One of the first steps you’ll want to take as you head into a new skills-based volunteer engagement is to identify the person on your nonprofit staff that will lead the project. Many organizations think first of the individual on their team that manages traditional volunteer engagements. Before you do that, remember that skills-based initiatives require a very different set of skills than traditional volunteer management, often unique to the project that you’re undertaking. Check out what makes for a great project lead below!

The staff member you assign should have...

- **Significant exposure to the project focus area** (i.e. your technology staff for a database project)
- Ability to **quickly respond** to ensure project momentum. Hint: Your Executive Director is usually not the best choice for this reason!
- Ability to quickly **make or facilitate the decisions** necessary within a project to move it forward
- **Comfort providing feedback** and pushing back if the volunteers are off course on their deliverable
- **Adaptability and a cross-sector perspective** to help bridge the perspectives of your organization and your volunteers
- A **focus on relationship development**, and seek to cultivate your skilled volunteers to be engaged with your organization long term
- The **trust of your staff** to know what’s best for your project and your organization. Hint: This is usually not your summer intern!