

# EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT HANDBOOK

A quick guide to how you and your colleagues can get involved with and support Oxfam's work.





Together, we can harness your people's passion and expertise to build a brighter future for those who need it most. Employee engagement with Oxfam is built around meaningful volunteering, inspirational insight experiences, and innovative fundraising ideas.

Volunteering	Inspiration	Fundraising	Second Hand September
Festivals	Site tours	Challenge events	Donate
Skills-based "pro-bono"	Staff talks	Fundraising events	Engage
Retail	Immersive experiences	Payroll giving	Amplify
		Match funding	

**O**ur immersive activities are tailored to your colleagues' needs and interests. While they represent a chance to be part of dynamic and varied projects, your teams will challenge themselves and learn new skills. Effective employee engagement programmes have been shown to improve staff retention and productivity, alongside enabling companies to stand out in the recruitment marketplace.

Our partnerships enable your business to be part of systematic change for a better world. By engaging your employees with Oxfam, they will become more connected to the ways in which our collaborations can make a meaningful impact. Actively involving the workforce will reinforce your business values through increasing the internal visibility of our projects together, all while allowing staff to play their part towards ending poverty and injustice.

Oxfam is a global movement of millions of people working together to end poverty. We are a partner to communities and local organisations around the world tackling injustice and inequality. We believe that when people come together, powerful change can happen. Our work puts the decision-making power back into the hands of affected communities to help foster self-sufficiency, enabling people globally to thrive for generations. We work across four key areas:

## Emergencies

When disaster strikes, Oxfam is there. Whether in Gaza, Ukraine, Yemen, or any other emergency, Oxfam will help facilitate life-saving support to those most in need. Working with our local partners to provide direct cash payments, clean water supplies, food and shelter ensures that people can face the worst crises knowing they have access to effective solutions, giving them a chance to rebuild their communities.



## Women's Rights

Women's rights are human rights and the potential for lasting change lies in the hands of millions of women currently living in poverty. That's why we put women's rights at the core of everything we do. Centring women at the heart of opportunities through education, business supplies, grants and loans, alongside access to cooperatives, enables women to bring their ideas and products to market, breaking free from poverty forever.



## Climate Change

Climate change is being felt most by people in countries that have done the least to cause the crisis. This injustice must be tackled head on with community-led innovations like drought-resistant seeds, reinforced homes, and training on how to grow new crops. People most at risk from the effects of climate change can now carry on living, earning, and learning, whatever the future brings.



## Inequality

Inequality is rising everywhere, fuelling poverty. We believe in a fairer world. To us, this means equal job opportunities, decent education, having enough money to get by, and more. It means freedom from injustice. It means power is shared fairly – so everybody has what they need to thrive, not just survive.



Volunteers are the heartbeat of our movement to end poverty around the world. They allow our retail network to mobilise resources that fund our projects, enable our events to run effectively, and even contribute to improving our programmes globally.

From great team building experiences to individual challenges, tailor-made volunteering with Oxfam will contribute to a huge amount of job satisfaction and staff retention – ensuring that teams feel valued by their organisation, all while knowing employees have come together to create meaningful impact.

## Festival Volunteering

Oxfam has a massive presence at some of the biggest UK summer music festivals, including Glastonbury, Reading, Leeds, Boardmasters, Wilderness and Shambala. We can bypass high public demand and ensure volunteering spaces are kept exclusively for our corporate partners, allowing your teams to attend without online queuing or disappointment.

Benefits of festival volunteering with Oxfam include:

- ✓ Secure camping in our Oxfam campsite
- ✓ A free food voucher for every shift
- ✓ Free tea and coffee 24 hours a day
- ✓ Access to crew only showers and toilets
- ✓ Free phone charging in our campsite

### Stewarding

Festival stewarding allows your teams to help the festival run smoothly by checking tickets and wristbands at the gates, directing people through the campsites, or supporting accessible viewing platforms in the arena. With just three 8-hour shifts, there is plenty of time to explore the festival and enjoy lots of great acts while making friends for life through our festival community.



