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# VOLUNTEER POLICY

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Prostate Cancer Research Centre

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## 1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

### 1.1. Why do we need volunteers?

- To support permanent staff to carry out other duties
- During busy times of the year to process donations
- To staff fundraising and awareness-raising events.

### 1.2. General principles

- Volunteering is always a matter of choice
- Volunteering is an opportunity to learn and acquire work experience
- Volunteers engage with and contribute to the organisation, and this is valued
- Volunteering is an unpaid activity. It is not undertaken for the receipt of salary, pension, or government allowance
- Volunteers do not replace workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers
- Volunteers represent the diversity of the community and reinforce Prostate Cancer Research Centre's humanitarian principles.

### 1.3. Philosophy

Prostate Cancer Research Centre recognises and values the reciprocal nature of the relationship between the organisation and individuals. It is committed to providing a volunteer programme that supports Prostate Cancer Research Centre's work and meets the expectations of individual volunteers. Prostate Cancer Research Centre values the contribution made by volunteers and seeks to recognise this by:

- Acknowledging that the relationship between volunteers and Prostate Cancer Research Centre is a reciprocal one
- Acknowledging that volunteers exercise free choice in committing their time, skills and experience to Prostate Cancer Research Centre
- Acknowledging that volunteers deserve the same treatment and respect as paid employees
- Ensuring volunteers are not used to replace paid staff positions and only carry out work to which they have agreed in advance
- Providing an opportunity for the development of skills and experience
- Providing support in the form of training, supervision, recognition, and the provision of references if requested.

## 2. CATEGORIES OF VOLUNTEERS

1. Short-term: those used for a specific task or event for no more than two months, whether it be for a single day, a week, or for five days a week over an extended period.
2. Seasonal: those used during key campaigns.
3. Long-term volunteers: those who agree to work with Prostate Cancer Research Centre to do specific work for more than two months (a start and end date will be agreed prior to placement, although this may be extended if the need arises and mutually agreed). These volunteers may be classified as interns.

## 3. ELIGIBILITY FOR APPLICATION

All applicants must be:

1. Aged 16 and above
2. British citizens or legal residents in the UK
3. Have no restrictions on volunteering in the UK
4. Friendly and reliable
5. Willing to give their time for charitable work
6. Agree to the terms and conditions of the volunteering placement.

#### 4. BENEFITS FOR VOLUNTEERS

- Work experience
- Exposure to medical research charity environment
- Skills development
- Flexible working hours
- Travel and lunch expenses paid
- Written references provided, as requested, for volunteers who have worked at least one day a week (or equivalent) for a minimum period of 3 months; approximately 48 hours.

Volunteers may assist staff members or have delegated independent tasks, but they should only be given work under the direct supervision of the designated staff member (e.g. research on a specific issue, administration, mailing, data processing).

#### 5. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

##### 5.1. Recognising motivation

Volunteers come to Prostate Cancer Research Centre for a variety of reasons, each of which are valid but require a different mechanism of management. They may view their volunteering as:

- A stepping stone into the work force
- A way of developing specific ideas about their work
- A way of offering general assistance in a charity environment
- A way of expressing their commitment to the charity's cause
- A means of satisfying their desire to contribute to society.

In placing a volunteer in a particular role it is important to recognise the expectations of the individual, and ensure that the overall experience meets the needs of the organisation as well as those of the volunteer.

##### 5.2. Equal opportunities

Prostate Cancer Research Centre applies the principles of equal opportunities to its recruitment process and will not withhold a volunteer position on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, nationality, sexual orientation or religion.

##### 5.3. Diversity

Prostate Cancer Research Centre is firmly committed to diversity in all areas of its work. We believe that we have much to learn and profit from diverse cultures and perspectives, and that diversity will make our organisation more effective in meeting the needs of all our stakeholders.

We are committed to developing and maintaining an organisation in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs are fostered and valued, and where those with diverse backgrounds and experiences are fully able to participate and contribute.

We will regularly evaluate and monitor our progress towards diversity.

