



Quick Guide

Volunteer Involving Organisations Partnering with Registered Training Organisations

Not all organisations have the resources to function as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) but would still like to deliver accredited training for their volunteers. For these organisations, partnering with an RTO makes good sense. This guide will help Not-for-Profits (NFPs) better understand what is involved when seeking for, and eventually partnering with, an RTO to deliver training for volunteers. It will guide you through a process that will determine the best solution for your training needs, what questions to ask, how to negotiate with an RTO, and documentation and evaluation procedures.

For more information on how to find an RTO, see the Quick Guide 'Registered Training Organisations and Volunteering Involving Organisations' free to download at www.volunteeringaustralia.org.

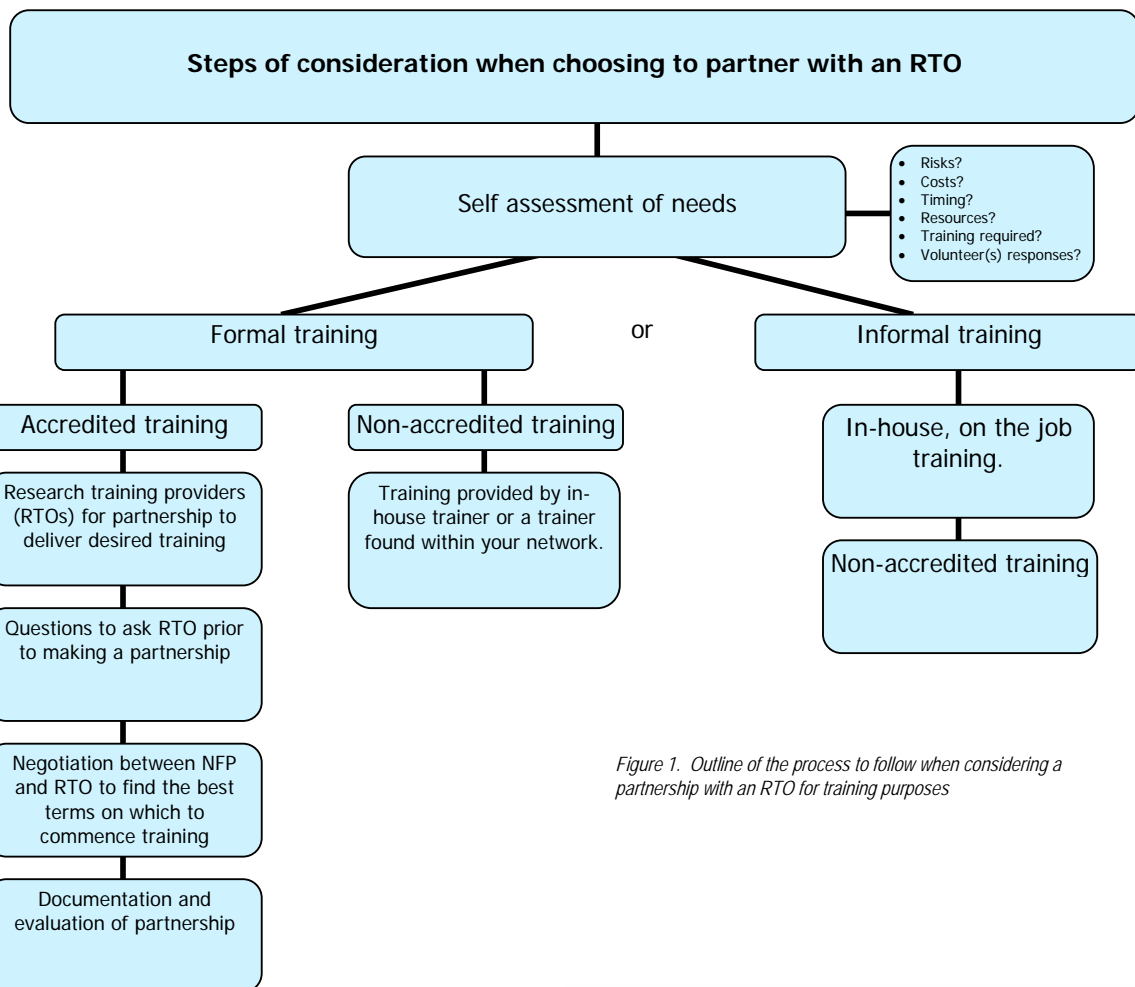


Figure 1. Outline of the process to follow when considering a partnership with an RTO for training purposes



NVSC is a project of Volunteering Australia

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I. Determining your need

Determine specifically what training you require? In which area do your volunteers require training?

