

DISABILITY POSITIVE VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Revision History

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1 POLICY STATEMENT

The Volunteer Policy identifies and sets out the principles by which **Disability Positive** (hereinafter referred to as the “**Company**”) works with volunteers, the benefits it gains from its volunteers and benefits that volunteers expect to gain. This policy sets out the minimum standards for recruitment, induction and appointment of volunteers to ensure that both volunteer and Company expectations are met. It provides for fair and equal treatment of its volunteers and a framework for implementation at national, country and regional level.

A Company volunteer is someone who freely chooses to give their time to undertake tasks and activities to help the Company achieve its aims, without payment or the expectation of payment. the arrangement is voluntary on both sides. Either party can bring this to an end.

Broadly, the Company recognises four main types of volunteer:

- 1) **Outreach Programme** - those involved in Company-managed programme delivery and related face-to-face work (i.e. Community Engagement services) with young people and/or adults.
- 2) **Fundraising** - those who give their time to deliver a specific activity to an agreed fundraising target or level of expectation. Any individual fundraising outside of these parameters is an “in aid of” supporter with no obligations to the Company and are outside of volunteering.
- 3) **Programme**- those involved in Company-managed programme delivery and related office-based work (i.e. Payroll and Supported Banking services) to support young people and adults.
- 4) **Office** - those involved in administrative based work supporting the front-line work of the Company.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Company policies: -

- **Volunteer Expenses Policy**
- **Equality and Diversity Policy**
- **Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy**
- **Health and Safety Policies**
- **Data Protection Policy**
- **Information Security Policy**
- **Complaint Handling Policy**

2 SCOPE

The policy is for staff that work with, and provide support to, volunteers within the Company and for volunteers themselves who provide this role as a part of their Company activities. The policy will be provided to all Company volunteers.

3 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- highlight and acknowledge the value of volunteers
- recognise the respective roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers
- confirm the Company's commitment to involving volunteers in its work
- establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers
- clarify the roles of volunteers
- help to ensure the ongoing quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by our volunteers
- acknowledge the current areas of volunteer involvement
- provides a framework for recruiting and supporting volunteers including people from under-represented groups

4 GENERAL

The Company seeks and values the following attributes that volunteers bring

- a genuine interest in supporting disabled people
- a non-judgemental attitude
- a willingness to listen
- understanding, commitment and reliability

...thereby adhering to the Company's values of recognising and valuing the contribution and views of disabled people; their family members and carers; supporting the right for all disabled people to have choice, control and independence; transparency and openness and appreciating equality and diversity.

The Company is not able to accept applications from those who are not willing to commit to the Company's aims and objectives or from those that the Company considers to be unsuitable for the role.

5 THE VALUE AND BENEFITS THAT VOLUNTEERS BRING

The Company recognises that volunteers are an enormous resource in helping to meet its aims. they bring a wealth of expertise, knowledge, experience and skills to the Company.

Specifically, volunteers:

- deliver a lot of the face-to-face work with disabled people
- enrich the quality of programme delivery
- provide a unique and different relationship with disabled people that cannot be provided by paid staff
- provide contacts and networking opportunities that help promote and raise the profile of the Company
- offer specialist knowledge in a variety of areas
- provide an interface between the Company, the local community, funders, referrers and other partners upon whom the Company relies

6 THE BENEFITS TO A VOLUNTEER OF SUPPORTING THE COMPANY

Supporting the Company provides volunteers with:

- the ability to make a difference to the lives of disabled people, and thereby making a contribution to society as a whole
- an opportunity to be part of a, well-respected local charity
- personal development opportunities and experiences
- networking opportunities and interaction with other volunteers, supporters and Company staff

7 COMPANY PRINCIPLES OF WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS

The Company has a number of defined principles and processes relating to a range of areas and aspects that underpin volunteer involvement in its activities, as outlined below. The principles will ensure fair and equal treatment of all volunteers. However, it is appropriate to make a distinction between volunteers involved in Company programmes and face-to-face work with disabled people. Resource materials are provided centrally to give advice, support and guidance on all such issues, and assist in delivery. These will also be aimed at staff managing volunteers, as well as volunteers themselves.

a) Recruitment, Selection and Induction

The Company is committed to being responsive to the needs of disabled people and our stakeholders. The Company is also committed to equal opportunities at all stages of recruitment and selection. Short-listing, interviewing and selection of volunteers should always be carried out without regard to protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation, in line with the **Equality and Diversity Policy**.

The Company requires the use of an application form to collect information on all prospective volunteers. Additionally, all volunteers will be formally interviewed to provide relevant information and explore their aspirations and the experience they can bring to the Company. It is important for all involved to appreciate that the interview is not a competitive process, and the sole selection criteria is suitability for the role. Written references will be required and taken up to help confirm suitability for volunteering and for specific roles.

A role description is a key document in the volunteer recruitment process. Within the role description, there will be a section dedicated to the person specification, which outlines the essential and desirable criteria (including qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and expertise required to perform the role). The detail set out in the person specification will provide the criteria against which a potential volunteer can be assessed throughout the volunteer recruitment process.

A Disclosure and Barring Service check is required for volunteers undertaking 'regulated activity'. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar someone from volunteering with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of their offence. The Company also asks all new volunteers to complete self-declaration questions which are included within the application form

Only when the selection process, background checks and training have been completed fully, and it is agreed that the person is suitable for the role, can a volunteer be appointed.

