

# HSTAR Scotland SCIO - Volunteer Policy

---

## Introduction

1. Our volunteers come from a range of sources and backgrounds. All of our volunteers add hugely to our work in the charity HSTAR Scotland SCIO.
2. Our role is to encourage volunteers to not only contribute to our work, but also to get the most personally from doing so. However, we care for vulnerable people and their needs and safety are paramount. Consequently, becoming a volunteer also entails obligations.
3. This policy lays out a framework to support everyone in achieving these objectives.

## Staff Responsibilities

4. **CHAIR.** Responsible for supporting our governing body of trustees, volunteer strategy and delivery of the volunteer programme, including thanking and recognition procedures.
5. **Trustees Management.** Responsible for supporting our committees and providing specialist support for volunteering in areas such as fundraising, training, H&SW, HR and finance, and also thanking and recognising our volunteers work. Responsible for managing the full spectrum of volunteer activities and support at establishment level. These responsibilities are to be reflected in job descriptions. Managers are also responsible for providing a tailored induction for each person, which must include data protection and Health & Safety
6. **Members / Staff.** Making our volunteers feel welcome, supporting them in developing their experience and ensuring that they are treated fairly.

## Volunteer Roles

7. Volunteers enable us to improve the quality of our services in a way that we would otherwise not be able to do. We do not use volunteers to substitute for normal staffing.
8. **Governance and Strategy.** Trustees ensure that we are governed well, and support and guide the Chair in leading us and maintaining high standards.
9. **Fundraising.** Volunteers help to raise funds that enable us to purchase services and items that we would otherwise be unable to afford.
10. **Other Roles.** The only limit to the range of roles a volunteer might fill is the time that he or she is able to commit and his or her skills and experience. Volunteers may also be employed in administration, facilities, communications and

## Recruitment, Selection and Induction

11. The attached application form is to be used to manage applications and subsequent administration, then retained on each volunteer's personal file.

## Supervision and Support

12. Line managers are responsible for providing supervision and support appropriate to each volunteer's role. This is to include supervision, appraisal and personal development, if appropriate.

## Training

13. Volunteers may only undertake activities which they are competent to carry out and essential training will be provided, if necessary, for them to do so. However, training that is not necessary for this purpose is not to be provided, as this may be deemed to be a non-cash benefit, which could contravene tax and/or benefits regulations.

## Recognition

14. There are many reasons why people volunteer their time and skills, and each person has her of his own reasons, but research has shown that the following are the most common.
- a. Enjoy helping people
  - b. Believe the cause is worthwhile.
  - c. Have time to spare.
  - d. Want to make friends.
  - e. Want to use skills.
  - f. Would like to learn new skills
15. However, there are also barriers to volunteering, as follows:
- a. Lack of time.
  - b. Put off by bureaucracy.
  - c. Worry about risk/liability.
  - d. The way things are organised (or not).
16. The most common benefits reported by volunteers are:
- a. Satisfaction from seeing results.
  - b. Enjoyment.
  - c. Personal achievement.
  - d. Opportunity to do something they are good at.
  - e. Broaden horizons.
  - f. Meet people.

## Recruiting

17. Recruiting messaging for volunteers should reflect the above factors and volunteering should be included in the charity's marketing strategy. As part of this, consideration should be given to segmenting the volunteer base. For example, people who volunteer for roles such as manning reception or helping-out at a day club for an hour or 2 are most likely to come from the local community, whereas web or social media volunteers, or similar, may be home based and could be drawn from a wide geographical area.
18. Equally, consider also the most effective recruiting channels. There are no absolutes, but business and professional people are more likely to use LinkedIn, whereas teenagers are more likely to be on Instagram.
19. If you're near a university, many student unions run a volunteering service and/or hold volunteering fairs.

