

# young at art. ©

## Volunteer Policy

**Young at Art's vision is to make life for children and young people as creative as possible through engagement with the arts.**

**It is committed to encouraging opportunities for inclusion and participation. This includes developing skills, employability and relationships, and generating alternative opportunities for engagement in cultural provision, e.g. through volunteering.**

The aim of Young at Art's Volunteer Policy is to support Young at Art's volunteers in delivery of programmes for children and young people.

The policies of Young at Art are established and overseen by the Board of Directors which delegates responsibility for implementation to the executive staff and, through line management, to other staff, artists and volunteers. No policy within the organisation operates in isolation and as such, other policies will influence (health and safety, equality, etc) the procedures addressed through this policy. The Policy informs and guides both staff and volunteers involved in projects and programmes run by Young at Art. It ensures that appropriate procedures are put in place to safeguard the welfare of volunteers.

Young at Art accepts and recognises its responsibilities to volunteers and will endeavour to carry these out by:

- Valuing the involvement of volunteers in its work because they help reflect the interests, needs and resources of the community Young at Art aims to serve, and they bring a unique perspective to the organisation's work.
- Recognising volunteers as an essential part of the team, with a distinctive but complementary role alongside paid staff.
- Benefiting from the skills, experience and enthusiasm of volunteers and believing that volunteers should also be able to gain personal benefits from the experience.
- Committing to managing volunteers in a way that ensures that the needs of both parties are met.
- Striving to create a diverse and inclusive organisation within a diverse and inclusive community.
- Ensuring equality of access to high quality volunteer opportunities and equality of treatment for its volunteers in all policies and practices.

Young at Art is committed to review of its policy and procedures by the Board of Directors at regular intervals, with reference to changes in practice and legislation.

### **Definition**

For the purpose of this policy a volunteer is defined as an individual who carries out an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit someone (individuals or groups) other than or in addition to close relatives, or to benefit the environment.

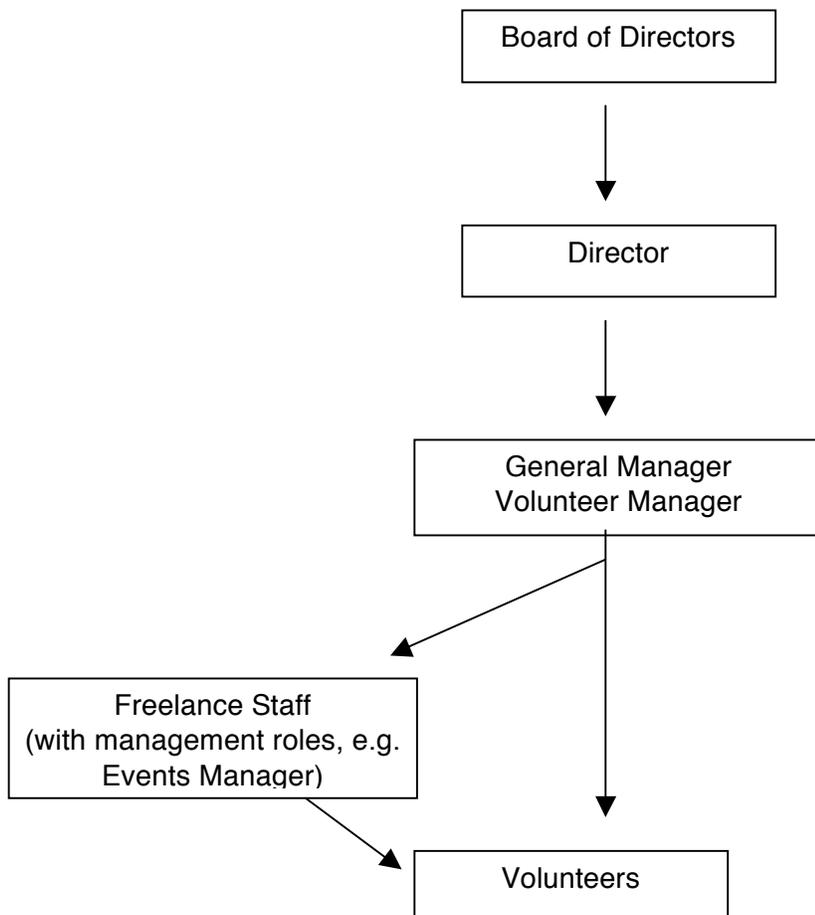
## Volunteer Procedures

Young at Art has agreed procedures for the implementation of all its policies. It has also established roles and responsibilities to ensure the policy is upheld.

