



# Cancer Research UK Volunteering Policy

## Introduction

Our volunteering policy aims to reflect the high esteem in which Cancer Research UK holds volunteers. Volunteers bring valuable experience of life to the charity. They champion the cause and often challenge opinions and perspectives whilst demonstrating loyalty and commitment to the charity's mission to 'conquer cancer through world-class research'.

Cancer Research UK's remarkable record of achievement in cancer research is not simply the work of our scientists, doctors and nurses. It is also testament to the hundreds of thousands of supporters who give so generously, especially of their time.

The contribution of volunteers spans the charity. Our Council, the ruling body that controls the strategic direction of the charity and its financial accountability, is made up entirely of volunteers. Many thousands more are the bedrock of vital income raised through our retail and community fundraising divisions.

This policy sets out the broad principles for volunteering with Cancer Research UK and has been produced in consultation with volunteers. It is relevant to everyone concerned with the recruitment, support, development and coordination of volunteers as well as volunteers themselves across the whole breadth of the charity.

Cancer Research UK recognises that volunteering must benefit the individual as well as the charity and aims to provide an environment that is inclusive, stimulating, friendly and supportive.

## About Cancer Research UK

Cancer Research UK is the world's largest independent organisation dedicated to cancer research.

We were formed in February 2002 as a result of a merger between the UK's two leading cancer research organisations, the Cancer Research Campaign and Imperial Cancer Research Fund. With a team of over 4,500 scientists, research doctors and nurses, Cancer Research UK is building on the strengths of both charities.

However, the charity relies overwhelmingly on voluntary funding from the general public, the activities of our volunteers, companies and trusts.

## Our commitment to volunteering

Volunteers are an established, valued and integral part of Cancer Research UK. The activities of the charity's volunteers are crucial in helping to raise the high level of funds

necessary to carry out our research work and the charity seeks volunteer involvement wherever appropriate.

Cancer Research UK commits to continually developing and maintaining the dynamic and mutually beneficial relationships between volunteers and the charity. The Volunteering Department plays a national role in developing policy and best practice in all areas of volunteer management and gives volunteers and volunteering issues representation at the very highest level within the charity.

Volunteers are Cancer Research UK's lifeblood and ambassadors. The charity recognises that the activities of volunteers are a positive force in raising the charity's profile and support in the community. Volunteers generate huge sums of money every year, directly through their fundraising activities, but also indirectly, networking through family, friends and associates.

## **Equal opportunities and diversity**

Cancer Research UK operates an Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy for both staff and volunteers and believes that no one should be treated less favourably than anyone else because of their gender, marital status, sexual orientation, social class, race, ethnic origin, religious belief or disability.

We are committed to diversity in all areas of our work and believe that we can learn from diverse cultures and perspectives.

## **Who is a volunteer?**

A volunteer is someone who does not receive financial compensation beyond the reimbursement of expenses and who performs a task at the request of, or on behalf of, Cancer Research UK.

The volunteer relationship is binding in honour, trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise can be imposed on volunteers to attend. Likewise the charity does not undertake to provide regular volunteering opportunities, payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken.

## **Scope of volunteering**

Over 46,500 volunteers are involved in the charity within our shops, events and local supporter fundraising operations and at our regional and head offices.

Volunteers also provide professional advice and guidance at various levels within the charity. The Council and the charity's scientific and financial committees are made up of volunteers who are key in providing planning and strategic advice and who are ultimately responsible for ensuring the charity is managed effectively.

The charity acknowledges it has responsibilities to its volunteers and similarly has expectations of its volunteers.

### **Cancer Research UK's responsibilities**

- To match the needs of the charity with the skills, knowledge, experience and motivation of the volunteer.
- To recognise that successful volunteer involvement incorporates the individual's motivations, aspirations and choices.
- To ensure paid staff are trained to work with volunteers.
- To ensure volunteers receive appropriate training and support to help them deliver in their roles.
- To celebrate success and recognise loyalty and dedication.
- To respect volunteers, listen and learn from what they have to say, consistently encouraging two-way communication.
- To provide timely and accurate information about the charity's research work, policies and procedures.
- To foster a friendly and supportive atmosphere - aiming to make volunteering fun.
- To make financial and other provisions in management plans for the needs of volunteers.
- To try to resolve fairly any complaints or grievances.
- To ensure every volunteer has access to a member of paid staff to guide and advise them.
- To ensure the health, safety and welfare of all Cancer Research UK volunteers whilst undertaking their volunteering activities.

