

Volunteer Policy

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People Affected by This Document

- Volunteers
- Associate members
- Trustees
- Executive Committee members
- Working group members
- Members

1. Policy Statement

As a volunteer-run organisation, we are entirely dependent on the vital role volunteers play in the work of OxCAN. We appreciate and value this significant contribution that volunteers make to the aims and objectives of the charity.

We provide appropriate support and supervision to allow volunteers to realise their full potential in their roles with OxCAN. We are committed to compliance with all relevant legislative obligations relating to the environment in which our volunteers conduct their role.

We will ensure that volunteers are safe, and their wellbeing is protected at all times, and offer clear procedures for what to do if things go wrong.

2. Volunteer Recruitment & Selection

2.1 Eligibility

The criteria for what constitutes an OxCAN volunteer, and the responsibilities attached, are set out in the OxCAN Membership Policy. OxCAN will consider involving any OxCAN (associate) member who wishes to volunteer with us. Prospective volunteers must demonstrate a commitment to the aims of OxCAN and their availability as volunteers must align with the needs of OxCAN.

We provide a volunteer recruitment process, which is free from any unlawful discrimination.

For some volunteer roles, specific selection criteria may apply to determine the suitability of a volunteer candidate for a particular role. In addition, selection criteria may become relevant where there are more applicants for a particular volunteer role than positions available. Selection criteria are based on the relevant skills, qualifications, and experience of volunteer candidates.

2.2 Recruitment & Selection Process

Depending on the role to be filled, our recruitment and selection process may include the following stages:

- Preparing a Volunteer Role Description.
- Preparing and placing a volunteer recruitment advertisement.
- Agreeing selection criteria.
- Meeting volunteer candidates, collectively or individually, to discuss the nature and expectations of the volunteer role.

- Shortlisting applicants against agreed selection criteria.
- Notifying interview candidates and unsuccessful applicants.
- Interviewing of candidate volunteers by a suitably briefed interview panel.
- Assessing candidates against agreed selection criteria.
- Offering a volunteer role to the successful candidate(s).
- Notifying unsuccessful candidates.
- Issuing a volunteer agreement for the volunteer's signature.
- Completion of vetting (if applicable).
- Providing interview feedback to unsuccessful candidates who request it.

2.3 Appointments

The Trustee Board shall carry out the appointments process for the CEO role, as well as ratifying all Executive Committee and managerial appointments. The appointments process for Trustees is prescribed in the constitution.

The Executive Committee shall carry out the appointments process for all existing Executive Committee member and manager roles, excluding the CEO role. All such appointments are subject to ratification by the Trustee Board.

The Directors of Working Groups shall carry out the appointments process to their respective Working Groups. All such appointments are subject to ratification by the Executive Committee.

3. Confidentiality & Data Protection

OxCAN respects the right to privacy and confidentiality of our volunteers and prospective volunteers. OxCAN will, from time to time, while operating the charity, exercising its legal rights, and performing its legal obligations, need to process personal data.

Before a volunteer commences their role, they will be invited to an induction, wherever possible. As part of their induction, the volunteer will be provided with information about the role. The information will specify the responsibilities and tasks involved in the volunteer's role, OxCAN's expectation as to how these responsibilities and tasks will be carried out, and any other relevant information applicable to the role. The volunteer will have an opportunity to voice any queries

they may have about their role. In addition, wherever possible, the volunteer will be provided with information about:

- The vision, mission, and organisational structure of OxCAN.
- How their role fits within the broader purpose of OxCAN.
- The support available to volunteers in OxCAN, including key contacts, information about the volunteer's supervisor/line manager, and communication channels within OxCAN.
- The type of commitment expected of volunteers.
- Any facilities, software, or equipment necessary for the volunteer to carry out their role.
- Health and safety, including any applicable risk assessments in respect of the volunteer's role.
- OxCAN's Code of Conduct for Volunteers.
- Details of OxCAN's grievance and disciplinary procedure.
- All other relevant policies and procedures of OxCAN.

4. Provision of OxCAN Electronic Mail

Personal electronic mail identity/accounts are provided to the OxCAN Executive Committee members, the OxCAN managers, the OxCAN Trustees. Additionally, they may be provided to any other OxCAN Volunteer at the discretion of the CEO. Such accounts are the property of OxCAN and held exclusively on behalf of OxCAN. At all times, OxCAN has the right to access information from such electronic mail accounts. At the end of the Volunteer's authorised position, they shall relinquish their account that OxCAN has provided forthwith on leaving their position.

Should a volunteer not relinquish their email account/identity or data related to that identity or should they continue to use his or her email identity/account, the matter will be referred to the CEO for resolution or, if it involves the CEO, will be referred to the Board of Trustees. The Trustee Board may rescind access to these accounts at their discretion.

If any matter referred to in the previous paragraph to the CEO cannot be resolved, the matter will be forwarded to the Trustees for resolution.

In the event the Trustees are unable to resolve the matter, it will be forwarded to a third-party mediator to work with the organisation to seek a resolution.

