



Festival of Spirituality and Peace Volunteer Policy

The Festival of Spirituality and Peace (FoSP) is committed to the principles of creativity, inclusivity and dialogue. FoSP aims to sponsor the kind of conversations and encounters which need to happen in the wider world if there is to be peace and respect for all – and to garner wisdom wherever it is to be found. Therefore our programme will create opportunities for engagement for those who seek constructively to address the issues of our time, to promote dialogue and to build community in diversity.

In line with this mission, FoSP seeks to involve volunteers to:

- deliver a professional and successful Festival programme
- help volunteers develop new skills
- engage volunteers with the themes of the Festival
- foster relationships between people from all over Edinburgh and from over-seas

Principles:

FoSP:

- recognises that voluntary work should bring benefits to the volunteer as well as to FoSP
- will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure of the Festival
- will not take on volunteers to replace paid members of staff
- will make sure that all members of staff work positively with volunteers and involve them in the correct manner whenever it is appropriate to do so
- will provide appropriate induction and training to allow volunteers to perform their tasks to a high level
- recognises that volunteering must be rewarding for the volunteer and will therefore ensure that the work of the volunteer contributes to their personal development
- will try to cover out of pocket expenses whenever possible

- recognises that good management is crucial to the development of volunteers and that this management requires designated responsibilities within specific roles
- will not discriminate against potential volunteers and will always recruit with our equal opportunities policy in mind
- acknowledges the right of volunteers to discuss any grievances they have with their named contact at any time.
- will provide constant support and encouragement to all volunteers

Practice Guidelines

The following guidelines deal with the practical aspects of volunteer involvement with FoSP. Further information can be found in the Volunteer Handbook.

Recruitment of Volunteers:

We will be recruiting from all sections of the community in line with our equal opportunities policy. There will, however, be an emphasis on recruiting young people. It is through volunteers that FoSP hopes to involve young people in the Festival programme. Therefore, priority will always be given to young people if there are more volunteer applications than placements.

Anyone interested in volunteering for FoSP will be asked to complete a simple application form which includes two references (either personal or professional). FoSP reserves the right to follow up these references if necessary.

Once an application has been received, prospective volunteers will be invited to come to St John's Church for a very informal chat about the Festival and the Volunteer Programme.

There is a chance that FoSP volunteers will come into contact with vulnerable people and might be put in positions of trust. For this reason, volunteers will be asked to provide all appropriate details regarding criminal convictions. This information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and will not prejudice the applicant unless the management team believe that a conviction is so severe that it prevents an applicant from becoming a volunteer. If this is the case, the applicant will be contacted via email and informed that their application was not successful. The applicant will be invited to meet with the Festival Coordinator and Director to talk through the decision.

Personal Information

Any confidential information will be handled with the utmost care. Confidential information will only be made available to FoSP's Coordinator (Tom Lea), Director (Donald Reid) and Volunteer Support Worker (Judith Brown). These three persons make up the steering group for FoSP's Volunteer Programme. Personal information will not be made available to any third parties.

Volunteer Agreement

Each volunteer will receive a Volunteer Agreement which will provide the volunteer with a clear outline of their responsibilities to FoSP and FoSP's responsibilities to them. The volunteer will be asked to sign the Volunteer Agreement and it will be counter-signed by the Festival Coordinator. The Volunteer Agreement **is not a contract**; it is a guideline. We hope it will encourage a greater level of understanding and trust between volunteers and paid employees

Volunteer Role Descriptions

There are a number of different roles and tasks available to FoSP volunteers. Each volunteer will be provided with role descriptions for each individual role. The role descriptions will provide general information about the specific role and will be supplemented during the on-site induction session.

All volunteers are entitled to refuse tasks they feel are asking too much of them or are in any way inappropriate or unrealistic. This will not effect the individual volunteer's involvement in all other aspects of the Festival.

All volunteers will also receive a Volunteer Induction Pack outlining the general aims of the Festival and providing information about the venues and people involved in its delivery.

Expenses

Those who volunteer for a minimum of eight hours per week can claim travel expenses to get to and from St John's Church. FoSP will supply lunches and two evening meals per week.

Induction and Training

Volunteers will be invited to attend a retreat just before the Festival begins. The aim of the retreat is to explore each individual's reasons for volunteering and what they aim to gain from the experience.

An onsite induction will take place on Saturday 8th August. This induction will introduce volunteers to their various tasks and familiarise them the venue and the staff.

Support

All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact. They will have constant support with regular feedback and opportunities to air their views and grievances.

The Volunteer's Voice

A suggestions box will be placed in the Volunteer Room. This box will be emptied daily and any comments, queries or problems will be addressed as soon as possible. Suggestions will be anonymous.

Insurance

All volunteers are fully covered by St John's insurance policy while they are on-site. St John's has full public and employee liability insurance.

Health and Safety

Volunteers are covered by St John's Health and Safety Policy. A copy of this policy is contained within the Volunteer Handbook.

Equal Opportunities

FoSP operates an equal opportunities policy and takes it very seriously. A copy of this policy can be found in the Volunteer Handbook. It is important that all FoSP volunteers have read and understood this policy and are committed to it.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff. FoSP has a duty to treat all sensitive information about volunteers as strictly confidential.

Grievances

FoSP has a grievance procedure; a copy of which can be found in the Induction Pack.

The End of the Experience

FoSP will provide all volunteers with references upon request and will do everything possible to support volunteers as they move on to other options. At the end of the Festival, there will be a thorough evaluation process aimed at encouraging feedback from volunteers regarding their experiences of the Festival and their time as a volunteer. This information will help to shape future Festivals and make sure that volunteers remain a priority for the Festival.