

Creating positive social change through volunteering

Over 1 billion people volunteer worldwide, sharing their skills and experience, providing support within their communities, and offering emergency assistance to those in need. On International Volunteer Day (December 5), we join forces with the UN to recognize the tireless work of all volunteers and the contributions that they make.

Nov 29, 2022

At Novartis, we actively nurture a culture of giving and volunteering with our associates. Here's how our people are making a difference around the world and why they volunteer.

We empower our people to engage and volunteer on their own terms, enabling everyone to make a difference in their chosen community and an impact on society's biggest challenges and unmet needs. Our Engagement & Volunteering (E&V) program is based around three pillars: employee giving, community initiatives, and skills-based volunteering. As one of the most inclusive and needs-driven, partner-led programs, with no upper limit on the number of volunteering or engagement hours and volunteering permitted during work hours, the Novartis E&V program was featured as best practice for impact valuation and for non-profit partnering at the 26th World Volunteer Conference.

Engagement & Volunteering at Novartis: Snapshots from around the globe

Our US-based associate Janelle Rychlick uses her professional skills by volunteering with the Tent

Partnership for Refugees, a global non-profit organization dedicated to supporting refugees to integrate into their host communities. Janelle mentors an LGBTQI refugee via sessions on career planning, resumés, interview skills and networking.

“Novartis is focused on reimagining medicine and improving people's lives. I believe volunteering is an extension of those goals to make a difference in our society. Volunteering allows you to give back to others and helps create a kinder world. It gives you the opportunity to learn from others and broaden your horizon”.



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<p>Janelle Rychlick, US-based associate</p>

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In Mexico, we recently launched two skills-based volunteering programs focused on women's economic empowerment where associates teach local teachers communications and marketing strategies with the aim of helping strengthen women-led income generating businesses.

Andrea Conde, Policy & Global Health Senior Manager shares, “Over 50 associates registered to these programs. I think this showcases our volunteering culture. We identify potential organizations we would like to work with based on Novartis values and culture, but it is not a one size fits all approach. The programs are very specific and are created based on the beneficiaries' needs and priorities. This helps us ensure the program's sustainability and its ownership.”

Meanwhile, Loveneet Saini, Patient Access Manager, explains how more than 500 local Novartis associates in Hyderabad, India, are actively volunteering their time and efforts, virtually or in-person, around initiatives focused on education and enablement, healthcare, infrastructure development and environmental

sustainability for the benefit of their community.

“If you enjoy volunteering, then volunteering at Novartis gives you the chance to come together with like-minded people who have the passion to give back to society. This volunteering group is something that I feel a sense of belonging to. It is something I connect to at a thought level, at a spiritual level because it gives me hope that yes, I'm giving something back and I'm doing my bit – even if it's a very tiny bit – but I'm playing my part to the best of my ability in bringing a positive change in the society.”

And in response to the war in Ukraine, Thomas Weigold, Poland Country Head, explains how associates from Novartis Poland helped, and even opened their homes to, colleagues and their families impacted by the war, helping more than 160 people so far in a hands-on, immediate way.

“At Novartis, we are great in helping patients, but we also realize we can make a big impact beyond that. That's where volunteering and helping can make a huge difference as a Novartis employee.”

Partnerships and collaborations in 2022

In the past year, our people have given to, and volunteered for, many of our strategic partners such as Save the Children, Mercy Ships, The Max Foundation and the Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative. Other example projects include mentoring health tech entrepreneurs, supporting environmental sustainability in the supply chain and driving innovation in the UN system.

In 2022 we also signed new partnerships with UNHCR, Medicines for Malaria Venture and Swiss Red Cross – opening up even more opportunities for our people to volunteer.



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<p>Our people tell us that they find volunteering opportunities meaningful and personally fulfilling.</p>

Estelle Roth, Global Head of Engagement & Volunteering

Estelle Roth, Global Head of Engagement & Volunteering says, “We asked our people which causes and beneficiary areas they most care about. We have over 60 different areas which span from health / access, youth education, environmental sustainability, or refugees, to name only a few. Without exception, our people told us that they find these opportunities meaningful and personally fulfilling. We apply a sustainable model where we always first listen to society. We take a needs-based approach and put positive and measurable impact at the center for our people, for our partners, for Novartis, and for society.”

Our projects are partner-led and we are committed to responding to partners’ needs and collaborating fully with them on an end-to-end journey. As a global company, we have a great responsibility and an even greater opportunity to lead the world in creating a positive social change, embracing societal impact as a core business objective, and can match our strengths with society’s needs.

Novartis has a wide range of skills, knowledge and expertise to share

Find out more about the Novartis approach to Engagement & Volunteering.

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