

Open House Festival

Volunteer Policy

Purpose

The Volunteer Policy identifies and sets out the principles by which Open House Festival works with volunteers, the benefits it gains from its volunteers and benefits that volunteers expect to gain. This policy sets out the minimum standards for recruitment, induction and appointment of volunteers to ensure that both volunteer and Open House Festival expectations are met. It provides for fair and equal treatment of its volunteers.

Who the policy applies to

This policy is for staff that work with and provide support to volunteers within Open House Festival and for volunteers themselves who provide this role as part of the activities with Open House Festival. It is useful for organisations and individuals with whom Open House Festival has partnership relationships. The policy will be provided to all Open House Festival Volunteers.

Who are Open House Festival Volunteers

An Open House Festival volunteer is someone who freely chooses to give their time to undertake tasks and activities to help Open House Festival achieve its aims without payment or the expectation of payment. The arrangement is voluntary on both sides and either party can bring this relationship to an end.

The festival has been volunteer-based since its inception, starting with five volunteers in its first year. The team has developed both in the number of volunteers and in the depth and range of volunteer roles and has worked with hundreds of wonderful volunteers over the last 20 years, many for more than a decade.

Volunteers now help with many aspects of the festival, including the following roles:

- Street team – pre-festival distribution of festival posters, programmes and flyers
- Front of house duties stewarding and tickets sales
- Assisting with setting up venues
- Assisting with the smooth running of events
- Merchandise sales
- Photography

Open House Festival seeks and values the following attributes that volunteers bring:

- A genuine interest in Open House Festival Events



- An excitement about the Arts and music and engaging new audiences
- Friendly positive and calm under pressure
- Comfortable with speaking to the public
- Excited to meet new and likeminded people from the local area
- Commitment and reliability

Open House Festival is not able to accept applications from those who are not willing to commit to Open House Festival's aims and objectives or from those that Open House Festival considers to be unsuitable for the role.

Equality and Diversity

Open House Festival is committed to building a diverse and inclusive organisation that is responsive to the needs of everyone involved in the organisation. Open House Festival is also committed to equal opportunities at all stages of recruitment and selection. Recruitment, interviewing and selection of volunteers should always be carried out without regard to protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnerships; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation

Open House Festival seeks to promote a harmonious working environment for all its volunteers in an organisation where the dignity and self-esteem of individuals are important. Any behaviour which may cause offence to a member of staff or volunteer because of their disability, gender, marital status, religious belief, political opinion, age, race, colour or sexual orientation is not acceptable. We are committed to providing equal opportunities to our volunteers and to taking steps to ensure our volunteers are protected from discrimination.

Value and benefit that Volunteers bring to Open House Festival

Open House Festival recognises that volunteers are an enormous resource in helping to meet its aims and are so important to the delivery of Open House Festival Events. Open House Festival has worked hard to build a strong and dynamic festival volunteer programme.

Specifically, our volunteers:

- provide a valuable link between the Open House Festival and the local community.
- help keep everything running smoothly
- enrich the quality of delivery of Open House Festival Events
- offer specialist knowledge and skills
- contribute to the atmosphere of Open House Festival.

The benefits to a Volunteer of supporting Open House Festival

Supporting Open House Festival provides volunteers with:

- a chance to be part of and gain experience doing something they are passionate about



- opportunities for personal skills development and experiences.
- an opportunity to contribute to the regeneration of Bangor through art and culture.
- interaction with other volunteers and Open House Festival Staff

Open House Festival principles of working with Volunteers

Open House Festival has a number of defined principles and processes relating to a range of areas and aspects that underpin volunteer involvement in its activities. These are outlined below. The principles will ensure fair and equal treatment of all volunteers.

Polices for Volunteers to familiarise themselves with

All volunteers should also read the following polices which can be found on our volunteer page on the website. These can also be provided in hard copy if you contact the Volunteer Coordinator (details are at the end of this Policy)

- Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Anti-Harassment Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Volunteers Substance Misuse Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Smoking Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- I.T. and Communications Policy

Recruitment and appointment of Volunteers

Open House Festival requires the use of an application form to collect information on all prospective volunteers. Additionally, all volunteers will be formally interviewed to provide relevant information and explore their aspirations and the experience they can bring to Open House Festival. It is important for all involved to appreciate that the interview is not a competitive process and the sole selection criteria is suitability for the role.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar someone from volunteering with us. This will depend on the circumstances and background of the offence. Open House Festival asks all volunteers to complete self-declaration questions which are included within the application form. While volunteering with us we also expect our volunteers to let the Volunteer Coordinator know as soon possible if you become subject to any criminal proceedings charges or convictions.

Training

Volunteers will have a set of skills, knowledge and experience gained from their education, work, previous volunteering and life experiences. However, to ensure that



volunteers are appropriately equipped for their role each volunteer must prior to the festival, attend the appropriate training and induction session before they can volunteer at Open House Festival. These sessions are critical as it covers systems, roles and responsibilities, code of behavior, a review of relevant policies and health and safety information.

During the festival, all volunteers must attend the volunteer briefing session which takes place at the venue before the Open House Event starts. This is crucial as it will cover specific information relating to that venue, individual volunteer duties for that shift, and any exceptional health and safety issues relating to that event.

Appointment

Only when the selection process, background checks and training have been completed fully and it is agreed that the person is suitable for the role can a volunteer be appointed.

All volunteers must read the Volunteer Code of Behaviour which outlines what is expected from the volunteer and what they can expect from Open House Festival. In starting a volunteer role with Open House Festival, the volunteer commits to the aims, values and key policies of Open House Festival. They also commit to delivering the key tasks outlined in their role description and given to them by Open House Staff at each Open House Festival Event.

