

# INVESTING IN VOLUNTEERS STANDARD



Indicator  
No 1

There is an expressed commitment to the involvement of volunteers, and recognition throughout the organisation that volunteering is a two-way process which benefits volunteers and the organisation

Practice		Suggested evidence	Notes
1.1	The organisation has a written policy on volunteer involvement, based on equal opportunities principles, which sets out the procedures for recruiting, supporting and protecting volunteers	Policy document e.g. Volunteer Policy	'Based on equal opportunities principles' means that equal opportunities should be reflected in every aspect of the policy. The policy should include the organisation's position statement on equal opportunities/diversity
1.2	Where the organisation has policies that relate to the involvement of human resources (e.g. equal opportunities, health & safety, confidentiality, discipline, grievance procedures, etc.) volunteers should either be included or should have their own equivalent policy	Inclusion in policies or Dedicated policies	

1.3	The organisation adopts appropriate procedures for regularly reviewing the volunteering policy and its implementation	Review date on policy <i>Plus</i> Procedure or Minutes or Policy review schedule	
1.4	People at all levels of the organisation (such as management committee, management, staff, volunteers, clients, supporters) have been informed of, and can articulate the organisation's reasons for involving volunteers	Minutes of meetings or Induction checklist for staff, management committee and volunteers or Annual report or Newsletter <i>Plus</i> Oral evidence	

Indicator  
No 2

The organisation commits appropriate resources to working with volunteers, such as money, management, staff time and materials

Practice		Suggested evidence	Notes
2.1	The organisation designates responsibility for recruiting, selecting, and supporting volunteers, and protecting their interests to a key person or group of people within the organisation, and these responsibilities are regularly reviewed	Job Description Supervision/Appraisal notes or Report to Management Committee	Where this role is taken on by a volunteer, for example, by a member of the management committee, a volunteer task description would be appropriate evidence
2.2	Job descriptions for paid staff include any responsibilities they have for volunteers	Job description	Identify all staff in the organisation with responsibility for volunteers
2.3	Time is given during staff meetings to discuss volunteer issues	Minutes of meetings	Minutes of team meeting that include volunteers are acceptable evidence where the volunteers are identified
2.4	The organisation's annual plan includes objectives for the volunteer programme which are reviewed regularly	Section within Annual Plan or Dedicated action plan for the volunteer programme	
2.5	There are adequate financial resources to cover the running of the volunteer programme and ensure that volunteers have the necessary resources and materials to do their work	Budget or Management Accounts or Petty cash vouchers/expenses claims forms/receipts	Expenditure for the volunteer programme might include travel expenses, volunteer training, refreshments for volunteer social events, volunteer support costs and the cost of materials used by volunteers

Indicator  
No 3

The organisation is open to involving volunteers who reflect the diversity of the local community, in accordance with the organisation's stated aims, and operates procedures to facilitate this

Practice		Suggested evidence	Notes
3.1	Information about the organisation and ways in which volunteers can be involved is made as widely available as possible	List showing where organisation has recruited or Examples of recruitment /publicity materials	
3.2	Analysis of the diversity of the local community compared to the volunteer team is undertaken	Collection of demographic data <i>Plus</i> analysis of equal opportunities monitoring forms	The important thing here is to compare the analysis of your own volunteer workforce with the community in which you work and also with your client/user group
3.3	Staff and volunteers are open to diversity among co-workers	Diversity/Equal Opportunities training or Minutes of discussions on diversity or Internal posters/written materials	
3.4	Images and/or descriptions of the organisation reflect the diversity of the local community, and are appropriate to the objectives of the organisation	Annual Report or Information Pack or Organisation's literature e.g. publicity materials	

3.5	The organisation is open to involving volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities, and commits the necessary resources	Statement in Volunteer Policy or Analysis or Equal Opportunities monitoring forms <i>Plus</i> Photograph of recruitment display or Letter inviting or thanking organisation regarding recruitment display	
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Indicator  
No 4

The organisation develops appropriate roles for volunteers in line with its aims and objectives, and which are of value to the volunteers and create an environment where they can develop

Practice		Suggested evidence	Notes
4.1	A 'task description' is drawn up for each voluntary role	Task descriptions for each volunteer role up to a maximum of 10	Where the organisation offers a large number of roles, it is only necessary to include a representative sample i.e. not more than 10
4.2	The organisation sets out the necessary skills, attitude, experience and availability needed to do the work	List of qualities and skills needed for each volunteer role up to a maximum of 10	These can be included with the task descriptions at 4.1
4.3	If feasible, a variety of tasks is available which will attract a range of people, while still meeting the needs and aims of the organisation	Task descriptions or A list of volunteer tasks	An organisation may have a variety of different roles, or it may be able to provide a variety of tasks within one role
4.4	Where possible, tasks are adapted to suit the needs and interests of individual volunteers	Written testimony from volunteer Or Explanatory note from organisation Or Oral Evidence	

