

Volunteer Policy

Our group depends on volunteers to carry out its work, both in the operation of the management committee, and in the carrying out of day-to-day activities. Irrespective of how a volunteer chooses to engage with the group, it is essential that he/she is consistently treated with respect and fairness, and in a friendly and supportive environment. This Volunteer Policy sets out the principles by which volunteering activity in the group will be managed.

Volunteer Opportunities

As a volunteer-based organisation with no paid employees, all roles and activities of the group are provided on a volunteer basis. As such, volunteering opportunities exist with respect to:

- Participation in the Management Committee as a committee member
- Providing administrative and I.T. support to the group
- Assisting with the running of public events
- Assisting with the maintenance and care of the group's facilities
- Assisting with the maintenance and care of the community's external spaces and facilities
- Assisting with the delivery of services to beneficiaries
- Participating in fundraising and funding activities
- Participating in activity specific projects

Volunteers are not employees and no volunteer is paid for the time and effort that they contribute to the group.

Volunteer Recruitment

The management committee welcomes volunteer participation from across the community. In addition, the group welcomes the participation of volunteers drawn from the TÚS Programme and Rural Social Scheme managed by the Partnership Company.

Working Conditions

The group is committed to ensuring that all volunteers operate in a safe working environment. Volunteers are expected to participate fully in any training provided, to assist them in carrying out work activities assigned to them. When working on behalf of the group, volunteers are

expected to take all necessary steps to ensure their own safety and that of members of the public with whom engage.

Training and Development

The group is committed to providing volunteers with an opportunity to learn and grow through their engagement with the group. Learning opportunities may arise from participating in tasks or activities that are new to a volunteer or through taking on management committee or project management responsibilities. Each volunteer will receive an appropriate level of induction training (in keeping with his/her volunteering role). Volunteers joining the group, as a result of participating in a work placement scheme, will also be facilitated in engaging in whatever training is deemed appropriate by the scheme supervisor.

Support and Guidance

The management committee will develop and agree on an annual work plan, which will determine the volunteering activities to be carried out by the group. Volunteers will be made aware of how their specific role helps implement the work plan. As work-related questions may arise throughout the year, the group will designate a committee (or sub-committee) member to liaise with volunteers and oversee their work as appropriate. In this way, practical work-related issues that may arise can be dealt with in a timely fashion. In the case of volunteers who are assigned to the group as part of a work placement scheme, the designated committee member will also liaise with the scheme supervisor in the Partnership Company as appropriate.

Recognition of Volunteers

The management committee is committed to recognising the invaluable contribution that volunteers make to both the group and the community it serves. To this end, volunteers will be thanked for their efforts privately and publicly when opportunities arise and volunteers will be encouraged to attend celebrations and events organised by the group. Whenever possible, the management committee will include a wide range of volunteers in its publicity efforts and external communications efforts.

Expenses

Out-of-pocket expenses may be reimbursed to volunteers, subject to the agreement of the management committee and within the terms agreed in advance by the management committee. Original receipts must be submitted to the management committee within one month of being accrued for costs being reimbursed.

Insurance

The management committee will ensure that appropriate insurance cover is in place to cover all volunteers. The group does not provide motor insurance or breakdown assistance for volunteers using their personal motor vehicles.

Managing Difficulties

The management committee recognises that difficulties may arise between volunteers and the group from time to time. Whenever possible, any such difficulties will be dealt with informally and in a timely fashion.

Disciplinary Matters

Should the behaviour or activities of a volunteer pose difficulties to the operations or reputation of the group, then an appropriate disciplinary procedure will be followed by the management committee. The disciplinary procedure will provide volunteers with an opportunity to explain their case fully and fairly. Where the management committee has reason to complain about the behaviour or activities of a volunteer assigned to the group through a work placement scheme, the designated committee liaison will immediately contact the scheme supervisor to discuss the matter. The scheme supervisor will then determine the appropriate course of action to be followed in each individual case.

Grievance Matters

Should the behaviour or work demands of management committee members pose difficulties for a volunteer, then an appropriate grievance procedure will be followed by the management committee. The grievance procedure will provide volunteers with a fair and supportive opportunity to state their issue(s) so that they can be resolved in an amicable fashion. Where a volunteer has been assigned to the group through a work placement scheme, the volunteer will be encouraged to contact their scheme supervisor. The scheme supervisor will then contact the designated management committee liaison to agree the appropriate course of action to take in the case.

Confidentiality

In the course of their activities on behalf of the group, volunteers may have access to information that is not intended for dissemination publicly. Volunteers are required to keep this information confidential. It is the responsibility of the management committee, to determine the appropriate time at which confidential information will be released to the public, subject to adherence to any relevant legislative requirements.