



## **Volunteer 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.

JustUs believes in the value of voluntary activity as an important expression of citizenship and an essential component of a free and democratic society. It supports and promotes volunteering in public and third sector organisations. JustUs takes responsibility for ensuring that volunteers within its own organisation are appropriately involved, valued for their contribution, and respected as colleagues.

In adopting this volunteer policy JustUs wishes to:

- Formally acknowledge and support the role of volunteers in its work
- Set out the principles governing the involvement of volunteers 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 JustUs paid staff and volunteers.

### **JustUs Equal Opportunities**

As an organisation that engages the use of volunteers JustUs is committed to a policy of equal opportunities. This principle will apply to service delivery, recruitment, promotion, training, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions.

Volunteers will be expected to adhere to JustUs' Equal Opportunities Policy, a copy of which can be found on our website.

### **Recruitment & Selection**

Recruitment of volunteers will be from all sections of the community and will be in line with JustUs' Equal Opportunities Policy. Appropriate targeting may be used.

### **Information & Training**

Volunteers will receive full information about their chosen area of work and will be given a clear idea of their responsibilities to JustUs.

Volunteers will be given induction and training in the specific tasks to be undertaken.

Volunteers will be encouraged to access any sector-wide free training where and when available.

Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them.

### **Support & Supervision**

Volunteers will be assigned a named contact person for supervision and support.

### **Problem-Solving**

JustUs 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. If the problem is not resolved by following this procedure, then the volunteer can choose to escalate it to the Board of Trustees.

### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers will be bound by the same confidentiality conditions as JustUs paid staff.

### **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

Volunteers will be bound by the same GDPR conditions as JustUs paid staff.

### **Expenses & Insurance**

JustUs 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 policy and procedures as paid staff.

### **Working Alongside Paid Staff**

JustUs 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.

JustUs recognises the need for training for all those working alongside and managing volunteers.

### **References**

Based on their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference

## **Preparation**

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

## **Recruitment**

JustUs has an Equal Opportunities Policy, and our recruitment practices aim to prevent discrimination, including 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)

To reach a wide section of the community, recruitment should be by a variety of means.

## **Initial Contact**

People interested in becoming volunteers with JustUs should be invited for an informal talk with the appropriate contact person. They should have their role explained and how it fits in with JustUs' overall aims and ethos

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.

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 and be willing to undergo a Disclosure and Barring System (DBS) check.

All information will 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, 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 the volunteer is absent.

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) enables people who need to know access to information held about volunteers.

## **Induction**

Induction sessions should be provided for all new volunteers and should cover:

- Role of volunteers
- Responsibilities of volunteers
- Expected appropriate conduct
- Arrangements for training, support, and supervision
- Contact person
- Need for confidentiality
- System for payment of expenses
- Problem-solving
- Background, ethos, and values of JustUs
- Health and Safety
- GDPR

### **Expectations of Volunteers**

JustUs expects 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 placement has been identified, details about the frequency and length of commitment and nature of the voluntary activity should be determined and a trial period agreed. Once the trial period has been completed the placement will be reviewed.

JustUs 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.

Each volunteer should have a clearly identified person 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.

### **Expenses**

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.

This policy and guidelines will be reviewed every 3 years.

Adopted: June 2022

Next review date: June 2025