

Raspberry Creatives Community Events CIC

Volunteering Policy

Introduction

Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community: the environment of individuals outside one's immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice without concern for financial gain.

Raspberry Creatives believes in the value of voluntary activity as an important expression of citizenship and an essential component of a free and democratic society. This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers and is relevant to staff, volunteers and trustees within the organisation. It aims to create a common understanding and to clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management of volunteers. (Organisation Name) takes responsibility for ensuring that volunteers within its own organisation are appropriately involved, valued for their contribution and respected as colleagues. The organisation recognises the important contribution that volunteers make to us. We believe that we should invest in our volunteers. To this end, we shall provide regular and on-going support, supervision and training, to enable volunteers to develop their skills, both in order to enhance their volunteering work with us and to help them contribute to the wider community.

In issuing this volunteer policy Raspberry Creatives wishes to:

- Formally acknowledge and support the role of volunteers in its work
- Set out the principles governing the involvement of volunteers and provide a set of guidelines to ensure good practice in working with volunteers
- Encourage and enable, rather than restrict, the involvement of volunteers.

This volunteer policy and accompanying guidelines are intended for use by Raspberry Creatives paid staff and volunteers.

Our commitments

We recognise volunteers as an integral part of the organisation. Their contribution supports our mission and strategic aims, and complements the role of paid staff. We aim to encourage and support volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits the organisation, its clients and the volunteers themselves.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will not be used to replace staff.

We are committed to offering a flexible range of opportunities and to encouraging a diversity of people to volunteer with us, including those from under-represented groups such as youth, people with a disability, older people and people from black and minority ethnic communities.

We recognise that there are costs associated with volunteer involvement and will seek to ensure adequate financial and staffing resources are available for the development and support of volunteering. We recognise that people have a right to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering and can contribute in many ways.

We recognise our responsibility to organise volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

Who is a volunteer?

Volunteers are individuals who undertake activity on behalf of our organisation, unpaid and of their own free choice. Volunteering is not undertaken for financial gain. Work experience placements and internships are not the same as volunteering. Trustees are volunteers with responsibility for governance of the organisation.

Volunteers may be involved on a one – off, short term or on a longer term, regular basis. They may be involved:

- in the direct delivery of our services
- on our board of management as trustees
- in community engagement to raise awareness of our work
- in one off events and promotional activities

In our offices or in community venues Volunteers are valued for:

- bringing additional skills and new perspectives to the organisations
- enabling us to be more responsive and flexible in our approach
- championing our cause within the wider community
- enhancing the quality of our work and of client experience
- promoting the wellbeing of users of services, staff, local communities and themselves.

Standards of good practice

Our management practice is informed by the Code of Practice for organisations involving volunteers and the Investing in Volunteers Quality Standard for volunteer management.

Roles and responsibilities

A designated staff member (The Volunteer Co-ordinator) has responsibility for the development and co-ordination of voluntary activity within the organisation, including volunteering policies and procedures and the welfare of volunteers.

All volunteers will have a designated staff member/volunteer for guidance, support and supervision. Staff responsibilities for volunteers will be explicitly referred to in their job/role description.

The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding. There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks or for the organisation to provide continuing opportunities for voluntary involvement, provision of training or benefits.

However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what the organisation expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the organisation.

The organisation expects volunteers:

- to be reliable and honest
- to uphold the organisation's values and comply with organisational policies
- to make the most of opportunities given, eg. for training

- to contribute positively to the aims of the organisation and avoid bringing the organisation into disrepute
- to carry out tasks within agreed guidelines

Volunteers can expect:

- to have clear information about what is and is not expected of them
- to receive adequate support and training
- to be insured and to volunteer in a safe environment
- to be treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner
- to receive out of pocket expenses
- to have opportunities for personal development
- to be recognised and appreciated
- to be able to say 'no' to anything which they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable
- to know what to do if something goes wrong

Volunteer Policy Statement

Equality and Diversity

- As an employer and engager of volunteers Raspberry Creatives is committed to a policy of equality and diversity. This principle will apply to service delivery, recruitment, promotion, training, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions.
- Volunteers will be expected to adhere to Raspberry Creatives Equality and Diversity Policy, a copy of which can be found within the Raspberry Creatives Volunteer Handbook.

