

Remember Oluwale Volunteer Policy

Introduction

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which the charity involves volunteers and is relevant to staff, volunteers and trustees within the charity. 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.

Commitments

The charity recognises volunteers as an integral part of the charity. Their contribution supports the charity's mission and strategic aims. The charity aims to encourage and support volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits the charity and volunteers.

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

The charity recognises 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.

The charity recognises that people have a right to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering and can contribute in many ways. The charity recognises its 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 the charity, unpaid and of their own free choice.

Volunteering is 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. Trustees are volunteers with responsibility for governance of the charity.

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 services
- on the board of management as trustees
- in community engagement to raise awareness of the charity's work
- in one off events and promotional activities
- in offices or in community venues

Volunteers are valued for:

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

Roles and responsibilities

[] has responsibility for the development and co-ordination of voluntary activity within the charity, including volunteering policies and procedures and the welfare of volunteers.

All volunteers will have a designated individual 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 charity 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 charity expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the charity.

The charity expects volunteers:

- to be reliable and honest
- to uphold the charity's values and comply with charity policies
- to make the most of opportunities given, eg for training
- to contribute positively to the aims of the charity and avoid bringing the charity 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

Recruitment and selection

Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to in recruiting volunteers. Opportunities will be widely promoted, 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. A risk assessment will be undertaken on all volunteer roles.

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.

For roles which involve 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 charity. DBS disclosures are dealt with in the strictest confidence. A criminal record is not necessarily a bar to volunteering.

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 charity's wider staff (should there be a time when the charity has staff), at staff meetings etc. They will also have the opportunity to attend meetings of the Board and the Advisory Committee, should they so desire

Formal recognition of the contribution of volunteers is expressed through annual reports, website articles, social media, and during Volunteers' Week award celebrations.

Dealing with problems

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

The charity 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 the charity'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 charity.

Expenses

Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.

Moving on

When volunteers move on from volunteering with the charity 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 charity for at least 3 months will have the right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options.

