



Volunteers Policy Statement

How we want to involve and enable volunteers at Project Art Works

Introduction

A volunteer is defined as someone who commits time and energy for the benefit of Project Art Works' key objectives, and who does so through personal choice, without the expectation of financial reward.

1. What volunteering means to us

Volunteers play a vital role within the organisation's programme delivery. We want to do the best we can to support and value volunteers that work with us.

We believe that volunteering is a really important and exciting thing to do.

Volunteering enables people to:

- develop skills and interests
- be part of their community
- meet new people and learn about other people's lives
- change their lives for the better
- develop confidence and a sense of personal fulfilment

2. Diversity

As an organisation we believe in equal opportunities for all so that people from all sections of the community have the chance to get involved. Volunteers are provided with information about the necessary skills and experience needed for a volunteering role.

We're interested in increasing the number of volunteers, particularly people who sometimes find it difficult to get into volunteering or who face social and/or cultural barriers to inclusion.

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3. How we make volunteering accessible - Making the work place right for you

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to the way we work and to explore ways we can make volunteering more accessible.

4. Making sure you're not out of pocket

We provide travel expenses to all volunteers and encourage everyone to claim them. We will give you cash or a Bank transfer to cover the cost. You need to give us travel tickets and receipts for the amount claimed. We pay fuel costs at fixed rates according to the distance travelled, please speak to the project manager for more information.

5. Getting there, travelling and Subsistence

We encourage all our volunteers to use the most environmentally friendly modes of transport but if you need to use your car, don't forget to inform your Insurance Company. Volunteering may come under business travel. This should not affect the cost of your insurance, if it does please speak to us. Project Art Works allocates £10 per day towards your expenses, contact your project manager for more details. If your expenditure is more than the allocation please discuss with the project manager.

6. Accountability

Project Art Works is a registered Charity. We are committed to act in the best interests of the charity and keep volunteers expenses to an amount that is reasonable and proportionate in order to protect funds.

7. If you claim benefits

You can still volunteer with us if you claim benefits. There are different arrangements depending which benefits you're on but the important thing is that you tell your advisor. You must also tell them you have received expenses, but that these only cover the money you spend.

8. How we involve volunteers

We want to involve volunteers in what we do so they can contribute:

- skills and expertise
- passion and enthusiasm
- a different and unique perspective

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We always try to:

- involve volunteers in tasks they find interesting and stimulating
- offer opportunities that are flexible, making sure they match your interests and skills as well as helping us deliver the work our participants want from us.

9. Getting started

You will be given a full introduction to your volunteering. As part of this we will agree a task description and volunteer agreement with you. This way we both know what you are going to be doing and what we expect from each other. You will also go through an induction with us so that you are familiar with how we do things and what is expected.

This will give you an appreciation and value of the work that you will be doing and how it directly and indirectly affects Project Art Works. You will receive all the relevant information you need to keep and to refer to.

To make sure we have a good relationship we will:

- provide a good quality experience that is accessible
- be clear about what our expectations are and what support we can offer
- make sure we listen so you feel supported
- tell you if we have any problems with what you are doing, not doing, or how you're behaving
- give you a chance to tell us what you think
- tell you when there are changes to what we need you to be involved in
- provide an introduction to the role and help you carry on learning whilst you are with us.
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To make sure we have a good relationship you will need to tell us if:

- you are unable to attend when you planned to
- you feel things are not working out for you - you need to tell us why too
- you think we're treating you unfairly or not being clear about our expectations

10. Keeping you and the people we work with safe

We undertake a duty of care to you and those we work with to ensure wellbeing is promoted in the organisation and in our work with others.

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We do this by:

- asking all our staff and volunteers to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) check before they start work. If for any reason you feel unable to provide us with details to enable these checks to be done, we will be unable to accept your offer to volunteer.
- Providing all staff and volunteers with Project Art Works' health and safety policy.
- Providing all staff and volunteers with Project Art Works' child and vulnerable adult protection policy
- Having guidance on personal safety for volunteers and staff.
- Doing risk assessments for the organisation and programming. These are updated annually. If you have particular needs e.g. a hearing impairment, you need to inform us. This will assist us in providing you with support when appropriate.
- Keeping good open relationships between volunteers and their line manager so any problems or issues can be discussed and resolved.

11. Thank you!

We really value and appreciate our volunteers and thank you for giving your time. We are committed to supporting our volunteers. If asked we can act as a referee for employment or provide a certification of the role you have played as a volunteer.

Policy to be reviewed July 2016