

Volunteering: How can you help?

Briefings



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Tom Wallace shares his story of volunteering with the ATT, how you can use your own skills and experience to benefit other members, and how it can help your own career progression.

Have you ever taken a moment to understand how the ATT's operational structure works? If you have, you may have realised that at its core is a network of dedicated volunteers - members who give their time alongside their day jobs to contribute their knowledge and expertise. This effort ensures the Association continues to operate as the leading professional body for those in tax compliance, and to meet its charitable aims of education, development and the public interest.

But have you ever thought about how *you* could help?

How I became involved

My own volunteering journey with the ATT began two years ago when the Online Branch was first being formed. As a new Branch, it was looking for volunteers to sit

on the committee and support the Chair in finding engaging speakers and arranging relevant events for members. I'd built up a strong network over my career, and when I saw the call for volunteers, I thought: 'I can help here.' I had connections with people doing interesting things in the tax world – technical experts, industry voices and policy specialists – and I wanted to bring that value to the membership.

That first step quickly led to more involvement. Through Branch work, I got to know the ATT's technical officers and began to understand the vital work they do – and how it's supported by the Technical Steering Group (TSG). I expressed interest in joining the TSG, was invited to observe a meeting and soon after that became a full member of the group. Then, at the end of last year, I applied to join Council and was voted on at the December meeting.

These three areas – Branches, technical work and Council – felt like natural places where I could contribute, based on my experience to date. But what's clear to me now is that *any* member can find their place in the ATT's volunteer structure.

How can you benefit?

With seven steering groups and committees, a thriving Branch network that spans the UK and beyond, and the Council itself, there are opportunities to get involved at all levels – and in a wide variety of ways. What you get in return is far more than the satisfaction of giving back – though that's certainly part of it. Volunteering with the ATT offers real professional and personal development.

You will build skills that translate directly into your day-to-day career – from understanding how a charitable organisation is governed to engaging with HMRC and government. You will also learn many more practical things, such as how to chair meetings effectively, how to contribute meaningfully to technical consultation responses, and even how to communicate your expertise on social media.

There are CPD opportunities along the way, both formal and informal, and the chance to learn from fellow volunteers from every corner of the tax profession.

How can you help?

So, what is the Association looking for in a volunteer?

To start with, you don't need to have decades of experience or a senior title in your firm. Whilst a handful of committees have minimum post-qualification requirements, most don't. In fact, many roles simply require that you're a current member and are willing to engage. The key qualities are reliability, curiosity and a willingness to share your own perspective.

All that's asked of you is to attend meetings regularly, prepare thoughtfully and contribute to discussions with the knowledge and experience you already have. If you can do that, you will be adding value from day one.

And don't underestimate what *you* might bring to the table. Whether you're from a big firm or a small practice, an in-house team or self-employed, just starting out or well-established – your insight is relevant. The ATT needs a wide range of voices and experiences to reflect its diverse membership. It's through that variety that the Association can remain responsive, inclusive and forward-looking.

If you've read this far and feel a flicker of interest, I'd encourage you to take the next step. Reach out to your local Branch. Get in touch with the ATT team and ask what opportunities are available. You don't have to commit to a major role straight away – there are many ways to get involved on a smaller scale, from helping with a single event to contributing to a piece of guidance or writing for the website.

Volunteering has been one of the most rewarding parts of my professional journey. It has broadened my network, deepened my knowledge and given me a sense of being part of something bigger – something that helps shape the profession I care about.

So, if you've ever wondered how the ATT works behind the scenes – or how you might play a part in it – now is the time to explore. You never know where that first step might lead.

Tom Wallace

Schools and careers fairs

You could also consider volunteering at schools and careers fairs, as sharing your knowledge and passion for tax can inspire the next generation to consider a rewarding career in the profession. Whether you're presenting to students about real-world tax challenges or showcasing the diverse opportunities in this field, your

role as a volunteer helps demystify tax and highlights its critical importance in society.

ATT's Technical Officer Steven Pinhey leads on ATT's involvement in schools and careers fairs. If you are a member and are interested in going into a school as an ATT representative to present or have a stand at a careers fair please can you let Steven know. We also have resources and merchandise available to support you, please take a look at our Volunteering at Schools and Careers Fairs page: www.att.org.uk/volunteer-schools-toolkit.