*It's very nice just to be with other people. You know you are helping to raise money as well as having fun. I think that's very interesting and a very good way of getting into festivals. So without having to break the bank to come here, without having to worry too much about getting tickets. Just to have fun and just to enjoy yourself.*

**Marco and Alejandra – Festival Stewards**



*I had a really great time volunteering for a well renowned charity, and I would 100% do it again. The coordinators on site were down to earth and gave us a lowdown on what to expect and to be mindful of others around you. My role as a supervisor meant I had to be proactive and engaging with people and support them through their volunteering experience. I found the role really benefitted me and allowed me to flex and adapt a leadership style that fits me.*

**Staff member of Selfridges at Boardmasters**





## Campaigning

Campaigning at festivals is an opportunity for your colleagues to advocate for climate justice by engaging with festival goers and highlighting Oxfam's campaign messaging, encouraging people to take action.

With four 6-hour shifts and a daily finish time of 5pm, your teams are guaranteed to catch every headline act.

## Festival Shop Volunteering

If your teams already have experience in our Oxfam Shops, they can apply to be part of our incredible team selling amazing second-hand fashion, keeping customers warm and dry, and raising vital funds for our fight against global poverty. Over the festival period, teams will work one 6-hour shift a day, rotating between morning, afternoon, and evening shifts, giving them plenty of time to enjoy the festival and catch some incredible live acts.



*Oxfam always run a campaign that you can really relate to as a member of the public and I really liked being able to bring that to people at a festival. The hours are great as well which means you still get to see your favourite acts and you get a bit of a lie-in, in the morning.*

**Megan at Glastonbury**



## Skills-Based Volunteering (Pro Bono)

Oxfam recognises that the corporate partners we work with have a vast array of unique skills and expertise that could complement our work. Partners' employees have previously contributed directly to our UK operations, global programmes and strategies, and more. We're always keen to discuss new ideas and opportunities for companies to lend us their knowledge and skills, in ways that are truly rewarding and meaningful for individuals.

### *Case Study: McKinsey*

In 2020, McKinsey and Oxfam came together for a skills-based volunteering placement which provided Oxfam with insights and commercial strategies to enable us to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 lockdown.

Since then, McKinsey's 'Oxfamily' network notifies Oxfam whenever their consultants have capacity to work with Oxfam between assignments. In open dialogue, Oxfam's leadership team has been able to pinpoint challenges humanitarian teams, operational or strategic management teams are facing. In 2023/24, McKinsey Associates spent 47 days providing consultations on operating models, examining global trends, and co-designing data strategies.



*One of my most meaningful projects was a pro-bono engagement for Oxfam. The charity receives much of its funding from its retail shops, which were closed because of the pandemic. The charity needed answers on how to continue its mission with a critical piece of its funding gone. We offered them a roadmap to carry on their mission. They're still operational and our work helped to keep them that way.*

**Yuan — McKinsey Software Engineer, London**





## Retail Volunteering

Oxfam retail volunteers make a real impact every shift and help us work towards a kinder and radically better world. Placing volunteers from our partners has a positive impact on shop sales, which leads to more resources for our projects globally. With over 500 shops, two superstores in Oxford and Manchester, alongside two online hubs, there are a variety of opportunities for colleagues with skills in sales, merchandising, digital, social media, and plenty more to add real value to our retail network.

### Corporate Away Days: Shop Takeovers

Our shops are run by volunteers who are empowered to take ownership, get creative, and make each shop special. We can cater to individual staff or entire teams who wish to have the chance to experience a busy and varied retail environment – sorting through public donations, working on the shop floor or tills, designing shop window displays, or creatively boosting online listings.

In August 2024, our partner Selfridges took part in a 3-day employee-led shop takeover in Notting Hill. They split the event between 2 teams, creating an engaging competition for their corporate away day. Across those days the team raised an incredible £3,946!



