

I have a question about the TechnoServe Volunteer Consultant (VolCon) Program– should I call TechnoServe?

No. Given the number of candidates and inquiries we receive we no longer can respond to phone calls. Please email volcon@tns.org and include the most relevant of the following as your email title:

- 1) ‘Question from individual interested to apply to be a TechnoServe VolCon’
- 2) ‘Question from individual who has already applied to be a TechnoServe VolCon’
- 3) ‘General TechnoServe VolCon Program Question’

Given the number of candidates and inquiries we receive we cannot always respond promptly to all questions, but we will respond to you as soon as we can. Thank you for your patience and understanding. Please note – we will direct all phone inquiries to this email query process so we ask that you please do not call.

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Your literature implies that Volunteer Consultants must have management consulting experience. While I didn’t work in a management consulting firm I do have strong business skills. Would I still be eligible for a VolCon position?

The TechnoServe Volunteer Consultant Program is very selective. While we do not have a specific set of criteria we look for, typical Volunteer Consultants have a minimum of three years at a top-tier strategy consulting (or sometimes an investment banking firm). Volunteer Consultants typically graduate from top-tier undergraduate programs, top MBA programs and have strong analytical and problem solving skills.

Other important skills include leadership skills, interpersonal skills, language skills (where applicable), the ability to manage his or her self (self-starter) and/or a team, and the ability to deal with ambiguity; VolCons are flexible, professional, have a great deal of integrity, and are passionate about the work we do.

While individuals who have worked in top-tier management consulting firm are most often selected for assignments, the specific requirements of an individual assignment do vary. Thus if you fit the profile of the type of candidate we are seeking, please do apply.

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Is the program only open to U.S. citizens or do you welcome foreign applicants?

TechnoServe welcomes applicants of all backgrounds and nationalities. In any given year more than half of our Volunteer Consultants placed may be from countries outside the U.S.

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I am a potential Volunteer Consultant candidate, but I do not have an availability of three or more months to go abroad – should I still apply?

The minimum TechnoServe commitment we ask for is typically three months. You can still apply, but please know that the number of available opportunities is limited. Also, for most ‘short’ projects we require the volunteer to cover some, if not all, of his or her expenses.

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I am a business school student looking for internship opportunities – is there anything available?

TechnoServe does not have a formal internship program but many MBA students have spent their internship as TechnoServe Volunteer Consultants. Thus please apply to the general Volunteer Consultant Program. If you are looking for a U.S. based internship, please communicate this in your application.

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I am a graduate student / I cannot travel – does TechnoServe offer remote projects?

From time to time, remote projects – i.e., projects that you would do from your home – for TechnoServe do emerge. These projects depend on the needs of our teams in the field. If you are looking for such a project, please note this in your application in the section regarding ‘location preference’ and please specify the number of hours per week you could volunteer in the section on availability

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My significant other and I would like to volunteer together – is this possible?

Maybe. Past Volunteer Consultants have volunteered with their significant others in one of three ways:

1. Both individuals volunteer on the same or two ‘core’ TechnoServe Volunteer Consultant projects in the same location. This may happen if we can find two roles in the same country for you and your significant other, that match your *individual* skill sets.
2. One individual volunteers on a ‘core’ TechnoServe project and the other individual supports with additional TechnoServe work in the same location. In this situation TechnoServe may have the funding to pay the expenses of the Volunteer Consultant working on the ‘core’ project but will not have the budget to cover the expenses of the other individual.
3. One individual is accepted into the TechnoServe Volunteer Consultant Program and the other individual volunteers with another organization in the same location. TechnoServe staff may be able to help connect the significant other with other potential organizations in the city/location.

If you are interested in applying with your significant other, please submit TWO separate applications and note in both applications your desire to be in the same location.

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I am interested in volunteering in Country X. How many VolCons are they staffing? When will they be staffing additional VolCons?

At any given time the number of VolCons on the ground in a given country will vary from as few as 0 to as many as 5-10 (at an extreme). In 2006, 2007, and 2008, TechnoServe staffed approximately 100 Volunteer Consultants per year, and there were a few countries that comprised a large percent of these VolCons – specifically Mozambique, Swaziland, Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda. The number of VolCons per country varies at any given time – and while one year one country may staff very few VolCons the next year it may staff more. Please feel free to indicate country preference in your application, and explain any further detail or connection in the free-form questions.

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I submitted my application/update to my application [x] days/weeks/months ago, but have not heard from TechnoServe – have you received my application? How long will it take you to process it?

We received all applications/updates to your application submitted to volcon@tns.org – thank you again for your application to the TechnoServe Volunteer Consultant Program. All applications are immediately processed and your information has been added to our candidate database.

Our process **only** allows us to follow up with you if a potential project for you emerges that fits your skill set. In the meantime, if your availability changes, or you have other updates to share, please resubmit these updates as noted on our website.

