



LEADERS OF TOMORROW (LOT)

VOLUNTEER POLICY

{To provide educational support by empowering BME young people with unbridled opportunities}

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**VOLUNTEER POLICY**

**THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME**

**Overall policy on use of volunteers**

The achievement of the goals of LOT is best served by the active participation of citizens of the community. To this end, the organisation accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at all levels in the organisation and within all appropriate programmes and activities. All staff are encouraged to assist in the creation of meaningful and productive roles in which volunteers might serve and to assist in recruitment of volunteers from the community.

**Purpose of the volunteer policy**

The purpose of the policy is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in volunteer involvement and management efforts. The policy is intended for internal management guidance only, and does not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. The organisation reserves the exclusive right to change any aspect of the policy at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policy. Alterations to or exceptions from the policy may only be granted by the LOT Executive Committee, and must be obtained in advance and in writing. The Executive Committee shall decide matters in areas not specifically covered by policy.

**Scope of the volunteer policy**

Unless specifically stated, the policy applies to all non-elected volunteers in all programmes and projects undertaken by or on behalf of the organisation, and to all departments and sites of operation of the organisation.

**Role of the Volunteer Co-ordinator in volunteer management**

The productive use of volunteers requires a planned and organised effort. The function of the Volunteer Co-ordinator is to provide a central co-ordinating point for effective volunteer management within the organisation, and to direct and assist staff and volunteer efforts jointly to

provide more productive services. The Volunteer Co-ordinator shall also bear responsibility for maintaining liaison with other volunteer programmes in the community and assisting community-wide efforts to recognise and promote volunteering. The Volunteer Co-ordinator shall bear primary responsibility for planning effective volunteer deployment, for assisting staff in identifying productive and creative volunteer roles, for recruiting suitable volunteers, and for tracking and evaluating the contribution of volunteers to the organisation.

### **Definition of 'volunteer'**

A 'volunteer' is anyone who without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of his or her volunteer duties performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the organisation. A 'volunteer' must be officially accepted and enrolled by the organisation prior to performance of the task. Unless specifically stated, volunteers shall not be considered as 'employees' of the organisation.

### **Special case volunteers**

The organisation also accepts as volunteers those participating in student community service activities, student intern projects, alternative sentencing programmes, employee volunteering programmes, and other volunteer referral programmes. In each of these cases, however, a special agreement must be in effect with the agency, school, company, or programme from which the special case volunteers originate and must identify responsibility for management and care of volunteers.

### **Employees as volunteers**

LOT does not accept the services of its own staff as volunteers. Family members of staff are allowed to volunteer with the organisation. When family members are enrolled as volunteers, they will not be placed under the direct supervision or within the same department as other members of their family who are employees.

### **Users and relatives as volunteers**

Users of the organisation may be accepted as volunteers, where such service does not constitute an obstruction to or conflict with provision of services to the user or to others. Relatives of users may also serve as volunteers, but will not be placed in a position of direct service or relationship to members of their family who are receiving services.

### **Service at the discretion of the organisation**

The organisation accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the organisation. Volunteers agree that the organisation may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with the organisation.

A volunteer at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever the volunteer's relationship with the organisation. Notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible to the volunteer's supervisor.

### **Volunteer rights and responsibilities**

Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to this organisation, its staff, and its clients. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated as equal co-workers, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation, and the right to recognition for work done. In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the values, goals and procedures of the organisation.

### **Scope of volunteer involvement**

Volunteers may be involved in all programmes and activities of the organisation, and serve at all levels of skill and decision-making. Volunteers should not, however, be used to displace any paid employees from their positions.

### **Two hat policy**

Members of the organisation's management committee are accepted as direct service volunteers with the organisation.

### **Conflict of interest**

No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity of programme of the organisation, whether personal, philosophical, or financial shall be accepted to serve as a volunteer.

### **Representation of the organisation**

Prior to any action or statement which might significantly affect or obligate the organisation, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from appropriate staff. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, lobbying efforts with other organisations, collaborations or joint initiatives, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. Volunteers are authorised to act as representatives of the organisation as specifically indicated within their role descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.

### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers are responsible for maintain the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a single member of staff, volunteer, client or other person or involves the overall business of the organisation.

Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer's relationship with the organisation or other corrective action.

### **Worksite**

An appropriate worksite shall be established prior to the enrolment of any volunteer. This worksite shall contain necessary facilities, equipment, and space to enable the volunteer to perform his or her duties effectively and comfortably.

## **Dress code**

As representatives of the organisation, volunteers, like staff, are responsible for presenting a good image to clients and to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties.

## **Timesheets**

Individual volunteers are responsible for the accurate completions and timely submission of timesheets.

