

# VOLUNTEER POLICY

November 2023

## Introduction

In common with much of the Community, Voluntary and Charity (CVC) sector, volunteers are one of The Wheel's most valuable resources and we encourage and support them to get involved at all levels of our organisation and within all appropriate activities.

## **Types of volunteers**

1. Board of Directors and sub-committees: At one of the most important levels within all CVC organisations, people volunteer to become trustees through boards of directors or committees and they are responsible for ensuring good governance within the organisation. These volunteers are not paid for their time but may receive reimbursement for out of pocket expenses.

Specific guidance is provided to Board and sub-committee members on their roles, responsibilities and appropriate codes of conduct.

2. Education Placement: From time to time the organisation may have availability for those seeking an education placement i.e. those who wish to gain on-the-job training
  - The Wheel will agree the duration and nature of such education placement and will also design training appropriate to the duration and nature of the role
  - Such education placement will not be remunerated but out of pocket expenses associated with attending the workplace will be refunded e.g. travel and subsistence costs
  - Periods of education placement will typically not exceed a 3 month period and may not be full time i.e. may accommodate the person's commitment to ongoing education or other personal commitments
  - There is no requirement for people on education placement to be Garda vetted, as The Wheel does not work with children or vulnerable adults
  - The Wheel staff do not require Garda vetting. Any education placement person who is under 18 years requires approval in writing from a parent or guardian that they are aware there is no Garda vetting in place with The Wheel staff
3. Other volunteers; Volunteers may also contribute their time in a variety of other ways if opportunities arise. It is understood that volunteers give their time freely, are not in any contract of service and, other than reimbursement for out of pocket expenses, do not get paid.

The Wheel's Volunteer Policy is underpinned by the following principles: -

## Rights of Volunteers:

Volunteers have the right to: -

- Receive adequate information and a clear role description of what is expected of them and to understand why they are doing a task and how it fits into the bigger picture;

- Where applicable, be assigned suitable tasks and feel able to ask for another job if it is not what they signed up to do;
- Have adequate support and supervision from a suitably trained supervisor;
- Be respected by paid staff and acknowledged in terms of recognition and feedback on their work;
- Be reimbursed for the out of pocket and travel expenses within the policy laid out;
- If relevant, request a reference when applying for a job;
- Have an awareness of and access to all of the organisations policies and procedures;
- Be able, where possible to attend appropriate forums to contribute to discussions on organisational aims and objectives;
- Be where applicable, able to develop and enhance their skills and have access to suitable training and development opportunities;
- Have their personal details kept in a confidential manner;
- Work in a safe environment.

### **Responsibilities of Volunteers:**

Volunteers have the responsibility to: -

- Agree to The Wheel's policy on volunteering
- Respect confidentiality
- Be reliable, honest and mindful of The Wheel's good name
- Not commit themselves to an unmanageable workload and to only work to a specified role description
- Report back as required and keep in regular contact with designated Wheel staff
- Treat everyone they meet when representing The Wheel with courtesy and respect

### **Recruitment**

- Anyone who is committed to the aims and values of the organisation is eligible to be considered as a potential volunteer
- The Wheel will provide an accurate description of the tasks that we expect volunteers to undertake
- We may draw up a brief person specification for volunteers where the role requires a particular skill-set
- We always have an informal chat with potential volunteers, so that both parties can decide if they are right for each other
- We may require references
- We reserve the right not to select someone as a volunteer

### **Induction**

- We welcome all new volunteers warmly and provide them with the information they need in order to become fully involved in our organisation

### **Support**

- We respect volunteers' right to privacy and confidentiality

- We reimburse any previously agreed out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the course of undertaking voluntary work for our organisation
- Volunteers are sometimes able to avail of training and development opportunities through our organisation
- We aim to thank our volunteers for their contribution
- We provide references for current and former volunteers on request

**If problems arise**

- We aim to act quickly and fairly if difficulties arise
- We urge volunteers who have any sort of problem to contact their supervisor at the earliest opportunity
- If the supervisor is the source of the problem or cannot resolve the issue, the volunteer should contact the supervisor's line manager
- We reserve the right to discontinue the relationship with any volunteer who does not adhere to the organisation's rules or who fails to perform their volunteer assignments satisfactorily

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