### **Our expectations of volunteers**

- To maintain and uphold the good name and reputation of the charity.
- To co-operate with paid members of staff, to listen and learn from what they have to say to achieve the aims of the charity.
- To aim for high standards of efficiency, reliability and quality in all aspects of their contribution.
- To encourage two-way communication with other volunteers and paid staff, fostering a pleasant and friendly atmosphere.
- To support the charity's equal opportunities and diversity policy and help promote the diversity of its staff and supporters.
- To accept that the ultimate responsibility for the affairs of the charity rest with the charity's Council and management.
- To work within the law – for instance, restrictions relating to lotteries and street collections. Volunteers should seek advice, where appropriate, from their Cancer Research UK contact or supervisor.
- To respect the need for confidentiality whenever they have access to restricted charity information.

- To ensure fundraising activities adhere to guidelines published in the Supporters' Handbook, including all aspects of managing accounts, use of the charity's logo and media contact.
- To ensure fundraising activities do not have any association with tobacco, asbestos or sunbed companies or their subsidiaries and ensure sponsorship support is appropriate for the cause of cancer research. If there is any doubt, volunteers should seek guidance from their Cancer Research UK contact or supervisor.
- To take reasonable care of their own health and safety whilst volunteering and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

## **Recruitment**

The charity encourages involvement by volunteers from all sections of the community and will not discriminate against any volunteers in the selection procedure.

The charity welcomes volunteers of all ages. We do not specify an upper age limit and Cancer Research UK recognises the valuable contribution made by older volunteers in terms of knowledge and experience.

Young volunteers can bring fresh perspectives and enthusiasm to the charity whilst gaining valuable skills and experience. Young volunteers must be at least 14 years old and, until the age of 16, must have the written consent of a parent or guardian. All young people who have not reached the age of 18 will be protected in accordance with the Health and Safety (Young Persons) Regulations 1997.

The charity would be irresponsible if it permitted volunteers to continue beyond a point where volunteering may be detrimental to their own or other people's health or safety and may decide it is appropriate for a volunteer to reduce or cease their volunteer contribution.

Selection procedures for individual volunteers must protect the charity's interests. References are sought in most cases. The charity must be satisfied that the volunteer possesses the appropriate personal qualities e.g. responsible, reliable and considerate of those around them.

## **Training and development**

New volunteers are made to feel welcome and will be provided with relevant information, training and induction as appropriate to their role.

Fundraising volunteers will be offered support and guidance on organising events, publicity and presentation.

Volunteers may wish to develop their skills whilst helping the charity and where appropriate are encouraged to take on new roles and/or become further involved.

Volunteers in our shops and offices are given time to settle in, to allow them to learn about the charity, their own role within the charity and to give the charity time to assess how their involvement is working out.

At the end of an agreed period of time an informal meeting is held to clarify any areas of concern.

Cancer Research UK training courses, seminars, conferences and laboratory visits may be available to volunteers as appropriate.

It is recommended that the progress and contribution of volunteers is discussed regularly and this will provide the opportunity for each volunteer and the charity to establish whether the hours of involvement with the charity should be adjusted.

## **Grievance and conduct issues**

Every effort will be made to settle any dispute or volunteer grievance fairly and amicably. In the first instance, a volunteer should take their grievance to their contact or supervisor. If the matter is not settled satisfactorily, a volunteer may then escalate their grievance to their supervisor's line manager. Where an issue cannot be resolved at a local or departmental level, the national volunteering department may mediate.

If there are concerns around a volunteer's behaviour or contribution, the matter will be discussed amicably and steps agreed to address it. These may include additional training or mentoring. However, if these areas of concern cannot be resolved after more formal discussions, their volunteering relationship with the charity may have to cease.

Cancer Research UK must protect its reputation in all circumstances and where a volunteer takes an action that may bring our name into disrepute, the volunteer's involvement with the charity will be stopped immediately. This also applies to any financial irregularity or violent conduct towards staff, other volunteers or members of the public.

A full copy of the charity's policy on volunteer grievances and disciplinary procedures is available from the national volunteering department at head office.

## **Moving on**

The charity recognises that volunteers may cease their involvement at any time. It is recommended that when a volunteer chooses to cease their links with the charity that their reasons for leaving are sought, any learning points are shared and it is established whether they might wish to be involved again in the future.

## **Expenses**

Volunteers in our offices and retail chain are given the opportunity to claim previously agreed out-of-pocket expenses, such as travelling expenses and, if devoting a full day to

the charity, a sandwich lunch or equivalent. Payment of expenses must be authorised by the volunteer's supervisor and can only be reimbursed upon production of receipts.

Expenses for fundraising volunteers should be accounted for through the standard financial procedures required by Cancer Research UK and its auditors, as detailed in the Supporters' Handbook.

## **Health and safety**

The charity is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all volunteers on its premises and to giving appropriate instruction, training and supervision for their welfare. Our written health and safety statement is available from any property that we occupy.

