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ARLIS UK & Ireland Volunteering Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers, and is relevant to volunteers, Trustees, Council and Committees' members, including the Conference Working Party members.

It aims to create a common understanding and to clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management of volunteers.

Our commitments

We recognise volunteers as an integral part of the Society, whose contributions support our mission and strategic aims.

We aim to encourage and support volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits the society and the volunteers themselves.

We are committed to offering a flexible range of opportunities and to encouraging a diversity of people to volunteer with us, including those from under-represented groups such as people with diverse abilities and from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

We recognise that there are costs associated with volunteer involvement and will seek to ensure that adequate financial and staffing resources are available for the development and support of our volunteers.

We recognise our responsibility to organise volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

Who is a volunteer?

Volunteers are unpaid individuals who with their own free choice undertake activity on behalf of our Society.

All members of the council including the Trustees are volunteers with the responsibility for governance of the society.

Volunteers may be involved on a one –off, short term or on a longer term, regular basis. They may be involved in a myriad of different roles.

Volunteers are valued for:

- bringing additional skills and new perspectives to the Society
- enabling the Society to be more responsive and flexible in our approach
- championing the Society's cause within the wider library, archives and collections community

The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding.

There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks or for the Society to provide continuing opportunities for voluntary involvement, provision of training or benefits. However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability.

Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what the Society expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the Society.

The Society expects volunteers:

- to be reliable and honest
- to uphold the Society's values and comply with organisational policies
- to make the most of opportunities given, e.g. for training
- to contribute positively to the aims of the organisation and avoid bringing the Society into disrepute
- to carry out tasks within agreed guidelines

Volunteers can expect:

- to have clear information about what is and is not expected of them
- to receive adequate support and training
- to volunteer in a safe environment
- to be treated with respect and in a non – discriminatory manner
- to receive out of pocket expenses when agreed with Council
- to have opportunities for personal development

- to be recognised and appreciated
- to be able to say 'no' to anything which they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable
- to know what to do if something goes wrong

Recruitment and selection

Our [strategy](#) explicitly states: ARLIS/UK & Ireland is a committed anti-racist inclusive organisation, which actively works toward more equity in the librarianship profession. It works to foster and nurture a deeper perception and understanding of art librarianship and libraries. We champion and support the contribution and work of the profession to provide value to our cultural and commercial lives, as well as promoting the benefits of art in all areas of society.

Therefore we will ensure that recruitment process reflect our inclusive approach and opportunities will be widely promoted to attract interest from a broad and diverse community.

Prospective volunteers are encouraged to discuss the role and the requirements with the Chair or appropriate Officer and information will be made available, such as written role descriptions which set out the nature and purpose of the volunteering role, key tasks, skills required and benefits.

All volunteers need to be members of the Society either as an individual or as an institutional representative, with the exception of those on Committees and Conference Working Party, who may not be members but have specialist knowledge and skills pertaining to the workings of that Committee.

Depending on the role, recruitment may involve an application form and election process or merely an expression of interest.

Induction, training and support

Volunteers will be given the role description and any appropriate induction and training specific to the tasks to be undertaken.

Volunteers will be offered support and supervision as appropriate.

Recognition

Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with the Society's wider membership at meetings, committees, working groups etc.

Formal recognition of the contribution of volunteers is expressed through written communications such as annual reports, website articles or verbally at meetings.

Dealing with problems

The society aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. It seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly.

We will attempt to deal with any problems informally and at the earliest opportunity in the first instance.

Volunteers will be made aware of the Society's [complaints policy](#).

Expenses

Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.

Policy revision history

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| 1. Name of document: | Conflict of Interest Policy |
| 2. Originator: | Amanda Russell, Hon. Secretary |
| 3. Date of origination: | February 2019 |
| 4. Revised by | Morwenna Peters, Hon. Secretary |
| 5. Revision history: | January 2020; October 2021; May 2022 |