



grassrootsvolunteering.org

GV Ambassadors Training Guide



Dear GV Ambassador,

First and foremost, thank you for your decision to join the GV family and help us map the world.

There are worthy organizations all over the world in need of support from tourism and qualified volunteers. With your eyes and ears out there mapping the world, GV will serve as a valuable connection between these organizations and travelers. We are de-commodifying the volunteering industry by empowering indie organizations and business to directly access interested travelers and volunteers.

GV would not grow and succeed without your commitment.

I am happy and honored to have you on board. If there is ever anything you need, or something I can do to help you, please don't hesitate to shoot me an email.

With thanks,

~Shannon

Founder of Grassroots Volunteering
ShannonRODonnell@gmail.com





VOLUNTEER



SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES

GV has two databases that operate independently.

Each entry is either a volunteer opportunity or a social enterprise. If it is both it needs two entries and there is a place to link them in the system.

Social Enterprises: Small businesses operating with an underlying social mission. These are specifically businesses aimed at travelers visiting a new city or town; the idea is to bring tourism to the local-level businesses and companies supporting social causes in their communities.

Volunteer Opportunities: Independent volunteer opportunities all over the world. These are low-cost or free and usually directly with the NGO, company, or communities. They are specifically seeking volunteers and merely need a connection and access to indie travelers.



Traits of Good-Fit Organizations

- **Financial transparency:** Organizations should clearly outline where and how volunteer fees are used. And social enterprises should be willing to clearly state how their business is supporting social projects.
- **Community based:** The best organizations are designed either directly by the locals, or they heavily involve local communities in designing the business or volunteer opportunity. This ensures the organizations are providing services and support that are needed and wanted.
- **Supports training and capacity building:** Both businesses and volunteer opportunities should look toward increasing the ability for communities to live without long-term aid or volunteering. The best volunteer programs leave behind valuable skills with the locals through training and workshops and do not foster dependency.
- **Independent and low cost:** Your goal is to find indie grassroots projects and organizations that are likely not able to effectively market themselves. Small mom-and-pop local businesses are ideal, these are often either run by a local or in tandem with a local. Volunteer opportunities should allow volunteers to directly arrange their stay with the organization, not through a middle-man.
- **Sustainable, ethical, and responsible:** Find organizations supporting the best-practices in both international development as well as international conservation. A project may be locally run and look great on the surface, but if their business practices contravene current conservation or human rights standards, they should not be included.



Additional Resources

- If you'd like to read up on current best practices in development and aid, or to better understand the voluntourism industry, this link on GV contains many resources: <http://blog.grassrootsvolunteering.org/why-the-developing-world/>
- All the links in this PDF are also linked on: <http://blog.grassrootsvolunteering.org/ambassador-information/>
- Also at the above link, GV Ambassadors are welcome to download a free copy of Shannon's book, *The Volunteer Traveler's Handbook*. This book has an entire section devoted to understanding the ethics of the volunteering industry.
- If you need a jump-start finding organizations to check out, consider using a guidebook, forums, or these websites that have a similar ethos to GV: <http://blog.grassrootsvolunteering.org/independent-volunteering-websites/> You could search these sites and find organizations to visit and vet for the GV database.