Recruitment & Selection

- Recruitment of volunteers will be from all sections of the community, and will be in line with our Equality and Diversity Policy.
- We will use monitoring to inform future targeting in recruitment.
- Opportunities will be widely promoted, in English and in Welsh, so as to attract interest from different sectors of the community. Positive action to target recruitment may be used where appropriate. Online application is encouraged but non-digital methods of application are also available.
- Information will be made available to those enquiring about volunteering, including written role descriptions which set out the nature and purpose of the volunteering role, key tasks, skills required and benefits.
- Recruitment will usually involve an informal interview, application form and the taking of references; the process will be defined and consistent for any given role - for example the recruitment process for trustees, regular volunteers and for volunteers for one off events will be tailored in each case and may differ from one another.
- Where applicants are not able to be placed in their preferred role, they will be provided

with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles, or signposted to the local volunteer centre or the www.volunteering-wales.net website.

- For roles which involve care giving and/or sustained and direct contact with young people or adults at risk, volunteers will be required to have a full DBS disclosure check which will be arranged by the organisation. DBS disclosures are dealt with in the strictest confidence. A criminal record is not necessarily a bar to volunteering.

Information & Training

- Volunteers will receive full information about their chosen area of work and will be given a clear idea of their responsibilities to Raspberry Creatives .
- Volunteers will be given induction and training in the specific tasks to be undertaken.
- Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them.

Support & Supervision

- Volunteers will be assigned a named contact person for supervision and support.
- Arrangements vary according to the volunteer and the role undertaken, and may include telephone support, group meetings or one to one reviews.

Problem-Solving

- Raspberry Creatives recognises that problems do arise and we aim to identify and resolve these problems at the earliest stage. Volunteers who have a problem of any kind should discuss it in the first instance with their named contact person.

- We will attempt to deal with any problems informally and at the earliest opportunity. All volunteers will have a named person to whom they can turn in the case of any difficulty.
- Where informal resolution is not possible, the organisations 'Settling differences' policy will be adhered to.
- Volunteers will be made aware of the organisation's complaints policy and how to use it. They will also be made aware of how inappropriate behaviour by volunteers will be addressed by the organisation.

Confidentiality

- Volunteers will be bound by the same confidentiality conditions as Raspberry Creatives paid staff.

Expenses & Insurance

- Raspberry Creatives will ensure that there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses.
- Volunteers will be adequately covered by insurance while carrying out agreed duties.

Health and Safety

- All volunteers are covered by the same health and safety policies and provisions as staff.
- A risk assessment will be undertaken on all volunteer roles.

Relations with Paid Staff

- Raspberry Creatives is committed to ensuring that volunteers work complements the work of paid staff, and that it will not be used as a substitute for paid work.

- Steps will be taken to ensure that staff at all levels are clear about the roles of volunteers and to foster good working relationships between staff and volunteers.
- Raspberry Creatives recognises the need for training for all those working alongside and managing volunteers.

Costs

- Raspberry Creatives will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers and recognises the value of designated responsibilities within specific posts for the management of volunteers.

Recognition

- Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with the organisation's wider staff, at staff meetings etc.
- Formal recognition of the contribution of volunteers is expressed through annual reports, website articles, social media, and during Volunteers' Week award celebrations.

Moving on

- When volunteers move on from volunteering with us they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully.
- Volunteers who have remained with the organisation for at least 3 months will have the right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- Raspberry Creatives will systemically monitor and evaluate its involvement of volunteers with reference to this Volunteering Policy.

