

성명	Janet Flora Hilts
과제명	Seoul Volunteer Center website does not appear inclusive
주제	서울시 자원봉사센터 website
현황 및 문제점	

Foreign residents have access to volunteer opportunities through the Seoul Global Center as well as other smaller non-profits or volunteer groups. This is good. Specifically the effort the Seoul Global Center has put into establishing a network of volunteers and offering regular opportunities has been a great step towards increasing positive interactions between foreign residents and local Korean residents, among other benefits.

However, the main volunteer network in Seoul, the Seoul Volunteer Center, seems to not be inclusive. At least the website, through which most people have first contact with the organization, does not seem to be inclusive to foreign residents. > <http://volunteer.seoul.go.kr/> then you are directed to > <http://www.1365.go.kr/> to apply to some listings.



The fact that the volunteer listings are in Korean only is not the problem. One can assume that for a foreign resident to participate in most of the volunteer activities listed he/she would need some Korean language skills, and thus could probably read the listings (perhaps using a dictionary for some help). The problem is that there is no evidence on the website that foreign residents are welcome to participate as volunteers in the opportunities listed.

Furthermore, there is the “English” tab and the “for Foreigners” tab (see photo). If clicked, one is directed to a message that lists some volunteering groups that are not affiliated in any way with the Seoul Volunteer Center. For instance, Korea International Volunteers <http://www.meetup.com/volunteers> and BEAN Seoul <http://seoul.beanonline.org> which perhaps do some decent work, but are certainly not certified volunteer centres where staff has training and so on. As well as listing these groups, there is a contact email and an application form that can be filled and sent to the Seoul Volunteer Center. On the form, it says “The information on this application is collected to determine eligibility for Seoul volunteer opportunities...” No information is given as to

why this form should be submitted rather than applying through the website. Nor is any information given about what will happen once the form has been received.

More importantly, directing foreign residents to click the “For Foreigners” link gives the impression that one is not supposed to apply through the website like Korean residents. This makes the website seem to be lacking in inclusiveness toward foreign residents and could even be interpreted as a sign that the centre does not want foreign residents to participate as volunteers in the same way that Korean residents can.

This is frustrating as it is, but furthermore, many of the volunteer opportunities listed on the site (the full Korean site) look really interesting and are very diverse, much more than those offered through the Seoul Global Center or the casual volunteer groups mentioned earlier. As well, the opportunities can be searched by location, thus giving foreign residents a chance to volunteer in their area of the city – a chance to get to know local people.

Volunteering is an excellent way for foreign residents to: get to know neighbours better, network, improve Korean language skills, improve the community through providing different skills or know-how, help local Korean residents become accustomed to non-Koreans, and so on (the benefits are plenty). With this in mind, I believe it is imperative the Seoul Volunteer Center website be inclusive and more welcoming to foreign residents.

개선방안

I propose the following solution.

First, it would be better if the “For Foreigners” link and following pages be changed. Perhaps different links corresponding to various languages could replace this (example, English, Chinese, etc.). Then there could be an explanation of how to apply through the Korean website with diagrams, etc. (as this could be difficult to understand) and then an explanation of how exactly to apply to the volunteer opportunities and other important instructions. To make the site inclusive, it is important the method be the same as for local Korean residents.

Second, volunteer opportunities listings already include criteria for which volunteers can apply (adult or teenager, etc.). Included here could be the additional criteria of “Foreign Resident’s Korean Language Ability” where the person posting the ad could choose between “basic, beginner, intermediate, advanced, expert” for instance. Certainly, some volunteering tasks would require advanced or better skills, but planting flowers or picking up trash on Bukhan Mountain would not.

Third, the website could include a pop-up or a little picture on the front page that indicates foreign residents are welcome to use the website and become volunteers. For example, “Let’s volunteer together!” , or something, written in different languages.

Fourth, on the instruction pages in the various languages, other volunteer centres, e.g. the Seoul Global Center, could be introduced very briefly with a link. Then foreign residents who don’t want to volunteer with Koreans or who can not speak Korea at all could be free to follow those links.