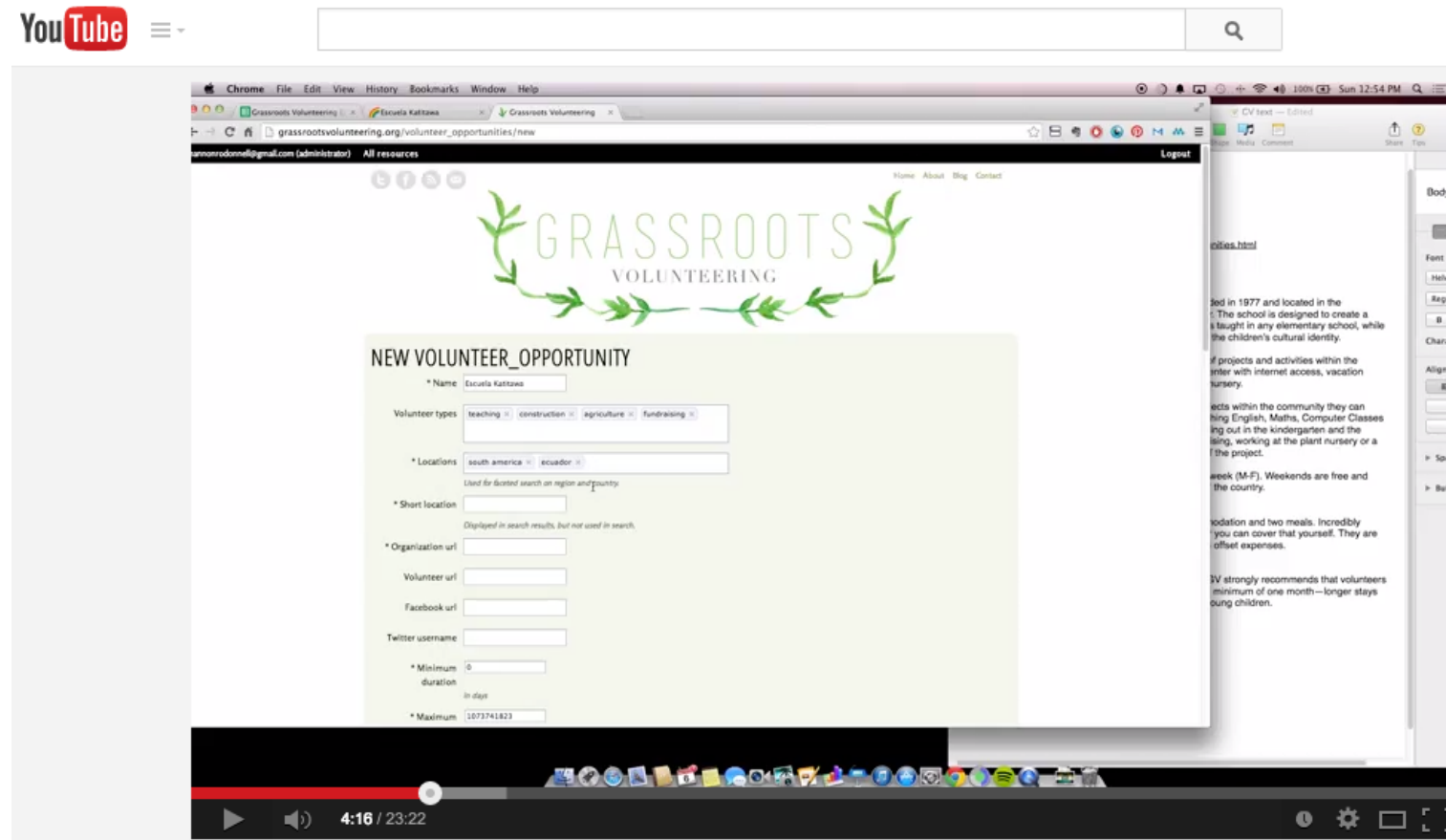


Logging into the site

1. Go to: <http://grassrootsvolunteering.org/login>
2. Enter your unique login that was emailed to you.
3. Notice that a thin black navigation bar has now appeared at the top of the site — you are now logged into the database console (the blog is a different system).



Entering a Volunteer Opportunity



Watch the video tutorial for entering a volunteer opportunity.