Indicator  
No 5

The organisation is committed to ensuring that, as far as possible, volunteers are protected from physical, financial and emotional harm arising from volunteering

Practice		Suggested evidence	Notes
5.1	An assessment of potential risk to volunteers is conducted when designing volunteer roles	Completed risk assessment checklist/form for each volunteer role up to a maximum of ten	Completed risk assessments should be included to match the role descriptions in 4.1
5.2	Appropriate insurance guidelines and cover for volunteers are set up	Insurance certificates <i>Plus</i> Inclusion of volunteers on existing policies or Insurance guidelines for volunteers	Insurance certificates must clearly show the cover for volunteers. If necessary include the accompanying notes
5.3	There is a clear policy on the reimbursement of legally allowable expenses which is rooted in the organisational ethos, and which takes account of the organisation's financial situation	Expenses claim form or Budget or Management accounts or Expenses policy or Statement in Volunteer Policy/Volunteers Handbook	
5.4	Knowledge of volunteers' personal details is restricted to those who need it, and passed on only with volunteers' consent, and regard is taken to storage of confidential documents	Confidentiality procedure or Statement in Volunteer Policy and in line with current Data Protection legislation	If you do not know your organisation's position regarding data protection you may need to check with the data protection commissioner

Indicator  
No 6

The organisation is committed to using fair, efficient and consistent recruitment procedures for all potential volunteers

Practice		Suggested evidence	Notes
6.1	Selection procedures are standardised, appropriate to the volunteer role(s) and include agreed timescales	Recruitment/selection procedure guidelines	
6.2	People interested in volunteering are provided with clear information about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the type of voluntary work available</li> <li>• the application and selection process</li> <li>• whether there is any compulsory training</li> </ul>	Information pack or Letter or Checklists	
6.3	At some stage during the recruitment, potential volunteers are given <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a summary of the organisation's expectations of volunteers</li> <li>• what volunteers can expect from the organisation</li> </ul>	Relevant recruitment publicity or Information pack or Letter or Task Description	

6.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation has clear criteria in terms of skills and abilities needed against which it assesses volunteers' suitability for particular roles</li> <li>• Asks only for information needed in order to make a placement and this is recorded in a consistent manner</li> </ul>	<p>Potential volunteers are recruited using the criteria laid down in Practices 4.1 and 4.2 and are only asked for relevant information. Interview procedure including question design or Application form</p>	<p>Evidence as 4.1, task descriptions, and 4.2, list of qualities and skills necessary for the task. Acceptable evidence would be a list of standard interview questions, or an interview schedule</p>
6.5	Feedback is given to volunteers whose applications are turned down	Interview notes/Guidelines or Letter	
6.6	At some point in the recruitment procedure time is given to explore the individual's reasons for volunteering	Interview notes	
6.7	Where appropriate, potential volunteers are given further opportunities to find out more about the voluntary work before committing themselves	Probation period or Trial visit	

Indicator  
No 7

The organisation takes a considered approach to taking up references and official checks which is consistent and equitable for all volunteers, bearing in mind the nature of the work

Practices		Suggested evidence	Notes
7.1	The organisation's procedures for taking up references is based on the nature of the organisation's work and the roles volunteers will be undertaking	Guidelines/criteria for taking up references	
7.2	The organisation's procedures for taking up references are uniform for all prospective volunteers applying for a particular role	Copies of references on file or Reference request letters	
7.3	The organisation's approach to the use of official checks takes into account the relevant Government guidelines, and the roles in which volunteers will be placed	Copy of relevant guidelines	
7.4	The organisation has considered which types of convictions/disciplinary actions may or may not be relevant to the voluntary work being undertaken	Criteria on when to ask about convictions/disciplinary actions or Guidelines on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act or Policy Statement	

Indicator  
No 8

Clear procedures are put into action for introducing new volunteers to the organisation, its work, policies, practices and relevant personnel

Practice		Suggested evidence	Notes
8.1	All new volunteers are introduced to the relevant paid staff and other volunteers with whom they will come into contact	Induction checklist	
8.2	All volunteers are provided with copies of the risk assessment undertaken on their role	Induction checklist/schedule And completed risk assessment forms	
8.3	Volunteers are provided with the necessary information and training to do the voluntary work, including any policies as appropriate	Induction checklist/schedule <i>Plus</i> Task descriptions or Training schedule	