The procedures are detailed in the following sections:

1. Preparation & planning
2. Recruitment & selection
3. Management of Volunteers
4. Training
5. Complaints
6. Evaluation
7. Management, monitoring & review
8. Appendix: Volunteer Policy Public Statement

Final responsibility rests with the Board of Directors, which delegates authority to staff as follows:



## **1. PREPARATION AND PLANNING**

- 1.1 Young at Art identifies roles for volunteers which extend the work of the organisation. Volunteers are involved in project roles which complement, but never substitute, the work of paid staff.
- 1.2 Volunteers will not be used in times of industrial action to do the work of paid staff. They may continue with their regular tasks, but will not be asked to undertake additional duties.
- 1.3 All volunteers are provided with a written role description, outlining the purpose, tasks and main requirements of their role. Young at Art reviews role descriptions once a year.
- 1.4 Volunteers are fully protected by the organisation's public and employer's liability insurance. However, drivers using their cars in connection with voluntary work must inform their own insurance company to ensure adequate and continued cover.
- 1.5 Young at Art acknowledges that the essence of volunteering is the giving, freely, of one's services and, while volunteers may not accept any form of financial reward for their services, they should not expect to be out of pocket as a result. Volunteers will be offered reimbursement for out of pocket expenses, on production of receipts authorised by their supervisor.
- 1.6 Young at Art endeavours to provide adequate and appropriate facilities, equipment and resources to enable volunteers to fulfil their roles.
- 1.7 The Director is responsible for the overall management of volunteer involvement, including overseeing the implementation of this policy and dealing with any complaint or grievance relating to volunteers. The volunteer's designated supervisor provides support and supervision, identifies training requirements, countersigns expenses claims etc. All staff required to undertake such duties are provided with training in the management, supervision, support and training of volunteers.

## **2. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

- 2.1 Young at Art is committed to representing all the people of Northern Ireland and wishes to see all sections of the community represented among its volunteers. Volunteer opportunities are widely promoted throughout Northern Ireland, and Young at Art endeavours to make recruitment and selection materials available in a format accessible to any individual or group, upon request. Furthermore, Young at Art regularly reviews the make-up of the volunteer team to identify and target under-represented group(s).
- 2.2 Young at Art implements a fair, effective and open system in the recruitment and selection of volunteers and treats all information collected in this process confidentially. All potential volunteers must complete application forms and provide references. Additional measures may be implemented depending on the nature of the volunteer role and AccessNI criminal record checks are conducted if the role requires the appointee to work in a regulated position and/or care position within the meaning of the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 (POCVA).
- 2.3 The process is conducted by appropriately briefed/trained staff and aims to allow both parties to give and receive sufficient information to assess whether the volunteer opportunities available match the potential volunteer's skills, qualities and needs. If unsuccessful, individuals will be offered an opportunity to discuss the outcome and identify possible alternatives within or outside of Young at Art.

## **3. MANAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS**

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- 3.1 All volunteers are provided with an induction prior to commencing their voluntary work. The induction: provides background information on Young at Art; explains its structures and procedures, organisational policies and codes of practice; describes the volunteer role and the work team and outlines how s/he will be supported, including practical information such as claiming expenses, etc.
- 3.2 All volunteers are provided with a written letter of welcome at induction, which outlines the expectations and responsibilities of both the volunteer and Young at Art. This agreement may be reviewed at any time with the consent of the volunteer and his/her supervisor.
- 3.3 All volunteers are made aware that the Administrator is their main point of contact (although the Director can also be contacted in case of an emergency or if the Administrator is unavailable). The Administrator can provide day-to-day help and guidance on any issue related to the voluntary work and is responsible for providing regular support to, and supervision of, the volunteer.