<http://youtu.be/KwhiMc75t7o>

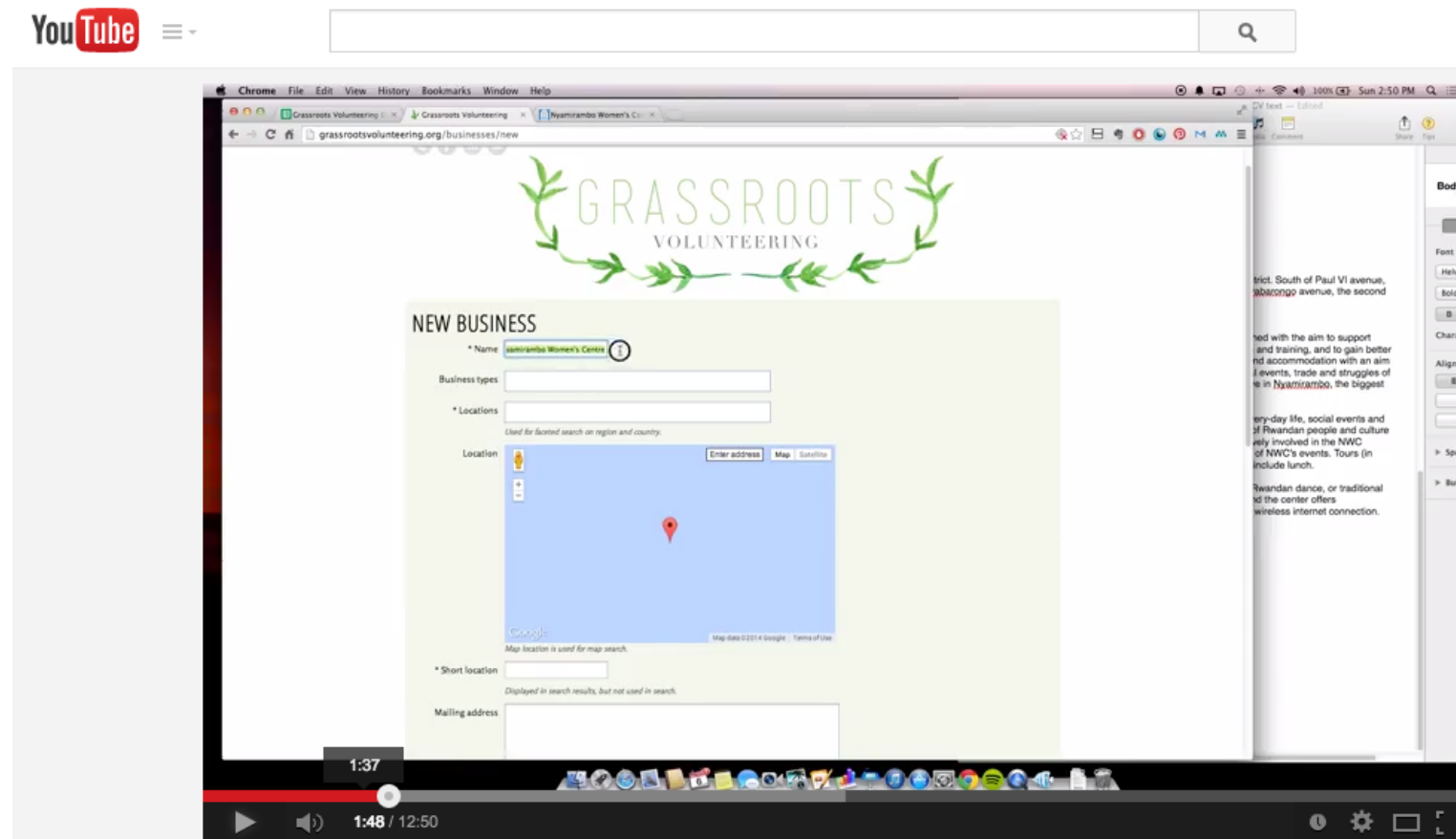


Volunteer Opportunity Notes

- You may need to open a new tab and add an appropriate — image, location, type — and then go back and add it to the entry.
- All volunteer opportunities need a website, even if that is a Facebook page. There must be a URL in that spot so volunteers can check and vet it.
- This is the code for a line break `<!--more-->` . This is important in *every single description* because it tells the search pages how much of a snippet to show.
- The Google Spreadsheet is accessible here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i3OztUZbTnxEUopJPWRj-75lXtE5p3FYMttVymZFZX8/edit?usp=sharing>



Entering a Business Opportunity



Watch the video tutorial for entering a business opportunity.

<http://youtu.be/JmZNNqIDSEQ>



Business Opportunity Notes

- You may need to open a new tab and add an appropriate — image, location, type — and then go back and add it to the entry.
- Business opportunities have to be *hand checked and pin dropped* onto the map. Use a map on their site or a separate window with Google Maps open to drop the location as close as possible to accurate. If you cannot locate it, do your best and note that in the spreadsheet.
- This is the code for a line break `<!--more-->` . This is important in *every single description* because it tells the search pages how much of a snippet to show.
- The Google Spreadsheet is accessible here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i3OztUZbTnxEUopJPWRj-75IXtE5p3FYMttVymZFZX8/edit?usp=sharing>



GV Blogging

The GV blog is run on Wordpress, which is an intuitive and simple blogging platform.

I would love help sharing relevant volunteer stories, industry news, organization profiles, and more.

If you are keen to do this, just let me know and I can give you a login for the GV blog as well. :)



That's it!

Though there are a few tricky quirks, once you get the hang of it, it's pretty easy to enter opportunities into either database.

If you have questions, though, don't hesitate to shoot me an email and I can help (shannonrodonnell@gmail.com), or log the question in the shared Google Spreadsheet when you add the URLs.

As always, you have my sincere and hearty thanks for your help with this project!

~Shannon

