



# **Volunteer Policy**

**Approved by Board of Trustees on:**

**Lead Staff Member: Jackie Rosenberg**

## **PDT - Volunteer Policy**

### **Introduction**

A volunteer is someone who, without expectation of financial compensation, beyond reimbursement of expenses, performs a task at the request of and on behalf of the Paddington Development Trust (PDT).

This gift relationship is non-contractual, being based on trust and understanding; and depends on mutual expectations. It is beneficial to both parties.

PDT is committed to supporting and developing our volunteer network.

Volunteers are critical to the mission of PDT which is “to bring people together and support them to take charge of their own individual and shared futures”.

As well as enabling PDT to accomplish its mission in the most cost-effective and engaging manner, volunteering opportunities are encouraged within PDT projects in order to enable local people, young and old, to contribute their time and skills to the good of their community and to support local people in gaining new skills and abilities which may support them back into training and work.

This Volunteer Policy sets out the broad principles underpinning volunteering within Paddington Development Trust. It is relevant to all volunteers and employees.

PDT does not employ volunteers who are under the age of 16 or over 85.

### **PDT’s Volunteering Values**

Paddington Development Trust: -

- recognises that without volunteers we would be unable to meet our main objective of supporting and empowering our local communities
- understands that volunteering is an enjoyable activity meeting the individual’s as well as the organisation’s needs
- is committed to making volunteering a worthwhile activity
- is committed to ensuring that volunteers are supported into further training or employment if this is their ambition
- sees volunteers as complementing not replacing paid staff and adding significant value to our activities
- invests volunteers, as far as possible, with the same rights as other members of the organisation and in return asks volunteers to recognise their responsibilities towards PDT and its projects.

### **Volunteer Rights**

All volunteers are entitled to equal treatment irrespective of sex, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, religion, community background or political beliefs

All Volunteers have a right to: -

- protection from exploitation from paid PDT employees
- adequate information, training and support for the tasks they are to undertake
- to receive on-going support and supervision in line with all PDT employees
- Health and Safety information to maximise their safety and welfare
- reimbursement of reasonable, agreed out of pocket expense
- be valued by everyone within the PDT
- access advice, including training and employment advice, from PDT staff on request
- be treated sympathetically and fairly if faced by problems relating to volunteer conduct or complaints. Efforts will always be made to reach a mutually acceptable solution.
- be consulted if changes are to be introduced that affect their role.

### **Volunteer Responsibilities**

All Volunteers have the responsibility to: -

- agree to PDT's policy on volunteering
- treat everyone they meet when representing PDT with courtesy and respect
- be reliable, honest and mindful of PDT's good name
- agree their tasks with their PDT colleague/Manager
- report back as required and keep in regular contact with designated PDT staff
- respect all information concerning PDT's operations or any employee's affairs as confidential
- treat with confidence any information made available to them as a result of their relationship with PDT whether of an individual or commercial nature
- take individual responsibility for their personal belongings
- ensure they are adequately insured for any task they undertake in their own cars whilst undertaking PDT business. (PDT carries relevant insurances to cover all other aspects of work undertaken by its volunteers).

### **Recruitment and Selection**

PDT uses a variety of methods to recruit volunteers dependent upon task and location. Recruitment is based solely on merit. Where individuals aged under 18 seek volunteering opportunities, appropriate parental permission will always be sought.

Recruitment will generally involve a face to face informal interview.

The aims of the selection procedures are: -

- to provide potential volunteers with sufficient information on both PDT and specific volunteering opportunities for them to make an informed decision on whether or not to pursue their application

- to allow applicants and the PDT staff member/manager to assess whether or not the applicant has the requisite skills, or potential skills after training, to fulfil the job's requirements
- to agree upon a probationary period acceptable to both applicant and PDT

### **References and Screening**

PDT may take up references for volunteers depending on the nature of the work being undertaken. Checks or screening may seem intrusive but are necessary for the following reasons: -

- the public need to know that they and the money they donate are in safe hands.
- they provide the volunteer with a degree of credibility.
- they act as a basis of trust for volunteers and their colleagues.

### **Criminal Record Check**

As required under Safeguarding and Child Protection legislation, any volunteer who will be working regularly with children, young people or adults who are vulnerable, or who has access to PDT funds, will be required to undergo checks through the Disclosure and Barring service. PDT will arrange for these checks to take place.

### **Induction, Training and Support**

Volunteers will be made welcome and provided with an induction, including an introduction to PDT, Health and Safety, Risk assessments and job-specific guidelines and resources. Further job specific training will be provided as required and agreed.

Progress will be monitored and when necessary additional training will be given to ensure volunteers have the skills and information they need to enjoy and carry out their tasks.

There will always be a designated member of staff on the other end of a phone to offer advice and support.

**Insurance** – The PDT's public and employer's liability insurance policies cover the activities of volunteers.

**Expenses** - It is PDT's policy to reimburse reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred whilst undertaking voluntary tasks, subject to the production of valid receipts.

These may include:

- travelling expenses
- Miscellaneous expenses e.g. telephone calls, postage, refreshments, etc, which must have been previously agreed.
- a percentage of childcare costs up to a maximum of £200 per family, according to number of volunteer hours and subject to availability of funding.

## **Resolving Problems**

The relationship between the organisation and its volunteer workers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. However, it is important that the organisation is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to the clients who use it, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service.

If your role as a volunteer does not meet with PDT's standards, here is how it will be dealt with:

- Initially with a meeting with the (appropriate person) who will explain the concerns.
- If this does not resolve the concern then a meeting with the relevant line manager, Deputy CE or CE will be arranged.
- If your work still does not meet with our standards, then we shall have to stop using your services.
- At all times you will be able to freely state your case and can have a friend to accompany you. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your work you should:
  - Initially explain your dissatisfaction with the (appropriate person)
  - If that does not resolve the concern, then a meeting with the (appropriate person) should be convened
  - If that does not resolve the issue, then a formal meeting with the Deputy CE or CE will take place.
  - If after this, your dissatisfaction remains unresolved, and we are unable to resolve your grievance, then it would be inappropriate for you to continue to be a volunteer.
  - At all times you will be freely able to state your case and can have a friend to accompany you.

## **On Leaving**

Volunteers do leave PDT; when they do, we like to know why and to ascertain whether they want to be kept informed of future opportunities for engaging with the PDT, or for volunteering through One Westminster.