## **VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT & SELECTION Position descriptions**

Volunteer staff, just as paid staff, require a clear, complete, and current description of the duties and responsibilities of the position which they are expected to fill. Prior to any volunteer assignment or recruitment effort, a position description must be developed for each volunteer post. This will be given to each accepted volunteer and used in subsequent management and evaluation efforts. Position descriptions should be reviewed and updated at least every two years, or whenever the work involved in the position changes substantially.

All position descriptions shall include a description of the purposed and duties of the position, a designated supervisor and worksite, a timeframe for the performance of the job, a listing of job qualifications, and a description of job benefits. The volunteer co-ordinator is available to assist staff in the development of volunteer position descriptions.

## **Staff requests for volunteers**

Requests for volunteers shall be submitted in writing by interested staff, complete with a draft position description and a requested timeframe. All parties should understand that the recruitment of volunteers is enhanced by creative and interesting jobs and by advance notice. The Volunteer Co-ordinator reserves the right to refuse to recruit or place any volunteers until staff are prepared to make effective use of the volunteer resource.

## **Recruitment**

Volunteers shall be recruited by the organisation on a pro-active basis, with the intent of broadening and expanding the volunteer involvement of the community. Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to

gender, disability, age, race or any other condition. The sole qualification for volunteer recruitment shall be suitability to perform a task on behalf of the organisation. Volunteers may be recruited either through an interest in specific functions or through a general interest in volunteering which will later be matched with a specific function. No final acceptance of a volunteer shall take place without a specific written volunteer position description for that volunteer.

## **Recruitment of minors**

Volunteers who have not reached the age of majority must have the written consent of a parent

or guardian prior to volunteering. The volunteer services assigned to a minor should be performed in a non-hazardous environment and should comply with all appropriate requirements of child labour laws.

### **Interviewing**

Prior to being assigned or appointed to a position, all volunteers will be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for and interest in that position. The interview should determine the qualifications of the volunteer, their commitment to fulfil the requirements of the position, and should answer any questions that the volunteer might have about the position. Interviews may be conducted either in person or by other means.

### **Criminal records check**

As appropriated for the protections of clients, volunteers in certain assignments may be asked to submit to a background criminal record check. Volunteers who do not agree to the background check may be refused the assignment.

### **Certificate of ability**

Any potential volunteer who indicates that they are under the care of a doctor for either a physical or psychological treatment may be asked to present a certificate from the doctor as to their ability to perform their volunteer duties satisfactorily and safely. Volunteers under a course of treatment which might affect their volunteer work will not be accepted without written verification of suitability from their doctor. Any volunteer who, after acceptance and assignment by the organisation, enters a

course of treatment which might adversely impact upon the performance of their volunteer duties should consult with the Information Co-ordinator.

### **Placement**

In placing a volunteer in a position, attention shall be paid to the interest and capabilities of the volunteer and to the requirements of the volunteer position. No placement shall be made unless the requirements of both the volunteer and the supervising staff can be met: no volunteer should be assigned to a 'make-work' position, and no position should be given to an unqualified or uninterested volunteer.

### **Staff participation in interviewing & placement**

Wherever possible, staff who will be working with volunteer should participate in the design and conduct of the interview. Final assignment of a potential volunteer should not take place without the approval of appropriate staff with whom the volunteer shall be working.

### **Acceptance & appointment**

Service as a volunteer with the organisation shall begin with an official notice of acceptance or appointment to a volunteer position. Notice may only be given by an authorised representative of the organisation, who will normally be the volunteer programme manager. No volunteer shall

begin performance of any position until they have been officially accepted for that position and have completed all necessary screening and paperwork. At the time of final acceptance, each volunteer shall complete all necessary enrolment paperwork and shall receive a copy of their volunteer position and agreement of service with the organisational

### **Probationary period**

All volunteer placements shall initially be done on a trial period of 30 days. At the end of this period a second interview with the volunteer shall be conducted, at which point either the volunteer or staff may request a re-assignment of the volunteer to a different position or may determine the unsuitability of the volunteer for a position within the organisation.

### **Re-assignment**

Volunteers who are at any time re-assigned to a new position shall be interviewed for that position and shall receive all appropriate orientation and training for that position before they begin volunteering. In addition, any screening procedures appropriate for that specific position must be completed, even if the volunteer has already been working with the organisation.

### **Professional services**

Volunteers shall not perform professional services for which certification or a licence is required unless currently certified or licensed to do so. A copy of such a certificate or licence should be maintained by the Information Department.

### **Length of service**

All volunteer positions shall have a set term of duration. It is highly recommended that this term shall not be longer than one year, with an option for renewal at the discretion of both parties. All volunteer assignments shall end at the conclusion of their set term, without expectation or requirement of re-assignment of that position to the incumbent.