All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner and not to act in a way that may put themselves or others at risk of injury.

Fundraising volunteers must take all necessary steps to ensure their own and the public's safety at any event they organise, seeking advice, if required, from the regional office.

It is the responsibility of all volunteers in the charity's shops and offices or fundraising in the community, to report any accident/incident or dangerous circumstance or occurrence to a paid member of staff, irrespective of whether any person has been injured.

## **Supervision and support**

In most circumstances, volunteers will be directly or indirectly supervised or supported by a paid member of staff. For instance, a volunteer helping in one of our shops will be trained and supervised by the shop manager. Volunteers fundraising for Cancer Research UK in their communities will have the support and guidance, if required, of their local Community Fundraiser. Where a supervising member of staff has yet to be appointed, every effort will be made to support volunteers in their roles.

Cancer Research UK has a responsibility to monitor and audit all its fundraising activities. This is essential in maintaining our reputation with the general public as a charity that can be trusted to manage donations honestly and cost effectively, whether gifts of clothing to our shops or money to local fundraising groups.

Monitoring includes auditing fundraising groups' income and expenditure annually, regular auditing of our shops and occasional spot checks on our stores to identify any irregularities that may have arisen through a training need or (very rarely) fraud.

## **Insurance**

The scope of the charity's insurance is extremely wide and is managed by the Risk Manager at our head office in London.

### Personal Accident Insurance

Volunteers up to the age of 75 are protected by a personal accident policy whilst working for Cancer Research UK. A fracture benefit of £100 per week (up to a maximum £1200, depending on where the fracture occurs) is payable for a limited period up to the age of 80. Out of pocket expenses may be payable, where appropriate.

### Legal Liability Insurance

All volunteers, regardless of age, are protected by our legal liability insurance against any injury whilst working for the charity, which may be incurred through the charity's negligence.

### Public Liability Insurance

Fundraising volunteers' activities are subject to Cancer Research UK's public liability insurance policy whilst carrying out their role within the charity. Some fundraising events may require a risk assessment form to be completed and, if in doubt, volunteers should check if this is necessary with their Cancer Research UK contact.

### Carrying Cash

Volunteers are insured to carry cash on the charity's behalf. Up to £3000 cash may be carried by one person, £3000 - £6000 must be accompanied by two adults, up to £9000 by three and up to £10,000 by four. Thereafter, cash must be transported by a security company. Cheques are rarely an issue as the amount specified under the policy is £1 million. Money may be retained overnight where there is no alternative, but special restrictions apply (see below if you require further information).

### Using your own vehicle

Cancer Research UK does not provide motor insurance for volunteers using their own vehicle. Charitable work is normally classed as social domestic pleasure use and not business use, but volunteers may wish to check with their insurer. The standard mileage allowance claimed through expenses includes a contribution for insurance, maintenance, tax and depreciation.

If you need further guidance on risk or insurance related matters, please ask your Cancer Research UK contact or supervisor in the first instance.

## **Media relations**

Cancer Research has a team of experienced and trained press officers whose role is to inform the media about cancer, the charity's work to tackle the disease and its fundraising initiatives.

Our volunteer fundraising groups and committees are often the key to some of the charity's best regional publicity and are encouraged to build relationships with their local newspapers and magazines to help publicise their events. Cancer Research UK has a dedicated press officer for each fundraising region who can offer support and advice when required.

There are some media matters, however, which should not be addressed by volunteers, such as the scientific work of the charity, cancer statistics or animal rights or political

issues, for example. Such issues should be referred to your Regional Press Officer, contact or supervisor. All unsolicited approaches from the media should be similarly referred on.

## **Copyright**

Volunteers may be asked if they would donate to the charity the copyright to any original works they may produce whilst volunteering.

## **Data protection and law**

Personal information recorded about volunteers is stored and maintained with appropriate safeguards for confidentiality. The charity abides by all provisions of the Data Protection Act of 1998. Volunteers who collect or administer any personal data on our supporters will also be required by law to comply with the provisions of that Act. Cancer Research UK has an in-house legal team at our head office in London to whom any queries of a legal nature can be referred by your contact or supervisor where necessary.

## **Conclusion**

Cancer Research UK would like to thank the volunteers and staff who helped draft this Policy and who made a valuable contribution to the review process. Our volunteers contribute a wealth of skills and experience in hundreds of communities across the UK and beyond. Wherever you are and whatever your skills, Cancer Research UK welcomes and values your support.

Cancer Research UK  
PO Box 123, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3PX

Volunteering Department  
Tel: 020 7438 5277 or 0845 009 4290

Email: [volunteering@cancer.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@cancer.org.uk)  
Website: [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org)

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