

They Eat Culture



Volunteer Handbook

Version 4

May 2011

They Eat Culture (TEC) has adopted the definition of volunteering contained in *Volunteering, Compact Code of Good Practice*, 2005:

“... any activity which involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups other than (or in addition to) close relatives.”

The purpose of this document is to ensure all volunteer placements are mutually valuable and rewarding for the individual and the organisation. This handbook sets out what a volunteer can expect from TEC and what TEC might reasonably expect from volunteers.

Contributions by volunteers are an important and valued part of the work of TEC. In return, TEC works towards providing an internship that will enhance a volunteer's skillset, meet their personal goals and objectives and reflect their interests.

Volunteer Roles

The volunteering experience can range from entry level to project management level. It can be on an ongoing basis, project specific, or time specific.

A volunteer will be assigned a specific role and this will be made clear in writing. Roles will complement the activities of paid staff but will not replace or stand instead of a paid position. Roles will be determined by how much time a volunteer can commit to, the skills a volunteer wants to develop and the work TEC is engaged in at that time.

Volunteers are encouraged to use their initiative and develop their role within the organisation as opportunities and circumstances allow. TEC will encourage independence and self reliance, but volunteers must always consult with paid staff. This is especially important to avoid risk to volunteers and others and to ensure all activities remain within the protection of our insurance cover.

The volunteer role will be reviewed at agreed points during the internship and may be amended where an obvious departure from the original role is seen to be emerging.

The cost of volunteering should not discourage individuals from undertaking unpaid work for the organisation. TEC will agree terms on a case by case basis and reimburse reasonable expenses incurred during the course of the internship.

What volunteers can expect of TEC:

- to be given meaningful assignments.
- to be given clear roles which match the needs of the organisation with the skills, knowledge, experience, motivations and aspirations of the volunteer.
- to have effective and competent supervision, support, instruction and training.
- full involvement and participation and a friendly and congenial atmosphere – making volunteering fun.
- recognition and celebration of work done, loyalty and dedication.
- to be respected and to be listened to – two way communication will be encouraged.
- fair resolution of complaints and problems.
- assurance of health, safety and welfare whilst undertaking volunteering activities.
- reimbursement of reasonable out of pocket expenses.
- to receive written information and guidance where appropriate (e.g. on policies, procedures and any work in the organisation that may impact on the volunteer's role) offered in alternative formats to suit specific needs.

What TEC expects of volunteers:

- to co-operate with other volunteers and paid members of staff to achieve the aims of the organisation.
- to aim for high standards of efficiency, reliability and quality in all aspects of contribution.
- to encourage two way communication with other volunteers and paid staff, fostering a pleasant and friendly atmosphere.
- to support and comply with TEC's Equal Opportunities Policy and help promote the diversity of staff and supporters.
- to work within the law.
- to take reasonable care of their own health and safety whilst volunteering and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- to sign up to the Volunteer Agreement.

Ambassador for TEC

By volunteering at TEC, volunteers are representing the organisation and contributing to raising TEC's profile. Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves within TEC policies and codes of conduct.

Health & Safety

TEC is committed to ensuring and maintaining safe and healthy working conditions and equipment for all staff. Where situations arise in which healthy and safety aims appear in conflict with the aims of the organisation or an aspect of its work, TEC will seek means of addressing the safety needs effectively. TEC aims to improve standards, predict potential problems and institute the necessary measures to prevent them recurring.

It is TEC's policy to comply with all extant Health and Safety legislation including The Health and Safety at Work Act and all regulations passed to implement EC Directives on Health and Safety. TEC management has a duty to ensure that health and safety is given appropriate consideration with other requirements.

It is the duty of all TEC employees and volunteers to have due regard for their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions. There is a duty to co-operate with management to enable all necessary compliance with safety legislation and not to misuse or interfere with anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

TEC's aim is to encourage a working atmosphere that is open, positive, helpful and friendly, where all staff are inspired to give their best and are valued for the contribution they make. All individuals are expected to accept personal responsibility for their actions and always be aware of the impact of their behaviour on colleagues and TEC clients.

Approval/permission

Volunteers must always seek and obtain approval from TEC where there is likely to be an impact on the organisation's budget or other resources in carrying out their role.

Volunteers must always seek and obtain approval from TEC with regard to external communication in writing or electronically.

Confidentiality

Volunteers may need to exercise confidentiality and diplomacy on certain issues relating to the work of the organisation. Situations where this applies will be made clear to volunteers in the induction process and volunteers will be asked to adhere to a confidentiality agreement as defined by TEC.

Conflict of interest

Where there is, or appears to be, a conflict between the interest of TEC and other interests a volunteer may have, the volunteer must declare the interest to their supervisor unreservedly.

Data Protection

Volunteers who collect or administer any personal data on TEC's clients, members or supporters will be required by law to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Volunteers have the same rights under the Data Protection Act 1998 as TEC employees.

Copyright & Intellectual Property

Copyright to any original works produced in the course of volunteering and rights to Intellectual Property developed during the internship (including creative and artistic work, research, educational, policy, commercial development work etc.) will be negotiated with volunteers on a case by case basis.