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I have submitted an application – is there anything else I can do to improve my chances of being staffed on a project?

No. We thank you again for your application to the TechnoServe Volunteer Consultant Program. Once your application is submitted, we are considering you for projects as they emerge. If you are nearing the time when you need to make a decision on another opportunity or give notice to your employer then you may submit a follow up query to volcon@tns.org as mentioned above.

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I work at a consulting firm and my firm needs to know whether to staff me on my next project or if an opportunity with TechnoServe will pan out – what do I do?

If you have NOT submitted your application to the TechnoServe Volunteer Consultant Program, please do so. In the space available in the excel template, please clarify any necessary lead-time or other timing concerns you might have (i.e. “I need 3 weeks lead time on my project as I must finish up work with an existing client” or “my firm would like to staff me on my next project, but need to know by [x] date if a project with TechnoServe is probable.”). If you have *already* submitted an application, please email volcon@tns.org to let us know of any timing issues that may have come up since you submitted your application (as noted above title your email: ‘Question from individual who has already applied to be a TNS VolCon’). Again, due to the nature of our staffing model, we cannot always work around your timing specifications – we appreciate your understanding.

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I have been referred by a Volunteer Consultant Program Alumnus – where can I share that information?

Please feel free to share any relationship or reference to TechnoServe in your application in the open-ended questions in part 2 of the application. We are always interested to hear about your connection to TechnoServe.

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I don’t understand the question in the Volunteer Consultant Candidate Information Database Template about expenses. Will it help / hurt my chances if I can / cannot pay for certain expenses?

At a maximum, TechnoServe covers expenses including a round trip economy flight to and from your home and project site, local accommodation, small per diem to cover meals and incidentals, vaccinations, visas, and medical evacuation insurance. NOTE: WE DO NOT COVER MEDICAL INSURANCE.

While TechnoServe covers the majority of these expenses for many projects, there are some Volunteer Consultant projects where the budget cannot cover all of the aforementioned expenses. Listing expenses you would be willing to cover will ensure we only consider you for projects that have at least the budget you require (and potentially more) and may open up some additional opportunities for you.

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I may be able to secure funding from my graduate program to fund part / all of my work with the TechnoServe Volunteer Consultant Program. However, I need to know if I will be staffed before a certain date – where should I note this?

Please make a note about any potential funding options in both the open-ended questions in part 2 of the application and your excel template. Please be sure to include the deadline as to when you need to know if you are staffed with TechnoServe in order to be eligible for the funding. Should a project fit your skill set, but not have the available funding – graduate school funding may help us place you.

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I have applied to the TechnoServe Volunteer Consultant Program in the past, but have unfortunately not had the opportunity to volunteer with the organization – are there other ways in which I can stay involved in TechnoServe’s work?

We thank you again for your continued interest in TechnoServe’s work. If it has been at least one year since your last application, and you wish to re-apply to the TechnoServe program please do so using the on-line forms. To keep up-to-date with TechnoServe news and to find out about other opportunities to get involved, sign up for TechnoServe updates at: www.technoserve.org/resources/get-updates.html
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I am a graduate student and am looking for a project to do as part of a course I am taking; can my classmates and I work with TechnoServe?

Very infrequently (i.e., perhaps once per year) TechnoServe works with a team of students. In order to apply for such a project, please send information clarifying your interest/project to volcon@tns.org. Please title your email: “Graduate students seeking organized project with TechnoServe” and, at a minimum address the following questions:

- a. Why is the team interested in partnering with TechnoServe?
- b. Are there any specific requirements in terms of geographic location or project type (e.g., industry, function, nature of the project, etc.)?
- c. What is the approximate number of person-hours per week that would go into this project and for how many weeks would the team be working on this project – what is the intended start and end date?
- d. What are the skills of the volunteers on the team? (Please send Resumes/CVs)
- e. What does the team envision the final deliverable to be (if this is specified by their program) or is the project open to TechnoServe’s needs?
- f. How much oversight is the team seeking from TechnoServe (approximate # hours/month)?
- g. What sort of ‘professor’/‘industry expert’ involvement/oversight would the team have at their university?
- h. Is the team planning to spend time in the field? If so, when and for how long? How would the team fund its expenses; would they be looking to TechnoServe to cover any expenses - -if so, which ones?
- i. How is the team evaluated on the project? For example, are students graded? What input/evaluation would the team need from TechnoServe (i.e., what is the process/documents that TechnoServe would need to complete)?

We will get back to you only if there may be an opportunity for you to do a project with TechnoServe.
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I am interested in a paid role in the field. How do I apply for this?

If TechnoServe has open positions then they will be listed on our website and you should follow the specific application process outlined in the vacancy announcement.
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