

Heartfelt, tailored recognition of your volunteers is essential to retaining them. Kick off your team’s planning process by asking yourself some key questions. Based on your answers, select a virtual recognition initiative from the chart below or come up with something entirely new!

## Key Questions

**1 What motivates your volunteers? How might recognition motivate them further? Are there any specific achievements you’d like to highlight?**

*Example:* Volunteers motivated by social opportunities might appreciate a virtual party where they can get to know each other, while you can also highlight the impact they’ve made so far.

**2 What virtual recognition type would work for, and resonate with, your volunteers?**

*Example:* Depending on their motivations, some volunteers may appreciate emails, postcards or other notes from clients directly sharing the impact they’ve made.

**3 How long will it take to plan and implement this recognition? How will you let volunteers know about it?**

*Example:* If you wanted to run a beginners’ yoga lunch and learn, you’ll need to find a yoga instructor, a video conferencing tool, a date and time that works for everyone, and an effective means of notifying everyone.

## Examples

	Pre-Pandemic	Pandemic and Beyond
<b>Formal events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awards event, banquet, gala</li> <li>Annual meeting</li> <li>Service hours/months/years recognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtual awards gala</li> <li>Home dance party</li> <li>Volunteer spotlight</li> </ul>
<b>Informal events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Casual meal (barbecue, potluck)</li> <li>Entertainment (movie, bowling)</li> <li>Game night, coffee night</li> <li>Lunch with volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooking class</li> <li>Yoga teaching</li> <li>Teleparty (Netflix Party)</li> <li>“Eating lunch” together</li> </ul>
<b>Giveaways</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Branded goods</li> <li>Cards, letters, notes</li> <li>Messages of support</li> <li>Coupons, promotions, gift cards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Home spa kit</li> <li>Client messages of support for volunteers</li> <li>Digital coupons</li> </ul>
<b>Community projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Art project (mural, chart paper)</li> <li>Impact-driven activations</li> <li>Pay-it-forward campaign</li> <li>Volunteer t-shirt design contest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital art project (whiteboard)</li> <li>Organization themed video</li> <li>Virtual design contest</li> </ul>
<b>Resume builders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite volunteers to seminars, events, conferences</li> <li>Business cards for volunteers</li> <li>Professional shout-outs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow staff to share their skills with volunteers via virtual seminars</li> <li>LinkedIn recommendations</li> </ul>