



North East Opera Volunteer Policy

1. Introduction

North East Opera (NEO) aims to give people a voice who otherwise are marginalised in society and volunteers can make a vital contribution. We recognise the added value that volunteers bring to our organisation and those who use our services. Volunteer involvement in this organisation does not replace or devalue the role of paid staff.

Within NEO volunteers are invited to be involved in:

- Board of Trustees
- Our weekly workshops, rehearsals, and performances

NEO aims to have a reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationship with our volunteers; with their involvement informing and developing our work, and our work enabling individuals to learn skills and achieve personal development through their volunteering.

The involvement of volunteers will be guided by the following principles of good practice:

- the tasks to be performed by volunteers will be clearly defined, so that all everyone is sure of their respective roles and responsibilities;
- the organisation will comply with the Data Protection Act in the use of data held on all volunteers;
- volunteering opportunities will complement rather than replace the work of paid staff
- volunteers will be provided with regular opportunities to share ideas/concerns with a named contact in line with our Support and Supervision Policy;
- all existing and future policies will be checked as to how they affect volunteers

2. The Purpose of this Policy

By adopting this policy NEO aims to:

- highlight and acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers;
- reflect the purpose, values, standards and strategies of the organisation in its approach to involving volunteers;
- recognise the respective roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers;
- confirm this organisation's commitment to involving volunteers in its work;
- establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers; and
- ensure the ongoing quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by our volunteers;

This policy provides an overview of the activities carried out by volunteers currently and provides a basis for the expansion, if required, for the role of volunteers alongside paid staff. This document and the associated policy, procedures and guidance provide a framework for the involvement of volunteers.

3. Recruitment and Selection

NEO will adhere to its equalities, diversity, and inclusion policy when recruiting and selecting volunteers. All potential volunteers will be asked to complete a volunteer's application/registration form. Written task descriptions will outline time, commitment, necessary skills and actual duties. Where there is specific training required this will be highlighted as part of the recruitment process. Where there is a requirement for a Disclosure Check this will be highlighted as part of the recruitment process. All volunteers may be

required to provide 2 references. Where individuals cannot be placed, we will endeavour to refer them to another agency who can support them to find a volunteering opportunity.

Support and Supervision

Once placed, we will expect volunteers to comply with existing policies and procedures. All volunteers are covered under NEO Public Liability Insurance.

All volunteers will have an induction to their volunteering which will involve an overview of the relevant policies and procedures. Following Induction, volunteers will have regular support and supervision meetings with a named contact to identify areas for development, or to discuss any issues. A record of these discussions will be held as part of the individual volunteer's records. Volunteers can have access to their records at any time.

Where volunteers have holidays or other commitments which mean that they cannot attend their normal volunteering, they should advise their named contact to ensure that we can arrange alternative cover. If volunteers require a longer break from their volunteering, they should discuss this with their named contact. NEO will endeavour to be as flexible as possible to accommodate the needs of volunteers.

Volunteers can access learning and development opportunities which are relevant to their volunteering role throughout their time with NEO. Opportunities for Learning and Development will form part of the discussions at support and supervision sessions.

Problem Solving

Where a concern is highlighted – either by a volunteer or about a volunteer, this will be dealt with using NEO's Safeguarding Policy.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for the implementations, monitoring and review of the policy and procedures lies with the Director, David Pisaro and NEO's Board of Trustees. Implementation and adherence to this policy is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers within the organisation.



June 2023