The Canddo Project CIC 

**Volunteering Policy**

## **Introduction**

Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community: the environment of individuals outside one’s immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice without concern for financial gain**.**

The Canddo Project CIC believes in the value of voluntary activity as an important expression of citizenship and an essential component of a free and democratic society. This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers and is relevant to staff, volunteers and trustees within the organisation. 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. (Organisation Name) takes responsibility for ensuring that volunteers within its own organisation are appropriately involved, valued for their contribution and respected as colleagues.The organisation recognises the important contribution that volunteers make to us. We believe that we should invest in our volunteers. To this end, we shall provide regular and on-going support, supervision and training, to enable volunteers to develop their skills, both in order to enhance their volunteering work with us and to help them contribute to the wider community.

**In issuing this volunteer policy (Organisation Name) wishes to:**

* Formally acknowledge and support the role of volunteers in its work
* Set out the principles governing the involvement of volunteers and provide a set of guidelines to ensure good practice in working with volunteers
* Encourage and enable, rather than restrict, the involvement of volunteers.

This volunteer policy and accompanying guidelines are intended for use by (Organisation Name) paid staff and volunteers.

**Our commitments**

We recognise volunteers as an integral part of the organisation. Their contribution supports our mission and strategic aims, and complements the role of paid staff. We aim to encourage and support volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits the organisation, its clients and the volunteers themselves.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will not be used to replace staff.

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 youth, people with a disability, older people and people from black and minority ethnic communities.

We recognise that there are costs associated with volunteer involvement and will seek to ensure adequate financial and staffing resources are available for the development and support of volunteering. We recognise that people have a right to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering and can contribute in many ways.

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 individuals who undertake activity on behalf of our organisation, unpaid and of their own free choice. Volunteering is not undertaken for financial gain. Work experience placements and internships are not the same as volunteering. Trustees are volunteers with responsibility for governance of the organisation.

Volunteers may be involved on a one – off, short term or on a longer term, regular basis. They may be involved:

* in the direct delivery of our services
* on our board of management as trustees
* in community engagement to raise awareness of our work
* in one off events and promotional activities

In our offices or in community venues Volunteers are valued for:

* bringing additional skills and new perspectives to the organisations
* enabling us to be more responsive and flexible in our approach
* championing our cause within the wider community
* enhancing the quality of our work and of client experience
* promoting the wellbeing of users of services, staff, local communities and themselves.

**Standards of good practice**

Our management practice is informed by the Code of Practice for organisations involving volunteers and the Investing in Volunteers Quality Standard for volunteer management.

**Roles and responsibilities**

A designated staff member (The Volunteer Co-ordinator) has responsibility for the development and co-ordination of voluntary activity within the organisation, including volunteering policies and procedures and the welfare of volunteers.

All volunteers will have a designated staff member/volunteer for guidance, support and supervision. Staff responsibilities for volunteers will be explicitly referred to in their job/role description.

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 organisation 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 organisation expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the organisation.

The organisation expects volunteers:

* to be reliable and honest
* to uphold the organisation’s values and comply with organisational policies
* to make the most of opportunities given, eg. for training
* to contribute positively to the aims of the organisation and avoid bringing the organisation 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 be insured and to volunteer in a safe environment
* to be treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner
* to receive out of pocket expenses
* 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

**Volunteer Policy Statement**

**Equality and Diversity**

* As an employer and engager of volunteers The Canddo project CIC is committed to a policy of equality and diversity. This principle will apply to service delivery, recruitment, promotion, training, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions.
* Volunteers will be expected to adhere to The Canddo project CIC Equality and Diversity Policy, a copy of which can be found within the The Canddo project CIC Volunteer Handbook.

**Recruitment & Selection**

* Recruitment of volunteers will be from all sections of the community, and will be in line with our Equality and Diversity Policy.
* We will use monitoring to inform future targeting in recruitment.
* Opportunities will be widely promoted, in English and in Welsh, so as to attract interest from different sectors of the community. Positive action to target recruitment may be used where appropriate. Online application is encouraged but non-digital methods of application are also available.
* Information will be made available to those enquiring about volunteering, including written role descriptions which set out the nature and purpose of the volunteering role,

key tasks, skills required and benefits.

* Recruitment will usually involve an informal interview, application form and the taking

of references; the process will be defined and consistent for any given role - for

example the recruitment process for trustees, regular volunteers and for volunteers for

one off events will be tailored in each case and may differ from one another.

* Where applicants are not able to be placed in their preferred role, they will be provided

with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles, or

signposted to the local volunteer centre or the www.volunteering–wales.net website.

* For roles which involve care giving and/or sustained and direct contact with young

people or adults at risk, volunteers will be required to have a full DBS disclosure check

which will be arranged by the organisation. DBS disclosures are dealt with in the

strictest confidence. A criminal record is not necessarily a bar to volunteering.

**Information & Training**

* Volunteers will receive full information about their chosen area of work and will be given a clear idea of their responsibilities to The Canddo project CIC.
* Volunteers will be given induction and training in the specific tasks to be undertaken.
* Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them.

**Support & Supervision**

* Volunteers will be assigned a named contact person for supervision and support.
* Arrangements vary according to the volunteer and the role undertaken, and may include telephone support, group meetings or one to one reviews.

**Problem-Solving**

* The Canddo project CIC recognises that problems do arise and we aim to identify and resolve these problems at the earliest stage. Volunteers who have a problem of any kind should discuss it in the first instance with their named contact person.
* We will attempt to deal with any problems informally and at the earliest opportunity. All

volunteers will have a named person to whom they can turn in the case of any difficulty.