*The Teams chat is still pinging away in the background from the group that were in Notting Hill yesterday. They had such a great time – and I achieved my objective of getting Head Office team members who work in retail to properly understand what it's like to be on your feet in a store all day. One of the volunteers, Kimberley, used to be part of the visual merchandising team at Selfridges – she took much joy in window dressing. Bring on the competition for team 2 at the end of the month. Thanks so much for helping us get there!*

**Julia – Project Management Office, Selfridges**



## Online Hubs

Our two hubs – located in Batley (West Yorkshire) and Milton Keynes (Buckinghamshire) – are where Oxfam collects and sorts our donated clothes, textiles, and accessories for online sale. After an interactive tour, your teams will work together to prioritise, photograph, and list items to be sold on our online platforms. The impact of the day is not limited to raising vital funds, but also allows your teams to contribute towards a more sustainable circular economy, reducing wastage by giving products a second home.



*Last week our fab team spent the day volunteering with Oxfam at their warehouse in Batley. Elliott and Shaun worked together to input books on to the system, ready to be bought from their website. We had a fab day – a big shout out to both Neve and Ben for supporting our team and making it a special day!*

**Shaun Castle – Business Support Officer, In2Care**



# EMPLOYEE INSIGHT EXPERIENCES

We want to help our partners' employees feel connected to Oxfam's work. Our Employee Insight Experiences can immerse staff within Oxfam's work – showcasing innovations and hearing from experts – helping to demonstrate the value of our partnership and creating a sense of pride among employees.

## Site Tours

Our Emergency Distribution Warehouse in Bicester is where Oxfam's emergency supplies are housed before being shipped globally when the worst crises strike. Site tours of our warehouse enable staff to experience how our solutions function in the real world, handling our innovative hygiene treatment equipment, watching how latrines are constructed, and even walking into our enormous water tanks. The tours themselves have built-in flexibility, allowing us to make the timings work for your needs and focus on themes most relevant to our partnership and staff interests.

## Staff Talks

Staff talks inspire and motivate teams, bringing them closer to the range of work Oxfam is involved in. They provide opportunities to ask questions and meet project staff, bringing Oxfam's work to life beyond facts and figures. Whether in person or through online webinars, these talks ensure your teams know exactly what has been or can be achieved together.

In 2023, we organised a hybrid event with our partner ROMO who fund education and water projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The talk was attended by dozens of ROMO staff and featured contributions from the Deputy Director of Oxfam's DRC office, highlighting the projects' progress on the ground.

## Immersive Experiences

### *Emergency Simulation Event*

For a completely interactive and immersive experience that strengthens skills in crisis management, communication and planning, while offering a truly unique team building day, look no further than Oxfam's unique Emergency Simulation Event. This half-day immersive workshop for up to 100 staff members is a simulation of a humanitarian emergency. Employees will receive an initial briefing from Oxfam, a series of updates as the emergency unfolds, and interact with Oxfam and local (role-played) stakeholders. This event can be tailored to a space in your office or an off-site venue.





# EMPLOYEE FUNDRAISING

Through partnership with Oxfam, you and your colleagues can join a community tackling poverty and inequality around the world. Employee fundraising is a hugely effective way to raise vital funds for Oxfam's work, while engaging employees with a sense of purpose and value.

By joining our fundraising efforts, your teams will not only be contributing financially but will also help to raise awareness of Oxfam's work through in-person events and social media activities. The money you raise will go towards supporting our partners and communities who know best how to tackle the challenges they face.



*We carry heavy responsibilities, but when we're together, we can take a load off our shoulders.*

**Sunita – Women's Group Member, Nepal**



In Gaudi, Nepal, extreme weather caused by the climate crisis has led to damaged harvests. After women in the community formed a group to overcome this challenge, Oxfam and partner NEEDS (National Environment & Equity Development Society) provided technical assistance and supported the group with training. Through this group, the women have led efforts to reduce disaster risks, enabling them to bring essential services to their community.

**(Left to right) Hasha, Juna and Bimala celebrate the success of their garlic farming project. Photo: Elizabeth Stevens/Oxfam**





## Challenge Events

Run, walk, climb or cycle – corporate sponsored challenge events are great opportunities for you and your colleagues to come together to conquer personal goals, try something new, or spend more time doing something you really love – all while building team morale.

We have guaranteed places in some of the best challenges across the UK – including the London Marathon, Tough Mudder and Alton Towers – that are designed for different fitness levels and interests, with something to suit everyone.

We can offer bespoke corporate event packages for hundreds of events all around the UK in an area that is most convenient for you and your teams.

