristic. The selection is based on tangible and evident indicators such as age, driving license, or location.

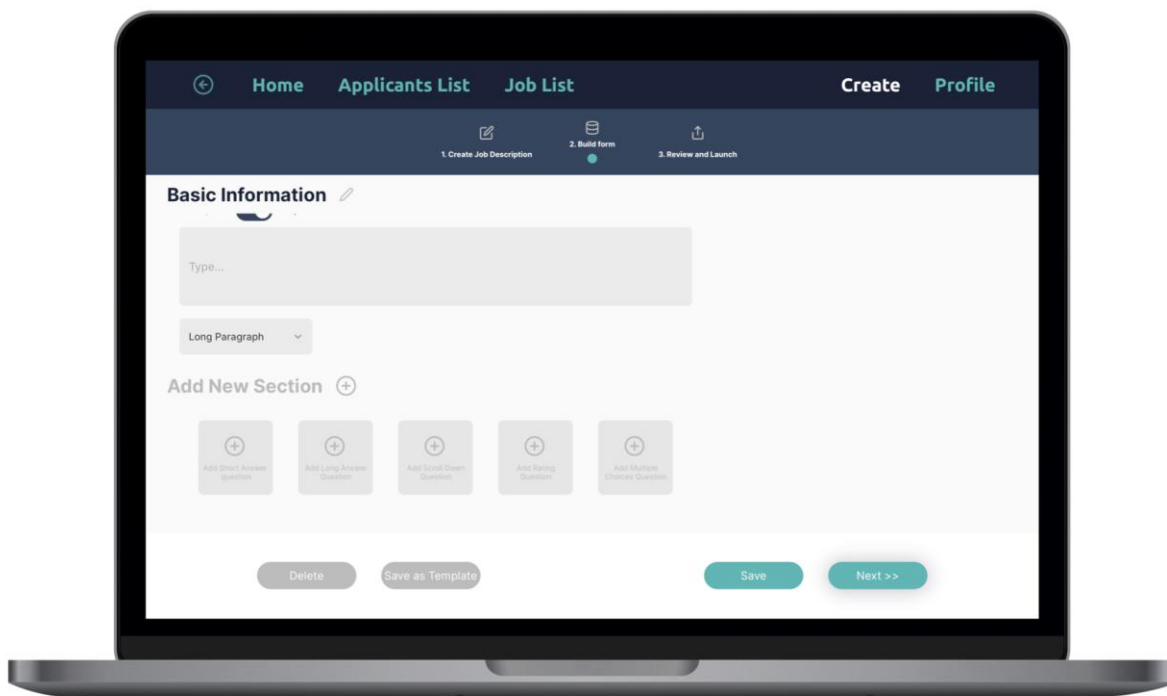
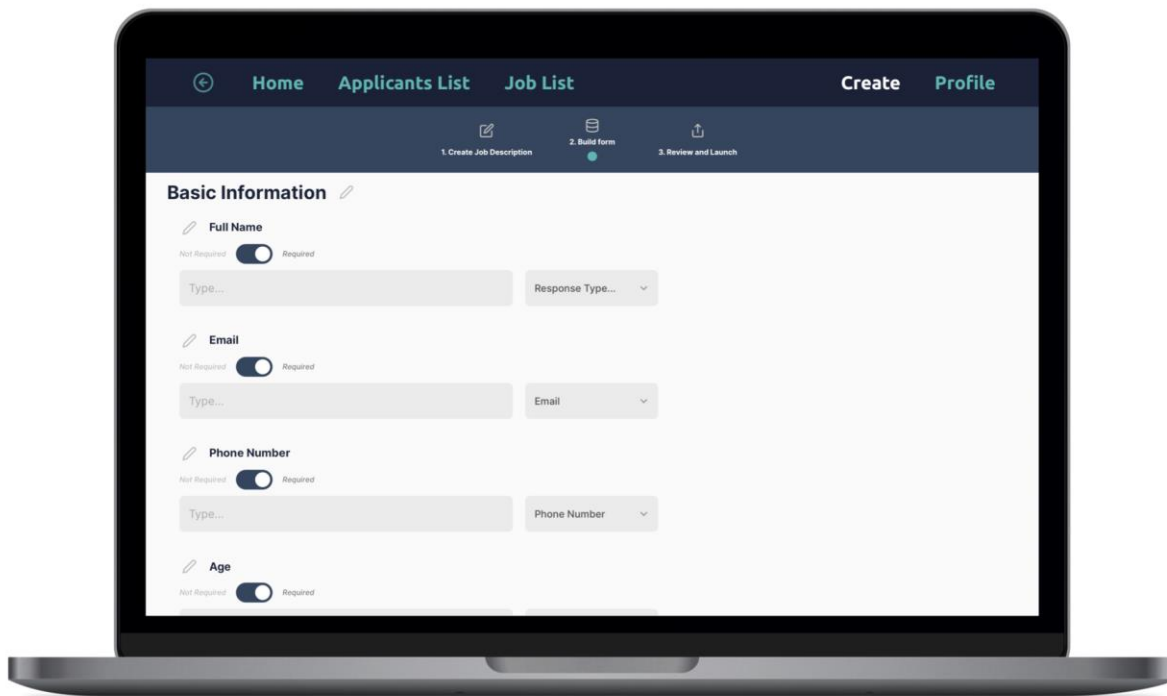


The organisation can also put education materials for successful candidates' use. The materials both in video and reading format will appear in the user's library. The training materials will help the organisation impart necessary information and give greater details of the role to the successful candidate.



There is a form builder tool embedded in the platform and basic questions will be provided as default for the convenience of matching algorithms.





Once the volunteering opportunity application is completed, the organisation can review it before launching it on the platform.