Volunteers are neither expected nor required to continue their involvement with the organisation at the end of the set term, although in most cases they are welcome to do so. They may instead seek a different volunteer assignment within the organisation or may retire from volunteer service.

### **Leave of absence**

At the discretion of the supervisor, leave of absence may be granted to volunteers. This leave of absence will not alter or extend the previously agreed upon ending date of the volunteer's term of service.

## **VOLUNTEER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT Orientation**

All volunteers will receive a general orientation on the nature and purpose of the organisation, an orientation on the nature and operation of the programme or activity for which they are recruited, and a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of the position which they

are accepting.

### **On-the-job-training**

Volunteers will receive specific on-the-job training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the position and the capabilities of the volunteers.

### **Staff involvement in orientation and training**

Staff members with responsibility for delivery of services should have an active role in the design and delivery of both orientation and training of volunteers. Staff who will be in a supervisory capacity to volunteers shall have primary responsibility for design and delivery of on-the-job training to those volunteers assigned to them.

### **Volunteer involvement in orientation and training**

Experienced volunteers should be included in the design and delivery of volunteer orientation and training.

### **Continuing education**

Just as with staff, volunteers should attempt to improve their levels of skill during their terms of service. Additional training and educational opportunities will be made available to volunteers during their connection with the organisation where deemed appropriate. This continuing education may include both additional information on performance of their current volunteer assignment as well as more general information, and might be provided either by the organisation or by assisting the volunteer to participate in educational programmes provided by other groups.

### **Conference attendance**

Volunteers are authorised to attend conferences and meetings which are relevant to their volunteer assignments, including those run by the organisation and those run by other organisations. Prior approval from the volunteer's supervisor should be obtained before attending any conference or meeting if attendance will interfere with the volunteer's work schedule, or if reimbursement of expenses is sought.

### **VOLUNTEER SUPERVISION & EVALUATION Requirement of a supervisor**

Each volunteer who is accepted to a position with the organisation must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for the direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer, and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance.

### **Volunteer-staff relationships**

Volunteers and staff are considered to be partners in implementing the mission and programmes of the organisation, with each having an equal but complementary role to play. It is essential in

the proper operation of this relationship that each partner understand and respect the needs and abilities of the other.

### **Acceptance of volunteers by staff**

Since individual member of staff are in a better position to determine the requirements of their work and their own abilities, no volunteer will be assigned to work with a member of staff without the consent of that person. Since volunteers are considered a valuable resource in performing the organisation's work, staff are encouraged to consider creative ways in which volunteers might be of service to the organisation and to consult with the Volunteer Co-ordinator if they feel in need of assistance or additional training.

### **Volunteer management training for members of staff**

An orientation on working with volunteers will be provided to all staff. In- service training on effective volunteer deployment and use will be provided to those staff who are highly involved in volunteer management.

### **Volunteer involvement in staff evaluation**

Examination of their effective use of volunteers may be a component in the evaluation of staff performance where that member of staff is working with volunteers. In such cases, supervisors should ask for input and participation of those volunteers in evaluating staff performance.

### **Staff involvement in volunteer evaluation**

Affected staff should be involved in all evaluation and in deciding all work assignments of volunteers with whom they are working.

### **Lines of communication**

Volunteers are entitled to all necessary information pertinent to performance of their work assignments. Accordingly, volunteers should be included in and have access to all appropriate information, memos, materials, and meeting relevant to the work assignments. To facilitate the receipt of this information on a timely basis. Volunteers should be included on all relevant distribution schedules and should be given a tray for receipt of information circulated in their absence. Primary responsibility for ensuring that the volunteer received such information will rest with the direct supervisor of the volunteer.

Lines of communication should operate in both directions, and should exist both formally and informally. Volunteers should be consulted regarding all decisions, which would substantially affect the performance of their duties.

### **Absenteeism**

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regular scheduled and punctual basis. When expecting to be absent from a scheduled duty, volunteers should inform their staff supervisor as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements may be made. Continual absenteeism will result in a review of the volunteer's work assignments or term of service.



## **Substitution**

Volunteers may be encouraged to find a substitute for any future absences, which could be filled by another volunteer. Such substitution should only be taken following consultation with a supervisor, and care should be taken to find a substitute who is qualified for the position. Substitutes may only be recruited from those who are currently enrolled as volunteers with the organisation.

## **Standards of performance**

Standards of performance shall be established for each volunteer position. These standards should list the work to be done in that position, measurable indicators of whether the work was accomplished to the required standards, and appropriate timeframes for accomplishment of the work. Creation of these standards will be a joint function of staff and the volunteer assigned to the position, and a copy of the standards should be provided to the volunteer along with a copy of their role description at the beginning of their assignment. Span fonts

## **Evaluations**

Volunteers shall receive periodic evaluation to review their work. The evaluation session will review the performance of the volunteer, suggest any changes in work style, seek suggestions from the volunteer on means of enhancing the volunteer's relationship with the organisation, convey appreciation to the volunteer, and ascertain the continued interest of the volunteer in serving in that position. Evaluations should include both an examination of the volunteer's performance of his or her responsibilities and a discussion of any suggestions that the volunteer may have concerning the position of projects with which the volunteer is connected.

