2024 Conference Volunteer Program Information & FAQs

Volunteering with WRMC is an extraordinary professional development and networking opportunity!

Volunteers will:
- meet and connect with industry experts and researchers
- work closely with a remarkable team of volunteers
- build lasting relationships with colleagues and mentors
- get a behind-the-scenes look at the WRMC
- receive discounted conference registration
- have the opportunity to attend sessions and events

The WRMC is a collaboration between NOLS, Outward Bound USA, and the Student Conservation Association in partnership with the WRMC Steering Committee. Volunteers will work alongside Steering Committee members and staff to host over 500+ wilderness risk management leaders and professionals at the 31st Annual Conference, October 15-17, 2024, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

How Conference and Preconference Volunteers Help
Volunteers help with registration by providing a warm welcome, handing out information, assembling name badges, and answering basic questions. During the learning workshops on Wednesday and Thursday, volunteers provide classroom and audiovisual support for speakers and attendees as room monitors. Volunteering is fast-paced and dynamic. At general sessions, meals, breaks, and other events, you’ll answer questions, help with traffic, and pitch in with a wide variety of tasks (see Task Descriptions below). Conference volunteers work during 2-3 learning workshops.

Timeline
- Application opens 6/1/2024 and closes 7/15/2024
- Selected Volunteers Notified by 7/25/2024
- Volunteer Agreement and Paid Conference Registration Due 8/10/2024
- Volunteer Virtual Meet and Greet Meeting - September (1-2 hours)
Volunteer Virtual Assignment Scheduling Process - September - Early October (2-3 hours)
Volunteer On-Site Orientation, Tour, & Welcome - Tuesday, October 15, 2024, from 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Main Conference Volunteers are typically scheduled for shifts between 12:00 pm Tuesday and 9:00 pm Thursday. Preconference Volunteers are scheduled for two three hour shifts on Monday and Tuesday between 7:00 am - 6:00 pm.

Application process
Applications will be reviewed after the submission deadline. There are no eligibility criteria such as a requirement to have attended in the past or particular volunteer skills. In 2024 more applications are anticipated than available positions, so please be sure to highlight all the skills and strengths you can bring to the team. Volunteers with previous conference volunteer or management experience, a solid understanding of the WRMC, or specific audiovisual, media, or photography skills can be particularly helpful. Be sure to make special notes and provide details of your skills and strengths. Individuals from nonprofit organizations or programs with a diversity, equity, and inclusion focus are encouraged to apply.

Click here for the Volunteer Program Application

Registration Discount
Conference Volunteer Discount: Conference volunteers will receive $500 off the regular registration. Volunteers make and pay for their own travel arrangements. Volunteer registrations follow all general conference policies such as cancellation, media, and Covid.

Expanded Volunteer Roles
These Volunteers work a heavy schedule, may only be able to attend a few learning workshops, and receive complimentary conference registration.
1. Volunteer Coordinator - The Volunteer Coordinator will take on extra duties including managing the schedule coordination, communication, on-call assistance, acting as a backup floater, and other administrative tasks before, during, and after the conference.
2. Audiovisual Coordinator - One or two AV Coordinator Volunteers will provide specific AV Support for presenters and other volunteers. The AV Coordinator position requires expertise and interest for this fast-paced, technical role.
2024 WRMC Volunteer Agreement

The undersigned _____________________________ (“Volunteer”) has offered to volunteer certain services to NOLS and NOLS has agreed to accept the Volunteer’s request. The term of this Volunteer Agreement is for services beginning on _______ and ending on _______. This agreement can be terminated by either party by notifying the other party in writing (email) of its termination.

A brief (though not exclusive) description of the services provided by the Volunteer are as follows:

Volunteer works closely with the Wilderness Risk Management Conference (WRMC) staff assisting with tasks that are essential to providing customer service to WRMC attendees and speakers prior to and during the annual conference.

Responsibilities include:
Attending virtual planning meetings and communicating before the conference to coordinate and schedule.
Attending welcome events, tours, orientation, etc. prior to the conference start.
Welcoming attendees, providing directions, answering questions and offering assistance at the WRMC registration tables or throughout the conference.
Providing support for WRMC presenters. This includes basic audiovisual/tech assistance.
Conducting and recording accurate head counts for WRMC events and workshops.
Assisting with room set up, breakdown, tidiness, and organization.
Other duties as assigned.

Volunteer recognizes that the opportunity to work on various NOLS programs and experience the collegiality and other benefits NOLS offers is good and valuable consideration for the agreement herein.

The purpose of this Agreement is to provide the Volunteer and NOLS with an understanding of the purpose and scope of the Volunteer’s activities at and for the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS). NOLS also wishes to provide Volunteer with information about some important NOLS policies that are applicable to volunteers, and to obtain the Volunteer’s agreement to abide by these policies. As a volunteer, you agree to conduct yourself at NOLS in a manner consistent with the values and mission of NOLS.

As a volunteer, you are free to discontinue your volunteer activities at any time. You do not have an employment relationship with NOLS. Consequently, you are under no obligation to provide any services to NOLS. You receive no compensation and are not eligible for any NOLS benefits, including but not limited to vacation, sick leave, retirement, pro deals or discounts, disability or workers’ compensation insurance, health insurance or unemployment insurance. You must possess your own health insurance.

