

Our Volunteer Base: The Heart of the Mission

Our volunteer corps is the **talent engine** of this organization. Recognizing that our globally distributed volunteers donate their most valuable assets—their time and expertise—we commit to treating that donation as a reciprocal investment. Our culture is built on the philosophy that for us to be successful in resolving unidentified missing persons cases, we must first be successful in **fostering and supporting the growth and well-being of our volunteer team**.

This vision ensures we attract and retain the passionate, high-caliber talent necessary to scale our operations effectively across all time zones.

Core Values: The Culture of Compassion and Growth

1. Inclusion and Mutual Respect: A Unified Remote Force

We are a borderless organization, recognizing the unique value of both **Investigative Genetic Genealogy (IGG) Practitioners** and **Advocacy Specialists**.

- **Role Clarity: IGG Practitioners** focus on case research and lead generation. Advocacy Specialists assist families of the missing, educating them on how to help law enforcement and IGG work (e.g., reporting a loved one missing, uploading their own DNA for comparison). Advocacy volunteers do not have contact with the families of the human remains we identify.
- **Empowerment:** Volunteers are central to operational strategy. We commit to structured feedback channels, empowering every team member to identify bottlenecks, propose new methodologies, and directly shape the organization's future.

2. Shared Expertise: We Are All Teachers; We Are All Learners

This core principle is our commitment to continuous, collective proficiency, driven by peer-to-peer collaboration.

- **Knowledge Exchange:** We implement a group-based model where newer volunteers are paired on teams with more experienced IGG practitioners to foster structured learning. This pairing ensures that while expertise is transferred, newer practitioners can also challenge established methods, leading to innovative breakthroughs.

- **Collaborative Retreats:** To foster real-time learning and connection, we will host Virtual Retreats focused on intensive, collaborative casework. These sessions allow us to take deep dives into difficult cases while giving volunteers a structured opportunity to learn from high-level problem-solving. As the organization grows, we will also organize In-Person Retreats to strengthen professional connections and team cohesion.

3. Compassion and Ethical Practice: Leading with Empathy

Our work demands a culture grounded in profound empathy, ensuring team support is as rigorous as our case methodology.

- **Internal Support:** We provide access to a **volunteer trauma counselor** who can equip volunteers with the skills to process the emotional weight inherent in casework and advocacy.
- **Ethical Empowerment:** We maintain the highest ethical standards as a cultural mandate, ensuring every volunteer is empowered to speak up and seek guidance on legal or ethical ambiguities without fear of reprisal.

Our Commitment to Volunteer Growth

We recognize that professional development is the most valuable compensation we can offer. We maintain an inclusive application process, allowing individuals to join our team either through our educational pipeline or by direct application:

- **Volunteer Application Process:** We maintain a formal application process, allowing individuals to become volunteers regardless of whether they have completed the Practicum or our application exam. Background checks for all volunteers will ensure organizational security.
- **Growth Pathways:** We actively facilitate growth, ensuring that service leads to skill acquisition:
 - **Access to Continuing Professional Development:** Unlimited access to all recorded CPD workshops and methodology seminars
 - **Transferable Skills:** Structured opportunities to develop high-demand professional skills in project management, data analysis, and IIGG

Our investment in our volunteers' sustained growth ensures their commitment to the mission is maximized, directly translating their time and passion into high-quality, long-term operational success for our organization.
