



VOLUNTEERS POLICY

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out basis on which the Community Foundation North East (the Foundation) engages volunteers.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) defines volunteering as *“any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual.”*¹
- 2.2 The Foundation does not normally engage regular volunteers in supporting its day-to-day work. The Board of trustees are volunteers, but their responsibilities are covered by Charity and company law and regulation, and their role set out in the Foundation’s terms of reference.
- 2.3 The Foundation does engage volunteers:
- as co-optees who add expertise to committees of the Board
 - to sit on fund panels
 - to provide pro-bono support to grantees
 - (occasionally) on time-limited voluntary placements
 - (occasionally) to help voluntarily with a specific Foundation event or activity
- 2.4 Volunteers may be appointed by third parties (e.g. donors appointing to panels), become involved through existing networks, or they may be recruited openly.
- 2.5 Supporters of the Foundation may choose voluntarily to fundraise in aid of one or more funds we hold. This is outside the scope of this policy but is covered by the Foundation’s fundraising guidelines.

3. PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The Foundation recognises volunteering as a generous gift of time and expertise. In return, the Foundation aims to offer any volunteers it engages with an experience that is rewarding and which meets their interests.

¹ www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/volunteering-policy

- 3.2 All volunteers can expect to be treated fairly and respectfully in line with the Foundation's values, policies and procedures, including equality and diversity. Where a volunteering opportunity is openly advertised, the Foundation will ensure equality and diversity practices apply as for other forms of recruitment.
- 3.3 Volunteers' roles will be clearly explained and mutually agreed. This may be in the philanthropy or other agreement for a fund, in terms of reference for a panel, or in a stand-alone volunteering agreement.
- 3.4 The Foundation will provide induction, information and support to volunteers appropriate to their role. Where volunteers are placed at the Foundation's office, this will include appropriate health and safety guidance.
- 3.5 Volunteers are expected to comply with the Foundation's policies and procedures including, but not limited to, safeguarding, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, data protection and diversity, equity and inclusion.
- 3.6 Volunteers will have a named staff person at the Foundation who will act as their primary contact for support and feedback.
- 3.7 Volunteers will be reimbursed travel and other agreed out of pocket expenses in line with the Foundation's policies and subject to receipts being provided.
- 3.8 Volunteers will be covered by the organisation's insurance policy while engaged in approved work for the Foundation.

4. BREACHES OF THE POLICY

- 4.1 Trustees, volunteers and employees must notify the Chief Finance and Operating Officer as soon as possible if they believe or suspect that a breach of this policy has occurred or may occur in the future. Where any alleged breach relates to the CFOO, either the Chief Executive or Chair of the Board should be notified.
- 4.2 In most cases breaches of the policy will likely be unintentional so may, following investigation, be dealt with informally and through reminders of the requirement to work within this policy. However, repeated or deliberate breaches could result in formal action. For employees, such issues will be dealt with under the Foundation's disciplinary procedure. For trustees, investigation will be carried out by the Finance and Resources Committee and could result in disqualification from the Board. Breaches by volunteers will be investigated by the Chief Executive and could result in individuals being removed from committees or panels.

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 5.1 The Foundation will monitor the effectiveness of this policy regularly to ensure its suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Any improvements identified will be made as soon as possible. The policy will be reviewed by the Board every three years.

Date originally approved by Board	March 2019
This version	2025 v 3.0
Date last updated	October 2025
Reason for last update	Planned review
Next review due	October 2028
Owner	Sonia Waugh
Job title	Chief Finance and Operating Officer
Related policies and procedures	• Safeguarding policy • Confidentiality policy • Conflict of interest policy • Co-optee role description • Board/committee terms of reference • Diversity, equity and inclusion policy • Philanthropy agreements and terms of reference for grant panels