5. Equality, Diversity, & Inclusion

OxCAN is committed to equality, fairness, and respect for all our volunteers and staff. We work to encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion among our volunteers. The aim is for our staff and volunteers to be truly representative of all sections of society and our members, and for each volunteer or staff member to feel respected and able to give their best.

We are committed against any unlawful discrimination against staff, volunteers, or members of the public, relating to any of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

This includes opposition to discrimination in:

- pay and benefits
- terms and conditions of employment or volunteering
- dealing with grievances and discipline
- dismissal
- selection for employment, volunteering, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities

OxCAN commits to:

- A. Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion in the organisation.
- B. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff and volunteers are recognised and valued.

- a. All staff or volunteers should understand they, as well as their organisation, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment or volunteering, against fellow employees, volunteers, members, or the public.
- C. Take seriously any complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, volunteers, members, the public, and any others during the organisation's activities.
 - a. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.
 - b. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations.
- D. Where appropriate make opportunities for training, development, and progress available to all staff or volunteers, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully used to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- E. Make decisions concerning staff and volunteers on the basis of merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- F. Review employment practices and procedures, when necessary, to ensure fairness, and update them and this policy to take account of changes in the law.

6. Expenses

OxCAN recognises that the reimbursement of expenses incurred while volunteering is important from an equal-opportunities point of view. This is necessary to ensure that all individuals have access to voluntary opportunities.

The rules for expense reimbursement are provided in clause 4.7 of OxCAN's Finance Policy, and should be referenced prior to incurring any expenses on behalf of OxCAN.

7. Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct for volunteers sets out standards of behaviour expected from volunteers of OxCAN. All volunteers should ensure that they have read and comply with this Code of Conduct.

Volunteers should maintain the highest standards of behaviour in the performance of their duties by:

- A. Fulfilling their role as outlined in their volunteer role description to a satisfactory standard.
- B. Performing their volunteer role to the best of their ability in a safe, efficient, and competent way.
- C. Following the charity's policies and procedures as well as any instructions or directions reasonably given to them.
- D. Acting honestly, responsibly, and with integrity.
- E. Treating others with fairness, equality, dignity, and respect.
- F. Raising concerns about possible wrongdoing witnessed by the volunteer during the volunteer's role with OxCAN with the CEO or Trustees.
- G. Meeting time and task commitments and providing sufficient notice when they will not be available so that alternative arrangements can be made.
- H. Acting in a way that is in line with the purpose and values of the charity and that enhances the work of the charity.
- I. Always communicating respectfully and honestly.
- J. Observing safety procedures, including any obligations concerning the safety, health, and welfare of other people in line with training provided to volunteers.
- K. Reporting any health and safety concerns.
- L. Directing any questions regarding OxCAN's policies, procedures, support, or supervision to the CEO.
- M. Addressing any issues or difficulties about any aspect of their role or how they are managed in line with the below grievance policy.
- N. Declaring any interests that may conflict with their role or the work of the charity (e.g., business interests or employment). If any doubt arises as to what constitutes a conflict of interest, volunteers may seek guidance from OxCAN's CEO and consult OxCAN's Conflict of Interest Policy.

- O. Keeping confidential matters confidential.
- P. Exercising caution and care with any documents, material, or devices containing confidential information, and at the end of their involvement with OxCAN, returning any such documents and material in their possession.
- Q. Seeking authorisation before communicating externally on behalf of OxCAN.

Volunteers are expected NOT to:

- A. Bring the charity into disrepute (including via email, social media, engaging with media, etc.).
- B. Engage in any activity that may cause physical or mental harm or distress to another person (such as verbal abuse, physical abuse, assault, bullying, or discrimination or harassment on the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or race).
- C. Be affected irresponsibly by alcohol, drugs, or medication in such a way that would affect their abilities to perform their duties and responsibilities while volunteering.
- D. Provide a false or misleading statement, declaration, document, record, or claim in respect of OxCAN, its volunteers, employees, or Trustees.
- E. Engage in illegal activity while conducting their role.
- F. Improperly disclose, during or after their involvement with OxCAN, confidential information gained during their role with OxCAN.

Where a volunteer is found to be in breach of the standards outlined in this Code of Conduct or any of OxCAN's other policies and procedures, this may result in the volunteer's position being terminated. Notwithstanding the foregoing, volunteers should note that OxCAN may terminate a volunteer's position without cause.

Volunteers acknowledge that no employment relationship is created in the context of their role with OxCAN.

8. Grievances Policy

The Disputes chapter of the constitution stipulates the procedure for management of disputes. This Grievances Policy implements the provisions of that chapter. All grievances shall be

handled confidentially and in good faith. False or malicious grievances may result in disciplinary action.

8.1 Dealing with Grievances Informally

If you have a grievance or complaint about your work or someone you work or volunteer with, you should start by speaking with the relevant person directly, to seek a resolution wherever possible.

If, after this initial engagement, the issue remains unresolved or you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may formally escalate the grievance to the CEO.

Where the grievance is with the CEO, the matter may be escalated to the Chair of the Trustees or another designated Trustee.

