

Volunteering Policy

Introduction

This volunteering policy sets out the principles and practice by which we, **Preflect**, involve volunteers and is relevant to both 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.

Our commitments

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

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 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 can be defined as activity which:

- is undertaken freely, by choice
- is undertaken to be of public/ community benefit
- is not undertaken for financial gain.

Work experience placements and internships are not the same as volunteering, and further guidance should be sought from Preflect's membership organisations such as the WCVA and Dorset Community Action.

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 one-off events and promotional activities.

Volunteers are valued for:

- bringing additional skills and new perspectives to the organisation
- 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.

Standards of good practice

Our management practice is informed by the WCVA's *Code of Practice for organisations involving volunteers*.

Roles and responsibilities

The board of trustees 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 volunteer for guidance, support and supervision.

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, e.g. for training or mentoring
- 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 treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner
- 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.

Recruitment and selection

Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to in recruiting volunteers. 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, and the process will be 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 other volunteering opportunities outside Preflect.

Induction and training

Volunteers will be given induction and training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken.

Support and supervision

Volunteers will be offered support and supervision as appropriate and this is discussed during induction. Arrangements vary according to the volunteer and the role undertaken, and may include telephone support, group meetings or one-to-one reviews.

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 the website, blog content and social media, as well as through the awarding of Preflect role titles.

Dealing with problems

The organisation aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. It seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly.

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.

Volunteers will be made aware of how inappropriate behaviour by volunteers will be addressed by the organisation.

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 and contributed to its work actively for at least 2 months will have the right to request a reference.

Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options, including full-time work, further education and other volunteering opportunities.

Other relevant documents

Organisational policies and other documents relevant to volunteers include:

- Privacy Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Trustee Code of Conduct
- Volunteer Agreement
- Small Charity Constitution.

Date approved: 23 May 2020

Person responsible: Balint Brunner, Co-Founder