

## **Volunteer Policy**

### **Who are the Diversity Trust's volunteers?**

The Diversity Trust's volunteers are people who contribute their time and skills to the Diversity Trust in multiple different ways. This varies from individuals who help us both in our work (core functions and service delivery, e.g., volunteer youth work)); students joining the Diversity Trust on time-limited volunteer placements as part of their course; professionals who offer their skills and expertise on a pro-bono basis and our Board of Non-Executive Directors.

### **Volunteer recruitment**

The Diversity Trust's approach varies depending on the specific volunteer role and the context.

This includes the following scenarios:

- individuals approaching the Trust offering their time and skills; at this point we will see if there is a role which is a good fit for them (and vice versa);
- student placements - we have a direct relationship with a university for students on placement as part of their courses (the students apply to our placement through the university and we then have a structured conversation to see if they will be a good fit);
- we recruit volunteers through our own networks and / or external advertising, such as LGBTQ+ volunteers for working in LGBTQ+ adult or youth work;
- Board members and Non-Executive Directors are recruited on the basis of:
  - the required skills / expertise (or potential to learn this through training / mentoring), such as specific governance roles (Chair, Treasurer, Secretary) and;
  - people's professional expertise and / or lived experience. Often these people already have a pre-existing relationship with The Diversity Trust and are committed to our mission and vision.

Otherwise, we recruit externally, both generically and via the various equalities networks that we're plugged into.

### **Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (EDEI)**

We recognise the valuable contribution that volunteers make to The Diversity Trust's work, and we appreciate their input. As an equalities-led organisation, EDEI is at the heart of everything we do.

We are continuing to build an inclusive culture in which individual difference and the contributions of our volunteers and staff are recognised and valued. Our team is very open, welcoming and accessible, meaning that there is transparency and support readily available for all. The diverse team, and trusting atmosphere also mean that team members are confident in bringing their authentic selves to The Diversity Trust. There are opportunities to raise any issues should they occur as the CEO operates an *open door policy* and there are regular opportunities when the team are encouraged to share what's going on for them.

We take a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, bullying and harassment, including but not limited to, all the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

We provide extensive training to all our team relating to a wide variety of equalities issues.

We embed equality, diversity, equity, and inclusion into all our policies, procedures, and everyday working practices, often informed and / or reviewed by Experts by Experience. We are open to receiving and acting upon feedback.

We celebrate equalities-related awareness events across the annual calendar.

### **Ensuring that volunteer roles are accessible**

At present, we only have a small number of volunteers, in our team, at any one time. Our current process is to ensure that the volunteer role on offer is a good fit for the individual person (and vice versa). We then have a conversation about any particular adaptations that would make it easier for them to volunteer and, if feasible, we will make necessary adjustments to accommodate these.

Our team are always supportive, so there is both formal and informal support and supervision on hand from the nominated lead through to peer-to-peer support from fellow colleagues.

We have an excellent track-record of attracting volunteers from across the different equalities strands. However, we acknowledge that there is always more that we can do.

If we recruit a larger number of volunteers, such as for a specific project, then we will co-design a process that specifically looks at accessibility every step of the way from recruitment to retention, onboarding to offboarding.

### **The volunteer induction and training process**

Each volunteer meets with the CEO and are then inducted with the specific team that they are joining. A nominated lead is allocated, who looks after the volunteer, in terms of both their well-being and being the first point of call for any volunteer role-related or personal issues which arise which may impact on the volunteer's ability to do this role.

Any task-related training is provided in-house by the relevant team member(s). The volunteer also has the opportunity to attend training sessions that are being delivered from the extensive training menu that is available to clients.

### **Volunteer expenses**

Generally, volunteer expenses are agreed with the volunteer in advance, such as the cost of travel to an in-person meeting or event. These are paid within 30 days on the presentation of receipts or an invoice, such as to cover mileage-related fuel costs. These are sent to the Finance Manager and approved by the CEO.

### **Volunteer support and supervision**

Volunteers are formally supported within their role by both the team lead, that they are attached to, the nominated lead for the specific tasks or project that they are helping with. They receive regular support through related WhatsApp Groups, informal support from their colleagues and formal supervision on a regular basis.

### **The health, safety and welfare of our volunteers**

We would undertake any risk assessments linked to specific roles that the volunteer(s) were undertaking and then mitigate anything that arose and / or adjust the volunteer role accordingly. We ensure that our volunteers are included in our insurance cover (Employers Liability Insurance, Professional Indemnity Insurance and Public Liability Insurance). As many of our volunteers also have lived experience which they may or may not be leveraging in the volunteer, we are aware of triggering situations and will take extra care of our volunteers under these circumstances.

### **Confidentiality and data protection**

The Diversity Trust will endeavour to protect the volunteer's own data and confidentiality in the same ways as we do for all our staff team. We also request that volunteers sign a Volunteer Agreement which sets out what both the volunteer and what we commit to in terms of our aspirations and responsibilities towards the volunteer and their role. The volunteer agreement states that the volunteer is expected to maintain confidentiality of the Diversity Trust's activity, the people in our care, our team and our procedures.

### **Problem solving and complaints procedures for volunteers**

[Step 1] Volunteers are encouraged to informally discuss any problems with their nominated lead at the earliest possible opportunity. Similarly, the Diversity Trust will do likewise with the volunteer. This open and transparent approach will enable an issue to be discussed and, if possible, a mutually agreeable solution, to be reached as soon as possible before it escalates.

[Step 2] If the issue cannot be sorted, then a more structured approach will be taken, keeping a note of the issue and agreed actions / developments and relevant dates. At this stage, it may be necessary to review the issue in conversation with the CEO (if not already involved) and / or a Board member, e.g. the Chair. They will then decide any next steps and ensure that the volunteer is kept abreast of any next steps.

Berkeley Wilde  
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13<sup>th</sup> November 2023