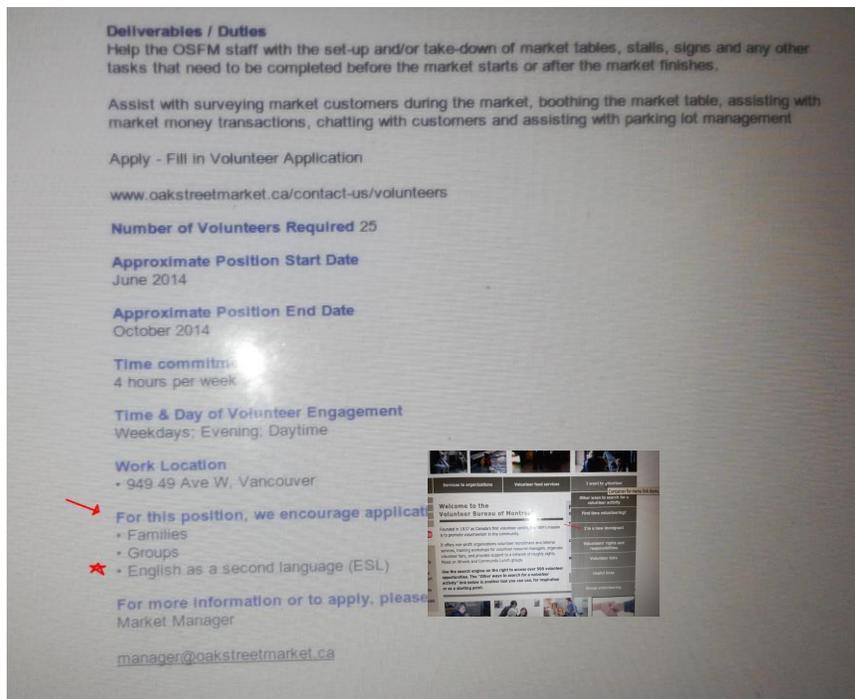
외국사례

To my knowledge, all volunteer centres in Canada strive to be inclusive and welcoming to new immigrants or international students. Even in my hometown, the tiny town of Deep River, I remember new immigrants from Korea and Cambodia volunteering around town. In Toronto, I knew some ESL students from Korea and Japan (who were not good at English at all) who regularly volunteered through the Toronto Volunteer Centre (but I had to help them navigate the website a little).

In Canada, it is normal for immigrants or international students to participate in volunteer activities with mainstream Canadians and through the same websites that mainstream Canadians use. For example, many postings on govolunteer.ca encourage people learning English (ESL learners) to apply > see photo

<http://govolunteer.ca/cgi/page.cgi?id=15&posting=29432>

Or on the Volunteer Bureau of Montreal website, if you click on “I want to Volunteer” there is the choice “I’m a New Immigrant” >>>



see photo.

If you click, then it says “The Volunteer Bureau of Montreal wishes you a warm welcome to Montreal!

Volunteering can be an excellent way to adapt to local culture while contributing to society. We encourage you to read the following pages to learn more about how you can get involved. If you have more questions, feel free to contact us by phone at 514.842.3351.” I think this is very welcoming.



Services to organizations	Volunteer food services	I want to volunteer
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Welcome to the Volunteer Bureau of Montreal

Founded in 1937 as Canada's first volunteer centre, the VBM's mission is to promote volunteerism in the community.

It offers non-profit organizations volunteer recruitment and referral services, training workshops for volunteer resource managers, organizes volunteer fairs, and provides support to a network of roughly eighty Meals on Wheels and Community Lunch groups.

Use the search engine on the right to access over 500 volunteer opportunities. The "Other ways to search for a volunteer activity" link below is another tool you can use, for inspiration or as a starting point.

Other ways to search for a volunteer activity
First time volunteering?
I'm a new Immigrant
Volunteers' rights and responsibilities
Volunteer fairs
Useful links
Group volunteering

