**Lincoln City Foundation**

**Volunteer Policy**

**Introduction**

A volunteer is a person who gives freely of his/her time, skills and experience without expectation of financial reward. Volunteering can take many forms. Some tasks require particular skills whereas others require none. Volunteering may be for a limited time to complete a particular task or may be on an ongoing basis.

Lincoln City Foundation recognises the immense benefits that volunteers bring. In return Lincoln City Foundation hopes to give its volunteers an opportunity to exercise their skills in a different environment and to undertake new experiences.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the reasons why Lincoln City Foundation seeks to encourage members of the community to become involved in voluntary work; to define the placement of the volunteer; and to ensure that all volunteers are treated fairly and equally.

All managers, supervisors, nominated officers, staff and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that the principles of the volunteer policy are applied within their area. All volunteers must be of school leaving age.

**Status of Volunteers**

A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment.

Lincoln City Foundation will agree a placement with the volunteer and there will be an expectation that the volunteer will meet the placement's requirements and that work will be provided in line with those requirements. However, the volunteer is free to refuse to fulfil the placement and Lincoln City Foundation is not bound to provide the work. It is also expected that Lincoln City Foundation and the volunteer will give as much notice as possible if unable to meet these expectations.

Whilst identifying the tasks that a volunteer will be expected to undertake as a part of their placement, care will be taken to ensure that insofar as is reasonably practicable, volunteering opportunities present volunteers with a chance to develop transferable skills and knowledge that are relevant to their requirements and aspirations.

**Volunteer Role**

This will set out the requirements of the placement and the skills or experience needed, as well as any training that is required before the volunteering work is undertaken.

Volunteers will not be used as substitutes for employees and an established post will not be used to recruit volunteers, i.e. there will be no job substitution done through volunteer placements.

Recruitment

A person wishing to become a volunteer will be asked to complete a Volunteer Application form and where applicable, will provide references and, depending on the nature of the placement, the prospective volunteer may be required to undergo a Criminal Records Check. In cases where this is deemed necessary, a risk-assessment may be conducted.

The Foundation will aim to employ a modern and diverse workforce (including volunteers) and promote an organisational culture that values and cultivates diversity and celebrates and promotes the diversity of staff.

**Safeguarding**

The Lincoln City Foundation safeguarding protocols in respect of children and vulnerable adults will be applied to all volunteering activities.

Volunteering agreement

The volunteer will be invited to enter into a volunteering agreement. This agreement will identify:

the volunteer's tasks;

* the training that the volunteer is expected to undertake;
* any expenses that will be paid to the volunteer;
* the insurance cover that will be provided for the volunteer;
* who will supervise the volunteer; and
* the notice that will be given to a volunteer if his/her placement is to come to an end.

**Training**

Lincoln City Foundation will provide any training required for the placement, including Health and Safety training, Data Protection/GDPR, Safeguarding and an induction into the service area.

Health and Safety

Lincoln City Foundation has a responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers.

Volunteers should at all time follow the organisations health and safety policies and procedures appropriate to their placement. Volunteers have a duty to take care of themselves and others who might be affected by their actions and are expected to not act outside their authorised area of work. Volunteers should report all incidents to their nominated supervisor.

Lincoln City Foundation will:

* provide volunteers with appropriate guidance on any health and safety issues that arise
* undertake risk assessments as required
* provide personal protective equipment (equipment will remain the property of the council and will be returned at the end of the volunteering period).

**Recompense**

Whilst volunteer placements are unpaid, volunteers may be reimbursed for all reasonable travel and subsistence expenses that have been pre-approved by the budget holder.

Policies and Procedures

Volunteers are expected to comply with all Lincoln City Foundation policies, procedures and guidance, while they are on its premises, on another site supporting activities, or undertaking any of their volunteering duties. Their service induction will include an explanation of these policies and procedures.

**Insurance**

Lincoln City Foundation will ensure that volunteers are covered by appropriate insurances. Any activity should therefore be under the direct control and supervision of the Lincoln City Foundation.

The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement.

**Confidentiality and Data Protection**

Volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information, in respect of staff, customers and suppliers. Volunteers should not disclose this information or use it for their own or another's benefit without the consent of the party concerned. This does not prevent disclosure once the information is in the public domain (unless it has been made public as a result of the volunteer's breach of confidentiality) or where the law permits or requires disclosure.

Lincoln City Foundation will not disclose volunteers’ personal details without their permission and will abide by the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and any other legislation related to the storage and disclosure of information.