Notwithstanding any other provision in this Volunteer Agreement, NOLS reserves the right to terminate volunteer relationships, and this Volunteer Agreement, at any time without cause and at its sole discretion.

As a volunteer, you are subject to NOLS policies, including, but not limited to, those on harassment; drug and alcohol abuse; a tobacco free campus; non–discrimination and equal opportunity. Copies of these policies are available from NOLS Human Resources. You should also be aware that you need to familiarize yourself with
other policies/guidelines of the department in which you volunteer, such as policies on confidentiality of records, conflict of interest and the like.

Release of Liability
Volunteer hereby releases, holds harmless and agrees not to sue NOLS, its owners, officers, trustees, agents, employees, and contractors (“Released Parties”), with respect to any and all claims of injury, disability, death, or other loss or damage to person or property suffered by Volunteer arising in whole or part during my volunteer activities at NOLS. This agreement of release includes claims of negligence of a Released Party, but not of gross negligence or intentionally wrongful conduct, and are intended to be enforced to the fullest extent permitted by law.

I understand that the relationship between NOLS and I will be governed by the substantive laws of the State of Wyoming and any suit, mediation or arbitration of any dispute with NOLS must be filed exclusively in the State of Wyoming.

Seen, read, and agreed to this ______day of ______, 20__:

__________________________________________________________ Signature

__________________________________________________________ Print Name
Volunteer Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Can I use this experience on my resume?
A: Yes, documentation of your participation is available. Volunteering with WRMC is an excellent opportunity to build your experience.

Q: How many volunteers will be on our team?
A: 10-15 people, so teamwork is an important component!

Q: Will volunteers receive a hotel discount?
A: Volunteers may receive the WRMC group hotel rate that is offered to all attendees. Volunteers book their own room, so it’s important to reserve before the discounted rooms sell out. If you need a roommate, this is a great pool of roomies.

Q: Is travel reimbursed?
A: Travel costs are not reimbursed.

Q: Do I have to be available for the full conference schedule?
A: Yes, generally. Commitment for the full conference schedule and the pre-conference volunteer meetings and communications is important. If you cannot be scheduled to volunteer during a specific portion of the conference, please notify wrmc@nols.edu.

Q: Can I network while on duty?
A: Yes, we encourage connections and encourage you to meet others in the industry.

Q: Do I have to be a previous volunteer or attendee to apply?
A: No prior requirements, just a willingness to bring your skills and talents.

Q: What happens if I find out later I’m unable to Volunteer?
A: We know life happens and that sometimes emergencies come up. If you can no longer volunteer, but can attend the conference, you will need to register at the then-current rate (e.g., if after the late fee goes into effect, your registration will include a late fee). If you can’t volunteer or attend due to an emergency or extenuating circumstances, please contact wrmc@nols.edu immediately. The standard cancellation policy and fees will apply.

Q: Can I apply for an Individual Scholarship and the Conference Volunteer Program?
A: Yes. You’ll need to submit an application to both programs before the deadline and then wait for notification. If you are selected for a Scholarship, because the Scholarship covers a full registration, it is likely the better choice for you.

Q: Who do I connect with for help?
A: It’s great to start with an email to the wrmc@nols.edu general email or call 307-335-2222.

Q: How many volunteers help with the WRMC?
A: There are over 100 helpers who donate their time to help produce the conference! Volunteers include 10-15 Steering Committee Members, 60-80 Presenters, and 10-15 Conference Volunteers like you.
General Volunteer Task Descriptions

Workshop “Classroom” Monitor & Support
One to two volunteers will work together for each session to help before, during, and after.

Presenter support
Assist presenters with uploading and launching their presentation. Generally projectors and laptops will be in place. You will get basic training on this during the on-site volunteer orientation on Wednesday afternoon.

Door greeter - Welcome attendees into the room, count the number of attendees per session.
Ushering to seats - quickly get folks in and settle into seats. Seat the front of the room first. Close and monitor the door when the session starts.

Room monitoring
Monitor room for comfort (go for help if the heat or AV needs changed). End of workshop - help to quickly empty the room after the session- there is a fairly quick turnaround between each session.

Conference Check-In
Conference check-in will occur at the start of each day, including each day of pre-conference workshops. Welcome attendees, check off from the registered attendee list, help them find their name badge and answer basic questions. Smile, answer questions, provide directions, etc.

Survey Prize Giveaways
Two volunteers will coordinate the prize giveaways program in addition to other volunteer tasks. The prize giveaways are intended to encourage attendees to submit feedback surveys and involve creating a fair and confidential system of random selection from those who have completed surveys.

Break and Meal Support
At meal times, volunteers may be helping with traffic flow, collecting tickets, or other traffic control tasks.

General Sessions (Opening, Keynote, Structured Networking) Support
Volunteers help with traffic control, directing, and ushering. You’ll welcome and usher people toward the front.

Audio Visual (A/V):
All Volunteers help with some AV and computer tasks to support speakers getting their presentation up and running. There will be Hotel Technology or other WRMC staff onsite for difficult tech issues. You will help with basic troubleshooting for projectors and computers. If any volunteers are particularly comfortable with AV, you will be designated as an AV Support Volunteer to roam as needed.