All volunteers must read this Volunteer Policy which outlines what is expected from the volunteer and what they can expect from the Company. In commencing their role, the volunteer commits to the aims, values and key policies of the Company. They also commit to delivering the key tasks outlined in the relevant role description.

The Service Manager, in conjunction with the Community Engagement Manager, is responsible for guiding and supporting the volunteer in their role and should be available to discuss any aspect of the volunteer's role.

b) Training

Volunteers will have a set of skills, knowledge and attitudes gained from their education, work, previous volunteering, and life experiences. However, to ensure that volunteers are appropriately equipped for their role each volunteer must undergo the appropriate induction and training process prior to appointment. As a minimum all volunteers are expected to complete mandatory training in Safeguarding, Data Protection, Health and Safety and Disability Equality, training required will be role dependent. All volunteers offered the opportunity to attend a refresher training session at intervals indicated in the training and development policy.

c) Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk

The Company's **Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy** gives clear procedures on responding to concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Combined with the associated procedures, and guidance, the policy provides a structure for staff and volunteers that may come across concerns of this nature within the context of their work.

d) Management and Support of Volunteers

Each volunteer will be provided with relevant management and support. This will include regular, appropriate and mutually agreed contact. As a minimum, volunteers will be offered an annual personal development review, which offers the opportunity to discuss their role, share feedback and identify individual development and support needs.

The Company will also provide appropriate recognition and occasions to celebrate volunteers and their work, on an individual and group basis, according to specific role(s), commitment and length of service. The Company also promotes National Volunteers' Week each year (usually taking place in June).

The Company has a procedure to help resolve any type of problems that arise and will be carried out by an appropriate person to ensure fair and equitable treatment of volunteers. the grievance procedure can be found in our Volunteer Handbook (please contact the Community Engagement Manager for a copy of the procedure).

e) Health and Safety

The Company will ensure that all volunteers are provided with the appropriate information, supervision and training required to enable them to complete voluntary work safely. This includes providing suitable systems and procedures and guidance is outlined in the **Health and Safety Policy**.

Volunteers must take reasonable care of themselves and others while volunteering for the Company and follow any health and safety advice and instruction given for their role. Volunteers should co-operate with the Company on health and safety matters, and immediately report accidents/incidents (including near misses – accidents/incidents that may have led to injury). Volunteers should not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.

The Company has a duty of care to volunteers to ensure they are supported in their role, as well as the disabled people we support. If a volunteer finds themselves in a situation which is a threat to personal safety, their first point of contact should be the Duty Manager or Community Engagement Manager.

f) Confidentiality, Copyright and Data Protection

All volunteers are required keep confidential any Company information they become aware of through their volunteering that is not in the public domain. Volunteers will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement to this affect, as the role may require some access to Company records and email, in line with the Company's **Information Security Policy and Confidentiality Agreement**.

Volunteers are required to assign copyright to the Company of any work produced as a part of their volunteering role or activity.

All volunteers are expected to comply with the Company's **Data Protection Policy** (and associated policies within). In complying with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, the Company will treat in confidence the information it holds about volunteers. The information will be held while there is a legitimate business purpose for doing so. Volunteers have the right to request to see all the information held about them by the Company, in line with the **HR Privacy Notice**.

Volunteer information, such as application forms, references and any reports regarding conduct concerns, will be stored in a safe and secure (encrypted) location.

g) Volunteer Expenses

The Company endeavours to reimburse volunteers reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, however the decision to reimburse expenses is made at the Community Engagement Manager's discretion, based on their assessment of the requirements of the Company,

the available budget and the volunteer's own needs. Volunteers' expenses will be paid in accordance with the **Volunteers Expenses Policy**.

h) Insurance

The Company provides Employers Liability, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity cover for all volunteers whilst working on Company activities. The Company does not provide motor insurance cover.

All volunteers that hold Business Class motor insurance will be automatically covered for their work on behalf of the Company. However, if their insurance is limited to social and domestic use then they will have to discuss their role as a Company volunteer with their insurance company to ensure that they are fully covered. **Volunteers will be asked to sign the relevant section on the Expenses form to confirm that they have agreed their driving on Company business with their insurers before we can reimburse mileage costs.**

i) Leaving the Company

Volunteers are free to cease volunteering with the Company at any time, although, wherever possible, an agreed period leading up to this point would be helpful in order to give the Company time to make any alternative arrangements required. It is possible that there may also be times when the Company will ask a volunteer to cease volunteering for various reasons. Wherever possible we will offer the volunteer the opportunity to feedback before leaving their role, and ensure they are appropriately thanked for their support.

j) Volunteer Feedback

We provide a range of opportunities for volunteers to offer feedback on our processes, support and work. These are inclusive of the quarterly telephone reviews and a Volunteer Survey which is conducted annually.

k) Making a Complaint

Should a volunteer wish to make a complaint, they are invited to speak to the Community Engagement Manager in the first instance as informal resolution. If the complaint is not resolved at this early stage, a volunteer is invited to put their complaint in writing and this will be given to the relevant member of the Company and responded to, in line with the Company's **Complaint Handling Policy**.

This policy is binding in honour only and there is no intention to create a contract of employment between the Company and volunteers.