

1625 INDEPENDENT PEOPLE

Volunteering Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

Volunteers are an important and valued part of 1625 Independent People (1625ip). 1625ip aims to provide opportunities for volunteers that are both beneficial for the volunteer and the organisation with the ultimate aim of enhancing our support for young people.

1625ip provides volunteering opportunities through a number of strands:

- VIP (Volunteering at Independent People) programme;
- Community Mentoring and Peer Support Programmes;
- Corporate volunteering opportunities;
- Governance of the organisation.

This Policy and Procedure sets out our framework for volunteering within 1625ip.

2. PRINCIPLES

- 1625ip recognises volunteers bring valuable insight and expertise that can inform and add value to our work with young people, which can include a different perspective reflecting the views of the local community;
- 1625ip recognises the specific benefits of supporting service users and other young people to use their own experiences and knowledge – to offer support to their peers and the benefits to young people of receiving support from other young people;
- 1625ip is committed to involving volunteers in decision-making processes;
- 1625ip will maintain effective structures to support and develop volunteers and the activities they undertake;
- Staff will consider involving volunteers when planning, reviewing and providing services;
- Volunteers will be integrated and treated equally as part of teams;
- Volunteer roles will complement and be additional to the work of paid staff;
- All volunteers should have access to appropriate training and development;
- Volunteer's contributions and training will be accredited where possible;
- 1625ip will remove or minimise all barriers to volunteering.

3. STATUTORY/REGULATORY CONSIDERATIONS

1625ip's volunteering streams are embedded within several contracts (this will vary from time to time), which need to be recognised in the planning and delivery of volunteering programmes.

1625ip will adopt the Mentoring and Befriending quality assurance framework (or an equally recognised accreditation scheme) for appropriate streams.

Volunteers rights and responsibilities are set out in the 'Volunteer Agreement', which is their formal agreement with 1625ip. Effective procedures will ensure that under no circumstances will a contract of employment exist.

Volunteers, like paid staff, should be able to carry out their duties in safe, secure and healthy environments that are free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, violence and discrimination. 1625ip operates within a framework of policies that serves to protect and facilitate volunteers.

All volunteers are covered under the Organisation's Public Liability insurance.

4. SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

A '**Volunteer**' is defined as someone who commits time and energy for the benefit of others, who does so freely, through personal choice and without expectation of financial reward, except for the payment of actual out of pocket expenses.¹

1625ip has the following volunteer roles within 1625ip:

1. Board Member; Responsible for the governance of the organisation (please see separate Board recruitment procedure);
2. VIP (Volunteer Independent People); General volunteering opportunities, including regulated group work and back office duties;
3. Community Mentor; Delivery of un-supervised, regulated, 1-2-1, weekly mentoring sessions to young people for a 12 month period;
4. Peer Mentor / Supporter; Young people with "lived experience" who volunteer to give their time to support other young people';
5. 'Young Volunteer'; Existing and former service users taking co-delivery roles in decision-making processes and leadership of activities;
6. Corporate Volunteer; Where employees are supported by their company using paid hours to volunteer at a charity of their choice.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

SLT Lead – will oversee the Organisation's strategic plan for volunteering across several contract areas. Allocation of resources to volunteer programmes.

Operational Manager(s) – will oversee implementation of the annual delivery plan for each volunteering programme and manage relevant direct delivery roles.

Volunteer Co-ordinators (includes all roles)² – will co-ordinate day to day delivery of volunteer programmes.

¹ Volunteering England fact sheet – Health and Safety of volunteers

² This includes a range of operational roles within 1625ip, not all of whom may be called Volunteer Coordinators

1625ip will:

- Seek to provide a worthwhile experience, which is rewarding in itself as well as creating value for the charity;
- Undertake DBS checks (enhanced where relevant), as appropriate to the role, request and check references;
- Provide an induction for volunteers;
- Provide out of pocket expenses as per the procedure;
- Provide support and supervision to volunteers;
- Encourage and, where possible, enable volunteers to access training;
- Keep records of volunteers' work and training.

All volunteers are bound by 1625ip's Confidentiality Policy.

6. LINKS TO

- 1625 Service User Participation Strategy;
- Quality Assessment Frameworks (internal and external).

7. COMMUNICATING THE POLICY

The Policy will be provided to volunteers and staff as part of the induction process, will be circulated to all staff as part of regular policy updates and is advertised on our website with relevant volunteering opportunities.

Full copies of the Policy will be available on request to external parties.

8. POLICY REVIEW

This Volunteer Policy and Procedure will be made accessible to all and reviewed every 3 years.

