



Volunteering Policy

Reviewed and approved by Board April 2021

For Review April 2022

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers and is relevant to staff, volunteers and trustees within the organisation. It aims to create a common understanding and to clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management of volunteers.

The Community Leader handbook gives further details about the support and procedures in place for our volunteer Community Leaders.

Our commitments

We recognise volunteers as an integral part of the organisation. Their contribution supports our mission and strategic aims and complements the role of paid staff. We are committed to encouraging a diversity of people to volunteer with us, and we aim to encourage and support volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits Aloud, our participants and the volunteers themselves.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will not be used to replace staff.

We recognise that there are costs associated with volunteer involvement and will seek to ensure adequate financial and staffing resources are available for the development and support of volunteering. We recognise that people have a right to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering and can contribute in many ways. We recognise our responsibility to organise volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

Who is a volunteer?

Volunteers are individuals who undertake activity on behalf of Aloud - unpaid and of their own free choice.

The Welsh Government Volunteering Policy (2015) defines volunteering as activity which

- is undertaken freely, by choice
- is undertaken to be of public/ community benefit
- is not undertaken for financial gain

Work experience placements and internships are not the same as volunteering. Trustees are volunteers with responsibility for governance of the organisation.

Volunteers may be involved on a one – off, short term or on a longer term, regular basis. They may be involved:

- in the direct delivery of our services
- on our board of management as trustees
- in community engagement to raise awareness of our work
- in one off events and promotional activities
- in our offices or in community venues

Volunteers are valued for:

- bringing additional skills, knowledge and new perspectives to the organisations
- enabling us to be more responsive and flexible in our approach
- championing our cause within the wider community
- enhancing the quality of our work and of client experience
- promoting the wellbeing of users of services, staff, local communities and themselves.

The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding. There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks or for Aloud to provide continuing opportunities for voluntary involvement, provision of training or benefits. However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what Aloud expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the Aloud.

Aloud expects volunteers:

- to be reliable and honest
- to uphold our values and comply with organisational policies
- to make the most of opportunities given, such as training
- to contribute positively to the aims of the organisation and avoid bringing the organisation into disrepute
- to carry out tasks within agreed guidelines

Volunteers can expect:

- to have clear information about what is and is not expected of them
- to receive adequate support and training
- to be insured and to volunteer in a safe environment
- to be treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner
- to receive out of pocket expenses
- to have opportunities for personal development
- to be recognised and appreciated
- to be able to say 'no' to anything which they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable
- to know what to do if something goes wrong

Recruitment and selection

Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to in recruiting volunteers. Information will be made available to those enquiring about volunteering, including written role descriptions which set out the nature and purpose of the volunteering role, key tasks, skills required and benefits. Due to the nature of our work with young people, all volunteers with Aloud will be required to have a full DBS disclosure check which will be arranged by us. DBS disclosures are dealt with in the strictest confidence.

Dealing with problems

Aloud aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. We seek to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly. We will attempt to deal with any problems informally and at the earliest opportunity. Volunteers will be made aware of the organisation's complaints policy and how to use it. They will also be made aware of how inappropriate behaviour by volunteers will be addressed by the organisation.

Expenses

Volunteers will be given information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.

Organisational policies relevant to volunteers include: Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Valuing Diversity and Dignity at Work, Social media, Safeguarding, Code of Conduct and Data Protection.