If your grievance is with (a) Trustee(s), you should contact that (those) Trustee(s), to attempt to resolve the grievance informally.

8.2 Formal Grievance

If the matter is serious or you wish to raise it formally, you should put your formal grievance in writing.

Formal grievances should normally be sent to the CEO. If your grievance is with the CEO and you feel unable to approach them, you should put your grievance in writing to the Chair of Trustees or another designated Trustee. If your grievance is with (a) Trustee(s), you should address it to the remaining Trustees.

8.3 Grievance Hearing

The CEO or Trustees - depending on to whom you sent your grievance (i.e., the CEO, or the Trustees if the grievance concerns the CEO or Trustee) - will arrange a meeting, within five working days, to discuss your grievance. You have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or representative.

In line with the principles of fair hearing, the individual against whom the grievance is made must be present at the grievance hearing and will be provided with a copy of the grievance that sets out all allegations made against them in sufficient detail and in advance of the hearing, to enable them to respond meaningfully.

After the meeting, the CEO or Trustees will provide you with a written decision, usually within two working days. If further information is required before a decision can be made, you will be informed of this and given a revised timescale.

8.4 Appeal

If you are dissatisfied with the decision on your grievance, you may submit a formal appeal. Appeals should be made in writing and addressed to the Trustees. You should also notify the CEO - or, where the grievance concerns the CEO or a Trustee, the Trustees - of your intention to appeal.

In your written appeal, you should clearly state the grounds for your appeal. These may include:

- A) a procedural irregularity;
- B) an unreasonable original decision;
- C) failure to provide clear reasons for the decision; and/or
- D) the existence of material evidence not previously considered, along with valid reasons for not having presented it earlier.

You will be invited to an appeal hearing with the Trustees, within five working days. You have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or representative.

In line with the principles of fair hearing, the individual against whom the grievance was made must also be present at the appeal hearing and will be given access to the appeal submission and any new evidence raised, in order to respond appropriately.

Following the hearing, the Trustees will provide a written decision, within two working days. The decision of the Trustees is final.

8.5 Mediation

At any stage of the grievance, you may request the grievance be handled with mediation. Mediation is an alternative dispute resolution process where a third party is appointed to guide the parties to resolve the grievance. The mediator can be someone from inside or outside the CIO.

All parties to the grievance must agree to mediation, and jointly decide on which mediator to appoint. Once the mediator is appointed, the parties to the dispute shall attempt in good faith to work with the mediator to resolve the dispute.

Where there is a cost for a mediator, that cost is to be equitably shared by the parties.

9. Volunteer Charter

I confirm that I have read and understood the OxCAN Volunteering Policy and will commit to following the Code of Conduct and meeting my obligations under the charity's policies and procedures.

I acknowledge that volunteering is a freely made choice and as such this does not constitute a contract of employment.

9.1 Introduction

- A. OxCAN acknowledges that any volunteer activity is a freely made choice of the individual.
- B. OxCAN acknowledges that volunteering is mutually beneficial.
- C. OxCAN recognises and values the work of volunteers.
- D. Volunteering is open to all OxCAN members and OxCAN uses fair, efficient, and consistent recruitment processes.
- E. Volunteers should be able to perform their duties in safe, secure, and healthy environments that are free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, violence, and discrimination.

9.2 Commitments of All Volunteers

- A. Ensuring confidentiality of the personal information you provide, using data protection legislation.
- B. Providing a thorough induction on the work of OxCAN, including its vision, mission and values and all related policies.
- C. Providing a role outline and clear expectations.
- D. We will reimburse you for authorised expenses conducted in relation to your voluntary work. All expenses must be pre-approved in line with OxCAN's Finance Policy.
- E. If you should experience any problems or difficulties while volunteering with us, or in the event of an unresolved problem, you should speak with your volunteer supervisor, in the first instance, or raise the matter directly with the OxCAN CEO.
- F. Keeping you informed of any changes in our volunteer requirements, as well as new developments within OxCAN.

9.3 What We Expect from Our Volunteers

- A. We expect volunteers to commit to our charitable objectives and to abide by our values in all activities.
- B. We require volunteers to meet reporting requirements, as set out in your role description, and to maintain regular contact with your volunteer supervisor and line manager, informing them if your contact details change. Should your circumstances change and, where these may affect your volunteering with us, you need to let us know as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.
- C. We expect volunteers to be dependable, conducting their agreed role and attending meetings regularly and on time. Volunteers who do not attend six consecutive meetings without good reason may be asked to step down.
- D. We expect volunteers to be professional and courteous with other volunteers, members, trustees, and stakeholders.
- E. Volunteers must ensure that confidential information regarding the charity is always maintained.
- F. Volunteers should understand that their relationship with OxCAN could end if their actions are detrimental to OxCAN.

By signing below, you, the volunteer, indicate that you have read in full and commit to the Volunteer Charter above.

The Volunteer:

Signed:

Full Name:

Date:

On Behalf of OxCAN:

Signed:

Full Name:

Date: