

Volunteering with London Youth

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting London Youth's work, and we are committed to valuing and enhancing the experience of those that do volunteer with London Youth.

The volunteer, in return, will be provided with opportunities to develop and use their skills/expertise in a new environment. Some volunteers will be able to use their experience volunteering with London Youth to develop their own careers and further their education/training.

Purpose of this policy

Our volunteering policy is intended for people who have accepted an agreed volunteering opportunity with London Youth. It outlines the principles on which the relationship between volunteers and London Youth is based and provides basic information about volunteering with us. It is complementary to our [Volunteer Agreement](#) that all volunteers are asked to sign before they start volunteering with London Youth.

We do not pre-define roles for volunteers within London Youth. Nor do we define timescales for engaging a volunteer. These may range from assisting with short-term discrete tasks to playing a part in on-going project work.

Status of volunteers

A volunteer will not be an employee of London Youth. She or he will not be engaged on a contract of employment nor on any type of contract for services. The engagement will be binding in honour only, there being no legal agreement between London Youth and the volunteer.

London Youth is under no obligation to offer or to continue to offer any volunteering opportunity, irrespective of any past involvement or relationship. Similarly, the volunteer is under no obligation to accept any opportunity offered, and may withdraw from the volunteering agreement at any time. Both parties are encouraged to give the other as much notice as possible, should the agreement be brought to an end.

By entering into a volunteer agreement no restriction whatsoever is placed on the individual to carry out volunteer work for any other organisation or to take paid work with other organisations.

Recruitment of volunteers

Recruitment of volunteers is devolved to each London Youth programme to meet their requirements. London Youth welcomes and respects the breadth of skills, experience and goodwill that volunteers bring. The sole qualification for volunteer recruitment shall be suitability to perform a task on behalf of London Youth.

Volunteers under the age of 18 must have the written consent of a parent or guardian prior to volunteering.

Prospective volunteers will complete an [application form](#) expressing their area of interest and availability, as well as the skills, knowledge or expertise which they believe they could bring to such a role. A short interview will be held with the relevant Team to ensure suitability for the role in question.

At no time will a volunteer be engaged as a substitute for an employee or worker who would be engaged on a contract for services, irrespective of duration of the engagement.

Two satisfactory references about the volunteer will be required. For some activities, London Youth will require a Disclosure and Barring Service check under our Safeguarding Policy; this will depend on the role to be carried out.

Equal opportunities and diversity

London Youth is committed to equal opportunities and diversity. This commitment is reflected throughout the charity's policies and practices and extends to our volunteers.

Induction and training

All volunteers will receive an induction on London Youth's work. Volunteers will receive specific training, where necessary, to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their volunteer role. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the position and the capabilities of the volunteer.

Reimbursement of expenses

Volunteer roles are unpaid and will not receive any benefits-in-kind. However, volunteers are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable travel and subsistence expenses, payable on submission of receipts on a weekly basis. Sums payable are subject to London Youth's financial regulations and will be discussed during induction.

Management of volunteers

All volunteers will have a placement supervisor to whom they should report and direct any questions or queries about fulfilling their role. The supervisor will review the individual's volunteer arrangements on a regular basis; we call this process the 121 meeting.

The supervisor will attempt to informally resolve problems arising from the volunteer's work. If this cannot be done the organisation's complaints procedure will be used and the matter will be referred to a senior manager.

If a complaint is made concerning the volunteer, the supervisor will outline the basis of the complaint and seek an explanation from the volunteer. If the explanation is unsatisfactory the supervisor may recommend to the People Team that the volunteer agreement is brought to an end. If the volunteer is dissatisfied with the supervisor's decision, s/he may write to the relevant senior manager, whose decision is final.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

London Youth takes great care to protect your information as part of our data protection responsibilities. We will maintain a schedule of people who have volunteered for London Youth for an indefinite period which will detail the volunteer's name, date of birth together with the period and nature of volunteering activity. Placement supervisors must forward this information to the People Administrator. Each team may keep a list of contact details, recruitment paperwork and supervision notes for volunteers.

Audit and whistleblowing

London Youth is accountable to the Charity Commission. We have a responsibility to check and audit our activities to maintain our reputation as a trustworthy charity. If you believe that any member of staff or volunteer is behaving in a way that is likely to bring the charity into disrepute or cause financial loss, you should notify London Youth immediately. Details for notifying us of your concerns are set out in our Whistleblowing Policy.

Insurance

London Youth has appropriate types of insurance in place to cover its volunteers. These include employers' liability and public liability insurance. Our insurance does not cover personal belongings of volunteers.

Responsibilities and expectations

London Youth wants people to enjoy volunteering with us and we take our responsibilities towards volunteers seriously.

Our responsibilities to volunteers	Our expectations of volunteers
To offer equal opportunities to everyone who wants to volunteer	To support respect and adhere to London Youth's policies and guidelines
To match skills and experience to the right role wherever possible	To follow management instructions - including all aspects of health and safety, safeguarding, data protection and equal opportunities
To offer appropriate training to support the volunteer role	To act responsibly and within the law
To respect all volunteers and listen to their feedback - consistently encouraging two-way communication	To let your supervisor know first if you have any problems so that a solution can be identified
To provide information about London Youth's work, policies and procedures	To work in partnership with other volunteers and employees
To reimburse agreed out-of-pocket expenses incurred in carrying out the volunteering role	To aim for high standards of efficiency, reliability and quality in your volunteering
To make the necessary arrangements to ensure volunteers' health, safety and welfare in the workplace	
To encourage a positive and friendly atmosphere	
To provide access to trained members of staff to support and guide volunteers	
To provide access to information about other opportunities with London Youth	

Volunteer Wellbeing

Health & Safety

London Youth is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees, children, young people, volunteers and anyone else who may be involved in, or affected by our activities. Our commitment and practices are set out in the [London Youth Health and Safety Policy](#).

All volunteers are required to co-operate with us in carrying out this policy and fulfilling our statutory duties.

Safeguarding

London Youth has a [Safeguarding Policy](#), the purpose of which is to

- Provide protection for the children and young people who receive London Youth's services
- Provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm

This policy is mandatory for anybody working for or on behalf of London Youth, including volunteers. The policy must be applied whenever there is a concern about a child/young person or about the behaviour of an adult.

Volunteers who are directly working with young people will be required to attend London Youth Safeguarding Training. Volunteers who are not directly working with young people will be given a copy of London Youth's safeguarding policy and procedures and will be expected to adhere to them.