**Supervision and Performance Management**

A nominated supervisor with appropriate authority will be appointed to support and manage the volunteer. The nominated officer will review the arrangements on a regular basis. If the volunteer has any queries or would like to change his/her placement this should be discussed with the nominated officer in the first instance.

If concerns are raised regarding a volunteer’s performance or negative feedback is received from a stakeholder or participant, this will be managed initially by the project officer. If the complaint is regarding a safeguarding issue or significant misconduct this will be investigated as per organisational policy by the HR/Operations and the process for appeal will be available for volunteers.

**Dealing with Problems**

The nominated supervisor will normally try to solve any problems informally, but if this is not possible the formal volunteer complaints system will come into operation. If the volunteer wishes to make a formal complaint, he/she should put the complaint in writing to his/her supervisor. If it is not possible to reach a solution the volunteer may raise the matter with the Operations Manager. If the dispute is still unresolved, the volunteer must raise a complaint using the relevant complaint procedure.

If a complaint is made about a volunteer, this will be notified to him/her in writing and the nominated supervisor will decide whether any action should be taken. If the volunteer is dissatisfied with the decision, he/she may raise it with the nominated supervisors’ manager.

**Volunteer's pack**

On commencing his/her volunteer work, the volunteer will be given a pack containing:

* general information about the Lincoln City Foundation
* a copy of this volunteering policy
* a standard volunteering agreement
* details of where he/she can access the Lincoln City Foundation policies, procedures and guidance
* guidance for drivers.

**Responsibilities**

It will be the Lincoln City Foundation’s responsibility to:

* Ensure volunteers are taken on, in line with this policy
* Ensure that a volunteer does not undertake any tasks on behalf of Lincoln City Foundation before satisfactory references are received and criminal records are checked if required.
* Prepare an appropriate volunteer agreement
* Conduct an induction, to familiarise the volunteer with the Lincoln City Foundation policies and procedures
* Arrange appropriate insurance, where applicable
* Provide the following details to Human Resources/Operations Manager:
* Name
* Address
* Two emergency contacts.

**Volunteers Agreement**

Lincoln City Foundation encourages and welcomes volunteers. This agreement sets out the relationship between a volunteer and Lincoln City Foundation. This agreement is binding in honour only. It is not intended by the parties to be legally binding agreement nor is it intended to create an employment relationship between us.

**Referees**

As a part of the Volunteer placement, Lincoln City Foundation may require you to provide up to two referees. We may also require you to be checked by the Criminal Records Bureau.

Your placement as a volunteer

The main roles available for individuals to volunteer are through Coaching and Administration. Other roles are available through discussion with Lincoln City Foundation.

**Foundation Pledge**

Lincoln City Foundation will provide the volunteer with:

* An introduction to the organisation and your volunteering placement within it
* Training related to your responsibilities as a volunteer. We hope that you will take advantage of this to improve and maintain your skills
* A nominated supervisor who will supervise your volunteering and with whom you can discuss any concerns with regards to your placement
* A regular review of your volunteering placement will be undertaken. This will normally be carried out by your nominated supervisor
* Personal liability insurance to cover you while you are fulfilling authorised volunteer work.

**Volunteer Commitment**

We will discuss with you the amount of time that you are willing to commit to volunteering, when you will be available, and how your availability will fit in with our needs. If, for any reason, you will not be attending as we have agreed, we would expect you to let us know as soon as possible so that a substitute can be found, or different arrangements can be made. If we have no work for you to do as a part of your placement, we will let you know as soon as possible.

**Confidentiality**

In the course of your volunteering you may come across confidential information about Lincoln City Foundation, its staff, and its customers. You must respect this confidentiality and not use the information for your own benefit or disclose the information, except where required or permitted to do so by law.

**Policies**

You will abide by the organisation's health and safety and equal opportunities policies. These can be found in the documents that have been given to you.

**Ideas and problems**

You may have ideas for the better performance of your duties or of ways in which we can meet our objectives as an organisation. Please discuss these with your nominated supervisor.

You may run into problems when performing your duties. You should discuss any complaint or problems with your nominated supervisor. Your nominated officer will discuss with you any issues that he/she may have with your work. If you would like to change the arrangements for your volunteering, this should be raised with your nominated supervisor.

**Termination**

Either you or the organisation can terminate this agreement with or without notice at any time.

Signed on behalf of Lincoln City Foundation:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Meeting sign off date: | 5 December 2016 | Document version: | 3 |
| Head of Community: |  | Company Secretary: |  |
| Date of next review: | 4 December 2019 |  |