8.4	There is clarity between the volunteer and the organisation about the boundaries of the volunteers' roles	Induction checklist/schedule <i>Plus</i> Task descriptions or Training programme or Minutes of meetings	Evidence needs to show boundaries to the volunteer roles that are appropriate to the organisation. Examples of this might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limits to the volunteer's relationship with service users</li> <li>• Limits to the type of information and/or advice given to members of the public</li> <li>• Any limitations necessary to comply with health and safety or insurance policies</li> </ul>
8.5	There are clear health and safety and accident and emergency procedures	Induction checklist/schedule or Information sheets e.g. emergency evacuation/fire drills or Training programme. Health & Safety policy/ procedure/ guidelines	The evidence should show how the organisation communicates these procedures to the volunteer. The evidence should be copies of the policies/procedures/ guidelines which take account of the practice
8.6	Volunteers are informed of what insurance cover is in force and what they need to do in order to remain covered by insurance	Induction checklist/schedule or Insurance certificates Policy on insurance or Insurance guidelines	

8.7	Volunteers are advised of, and understand, guidelines for addressing situations where volunteers act in discriminatory ways, or where volunteers themselves are in receipt of such treatment	Induction checklist/schedule. Equal Opportunities policy or Complaints policy and disciplinary procedure or Relevant guidelines	
8.8	Volunteers are advised of and understand, the procedure to use if they wish to complain about their treatment by paid staff, users, committee members or other volunteers	Induction checklist/schedule. Complaints policy/procedure	
8.9	Volunteers are informed of what expenses can be claimed, and the procedure for reimbursement	Induction checklist/schedule or Expenses claim forms/petty cash forms Expenses policy or Volunteer policy	
8.10	Volunteers are advised to inform the Benefits Office that they are doing voluntary work, if this is relevant to them	Induction checklist/schedule	The evidence should illustrate that the organisation has a means of telling the volunteer they should inform the benefits office that they are volunteering if it is applicable. This does not mean the volunteer must tell the organisation

Indicator  
No 9

Everybody in the organisation is aware of the need to give volunteers recognition

Practice		Suggested evidence	Notes
9.1	Management Committee and paid staff recognise the value of volunteers' contributions and communicate effectively their appreciation to volunteers, both formally and informally	Awards schemes or Volunteers' contributions mentioned in annual report, local paper, other publications or Social events	The evidence should illustrate ways in which the management and staff say thank you to the volunteers in words and action
9.2	Volunteers have an opportunity to make known their views about the organisation's work,	Minutes of meetings or Suggestion box or Comments book or Support meetings or Supervision/review notes	The evidence should reflect how the organisation involves volunteers in consultation and in giving feedback on how the organisation operates and in decision making this could be formal or informal

9.3	Volunteers have an opportunity to make known their views about the organisation's policies and procedures and to participate in decision-making	Minutes of meetings or Volunteer representatives on management committee or Consultation documents or Newsletter	The evidence should reflect how the organisation involves volunteers in consultation and in giving feedback on how the organisation operates and in decision making this could be formal or informal
9.4	The organisation provides volunteers with the opportunity to continue developing their skills and talents within the roles on offer	Supervision/review notes or Training programme or Range of voluntary work on offer	
9.5	Volunteers leaving the organisation, who have made a regular commitment to it, are offered a reference and/or other statement of their achievements	References or Letters or File notes or Certificates	
9.6	The organisation endeavours to obtain feedback from volunteers leaving the organisation	Exit interviews or Exit questionnaire	

Indicator  
No 10

The organisation takes account of the varying support needs of volunteers

<b>Practice</b>		<b>Suggested evidence</b>	<b>Notes</b>
10.1	All volunteers know what forms of support the organisation offers them, and who to contact in the case of any problems	Induction checklist/schedule or Information/Induction pack or Task Description or Volunteer Policy/Manual	
10.2	Either one-to-one and/or group support sessions are offered, as appropriate	Volunteer Policy or File notes or Supervision/review notes Or Minutes/Notes of meetings	
10.3	Where volunteers' work is emotionally demanding, an opportunity for them to 'unload' is freely available	Volunteer Policy Or Guidelines Or Information/Induction pack Or Supervision	

10.4	Volunteers are aware that they can refuse demands they consider unrealistic, beyond the scope of the role or which they do not have the skills to carry out	Induction checklist/schedule Or Volunteer Policy Or Volunteer manual/handbook	The evidence should illustrate how the organisation makes it clear to the volunteers that they can refuse to carry out tasks they feel inappropriate or unrealistic
10.5	Staff who supervise volunteers are appropriately trained in volunteer management and the organisation's policies	Training programme/ materials/resources or Record of staff training or Training certificates	
10.6	Volunteers are informed of all relevant changes in the organisation which affect their work	Memos or Newsletters or Minutes of meetings	