## Retention

20. We will seek to support each volunteer by recognising what they gain from doing so, minimising the barriers and providing appropriate recognition for their contribution to our work. Volunteers are to be included in recognition systems. Examples may include:
- a. A letter of welcome signed by the CEO on taking up the role and/or a Christmas card.
  - b. Badges can work well.
  - c. Good news stories can be posted on social media or in newsletters, or even as a press release, and help generate useful PR as well.
  - d. There are national and often local volunteer awards, or you could create your own.
  - e. Long service recognition can work well – for example a gold, platinum badge, a hand written thank you from the CEO, thanks in the board minutes or posting on social media or in the newsletter.

21. And don't overlook the power of simply saying thank you when you meet people who give their unpaid time to your charity.
22. However, it is very important that whatever the recognition is, that it is something the volunteers genuinely value.

## Finance

23. Any necessary purchases made on our behalf should have the prior approval from the appropriate line manager.

## Expenses

24. Volunteers are entitled to be paid reasonable expenses for costs incurred in accordance with our Expenses Policy. However, they may not be paid or given non-cash benefits, as these may inadvertently create a contract of employment, create tax liabilities or impact on an individual's benefits, if he or she is in receipt of these. If in any doubt, the advice of the HR Manager is to be sought.

## Insurance

25. Your indemnity insurance should be arranged to provide adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst undertaking voluntary work that has been approved and authorised. However, we are not able to reimburse volunteers items that may be lost or damaged, unless arising from negligence on the part of our staff.
26. For volunteers who are generous enough to use their own vehicles for our activities, their vehicle insurance policy must include business use.

## Legal and Administration

27. Whilst administration is kept to a minimum we must meet specific obligations to protect both volunteers and the vulnerable adults that we care for. Each volunteer is to be given and sign a volunteer agreement or other appropriate document.

## Health & Safety at Work (H&SW)

28. Line managers are responsible for ensuring that anyone who works or visits an establishment receives an appropriate H&SW briefing and, where applicable, training. The actual requirements for each volunteer will vary depending on their experience and the role he or she carries out.

## Benefits

29. People are allowed to volunteer while claiming state benefits, including means-tested benefits such as jobseeker's allowance (JSA), incapacity benefit, income support, and employment and support allowance (ESA). They may volunteer for as many hours as they wish to, but there are specific rules that they must comply with. The link below provides guidance, but rules can change and may depend on circumstances, so the individual should approach their benefit provider for clarification.

## Equal Opportunities and Diversity

30. Our Equality and Diversity policies are fully applicable to volunteers. Reasonable adjustments are to be made to support volunteers with special needs. We believe that diversity is strength, and value all staff regardless of their age, ethnicity, gender, religion, physical abilities or sexual orientation. We will treat each other with honesty, respect and consideration, and will work together to support each other. We will not tolerate bullying or harassment.

## Dispute Resolution

31. If a volunteer has a concern, this should be raised in the first instance with his or her line manager. Every effort is to be made to resolve any concern informally. However, if need be, volunteers have the right to use our Grievance and Public Disclosure (Whistle Blowing) procedures.

32. In respect of breaches of policies or procedures, or inappropriate behaviour by a volunteer, including events in an individual's private life that may impact upon our work, the relevant member of the Management Team would remind the individual of the standards required.
33. Serious or repeated breaches by a volunteer may result the individual being invited to relinquish his or her position. In such an instance the individual may appeal to the line manager of the member of the Management Team who made this decision, but must do so in writing within 10 days of being notified of the decision. There would not normally be a need to hold a meeting with the individual, unless in this was felt to be appropriate and the individual was willing to attend.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

34. The HR Manager will issue guidance on the monitoring and evaluation of the contribution that volunteers make, which is to be reported annually to the CEO. This is to include the numbers and time commitment of volunteers at each establishment and the roles filled.
35. This is to be reported in the annual Directors' Report and Accounts. Appropriate objectives are to be built into the annual business plan to monitor and develop the contribution our volunteers make to our work.

## **Review**

36. This policy and supporting volunteer policies are to be reviewed annually.