#### 5.4. Written description of volunteering role

It is important to match the skills and interests of the prospective volunteer with the tasks required by the charity. Each departmental manager must produce role descriptions for volunteers to be placed in their department. The description must include:

- A list of the basic tasks involved
- The desirable skills for the position
- The duration of the position and required time commitment
- The name and job title of the staff member responsible
- Benefits for the volunteer of working in the department and on the set role

#### 5.5. Initial contact

- Volunteering opportunities will be posted on the relevant platforms. Volunteers may request a volunteer application form to be sent to them for potential roles.
- The application of the selected volunteer will be processed by the department responsible for managing them.
- If an individual wishes to support to Prostate Cancer Research Centre in accordance with his/her qualifications or experience e.g. helping deliver fundraising events, s/he will complete the volunteer application form and submit this with a CV and covering letter explaining in what capacity they wish to volunteer with Prostate Cancer Research Centre.
- If an individual supporter (not a volunteer) wishes to raise funds for Prostate Cancer Research Centre and wishes to use our logo or branding, s/he will be forwarded to the Fundraising Department. Prostate Cancer Research Centre will process the request and agree in writing the terms of reference to be signed by the organisation and the volunteer.

#### 5.6. Volunteer application form

The volunteer application form will be used to:

- Determine the applicant's motivation and expectations
- Acquire background information about the volunteer (skills/knowledge/working experience)
- Determine their availability
- Determine time commitment
- Ask for contact details of two referees. Character and/or employer references will be sought for all prospective volunteers.

#### Volunteer declaration

Prostate Cancer Research Centre will request that the volunteer makes a declaration on their application form that states:

1. The information provided is true to their knowledge.
2. That if they are accepted as a volunteer, s/he will not engage in activities which are prohibited by the law of the United Kingdom relating to the collection and use of funds, or engaging in activities that incite hatred or endanger the welfare, safety or security of the public, fellow volunteers or members of staff.
3. That they affirm that irrespective of his or her faith and beliefs, s/he will, in the discharge of his or her work as a volunteer, adhere to the policies of Prostate Cancer Research Centre and promote its mission, vision and values.

#### 5.7. Informal interview

Following the successful submission of the volunteer application, an informal meeting should be held at Prostate Cancer Research Centre between the prospective volunteer and the manager from the department where the volunteer will be working. This is not a formal interview but will give Prostate Cancer Research Centre and the volunteer the opportunity to meet and decide whether the role's requirements and the volunteer's skills can be matched.

Essentials to be clarified at the informal interview:

1. Discuss expectations: what does the prospective volunteer hopes to gain from working at Prostate Cancer Research Centre?
2. Discuss the benefits for Prostate Cancer Research Centre and the volunteer. It should be noted that during their placement with the charity, volunteers represent the Prostate Cancer Research Centre, and this should be kept in mind during the selection process.
3. Clarification of the tasks to be undertaken. It is essential that the volunteer is under no illusion as to the tasks they will be asked to do. If the task requires 7 hours a day at the photocopier then they have to understand that they can accept or refuse.
4. Clarify agreed starting date, and end date if appropriate. Confirm how long the volunteer can commit to the role. It would be an advantage, both to Prostate Cancer Research Centre and to a prospective volunteer, to outline the minimum period of time for the work. A prospective volunteer cannot be held to this as they are giving their time without remuneration; they may have future commitments or have the opportunity to take paid employment before the end of the placement.
5. Clarify days per week, hours per day and lunch break.
6. The volunteer must be clear to whom they are accountable, and to whom they report regarding their work. Also, it must be clarified who is responsible for them in other areas, e.g. training, induction and general support.
7. Highlight what training will be needed to fulfil the requirements of the task, and how this will be scheduled into the role.

