



POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Pyramid of Arts

Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy for Arts Volunteers

Policy Statement

This policy explains how we will recruit, induct and support new arts volunteers in order that they will fully understand our work, philosophy and their role within the organisation.

Our intention is for Pyramid groups to form the basis of genuine communities of interest in which people with learning disabilities can contribute equally with their non-learning disabled peers, and where they have opportunities to form friendships and social networks with people who are outside the parent/ carer/ teacher relationships which dominate so much of their lives.

Recruitment and Selection

Pyramid of Arts operates a rolling programme of induction, so applications are welcome at any time. If there are no current arts volunteer vacancies, we will (with permission) hold the details of any applicants for two years and notify them when a place in a group becomes available.

Requests for application packs should be addressed to the Operations Coordinator, who will arrange for interested persons to receive:

- An introductory letter explaining the application procedure
- Membership application form
- Equal Opportunities monitoring form
- Equal Opportunities explanation
- 'Arts Volunteer' role description
- General information sheet about Pyramid of Arts
- Our latest newsletter or annual report
- This induction policy

On receipt of an application form, the Operations Coordinator will

- ask the Groups Coordinator to contact the applicant to arrange an interview
- apply for two written references (as provided on the application form)

Interviews are conducted by the Groups Coordinator or a Project Coordinator, with the aim of finding out

- more about the applicant's interest in and experience of the arts
- more about the applicant's interest in and experience of learning disability
- the applicant's availability to attend Pyramid of Arts activities
- what the applicant is looking to gain from volunteering with us

Equally, the interview is an opportunity for us to tell the applicant

- about the ethos of the organisation and how we work
- what we expect from our volunteers in terms of commitment
- about training opportunities

... and to answer any questions they may have.

After interview and having received two references, the Coordinator will decide if the applicant meets the criteria in the Arts Volunteer Role Description. A four-week trial placement will be offered to successful candidates.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity amongst all participants and staff is valued and individual skills will be promoted and utilised. Volunteers will be provided with a copy of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and expected to uphold its values at all times.

Pyramid of Arts will always seek to make reasonable adjustments in order for volunteers to participate fully in our activities. Volunteers should speak freely to the Coordinator conducting their interview about any support needs they have.

Security and Screening

Pyramid of Arts believes that everyone involved in the organisation has a right to be valued as an individual, to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be safe. Volunteers will be provided Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policies Summary document. The full safeguarding policies are provided and discussed as part of the Foundation Training (see below). In terms of screening applicants, the key points in the policies are that:

- All volunteer applicants are required to complete and sign an application form, attend an interview and provide contact details for two referees (which will be taken up prior to interview)
- Proof of identity is essential and Pyramid of Arts will apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate for all applicants
 - Proof of identity (*accepted documents will be according to latest DBS guidance*) must be provided by the applicant at their interview and they will be required to complete a DBS application at the end of their four-week trial period.
- Pyramid of Arts can decide to exclude someone from volunteering if there are any doubts about their identity, references or suitability. This decision would be made by senior management
- Applicants will be told that the work and contact they will have with children require us to ask them to declare any criminal convictions they may have which involve abuse against children, however old the conviction(s) may be. This is an exemption from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

- All volunteers must agree to abide by the Pyramid of Arts Safeguarding Policies. The interviewer must make sure that applicants are aware of and understand their obligations under these policies
- Information gathered during the screening process (references, DBS certificate etc.) will be treated in the strictest confidence and held in accordance with the Pyramid of Arts Data Protection Policy and Confidentiality Statement (available on request)

Health and Safety

Everyone who takes part in Pyramid of Arts' activities has a responsibility to keep themselves and others safe. New volunteers will be provided with a copy of the Health and Safety Policy for guidance.

Staff and core workers have the responsibility of undertaking formal risk assessments wherever needed, and disseminating relevant information to volunteers. A copy of the full Risk Assessment and Management Policy is available from the Operations Coordinator.

Support and Training

The first point of contact for a new volunteer is the core worker for their allocated group. The core worker will make introductions with other group members; explain the current project and any procedures relevant to the venue or activity (e.g. evacuation procedure). The core worker is responsible for ensuring new members 'settle in'.

New volunteers complete a four-week trial period in their allocated group, after which there is an informal review with the group's core worker. This is an opportunity to feed back about how they are settling in and to talk about any concerns or issues.

On-going support is offered through weekly debriefing meetings at the end of each session for core workers, lead artists and volunteers.