**£10 a month** could help people who have been forced from their homes through conflict or the climate crisis, and need access to emergency food, clean water and hygiene kits.

**£12 a month** could help communities adapt to the worst impacts of the climate change, providing things like equipment and training in new farming techniques, as well as drought-resistant seeds.

**£15 a month** could help women to step into leadership roles, speak out against harmful laws and policies, and uphold their rights.

Whether your colleagues are looking to push their limits or just have fun, our events offer the perfect opportunity to make a difference. [Click here](#) to see a full list of our current challenge events.

[Register here](#) to receive loads of exciting news, updates and promotions for Oxfam's existing challenge events and any we introduce in the future.

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*I've wanted to run London for years and applied via the ballot for 21 years without success. I didn't just want to run for any charity, I wanted to run for one that meant something to me and Oxfam was the perfect fit. I lived in Tanzania as a child and subsequently served in Kenya with the Army so had seen first-hand the work that Oxfam carries out within East Africa. I also wanted to honour my sister who died in September; I had a photo of her dressed as a fairy, hence runny as a big pink fairy! So far I've raised just over £2,200 and the money is still coming in.*

**Matt Conrad-Jones, Pentland Brands – Oxfam London Marathon Runner 2024**

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## Fundraising Events

Fundraising is the perfect way to boost team morale and bring people together while supporting a great cause. From bike rides to book sales, hikes to head shaves, employee fundraising can bring a workplace to life, creating a culture of enthusiasm and fun while working towards a common goal. Below are some ideas to get you going but feel free to take them as inspiration and make them your own!

- **Shocking Shirt Day:** Encourage your colleagues to donate a pound and wear wild, wacky, and weird shirts to work.
- **Walkathon at Work:** Rent a walking treadmill and challenge your colleagues or other departments to a friendly competition.
- **Quiz Night:** Quizzes can be in person or online – a fun and accessible way to raise money by asking people to make a donation to join.
- **The Christmas Rejects:** Organise a raffle using unwanted Christmas gifts. Whether it's socks from your siblings, bath and shower goodies from parents, or electrical items from partners, a raffle is a great way to re-gift without the guilt!

Check out our full list of fundraising ideas you can bring to your workplace [here](#).

**£50** could help a family of six in Kenya to support themselves for 10 weeks through a vital cash transfer

With support from our hands-on fundraising teams, your partnership manager can work with you to create a **bespoke calendar of fundraising events** and support you to make them as successful as possible.