- Computers
- Communications
- Customer relations
- Occupational Health & Safety
- Industry specific skills (i.e. Working with aged or people with a disability, sport coaching, phone counselling etc.)
- Role specific skills (i.e. Administration skills, being a member of a committee of management)

Consider the potential challenges involved in providing the training to the volunteer(s), these may include:

- Cost to organisation
- Time taken away from volunteers routine task(s)
- Insufficient training for required skill needed to learn
- Lack of motivation by volunteer(s)
- Resistance to attend training

Consider your volunteers' response

For the training to return maximum benefits the training should also meet the needs of your volunteers individually. For example, answer these questions:

- How will your volunteers accept the training?
- How do your volunteers prefer to learn?
- What expectations do they have about the training?
- How will training impact on your volunteers regular job functions?
- Will training involve extra time outside of their job functions?

Determine what format of training would suit the volunteers

Would your volunteers prefer:

- Classroom *or*
- Work place tasks *or*
- Workbooks *or*
- Computer Based Learning (CBL) *or*
- Self paced learning *or*
- Group assignments *or*
- Combination learning

Take into account the following factors when deciding which training format would be most suitable:

- Age
- Gender
- Knowledge/Education levels
- Time available for training
- Experience
- English language ability
- Cultural background

Determine weather you want to provide accredited (using an RTO) or non-accredited training

non-accredited training	accredited training
provided in-house	provided by a RTO
little or no fee	fee for service
training may be useful for job at hand, but training not recognized outside organization; volunteer will not receive a nationally recognized certification	provides nationally recognized training that is useful for future endeavors, accreditations can be transferred
resources are limited to what the organization can provide	comprehensive training in a subject can better the organization in effectiveness
may be shorter in length and specific to a certain skill requiring upgrading or need by organization	volunteer's) may appreciate the investment made to their skill set and create volunteer loyalty
	Courses are reviewed and updated regularly, information presented is new and fresh
	Quality is assured to a high standard.

For more information on the benefits of using accredited training, see the Quick Guide 'Registered Training Organisations and Volunteering Involving Organisations' free to download at www.volunteeringaustralia.org.

II. Choosing the best RTO for your needs

Volunteering Australia recommends that you have a clear vision of training outcomes you hope to achieve, before engaging an RTO. Below are some questions to help you choose the training provider best able to meet your needs. Not all questions will be relevant to your particular circumstances, see our website for more information on choosing trainers.

After determining your needs, choose an RTO who can satisfy the need. Some questions to ask are the following:

In regards to RTO or trainer experience

- Does the consultant have expertise and experience in consulting on the AQTF? (The **Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)** is the national set of standards which assures nationally consistent, high-quality training and assessment services for the clients of Australia's vocational education and training system)
- Does the consultant have qualifications relevant to the vocational education and training (VET) sector?
- Has the consultant worked with not-for-profit organisations? Has the consultant worked in similar sectors as your organisation?
- Is the RTO authorised to deliver the particular course or subject area?
- Who will actually be conducting the training? What are their qualifications or experience on this subject? Some RTOs have many trainers on their books. Ask if They have delivered the sort of training you need (communications training, finance literacy training, Government training etc.)Determine how the training will be assessed (course work, practical, exams etc.) and how the results will be reported to you.

In regards to training planning and availability

- What is the duration of the training?
- When can the training commence? (ie. How much time is required for the trainer to prep the course)
- Will the training involve pre-work? Post work? Home work?
- Ask for a course outline or training plan.

