

## Contractors can give their time to charities with timebank

Many of us contractors [donate money from our companies to charities](#), but sometimes we would like to help in person and volunteer.

For people like us who are tied down by long working hours and sometimes infamous commuting periods, it is hard to fit in volunteer work for a cause or a charity that we would like to support.

### Flexible Charity Commitments

Specialised websites like [Timebank](#) help make it easier for people like us to give not just money, but our expertise to charities.

Timebank was started back in 1999 by the same people who started "Comic Relief." That's the charity that does "Red Nose Day" when we are all asked to don the traditional clown's nose in the interest of helping others.

"We have attracted over 220,000 people into the world of volunteering and we do this by creating new ways for people to get involved; connecting people and organisations to each other; and transforming the image of volunteering to reflect its vital role in a healthy society and the dynamic affect it can have on the lives of volunteers," a spokesperson for Timebank says.

### Best for Contractors

One of the best routes into volunteering for high-tech contractors is to consider trusteeships (there is a prompt on the Timebank site for them), the spokesperson points out.

"Trusteeships involve doing work for small charities, many of which do not have the resources to hire their own IT experts. Here IT contractors could potentially be of great help," the spokesperson says.

Timebank works by supporting the network of more than 400 Volunteer Centres across the country – known as TimePartners and with them all listed on the website, you have the opportunity to match your skillset and time availability to the charity of your choice. Timebank makes it easy to find the kind of charity that you are looking for, and then puts you together with it. It is even possible to find charities abroad, for example in developing countries, on the Timebank site, and that means that engineers can find large projects to work at if they so choose.

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Timebank Spokesperson

### Virtual Volunteering

Another interesting offer on the Timebank site is the possibility of "Virtual Volunteering:" working right from your laptop as a volunteer for the charity of your choice.

A linked site that offers this possibility is "IT for Communities." [i4Communities](#) has been helping IT professionals to find suitable volunteering opportunities with charities and other VCOs since 2002. i4C provides only suitable volunteering opportunities for IT professionals, with a clear description of the charity's IT requirement written by i4C staff, workshops, networking events & annual awards, support for volunteers by phone and by email and information on this website and promotion of the value of volunteering to employers and the IT sector.

**“ Trusteeships involve doing work for small charities many of which do not have the resources to hire their own IT experts ”**

Timebank Spokesperson

So, no more excuses about how you have no time. If we contractors want to help others, now we have the means and the opportunity.

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