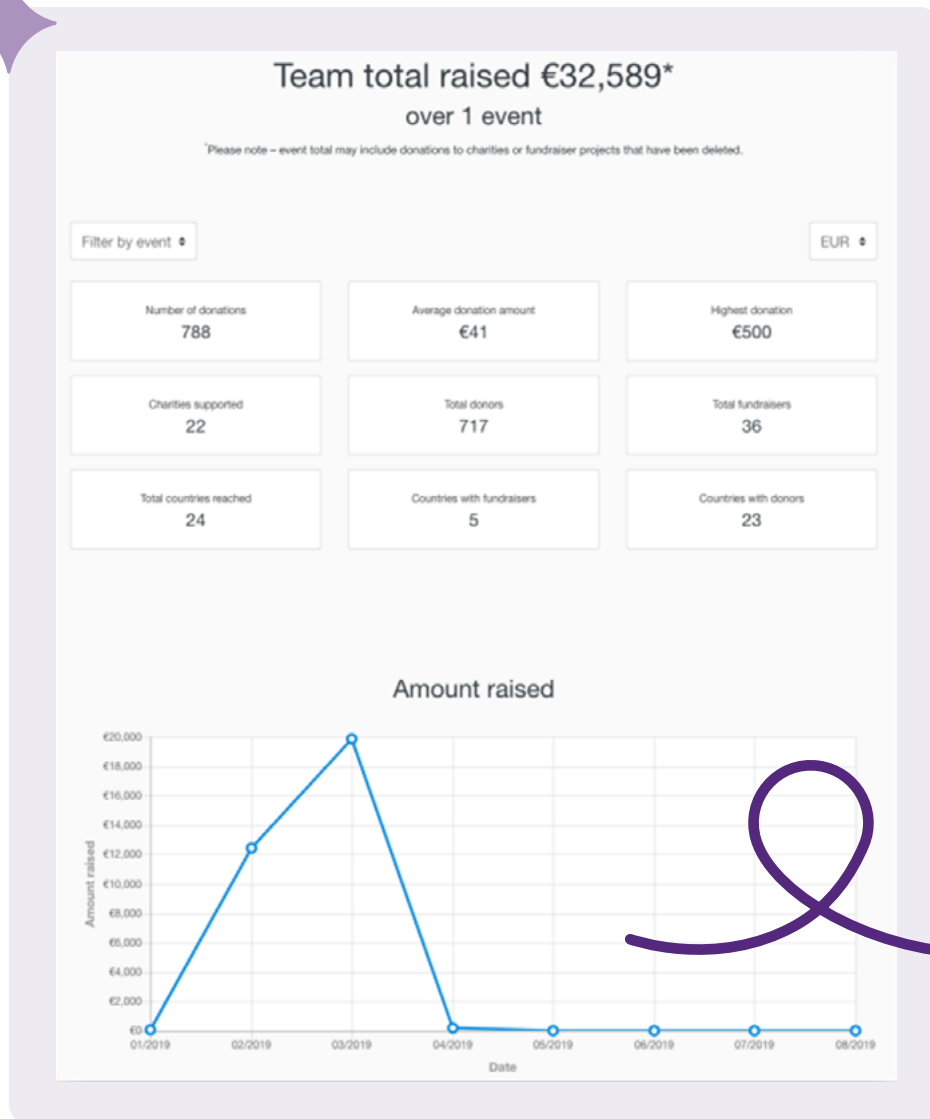
## Gigs Galore!

A wonderful community from Beeston have been supporting Oxfam by organising their very own "Oxjam" music festival every year since 2011.

According to event organiser Heather it's "a local institution", offering 12 hours of live music with 125 artists across 20 stages. Heather said, *"The festival is a brilliant example of a truly volunteer-led event, for a fantastic cause."* And it's so iconic, it's raised over £200,000 so far!

**Singer Lia White performing at Oxjam Beeston. Photo: Christopher Frost**





## Making it easy for your colleagues to fundraise

We recommend setting up a Corporate Fundraising Page on [GivenGain](#), a non-profit platform that ensures 100% of donations go to charity. Everything you raise will be sent to us directly including eligible gift aid. You can also donate online via our [website](#), by contacting your partnership manager, or by emailing [privatesector@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:privatesector@oxfam.org.uk)

Please [click here](#) for a step-by-step guide to setting up your company fundraising page on GivenGain.

From here you will be able to share the event with staff and they will be able to create personal fundraising projects.

You will also be able to personalise your fundraising page with individual or team leaderboards to fire up a bit of friendly competition and engagement!

[Click here](#) for Oxfam's fundraising kit to help get your colleagues started!

Through fundraising with Oxfam and GivenGain you will receive a dashboard view of all employees' fundraising – the amounts raised and by whom, and who the donors reached will be. This is great way to share any fundraising progress with your stakeholders and the general public.

Prizes are an excellent way to incentivise your colleagues to get involved and don't need to have a high cost – team lunches, vouchers, or a Friday afternoon off all work brilliantly.





## *"I belong to this community."*

Having fled terrifying violence in Myanmar almost one million Rohingya people are still living in the world's largest refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Living conditions are harsh, especially for women who face worsened personal safety and greater family responsibilities.

At two Oxfam and partner-supported women's centres in Cox's Bazar, Yeasmin (pictured) and other women are learning to read, write and make items like clothing and fishing nets to sell.

Because of the violence they have experienced, they're also taking part in trauma-recovery activities, where they can form friendships and learn about their rights.

**Yeasmin (left) is learning to make dresses and hopes to continue her tailoring work from her home in the camp. Photo: Fabeha Monir/Oxfam**



## *How to help employees make the most of their fundraising:*

1

**Personalise your page:** Add a photo of yourself! Fundraisers who include a selfie tend to raise more money.

2

**Set a realistic fundraising goal:** Choose a target that feels achievable. You can always raise it later if you reach it.