The Volunteer Code of Behaviour is binding in honour only and there is no intention to create a contract of employment between Open House Festival and volunteers. When you volunteer with us your status will be as a volunteer. Neither you nor we intend any employment relationship nor any employment rights or workers' rights to be created either now or at any time in the future as a result of you volunteering with us.

Once appointed the Volunteer Coordinator will be responsible for guiding and supporting the volunteer in their role and will be available to discuss any aspect of the volunteer's role.

Management and Support

Each volunteer will be provided with relevant management and support.

The Volunteer Coordinator will be present for the entirety of the Open House Festival month and for volunteer training prior to Open House Festival. During the Open House Festival volunteers working at specific sites will be supervised by the Event Manager however the Volunteer Coordinator will be contactable at all times. Volunteers can direct any questions or queries to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Open House Festival will keep in contact with volunteers by email, texts and phone calls.

Open House Festival will also provide appropriate recognition and occasions to celebrate volunteers and their work.



Open House Festival has a procedure to deal with any types of problems that arise and this will be carried out by an appropriate person to ensure the fair and equitable treatment of volunteers. The procedure is set out in our Complaints Policy which can be viewed in the Volunteer Page on our website

Assessment and Feedback

We are aware that some volunteers use their time at the festival as work experience to help them in their search for work opportunities. We support this and we want to help if we can. We have a 'Volunteer Assessment System' which can, on request, be used as the basis for a reference. It will cover issues such as:

- Training attended
- Number of shifts / hours worked
- Roles and responsibilities
- Time keeping
- Attitude, strengths and weaknesses

If a volunteer wants to be assessed, they should let us know before the Open House Festival begins. The Event Manager at the Open House Festival Event will complete the Volunteer Assessment Form on the volunteer's behalf. Using the information gathered from all the Volunteer Assessment Forms, the Volunteer Coordinator will then be able to complete a Summary Assessment, which can be supplied to potential employers.

Health and Safety

Open House Festival will ensure that all volunteers are provided with the appropriate information supervision and training required to enable them to complete voluntary work safely. This includes providing suitable systems and procedures and guidance as outlined in our Health and Safety Policy

Volunteers must take reasonable care of themselves and others while volunteering and follow any health and safety advice and instruction given for their role. Volunteers should co-operate with Open House Festival on health and safety matters and immediately report accidents or incidents including near misses. Volunteers should also report any concerns in relation to Health and Safety at Open House Events or any possible improvements, to a member of Open House Festival staff as soon as possible.

Volunteers should not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.

Open House Festival has a duty of care to volunteers to ensure they are supported in their role. If a volunteer finds themselves in a situation which is a threat to their personal safety their first point of contact should be the Event Manager or the Volunteer Coordinator or any other member of Open House Festival Staff who is available at the Open House Festival Event.



Expenses

We are very grateful to most volunteers for not only providing their time free, but also choosing to meet incidental expenses from within their own resources, i.e. at no charge to Open House Festival. Otherwise, with the number of volunteers involved, we could not afford to deliver the amount and variety of events as part of the Open House Festival. However, should you wish to claim travel expenses, you are entitled to do so through completing the Volunteer expense claim form.

When claiming your expenses, it is important to provide a receipt of payment along with your expenses form to the Volunteer Coordinator. If you are driving your own car, you may claim the standard mileage rate for volunteers of 30p per mile. Any receipts for public transport must be provided. Expenses can be claimed by filling in a Volunteer Expenses Claim Form, which should be returned to the Event Supervisor at the end of the shift, or to the Volunteer Coordinator at the end of the festival. Open House Festival does not cover expenses for food as this will be provided by Open House Festival for volunteers working over meal times

Insurance

Open House Festival provides Employers Liability, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity cover for all volunteers whilst actively engaged in volunteering for Open House Festival. Personal equipment and belongings however, are not covered under this insurance.

Confidentiality Copyright and Data Protection Issues

All volunteers are required to comply with Open House Festivals Data Protection Policy and to maintain confidentiality about any commercially sensitive information or information which is not public knowledge or details of a personal nature that they may gain access to during their festival work.

To effectively monitor the work that volunteers do and how they are managed, a personal information record is maintained by Open House Festival for all volunteers. This record includes: contact details and other relevant personal information given at time of application, records of previous volunteering and any complaints or grievances made or received. This information will be kept as computerised records in a safe and secure place.

Open House Festival in compliance with The General Data Protection Regulations 2018 will treat in confidence the information it holds about volunteers. The information will be held while there is a legitimate business purpose for doing so. Volunteers have the right to request to see all the information held about them by Open House Festival

Leaving Open House Festival

Volunteers are free to cease volunteering with Open House Festival at any time although wherever possible an agreed period leading up to this point would be helpful to give Open House Festival time to make any alternative arrangements required. It is possible that there may also be times when Open House Festival will



require a volunteer to cease volunteering for various reasons. Wherever possible we will offer the volunteer the opportunity to feedback before leaving their role and ensure they are appropriately thanked for their support.

Volunteer Feedback

We provide a range of opportunities to provide feedback on Open House Festival Events, the volunteering process and the support and management of volunteers. We always welcome informal feedback at any time and in addition all volunteers will get a feedback form, so they can tell us what worked and what didn't both for the volunteer during the Open House Festival. Volunteers are also asked to feedback in this form on any information received from attendees at the events. Volunteers are the eyes and ears of the festival and their views are invaluable, so we encourage them to take the time to fill this in and return it.

We invite volunteers to send all comments and suggestions and feedback including on this Volunteer Policy to

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