If for any reason a volunteer cannot talk to their core worker or the core worker is not available, they are free to contact the group's Coordinator, in confidence, via the office.

Pyramid of Arts will further provide three group support and training meetings per year for all volunteers, core workers and lead artists, as an open forum to meet each other and share good practice. These are referred to as CAV Meetings.

All volunteers are required to complete the Pyramid of Arts Foundation Training course, which explores the organisation's ethos and working practices as well as covering key information around Policies and Procedures and Health and Safety. The course is run at least twice per year.

Volunteers will also be offered occasional additional training from other agencies, via Pyramid of Arts. This includes Emergency First Aid and Safeguarding Young People.

Expenses

Volunteers are able to claim back reasonable travel costs for attending group sessions, up to a maximum of £12 per round trip.

Claims should be made directly to the group core worker on a weekly basis, and they will reimburse the volunteer in cash.

Public transport: Volunteers must give their bus / rail ticket to the core worker as proof of purchase. Claims can be made a week in arrears if the ticket is needed for the return journey.

If a volunteer uses a weekly bus pass, Pyramid of Arts will pay for one per month (provided that volunteer attends 4+ sessions in that month). The process for claiming is the same as above.

Private vehicles: Before making their first mileage claim, the volunteer must present their full driving licence to the core worker and both sign the 'driving licence check' form. This is an important legal requirement. Driving licences will then be checked again the following September, and from then on an annual basis. The volunteer must tell the core worker how many miles they have travelled and will be reimbursed at a rate of 40p per mile.

Bike mileage is paid at 20p per mile.

If a volunteer has a large weekly travel expense which the core worker cannot pay from the group's float money, it is possible to make a claim on a monthly basis instead. The volunteer and core worker should complete a 'volunteer expenses' sheet on a weekly basis, and the core worker then submits the claim, along with their own paperwork, at the end of the month. The volunteer should provide the Finance Operations Coordinator with his/her bank details, in order to receive their reimbursement via bank transfer.

In exceptional circumstances, volunteers can take a taxi instead of using public transport (e.g. if traveling alone at night.)

Insurance

Pyramid of Arts has Employers Liability Insurance which covers against injury or illness arising from volunteering with us. A copy of the insurance certificate is on display in the registered office.

Volunteer applicants are advised at the interview stage that using personal vehicles for voluntary purposes may not be automatically covered by their car insurance. Pyramid of Arts strongly recommends that volunteers contact their insurance company to make a full disclosure of their activities and ensure that they have adequate protection. Pyramid of Arts is not responsible for paying any extra premium imposed by the insurance company for using a personal vehicle for voluntary work.

Pyramid of Arts does not take responsibility for the loss or theft of personal belongings. Volunteers are advised not to bring valuables to sessions and to keep personal possessions with them at all times.

Confidentiality

Pyramid of Arts respects the privacy of all members and takes its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act seriously. Pyramid of Arts will store information about volunteers as necessary for safety, effective communication and monitoring purposes. The Data Protection Policy and Confidentiality Statement are available on request or online at <http://pyramid-of-arts.org.uk/about/policies-and-procedures/>. Volunteers are entitled to see all the information Pyramid of Arts holds about them and should make a request to the Operations Coordinator for copies.

Volunteers are expected to keep any information they learn about staff or fellow members confidential. This could be related to someone's health and support needs, or personal information such as phone numbers and email addresses.

An exception is made if the volunteer has reason to believe that someone is at risk, in which case they should refer to the Safeguarding Policies (available online as above) for further guidance.

Data Protection and Confidentiality are covered in the Foundation Training, as mentioned on page 3.

Problems and Complaints

We endeavour to resolve issues quickly and without escalation where possible. In the first instance, a volunteer should notify their core worker if there is a problem / difficult situation in their group. The core worker can act as an intermediary if needed.

More general (non-group related) issues can be addressed to the Operations Coordinator, who will try to resolve the issue, or refer it to the relevant member of staff.

Volunteers can request a copy of the Compliments and Complaints Procedure and follow the guidance therein if they want to make a formal complaint, which will be investigated by the appropriate member of staff.

If a complaint is made against a volunteer, Pyramid of Arts will follow the Complaints Procedure (and, if relevant, the Safeguarding Procedure). We will ensure that the volunteer is kept informed, and has fair opportunity to respond to any allegation.

Questions and Further Guidance

Any queries related to this policy or requests for further information can be addressed to the Operations Coordinator.

Policy Review

All Pyramid of Arts policies and procedures are regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees. Feedback is welcome and can be submitted via the Operations Coordinator.