3

**Kickstart with a self-donation:** Make the first donation to your own page. It's a great way to get things started and encourages others to follow.

4

**Share on social media:** Post your fundraising link regularly on your social platforms. This is a great way to reach more people and increase donations.

5

**Keep donors updated:** Post updates on your fundraising page. Your supporters will get email notifications, keeping them engaged and connected to your progress!

**£200** could support a study in Indonesia on sustainable agriculture to improve food security.

**£500** could help provide sugar cane saplings and training, supporting communities to prevent flood damage in Nepal.

## Payroll Giving

If your employees want to make a regular donation to Oxfam, give as you earn is a great way to do it. It's easy to set up, it's automatic, and because it's a way of giving tax-free, it means donations can go further towards fighting the injustices of poverty and inequality.

Payroll giving is a flexible system that empowers employees to engage with causes close to their heart by donating as much or as little as they wish to the charity of their choice.



In 2023, the UK workforce donated over

**£126 million**

to charitable causes through payroll giving, with donations counted as part of Charitable Giving targets.

Donate

**£5**

to Oxfam

We'll receive the full amount, but it'll only cost you

**£4**

or

**£3**

if you're on a high tax rate bracket

Join companies such as Microsoft, Google and Spotify by setting up a give as you earn scheme through Oxfam. Find out more [here](#).





## Matched Funding

Knowing that the money raised will be matched by your employer is a great motivator for fundraisers and encourages more people to give.

Matching the money and time your employees give to charity shows a commitment to the communities and causes your people care about. You can match your employees' donations on a pound-for-pound basis, or specify the amount you're prepared to match.

Matching can be tailored to suit your needs. Company funds used for matched giving are tax-effective and can be deducted from your corporation tax.

**£2,000** could help a community in East Africa to build a sustainable water system so that they can overcome drought.



*I have been receiving the cash for a while now... With the cash, I am able to buy groceries and feed my children.*

**Ebla – Participant in the WASDA cash scheme in Wajir, Kenya**



# SECOND HAND SEPTEMBER



Second Hand September (SHS) is our award-winning campaign to amplify the benefits of shopping for pre-loved items and encourage the public to buy more sustainably with Oxfam. Since 2019, SHS has campaigned to introduce people to the joy of feel-good, ethical clothes shopping while joining others to make the world a more equal place.

We want everyone, everywhere to dress for the world they want. With celebrity ambassadors, alongside huge print, radio, and TV media coverage, the campaign allows us to reach over 11 million people throughout the UK.

There are many ways that corporate partners and their employees can play an active role in SHS. Many of these actions complement existing employee engagement activities through a nationally recognised campaign:



## Donate

- Auctions of high-value items/donations for staff.
- Donate % of profits from certain ranges.
- Donation drives at the office.
- Fundraising drives to support Oxfam's climate campaign.
- Match-funding of employee or customer donations.



## Engage

- SHS challenges within existing employee engagement activities (e.g., thrifting, styling, window dressing).
- Content development – host webinars, write a guest blog on our site.
- Host upcycling workshops or swap shops.
- Pre-loved outfit day (like Christmas Jumper day).
- Learn more about Oxfam's work through a staff visit.



## Amplify

- Joint media/PR activities celebrating our collaboration.
- Support Oxfam with ad credit or media space.
- Connect us with your spokespeople and ambassadors.
- Spread the word on social media by sharing our pre-prepared assets (you can add your logo!).
- Engage with our socials by liking, commenting, answering our questions.
- Share internal comms about SHS.



Through these activities we can offer a wide range of support to make our joint campaign impactful throughout the workforce – everything from hundreds of postal bags, support from our stock teams, virtual and physical assets, hands-on guidance from our partnership team for employee engagement, and even bespoke and joint communications and branding.

### *Case Study: Co-Op Bank*

During 2024 we collaborated with our partner the Co-Op Bank to tailor the campaign for their team's needs. We added 46 employee volunteering days to Oxfam's retail network for the month of September. There were donation drives at 4 key office locations and 15 bank branches, with bespoke creative assets designed to maximise staff engagement.





**Contact us:**

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