The evaluation session is an opportunity for both the volunteer and the organisation to examine and improve their relationship.

## **Written basis for evaluation**

The position description and standards of performance for a volunteer position should form the basis of an evaluation. A written record should be kept of each evaluation session.

## **Staff responsibility for evaluation**

It shall be the responsibility of each member of staff in a supervisory relationship with a volunteer to schedule and perform periodic evaluation and to maintain records of the evaluation.

## **Corrective action**

In appropriate situations, corrective action may be taken following an evaluation. Examples of corrective action include the requirement of additional training, reassignment of the volunteer to a new position, suspension of the volunteer, or dismissal from volunteer service.

## **Dismissal of a volunteer**

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedure of the organisation or who fail

satisfactory to perform their volunteer assignment may be subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be terminated until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with supervisory staff. Prior to dismissal of a volunteer, any affected member of staff should seek the consultation and assistance of the Information Co-ordinator.

### **Reasons for dismissal**

Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following: gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property or misuse of organisation equipment or materials, abuse or mistreatment of clients or co-workers, failure to abide by organisation policies and procedures, failure to meet physical or mental standards of performance, and failure to perform assigned duties satisfactorily.

### **Concerns and grievances**

Decisions involving corrective action of a volunteer may be reviewed for appropriateness. If corrective action is taken, the affected volunteer shall be informed of the procedures for expressing their concern or grievance.

### **Notice of departure or re-assignment of a volunteer**

In the event that a volunteer departs from the organisation, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, or is re-assigned to a new position, it shall be

the responsibility of the Volunteer Co-ordinator to inform those affected staff and clients that the volunteer is no longer assigned to work with them. In cases of dismissal for good reason, this notification should be given in writing and should clearly indicate that any further contact with the volunteer must be outside the scope of any relationship with the organisation.

### **Resignation**

Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with the organisation at any time. It is requested that volunteers who tend to resign provide advance notice of their departure and a reason for their decision.

### **Exit interviews**

Exit interviews, where possible, should be conducted with volunteers who are leaving their positions. The interview should ascertain why the volunteer is leaving the position, suggestions the volunteer may have to improving the position, and the possibility of involving the volunteer in some other capacity with the organisation in the future.

### **Communication with the Volunteer Co-ordinator**

Staff supervising volunteers are responsible for maintaining regular communication with the Volunteer Co-ordinator on the status of the volunteers they are supervising, and are responsible for the timely provision of all necessary paperwork to the department. The department should be informed immediately of any substantial change in the work of status of a volunteer, and should be consulted in advance before any corrective action is taken.

## **Evaluation of organisation's volunteer usage**

The Volunteer Co-ordinator shall conduct an annual evaluation of the use of volunteers by the organisation. This evaluation will include information gathered from volunteers, staff and clients.

## **VOLUNTEER SUPPORT & RECOGNITION Reimbursement of expenses**

Volunteers are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred while undertaking business for the organisation. The volunteer management department shall distribute information to all volunteers regarding specific reimbursable items. Rates for travel and meal expenses are laid out in the LOT Volunteer Expenses Claim Form. Prior approval must be sought for any major expenditure.

## **Access to organisation property and materials**

As appropriate, volunteers shall have access to property of the organisation and those materials necessary to fulfil their duties, and shall receive training in the operation of any equipment. Property and materials shall be used only when directly required for the volunteer task.

## **Insurance**

Liability accident insurance is provided for all volunteers engaged in the organisation's business.

## **Recognition**

An annual volunteer recognition event will be conducted to highlight and reward the contribution of volunteers to the organisation. Volunteers will be consulted and involved in order to develop an appropriate format for the event.

## **Informal recognition**

All staff and volunteers responsible for volunteer supervision are encouraged to undertake methods of recognition of volunteer service on a regular basis throughout the year. These methods of informal recognition should range from simple 'Thanks You's' to a concerted effort to include volunteers as full participants in decision making and implementation for projects which involve the volunteer.

## **Volunteer career paths**

Volunteers are encouraged to develop their skills while serving with the organisation, and are to be assisted through promotion to new volunteer jobs to assume additional and greater responsibilities. If so desired by

the volunteer, the organisation will assist the volunteer in maintaining appropriate records of volunteer experience that will assist the volunteer in future career opportunities, both paid and volunteer.

SIGNED BY CHAIR OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

DATE: December 2012 NEXT DATE OF REVIEW: December 2013