You can negotiate with the RTO when and how the training takes place. For example:

- during work hours
- after work hours
- on the Internet
- in group training sessions
- combination

You can also employ the RTO to coordinate all of the training or just a component of it. For example, your organisation could handle all on-the-job training while the RTO conducts off-the-job training.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of prior learning is formal recognition of existing skills and knowledge (competencies), regardless of how, when or where the learning occurred. You may want to ask the RTO what their processes are for RPL applications.

For more information on recognition of prior learning, see the Quick Guide 'The Recognition of Prior Learning Toolkits' free to download at www.volunteeringaustralia.org.

In regards to costs

- What are the tuition costs? ask your RTO for a **full breakdown** of training costs
- Is there a cost for resources required for the training (books, raw materials etc.)
- Are there possible transport and accommodation costs if training is offsite?
- Is there a cost of providing facilities for onsite training?
- Are there administration costs, including extra insurance and record keeping?
- Is there a cost of recruitment and wages in the case of Australian Apprenticeships?
- Is there a discounted rate for not-for-profit organisations?

In regards to a Referee or reference

- Could you provide me with a reference of a client who received similar training to our request?

Steps to successful negotiation

- Be prepared
 - Set objects/ outcomes of training
 - Gather knowledge of information you want to have trained
 - Put needs on paper
- Know your budget
 - Prepare a monetary range you are willing to spend on training
- Find a common agreement
 - create a WIN-WIN situation; a WIN-WIN agreement provides satisfaction to both the NFP and the RTO (regarding costs, terms, timing etc). Both sides give a bit to gain a lot.
- Confirm agreement on paper
 - Create a contract and have both the NFP and RTO sign
 - Agree on costs, terms and conditions. State these in the contract

III. Documentation and Evaluation of Partnerships

Agreement of Partnership

A written agreement of the partnership should be created between the RTO and the NFP organisation. It must be signed by both parties. The written agreement could be in one of the following forms:

- memorandum of understanding
- service agreement
- letter of agreement
- contractual terms
- contract of services offered

A good formal agreement will clearly establish the basic rules of the partnership arrangement. The agreement may include the following:

- the policies and procedures on partnership arrangements set by both potential partners
- how much each potential partner is required to put into the partnership in terms of money, time and effort

Once a partnership has been established, the not-for profit should identify a project manager, or go-to person, who can liaise on behalf of the NFP with the RTO. Likewise, be sure to have a key contact person within the RTO who will manage your partnership from their end.

Post training evaluation

Evaluate the outcomes of the training provided and the partnership on an ongoing basis. Recognize achievements, determine shortfalls. Evaluation can be conducted in a variety of ways, listed are a few:

- Reports
 - efficiency in the workplace
 - Morale of volunteers
 - Scope of services offered
 - Quality of services offered
- Surveys/evaluations of volunteers who have completed training
- Assessments provided by RTO

IV. CASE STUDY

Parklands Albury Wodonga is a not-for-profit organisation who work closely with local TAFE's and Universities to provide training for volunteers.

"We have a close relationship with the two TAFE's and Universities" quotes Anthea Packer, Community Ranger, "Wodonga TAFE has provided accredited training for Community Development Employment Participants for some years. We provided the park and materials for the projects and Wodonga TAFE provided teachers who worked in the field completing projects. A similar program was run this year for Mental Health Cert 1 students."

In recognition of the time commitments of volunteers and the value of their contribution, Parklands has paid for a number of regular volunteers to undertake training in areas such as Farm Chemical User certificates, food handling tickets (for fundraising BBQ's) and Traffic Control tickets (to assist CFA units with burning off activities). Parklands generally books the volunteers into existing courses as and when this suits the particular volunteer.

Anthea goes on to tell of other successful partnerships with Riverina Institute of TAFE, National Environment Centre (NEC). This TAFE has been particularly supportive and very flexible in their service delivery of training.

Occasionally, the NEC (Riverina Institute of TAFE) has provided tickets training for free and Parklands has organised the students, generally regular volunteers and university students.

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