



Online Application Tip Sheet for Virginia Master Naturalist Program Applicants

General Tips

- The VMN program has an online application process. It uses Better Impact, which is also the volunteer management system we use for all volunteer communications, listing available volunteer activities, and recording volunteer service hours and other information. Using the volunteer management system for these functions will help you be an effective VMN volunteer.
- When you apply to the VMN program, you apply to a specific VMN Chapter, usually during a specific period of time during the year when they are accepting new applications. Visit [the VMN website](#) for a list of Chapters, and contact the chapter nearest you or visit their website for information on whether they are accepting applications, where to find their online application, and for information on their basic training course for new volunteers.
- Each VMN Chapter has its own volunteers who are overseeing the basic training course and volunteer recruitment and screening process. Please check that Chapter's website for information on who to contact if you have questions or need assistance during the application process.
- Each VMN chapter has a mobile-friendly version of their application form, and the link is available upon request if you prefer to complete the application on a mobile device rather than a computer.
- Your application needs to be completed in one sitting. There is not an option to save and complete it later. Therefore, we recommend that you look through this document to know what questions will be asked, so that you can assemble your information ahead of time and be ready to enter it all at once.
- When you see a flag icon next to a question in the application form, that means that is a required field, and you must enter something there.
- When you see an "i" icon, you can click on it to get more information about that question or field.

Page One of the Online Application Form

- Create a login username if you do not already have one. Otherwise, log in with your Better Impact credentials if you already use Better Impact with another volunteer organization.



Sandbox Chapter

Application Form - *Sandbox* Virginia Cooperative Extension

The screenshot shows a web form with two main sections. The left section, titled "I am new to MyImpactPage.com", contains instructions on creating a unique username and three input fields for "Username", "Email Address", and "Verify Email Address". The right section, titled "I already have a username", contains instructions on logging in and two input fields for "Username" and "Password", along with a "Login and Continue" button. At the bottom of the form, there is a "Save and Continue" button. The footer includes "MyImpactPage.com Privacy Policy" and "Powered By BETTER IMPACT".

Figure 1 VMN sample application form page one

Page Two of the Online Application Form

Complete the Contact Information page. Fields that are flagged are required. You will be required to provide name, address, a phone number, and an email address. Optional fields include some social media handles, alternate phone numbers, and a secondary email address. On this page, you will also need to create a password for your Better Impact account. After completing the Contact Information page, click “Save and Continue” at the bottom of the page.



Sandbox Chapter

Application Form - *Sandbox* Virginia Cooperative Extension

Contact Information

You need to complete all fields flagged (^{RM}) as required on this page and on the next one. If you don't fill in all required fields and click save on the next page, your application will not be submitted to *Sandbox* Virginia Cooperative Extension.

ACCOUNT

Username ^{RM}

Password ^{RM}

Confirm Password ^{RM}

NAME FIELDS

Salutation

Legal First Name

First Name ^{RM}

Middle Name

Last Name ^{RM}

Suffix

Figure 2 VMN sample application form page two

Page Three of the Online Application Form

The final page of the application is where you will fill out the majority of the application. The specific questions may vary slightly among chapters.

General Availability

You may be asked for your General Availability, where you can indicate when you are available for volunteer service. Your answer does not commit you to any specific schedule, but it helps with matching volunteers to projects.

Application Form - *Sandbox* Virginia Cooperative Extension

Please note that your application will not get submitted until you fill in all fields flagged (ⓘ) as required on this page and click the Submit Application button. You'll know your application was successfully submitted if when you click the 'Submit Application' button, it takes you to another screen. If you stay on this screen, it means you missed a required field and your application has not yet been submitted.

General Availability

Please check all that apply to let us know when, in general, you are available for volunteer service. Your answer does not commit you to any specific schedule, but it helps us match volunteers with projects.

	<input type="checkbox"/> Mornings	<input type="checkbox"/> Afternoons	<input type="checkbox"/> Evenings	<input type="checkbox"/> Nights
<input type="checkbox"/> Monday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Friday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Figure 3 General availability question on VMN sample application form

General Interests

You may be asked for your General Interests, where you can indicate which categories of volunteer activities are of most interest to you. You may check all that apply. Remember, by clicking on the “i”, you can bring up a window with more information about that category of activity.

General Interests

Please indicate what categories of volunteer activities are of most interest to you. You may check all that apply. By clicking on the "i" information button, you can find more information about that category of activity.

- ⓘ Citizen Science ⓘ Stewardship ⓘ VMN Chapter Administration
 ⓘ Education and Outreach

Figure 4 General interests question on the VMN sample application form

About You and Experience

You will be asked to provide answers to the follow questions to help us get to know you. Answer each question in the text box provided.