## **4. TRAINING**

- 4.1 Young at Art is committed to improving the personal and professional effectiveness of volunteers. Volunteers may be required to attend in-house training sessions that are relevant to their voluntary work.
- 4.2 Volunteers may also apply to the Director for financial and practical support to attend external courses, where they can be shown to have a clear relevance to the voluntary work. Volunteers attending approved training courses, internal or external, may do so within their normal hours of voluntary work and may reclaim out-of-pocket expenses.

## **5. COMPLAINTS**

- 5.1 Young at Art aims to reflect the voluntary nature of its relationship with volunteers in all its policies and procedures for managing their involvement. Therefore, the volunteer's designated supervisor deals with minor complaints or grievances about or by volunteers or their work through the usual support and supervision procedures, in the first instance.
- 5.2 Young at Art recognises its duty to protect the wellbeing and interests of all its stakeholders and therefore operate a formal complaints procedure in the case of more serious complaints. In the case of particularly serious offences, this process may be bypassed and/or the subject of the complaint asked to leave. Where a criminal offence is suspected, the matter will be handed over to the police.

## **6. EVALUATION**

- 6.1 Young at Art recognises the importance of seeking volunteers' ideas and opinions at regular intervals and conducts volunteer surveys following major projects e.g. Belfast Children's Festival. Feedback from volunteers is always welcome.
- 6.2 In order to effectively monitor the work that volunteers do and how they are managed, a personal file is maintained for all volunteers, which includes: contact details and other relevant personal information; details of the application and selection process; agreements made; hours worked; records of support and supervision activities; training undertaken and any complaints or grievances made or received. Some of this information and other relevant information may also be recorded in computerised records. All such information is treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and the company's own policies and volunteers are entitled to inspect all such information pertaining to their own involvement.

## **7. MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND REVIEW**

Young at Art is committed to managing the implementation of this policy and procedure in full and ensuring that it is reviewed regularly and amended as necessary. The Board and executive staff undertake this to ensure that the rights of volunteers and respect for their contribution remain central to the organisation

### **7.1 Responsibility for Management**

Final responsibility for the policy will rest with the Board of Directors of Young at Art. The daily and ongoing management of the policy will be undertaken by the Young at Art Director. All permanent and freelance staff and volunteers will have a responsibility to adhere to the organisation's policy and follow all procedures as required.

### **7.2 Monitoring**

- Young at Art will monitor its recruitment, selection and vetting procedures to ensure potential candidates are compliant with the requirements of this policy.
- Induction and training will be recorded for all volunteers and with each new intake of volunteers.
- Young at Art will keep a record of those volunteers who return for subsequent duties and provide references as appropriate.
- Young at Art will keep detailed and accurate confidential records will hold confidentiality as a primary consideration.
- Young at Art will record and review all complaints and hold detailed and accurate confidential records, sharing them with external authorities if required
- Young at Art will keep a record of comments, complaints and suggestions for improvements that can be made to its procedures and its communication of policy, from staff, individuals and host schools/organisations, and particularly volunteers
- Young at Art will be pro-active in gathering information on changes in law and practice and disseminate these/review procedures as appropriate.

### **7.3 Review**

Young at Art will review its policy annually alongside other company policies. This will be undertaken at Board level with a report compiled and delivered by the Director. The review will take into consideration:

- Any issues that have arisen during the year from the implementation of the policy.
- Any incidents reported and their implications for changes to be made.
- Comments and suggestions from any source and in particular from volunteers
- Changes in legal responsibility or recommended practice.
- Issues arising from outside the sphere of volunteering (e.g. changes in other legislation).

Any amendments required to policy and procedures will be discussed and approved at a Board meeting.

## **8. APPENDIX: VOLUNTEER POLICY PUBLIC STATEMENT**

Young at Art is committed to encouraging opportunities for inclusion and participation. This includes developing skills, employability and relationships, and generating alternative opportunities for engagement in cultural provision, e.g. through volunteering. It recognises volunteers as an essential part of its volunteer team and values their support and their role in making a diverse and inclusive organisations. Through its volunteers, Young at Art reflects the interests, needs and resources of the community it serves and volunteers bring a unique and valuable perspective to its work.

A written policy and procedures underpin this commitment. For further information about the policy and volunteering, contact Volunteer Manager, Claire Kelly on 028 90230660 or [claire@youngatart.co.uk](mailto:claire@youngatart.co.uk)