



## Volunteer Policy

*Last updated: June 2018*

Volunteers are at the heart of the Welcoming. They bring a wide range of skills, experiences and perspectives to our work and play a key role in delivering Welcoming activities. This policy outlines our approach to working with volunteers.

### 1. **Vision for volunteering**

Involving volunteers helps to ensure that the Welcoming is a diverse and flexible organisation that can respond effectively to the needs and interests of participants. We will endeavour to make volunteering at the Welcoming as accessible as possible and to involve people from all sections of the community in our work.

### 2. **Staff and volunteers**

The Welcoming expects all staff to work positively with volunteers and to seek to involve them in their work where appropriate. Staff will be supported through training and supervision to do this effectively. Each volunteer will be matched with a staff contact who will provide support and supervision throughout the period of volunteering.

### 3. **Recruitment**

Following initial application, usually through completing a registration form on the Welcoming website, potential volunteers will be invited for an informal talk with an appropriate member of staff. Volunteers will be required to provide contact details for two referees on taking up their role. This may be waived in the case of volunteers whose commitment is likely to be short-term or where the role is carried out under close supervision of a member of staff. Where applicants are not placed in the role they applied for, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles with the Welcoming or will be signposted to other organisations.

### 4. **Volunteer roles**

Staff will listen carefully to volunteers' reasons for volunteering and endeavour to match them with a role that fits their skills, interests and aspirations. Roles will be discussed and agreed with applicants and confirmed in writing.

### 5. **Induction, training, support and supervision**

The Welcoming is committed to ensuring that all volunteers have a positive and meaningful volunteering experience. We will provide volunteers with a full induction and any training that is required when they start their role. We will also provide regular support and supervision throughout the period of volunteering. Volunteers are encouraged to ask for, and to offer feedback, and to contribute to peer learning and development sessions where they have skills and experiences to share.

**6. Equality, diversity and inclusion**

The Welcoming is committed to embracing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion. Welcoming staff and volunteers will work in accordance with the Equality and Diversity policy and will prevent discrimination on any grounds.

**7. Health and Safety**

The Welcoming will take all reasonably practical steps to ensuring volunteers' health and safety while carrying out their roles. All volunteers will be made aware of relevant aspects of our Health and Safety policy.

**8. Insurance**

Volunteers are covered by the Welcoming's public liability insurance while carrying out their agreed duties.

**9. Expenses**

If volunteers would like to claim expenses for outlays incurred as part of their volunteering role, they should discuss and agree this with their staff contact in advance.

**10. Confidentiality**

Volunteers are required to respect and maintain the confidentiality of the Welcoming and its participants. Information that the Welcoming holds about volunteers will be stored safely and securely, in line with the requirements of Data Protection legislation.

**11. Valuing contributions**

Volunteer contributions will be acknowledged and appreciated through individual feedback and volunteer celebration events.

**12. Managing challenging situations**

Volunteers are encouraged to raise any questions or problems with their staff contact as soon as possible. Staff will respond swiftly to any concerns raised by, or about, volunteers and staff. If the staff contact is unable to resolve the problem, they will refer the matter to the Welcoming Co-Directors and ultimately the Welcoming Board of Directors.

**13. Social media**

Volunteers are welcome to use their own social media in relation to their role at the Welcoming in order to highlight our work in welcoming and supporting newcomers to Edinburgh. The Welcoming social media policy should be discussed with all volunteers who use social media in order to ensure that volunteers understand and adhere to its requirements, especially in relation to respecting and protecting the privacy of participants.

**14. Endings**

We will take care to thank all volunteers for their contribution to the Welcoming once their period of volunteering comes to an end. They will also be asked to provide feedback on their experience. We will provide volunteers with a reference in relation to their volunteering contribution to support them with accessing future volunteering and employment opportunities.