



Reinforcing Community Partnerships Through a Skills-Based Day of Service

Citizens came to Common Impact with a big goal: to not only host its first-ever skills-based day of service, but to leverage the event to achieve three core goals around volunteer programming, internal education, and community impact.

The company sought to provide a new way for colleagues to engage in virtual volunteerism and turned to an event model as a light-touch, high-impact option that would also serve as an entry point for educating colleagues on the professional development benefits of skilled volunteering and build internal excitement for future events. At the heart of these objectives was Citizens' desire to create lasting impact for its nonprofit partners, deepen those relationships, and live out its commitment to serving the communities in which it operates.



Leveraging our skillset to create lasting impact.



Read Citizens' Story: [Volunteering Time & Skills to Help Nonprofits Succeed](#)

10

nonprofits

57

volunteers

9

locations

\$97K+

social return on investment

The Approach

Common Impact tapped into our two+ decades of skills-based volunteering program management and strategic consulting to design a custom day of service that would deliver on Citizens' business and community goals, one of which was to complete 10 projects across 9 regions.

To help identify nonprofit partners, Citizens engaged their market managers for each of the target regions. Common Impact hosted a training on the day of service model and nonprofit capacity needs, and from there, Citizens entrusted them to recommend nonprofits in each region to participate, focusing on existing Citizens grantees in need of capacity building support and consultation. Common Impact worked with the nonprofits to understand their needs, goals, and existing capacity and resources; evaluate their readiness for skills-based volunteering; and, for the organizations selected, scoped specific project challenges that could be successfully completed within the day of service.

TIP: Giving employees the opportunity to recommend or select nonprofits helps create the conditions for continued participation and sustainable skills-based volunteer programs that provide deeper, more meaningful support for community partners!

"I strongly encourage my colleagues to participate in a skills based volunteering program. It provides an ideal venue to partner with colleagues of various skill sets while adding concrete value to a nonprofit. A concentrated effort that yields enormous benefits!"

- Citizens volunteer

Next, Common Impact formed the volunteer teams, recruiting from Citizens' talented employee base to select 5-7 employees with relevant expertise for each of the 10 projects. The virtual nature of the day of service allowed for a larger scale event with Citizens employees across 15 states and 8 business lines represented and nonprofits benefiting from a more diverse talent pool that could better address their specific challenges.

The Projects

With strong teams and clear project descriptions established, Citizens was well prepared to collaborate with nonprofit partners in developing solutions to their operations challenges, many of which centered on HR and marketing, as well as business areas like finance, fundraising, and client relations. Sample projects included:

HR Infrastructure Assessment

Assessed Boston Public Market's HR infrastructure and provided best practices and improvement recommendations in areas such as professional development and performance evaluation practices.

PR & Communications Strategy

Helped YWCA Brooklyn develop strategies for sharing client stories and outcomes to engage new constituents in need of services as well as entice potential partnerships with NYC media outlets.

CEO Succession Planning

Reviewed Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Detroit's existing emergency succession plan and created a framework for a new CEO succession plan, including structure recommendations and best practices for charting succession internally.

Professional Development Syllabus

Created a syllabus of professional development opportunities for Farm Fresh Rhode Island with recommendations on how to effectively integrate learning into the organization, addressing budget, internal communications, manager approval, cadence, and more.



The Impact

The day of service provided the nonprofits with fresh ideas, new resources to take advantage of, and concrete action plans to implement their deliverables. In a post-event survey, 100% of nonprofit respondents said they were interested in another skills-based volunteering opportunity and 87% felt the day of service made a real difference for their organization.

For Citizens, the day of service was a well-received introduction to skilled volunteering as a tool for professional growth and an opportunity to support nonprofits and their communities. Colleagues were overwhelmingly enthusiastic about the expertise and perspectives they gained and the depth of contributions they were able to make. 97% said that participating in this program positively influenced their interest in volunteering and that they plan to continue lending their skills to their nonprofit partner (59%) and other nonprofits (81%).

Citizens volunteer feedback

Valuable professional development opportunity

94%

Improved workplace skills (e.g. planning and problem solving)

84%

Enhanced management skills

60%

"We had an incredible experience working with Common Impact and our Citizens volunteer team. Every member was engaged throughout and made a dedicated effort to understand our organization. We came out of the project with a clear and feasible plan to implement and are excited to work on next steps!"

- Nonprofit participant

"Our first ever Skills-Based Day of Service was a huge success due in large part to the expert coordination and implementation of the Common Impact team. Citizens colleagues appreciated the ability to help solve critical social challenges and our partners praised the valuable insight gained. Common Impact truly helped bring our vision to life."



- Kaitlin Sprong, VP, Director of Community Engagement, Citizens