- Why are you interested in becoming a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer?

- How did you hear about the Virginia Master Naturalist program?
- What kind of volunteer work would you like to do as a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer?
- Have you ever been enrolled in a VMN Basic Training Course before (yes/no)? If yes, please also list when and with what Chapter.
- Please describe any previous volunteer experience you may have.
- What do you consider your strengths, special talents, or abilities that would make you a good match?

About You

Why are you interested in becoming a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer?

How did you hear about the Virginia Master Naturalist program?

What kind of volunteer work would you like to do as a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer?

Have you have ever been enrolled in a VMN Basic Training Course before? (Yes/No) If yes, please also list when and with what Chapter.

Figure 5 About You questions on the VMN sample application form

Experience

Please describe any previous volunteer experience you may have. i

What do you consider your strengths, special talents, or abilities that would make you a good match? i

Figure 6 Experience questions on the VMN sample application form.

References

As part of the volunteer screening process, we will contact up to three references. On the application form, you will need to provide the name, relationship, address (optional), phone number, and email for three different references of your choice. Your references may be co-workers, people who know you through other volunteer programs, or other people who can comment on how well suited you are for the volunteer role. The leaders of the VMN Chapter and organizers of the Chapter’s basic training course may contact your listed references by phone, email, or letter.

First Reference

Name i

Relationship v i

If you chose, "Other", please let us know what your relationship is.

Address

Primary Phone i

Email i

Figure 7 First reference section on the VMN sample application form

Demographic Information

You will be asked to provide some demographic information. This information is used for reporting purposes. The VMN program is part of Virginia Cooperative Extension, and Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. For gender, race, and ethnicity, you may choose an answer of “Prefer Not to Answer”. For age, however, you must indicate whether or not you are at least 18 years old. While the VMN program is primarily a program for adults, youth age 14 and up may participate alongside a parent, guardian, or other adult who will be present with them for all training and volunteer activities. That adult should also apply to the program.

Demographic Information

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Interim Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.
VMN Volunteer Enrollment Agreement, revised August 2018.

Gender

Are you at least 18 years old or older?

If you are under 18, please list your age:

Ethnicity

Race

Figure 8 Demographic information question on the VMN sample application form

Emergency Contact

You will be asked to provide name, phone number, and relationship for an emergency contact. If you are accepted into the program, this information is stored in your profile in case it is needed during a training or volunteer activity.

Emergency Contact

Name

Primary Phone

Secondary Phone

Relationship

If you chose, "Other", please let us know what your relationship is.

Figure 9 Emergency contact question on the VMN sample application form

Voluntary Disclosure

You will be asked to disclose whether you have any criminal convictions. A “yes” answer does not automatically exclude you from volunteering. A criminal background check may be conducted on you during the application process or during your volunteer service, and you will need to indicate that you understand that on the application.

Voluntary Disclosure

This information will be kept in a confidential manner and accessible only to authorized personnel. A "yes" answer does not automatically exclude you from volunteering.

Have you ever had any criminal convictions?

I understand that records and criminal background or reference checks may be conducted on me at any time during the application process or during my volunteer service.

I agree
 I do not agree

Figure 10 Voluntary disclosure section of the VMN sample application form

Agreements and Acknowledgements

In the final section of the application, you will be asked to indicate whether you agree to four different agreements: Media Release Statement, Volunteer Agreement, Enrollment Agreement, and Virginia Master Naturalist Volunteer Standards of Conduct. In each case, be sure to click the “i” to read and understand the statement before agreeing to it. You do not have to agree to the Media Release in order to be accepted, but you do need to agree to the other three policies.

Agreements and Acknowledgements

I agree to the Media Release Statement found in the information box to the right of this field. i ▾ *

I agree to the Volunteer Agreement found in the information box to the right of this field. i ▾ *

I agree to the Enrollment Agreement found in the information box to the right of this field. i ▾ *

I agree to the Virginia Master Naturalist Volunteer Standards of Conduct found in the information box to the right of this field. i ▾ *

Figure 11 Agreements and acknowledgements section of the VMN sample application form

Submitting the Application

Be sure to click “Submit Application” at the bottom of the page! If any flagged fields are not completed, the application will not be submitted and the system will let you know that there is something you need to go back and complete. If, after you click “Submit Application”, it takes you to another screen, then you know your application was successfully submitted.

Please note that your application will not get submitted until you fill in all fields flagged (i) as required on this page and click the Submit Application button. You'll know your application was successfully submitted if when you click the 'Submit Application' button, it takes you to another screen. If you stay on this screen, it means you missed a required field and your application has not yet been submitted.

Submit Application

Figure 12 Submit application button on the VMN sample application form.

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.

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