9. PROCEDURE (excludes Board members – see separate policy / procedure)

9.1 Recruitment (excepting corporate volunteers)

- We will use appropriate means to advertise for volunteers locally, that take into account the principles of our Equality and Diversity Policy;
- Volunteers will be asked to submit a written application (help can be given with this if necessary);
- The applicant will be interviewed by staff responsible for the volunteering programme;
- The person's suitability will be assessed against the requirements of the volunteer position description and person specification;

- All decisions on a potential volunteer's suitability will be reviewed with a second member of staff (involved in leading on volunteering), a relevant operations manager or senior manager **prior** to any outcome being communicated to volunteers;
- Where necessary, a second interview will be carried out;
- All volunteer positions are subject to appropriate references and a DBS check relevant to the position. The following provides general guidance for this, but each position should be checked for specific requirements:
 - Young people facing roles – enhanced DBS check;
 - Administrative / project roles / fundraising (not one-off) – Basic DBS check;
 - One off (supervised) work – not required.

9.2 Induction and training (excepting corporate volunteers)

- An induction will be prepared and delivered by the member of staff responsible for overseeing the volunteer role. This will include:
 - The role of the volunteer;
 - A list of all associated staff members and volunteers;
 - Copies of this Policy, 1625ip's Code of Conduct and all other relevant policies, including Confidentiality, Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding and Complaints;
 - Volunteer Agreement;
 - Essential procedures, e.g. timekeeping, rota;
 - Induction training and details of ongoing training; and
 - Other information as appropriate.
- There will be a trial period relevant to the voluntary role, to enable 1625ip and the volunteer to establish if they are suited to one another. A review will be undertaken midway through the trial period and at the end of the trial period.

9.3 Support (excepting corporate volunteers)

- An identified staff member will be responsible for overseeing the volunteering opportunity. They will:
 - Provide ongoing support to the volunteer, including acting as the first point of contact for any difficulties. This will be supported by other staff as appropriate;
 - Oversee their induction;
 - Discuss training needs and manage options for addressing them;
- Additional support will be provided, as required, for individual roles and volunteers;
- Organisational volunteer co-ordinating roles will have oversight of this process for VIP volunteers and will also coordinate pastoral support opportunities and related internal and/or external communications.

9.4 Recruitment, induction and support for Corporate Volunteers

- Recruitment, induction and support for Corporate Volunteers, by the nature of the role, differ to other volunteering streams, as corporate roles should reflect the work volunteers are doing, in order to fulfil their corporate social responsibilities in a meaningful way;
- A risk assessment of the activity(ies) reflecting the people involved will always be carried out, to ensure that risks are managed in a way that is proportionate to the volunteering opportunity and determined on a cases by case basis;
- There will always be an identified member of staff to act as the coordinator for 1625ip, who will be supported by a relevant manager or SLT member.

9.5 Expenses

- Out-of-pocket expenses, if required, will be reimbursed subject to budgetary constraints e.g. expenses for travel, meals, agreed childcare expenses. Normal caps are £5 for lunch and £4 for travel. Exceptions are to be agreed by a manager with authority to make such decisions;
- Volunteers should ensure there is prior agreement with the staff member responsible for supporting them prior to incurring these expenses;
- When reclaiming expenses, the relevant expenses form needs to be completed and all appropriate receipts provided.

9.6 Resolving problems

- The relationship between 1625ip and its volunteers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract of employment. Within this, it is important that 1625ip is able to maintain high standards of service to our service users and that volunteers benefit from and enjoy their contribution;
- If the tasks a volunteer undertakes does not meet with 1625ip's standards, we will provide feedback and offer the support necessary to enable improvement. If, following feedback and support, the required improvement is not achieved, then 1625ip will terminate the volunteer placement;
- Equally, if a volunteer is dissatisfied with any aspect of their role, they should initially discuss this with their mentor. If this response is not satisfactory, volunteers can use 1625ip's Complaints Policy to further seek to rectify the issues.

Appendix One: Useful Contacts and Publications

Volunteer Bureaux or Council for Voluntary Services

These can be found in your local yellow pages or phone directories.

Volunteering England

Regent's Wharf

8 All Saints Street

London N1 9RL

Phone: 020 7520 8900

E-mail: Volunteering@volunteeringengland.org

Website: www.volunteering.org.uk

National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service

Phone: 0114 278 6636

Website: www.nacvs.org.uk

Publications

Essential Volunteer Management

By McCurley and Lynch. Available from the Directory of Social Change. Phone: 020 7209 55151

Just About Managing: Effective Management for Voluntary Organisations and Community Groups

By Sandy Adirondack. Published by the London Voluntary Service Council. ISBN 1 872582 80 X.

Voluntary But Not Amateur: A Guide to the Law for Voluntary Organisations and Community Groups.

By Jacki Reason, Ruth Hayes and Duncan Forbes

Published by London Voluntary Service Council. ISBN 1 872582 11 7.

The Volunteer Recruitment Book

By Susan Ellis. Available from the National Centre for Volunteering

Phone: 020 7520 8900. They also produce a range of other publications and free leaflets – ask for their publications brochure.