#### 5.8 Manager's responsibilities prior to start of volunteering placement:

1. Obtain proof of address and photo ID. A copy will be made of this documentation and stored in accordance to the charity's Human Resources Policy and Privacy Policy.
2. The volunteer must be informed of any expenses Prostate Cancer Research Centre will pay and also their position as regards Employers' Liability Insurance and Health and Safety expectations. For a more detailed understanding please refer to Prostate Cancer Research Centre's Health & Safety policy.
3. Confirm in writing the details of the placement and the length of time for which they will volunteer.
4. Maintain and secure a record of the volunteer's application.

5. If a person proves unsuitable for their allotted tasks after they have started, Prostate Cancer Research Centre reserves the right to offer them other tasks to those originally agreed.
6. In the case of gross misconduct or negligence, Prostate Cancer Research Centre reserves the right to terminate the volunteering placement without notice (see section 12 below).

## 6. INDUCTION AND TRAINING

At the start of a volunteering placement at Prostate Cancer Research Centre, volunteers will be issued with a welcome pack and complete an induction to the premises, facilities and staff. The induction will include:

1. A tour of the Prostate Cancer Research Centre office, an introduction to all staff present, plus an introductory talk on the work of the organisation.
2. Training on all relevant equipment e.g., photocopier, telephone, PC
3. Information on health and safety procedures, emergency procedures, fire exits, access and security
4. PC login and email access, if necessary, to complete the task. This will be set up and authorised by the IT administrator
5. Receipt of the volunteer policy, role description and relevant training documentation.
6. Signing of the company's confidentiality agreement.

## 7. SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

Supervision and support should be carried out in two areas:

1. The staff member working with the volunteer should be responsible for keeping the volunteer supplied with work, overseeing and being accountable for that work. The volunteer's timetable and work programme must be made clear and agreed at the outset.
2. When the staff member responsible for the volunteer's work is absent, another member of staff should be designated and available to assist the volunteer. It is not good practice to leave a volunteer unsupervised while the staff person is away from the office. Another member of staff should be assigned as contact person for these periods, and this will be confirmed in advance of the supervisor's absence.
3. Provide the volunteer with feedback on their work at Prostate Cancer Research Centre.

## 8. LOCATION OF VOLUNTEERING PLACEMENT

The location of the volunteering placement will be agreed in advance and notice will be given if the location is to change. The volunteer will be allocated a working space at the placement. The volunteer's supervisor should make the necessary arrangements for this in advance, in agreement with the CEO.

## 9. EXPENSES AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Travel expenses. To be paid up to a maximum of £15.00 a day, on submission of travel receipts or journey history
2. Lunch expenses. To be paid if the volunteer works a full day (7 or more hours). The agreed lunch allowance is £7.00 per day, issued on submission of receipts.

## 10. RECORDS AND MONITORING

1. Any departments requesting volunteer support will initiate their request in writing to the CEO.
2. All volunteer applications, references, supporting paperwork and proof of identification will be processed and stored in accordance with the charity's Human Resources and Privacy policy.

## 11. RECRUITMENT OF NEW VOLUNTEERS

Apart from unsolicited enquiries from prospective volunteers, there are several sectors that are potential suppliers of volunteer assistance:

1. Advertisements on the charity's website (specific vacancies will be posted here)
2. Universities and colleges
3. Fundraising/awareness events
4. Recommendations by other former volunteer, current volunteers, members of staff or trustees
5. Social media channels
6. Websites advertising volunteering roles, e.g. Do-it.org.

## 12. TERMINATION OF VOLUNTEERING PLACEMENT

- The end of the volunteer's placement should be mutually agreed in advance.
- In the event of the volunteer not working satisfactorily a discussion should ensue. Volunteers will be treated with fairness and respect: it could be that they might work better with another member of staff or in a different task. If that fails, the charity will seek to find an alternative or by mutual agreement agree to terminate the placement.
- In the case of gross misconduct or negligence, Prostate Cancer Research Centre reserves the right to terminate the volunteering placement immediately without prior notice.
- Written references can be provided for volunteers on request.

## 13. GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY

1. Please refer to the Grievance Policy & Procedure
2. Please refer to the Disciplinary Procedure