* Where informal resolution is not possible, the organisations ‘Settling differences’ policy will be adhered to.
* Volunteers will be made aware of the organisation’s complaints policy and how to use

it. They will also be made aware of how inappropriate behaviour by volunteers will be

addressed by the organisation.

**Confidentiality**

* Volunteers will be bound by the same confidentiality conditions as The Canddo project CIC paid staff.

**Expenses & Insurance**

* The Canddo project CIC will ensure that there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses.
* Volunteers will be adequately covered by insurance while carrying out agreed duties.

**Health and Safety**

* All volunteers are covered by the same health and safety policies and provisions as staff.
* A risk assessment will be undertaken on all volunteer roles.

**Relations with Paid Staff**

* The Canddo project CIC is committed to ensuring that volunteers work complements the work of paid staff, and that it will not be used as a substitute for paid work.
* Steps will be taken to ensure that staff at all levels are clear about the roles of volunteers and to foster good working relationships between staff and volunteers.
* The Canddo project CIC recognises the need for training for all those working alongside and managing volunteers.

**Costs**

* The Canddo project CIC will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers and recognises the value of designated responsibilities within specific posts for the management of volunteers.

**Recognition**

* Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and

opinions with the organisation's wider staff, at staff meetings etc.

* Formal recognition of the contribution of volunteers is expressed through annual

reports, website articles, social media, and during Volunteers’ Week award

celebrations.

**Moving on**

* When volunteers move on from volunteering with us they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully.
* Volunteers who have remained with the organisation for at least 3 months will have the

right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options.

**Monitoring & Evaluation**

* The Canddo project CIC will systemically monitor and evaluate its involvement of volunteers with reference to this Volunteering Policy.

**Guidelines for Involving Volunteers**

**Preparation**

Prior to recruiting volunteers, full consultation and discussion should take place with users of the service, paid staff and unions to satisfy that there is a genuine need for volunteers and to develop a clear description of their role. A contact person within the section proposing to involve volunteers should be identified and the staff time and expenses to train, support and reimburse volunteers determined.

*Recruitment*

* The Canddo project CIC has an Equality and Diversity Policy and will prevent discrimination particularly on the grounds of gender, marital status, disability, race, colour, religious belief, political belief, sexuality, nationality, ethnic origin, age, trade union activity, responsibility for dependents or employment status. (See statement and policy for details)
* In order to reach a wide section of the community, recruitment should be by a variety of means.
* Positive action in recruitment may be used for specific voluntary tasks. For example, specific work with minority ethnic groups or the requirement to be able to converse in Welsh.

**Initial Contact**

* People interested in becoming volunteers with The Canddo project CIC should be invited for an informal talk with the appropriate contact person. They should:
* Be given written information to take away
* Have their role explained and how it fits in with The Canddo project’s overall aims and ethos
* Have the next stages of becoming a volunteer with The Canddo project CIC outlined
* If the volunteer wishes to proceed with the application at this stage, the contact person should fill out the application form for the volunteer (getting referees’ details) and ask the volunteer to sign.
* If the volunteer is undecided, agree the next step e.g. for the contact person to phone the potential volunteer in a week’s time**.**

**Selection**

* All volunteers should complete an application form. Two written references will be required. If the volunteer is to carry out specialised work (e.g. IT support) at least one reference should relate directly to this.
* If volunteers may be working with vulnerable people, or in positions of trust, they should be asked to provide information on their application form about any criminal convictions that they may have.
* All information should be dealt with in the strictest confidence and should not necessarily prejudice the person being accepted for voluntary work.

**Records**

* Minimum details should be kept on volunteers. This will include the application form, references, placement details, relevant information regarding the person’s health, correspondence and any other relevant information such as emergency contact details.
* Record keeping must be secure but accessible to other members of staff if you are absent.
* Records should be stored in accordance with the GDPR policy.

**Induction**

* Induction sessions should be provided for all new volunteers and should cover:
* Role of volunteers
* Responsibilities of volunteers
* Arrangements for training, support and supervision
* Contact person
* Need for confidentiality
* Ethos/values, etc
* System for payment of expenses
* Problem-solving procedures
* Background to The Canddo project CIC
* Building orientation
* Health and Safety
* Meeting staff
* During induction, volunteers should receive the The Canddo project CIC) Volunteer Handbook.

**Expectations of Volunteers**

* **(ORGANISATION NAME) should expect volunteers to:**
* Participate in induction sessions
* Comply with existing policies and procedures
* Undertake voluntary work at agreed times
* Inform relevant staff if unable to attend
* Give some notice if unable to continue volunteering

Raise any issues of concern relating to their voluntary work with the contact person.

* Agree with the aims and ethos of the organisation

**Placement**

* Once a suitable voluntary opportunity has been identified details about the frequency and length of commitment and nature of the voluntary activity should be determined and an established trial period agreed.
* The Canddo project CIC reserves the right to ask volunteers to leave and will give reasons in writing if requested.

**Support, Supervision and Problem-Solving**

* Regular support/supervision should be available to each volunteer. The type and level of support will depend on the needs of the volunteer and the nature of their role. Full information on this will be provided during induction.
* Each volunteer should have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for the day to day management and guidance of the volunteer and who will be able to offer advice, support and feedback on a regular basis.
* Support prompt questions can be used if desired using a pre prepared proforma.
* If a complaint about a volunteer arises, refer to the complaints policy.

**Expenses**

* The procedures for claiming expenses should be clear and accessible.
* All agreed out of pocket expenses should be reimbursed on production of receipts.

**Insurance**

* It should be ensured that volunteers have appropriate insurance cover in terms of employers and public liability.