



VOLUNTEERING GOVERNANCE

TO SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS WORKING
WITH VOLUNTEERS





What is volunteering governance?

Volunteering governance means having the right policies, procedures, and structures in place to support volunteering safely and effectively.

Why is volunteering governance important?

It ensures that volunteers are:

- protected
- valued
- able to contribute meaningfully

What is the link between volunteering governance and being a volunteer-ready organisation?

Strong governance is at the heart of being a volunteer-ready organisation.

It builds trust, creates clarity about roles and responsibilities, and shows that the organisation is committed to providing a positive and well-managed volunteering experience.



How can organisations achieve good volunteering governance?

Clear policies and procedures

(Simple, accessible guidance for how volunteers are recruited, inducted, and supported):

- **Defined roles and responsibilities** – clarity about what's expected from both the organisation and the volunteer.
- **Safeguarding and risk management** – keeping volunteers and service users safe through checks, training, and good practice.
- **Support and supervision** – providing volunteers with a clear point of help, feedback, and encouragement.
- **Recognition and value** – celebrating contributions so volunteers feel appreciated.
- **Inclusion and fairness** – making volunteering open and welcoming to people from all backgrounds.
- **Ongoing improvement** – regularly reviewing how volunteering is managed and asking volunteers for feedback.

The four pillars of a good practice

- **Clarity** - Clear roles, expectations, and communication give volunteers confidence.
- **Safety** - Safeguarding, risk awareness, and good practice create trust and security.
- **Support** - Guidance, feedback, and recognition help volunteers feel valued.
- **Inclusion** - Open, fair, and welcoming opportunities ensure everyone can take part.



Follow the 10 steps of being a volunteer-ready organisation to cover all the areas with volunteering governance

The step-by-step roadmap below, from the bottom to the top, outlines each area you need to focus on to achieve better success in volunteering.



YOU CAN DO IT



Foundational Policies: Check-list



Volunteering Policy



Purpose: Lay out expectations and procedures for an organisation and a volunteer, aiming to prevent misunderstanding between both sides.

It contains procedures for recruiting, supporting, protecting and recognising volunteers.



Code of Conduct



Purpose: Set out the conduct - a list of behaviours that guide people on how to perform their duties professionally or ethically.

It outlines ethical principles and values guiding expected behaviour, both in the workplace and when representing the organisation externally, including compliance with relevant laws and standards.



Induction



Purpose: Ensures that all volunteers are provided with a properly structured introduction to the organisation.

It gives volunteers the key info they need - what their role involves, who supports them, how things work in the organisation, and what to do if they have any concerns.



Health and Safety



Purpose: Set procedures to prevent accidents, engage staff in safety, maintain high standards, and manage risks to health, life, and property.

It is a complexity of themes such as the workplace, fire, first aid, working off-site, work-related violence, events, equipment, musculoskeletal disorders, stress, and mental health.



Safeguarding



Purpose: Identify and prevent risks of harm, exploitation, or abuse, with clear, accountable systems for reporting and learning.

It means protecting children and at-risk adults from harm or rights violations when they interact with the organisation's staff or programs.



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion



Purpose: Set out clear intentions for equality of opportunity and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.

It helps to create a welcoming volunteer environment by making roles flexible, offering support and training, and removing barriers so more people can take part.



Confidentiality



Purpose: Applies to all trustees, employees, and volunteers, covering their duty to protect personal data under the Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR).

GDPR applies to any organisation that processes, collects, stores, or uses information about an identifiable person, and applies to volunteers in the same way as any other individual.

Note: This is not an exhaustive list of policies. Additional policies and procedures may be required depending on the nature of your activities.

Discover more useful information
about volunteering policies



Questions?
We're here to help! Get in touch at: volunteering@tsdg.org.uk