

VOLUNTEER AND WORK PLACEMENT POLICY	
This is an O’Neill/Ross Policy	
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Version	1

Purpose

O’Neill/Ross (hereafter ONR) actively seeks to engage with individuals looking for work placements and volunteering opportunities within the Arts.

The document aims to clarify the distinction between various non-staff roles within ONR and the approach to the management of these roles. This is to ensure that those engaged under the policy are treated fairly, are clear on their roles and receive consistent, high quality management and support.

Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to the following engagements at ONR:

1. Work experience placements
2. Occasional Volunteers

All staff involved in the engagement and management of the above are required to comply with this policy.

Work Experience Placements

ONR Definition

Work experience placements are short-term, unpaid engagement opportunities for individuals to spend time working with ONR. Typically, work experience placements should last up between one and four weeks.

Voluntary work placements offer an excellent opportunity for individuals to gain experience of the creative work place and can often provide a valuable resource to the organisation. Due to the number of applications ONR receives for work placement opportunities, it is essential that both the individual and the organisation have considered what is hoped to be gained from the work placement and whether there is suitable work available to achieve this. This is essential if the placement is to be meaningful.

Procedure

Final authority to agree work placements rests with the Company Directors.

Particular care needs to be given when considering a work placement for a young person under the age of 18. Further guidance can be found in the ONR Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

Anyone requesting a work placement with ONR should contact ONR via email ideally two months in advance, detailing the following information:

- Why they want a work placement at ONR
- What they hope to gain from the placement
- How this links to their overall career/ development
- If there is a particular department/ location they would like to gain experience of working in
- The date they wish to start their placement and the duration

This should then be forwarded to the appropriate member of staff whose duty it will be to log the request and respond to the applicant.

If a placement can be arranged the responsible member of staff will then write to the individual to confirm the placement, clearly stating that this is unpaid voluntary work and confirmation of who they should report to and at what time on their first day. Prior to the work placement commencing a risk assessment should be conducted, in particular when arranging a work placement for someone under 18 years of age. An induction should also be completed with the individual.

Occasional Volunteers

ONR definition

Occasional volunteers are those carrying out volunteering activities less frequently than once a fortnight and include episodic or one-off volunteers. Occasional volunteering roles tend to be activities in which organisations do not require a regular commitment for, or activities that are run at particular times during the year for a short period of time. For example, helping at events or collecting for fundraising initiatives. Occasional volunteers will not be expected to provide support over a sustained period of time. Rather, they will be offered ad-hoc opportunities for short-term engagement as and when they arise.

ONR offers ad-hoc opportunities for occasional volunteering, predominantly linked to events management and front of house support. Possible management systems include setting up a 'bank' of occasional volunteers who have signed up to give ad-hoc support as and when they are available and the need arises. The recruitment and management of these occasional volunteers is identical to that detailed for work experience

The tasks that occasional volunteers fulfil will typically be administrative or hands-on in nature. As such, training will not form part of the recruitment process but will be managed on a day-to-day basis, depending on the volunteer's tasks. However briefings, to include role descriptions and health and safety procedures will be provided via email before volunteers start. Briefings will also take place before each event.

Procedure

Authority to agree occasional volunteering rests with either the Company Directors or member of staff in charge of volunteers, dependent on its specific aim.

Particular care needs to be given when considering an occasional volunteering opportunity for a young person under the age of 18. Further guidance can be found in the ONR Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

Anyone requesting an occasional volunteering opportunity with ONR should contact ONR via email ideally two weeks in advance, detailing the following information:

- Why they want to volunteer with ONR
- What they hope to gain from the voluntary role
- How this links to their overall career/ development
- If there is a particular department/ location they would like to gain experience of working in
- The dates they wish volunteer and the duration

This should then be forwarded to the appropriate member of staff whose duty it will be to log the request and respond to the applicant.

If a voluntary role can be arranged the responsible member of staff will then write to the individual to confirm the role, clearly stating that this is unpaid voluntary work and confirmation of who they should report to and at what time on each day they volunteer. Prior to the voluntary activity commencing a risk assessment should be conducted, in particular when arranging voluntary activity for someone under 18 years of age. An induction should also be completed with the individual.

Role and Scope of Volunteers

Overview

Volunteers may be involved in all programmes of work, at all levels of skill and decision making.

Each volunteer will be assigned a specific role(s) and this will where possible be made clear in writing. The role may vary according to what opportunities exist at ONR. Some roles may be part of a general opportunity whilst others may be unique to the volunteer or a specific task that they can fulfil. Roles will complement the activities of paid staff but do not replace or stand instead of a paid position.

Volunteers are encouraged to use their initiative and develop their role within the organisation as opportunities and circumstances allow. ONR will encourage independence and self-reliance, but volunteers must always consult with their manager. This is especially important to avoid risk to volunteers and others and to ensure all activities remain within the protection of our insurance cover. Volunteers must always seek and obtain approval from ONR where there is likely to be an impact on the organisation's budget or other resources in carrying out their role.

Volunteering with ONR will reflect the best available practice in working with volunteers. We will strive to ensure that volunteers are not exploited or treated unfairly or unreasonably. We acknowledge that ONR has responsibilities to its volunteers and similarly has expectations of its volunteers.

What volunteers can expect of ONR

- To be given meaningful assignments.
- To be given clear roles which match the needs of the organisation with the skills, knowledge, experience, motivations and aspirations of the volunteer.
- To have effective and competent supervision, support and briefing for the roles
- Full involvement and participation and a friendly and congenial atmosphere – making volunteering fun.
- Recognition and celebration of work done, loyalty and dedication
- To be respected and to be listened to – two way communication will be encouraged
- Fair resolution of complaints and problems
- Assurance of health, safety and welfare whilst undertaking volunteering activities
- Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses.
- To receive written information and guidance where appropriate (e.g. on policies, procedures and any work in the organisation that may impact on the volunteer's role)
- For ONR to have made financial and other provisions in management plans for the needs of volunteers.

ONR's expectations of volunteers

- **Ambassador for ONR**
Whilst volunteering for ONR, volunteers represent the organisation and play a positive role in raising our profile, or the profile of the agencies we serve. They should therefore have ONR's best interests at heart and uphold the good name and reputation by behaving within any relevant ONR policies and codes of conduct.
- **Conflict of interest**
Whether paid or voluntary, it is essential that the individuals acting on behalf of ONR are putting ONR first. We wish to avoid anyone making a decision (or assisting in making a decision) on behalf of ONR in any way other than completely impartially - in other words, where there is, or appears to be, a conflict between the interest of ONR and other interests the individual may have. In these circumstances this conflict of interest should be made clear to ONR, if it is not already apparent.

- **Data Protection**

Volunteers who collect or administer any personal data on ONR's clients, members or supporters will be required by law to comply with Data Protection legislation. Volunteers have the same rights under the Data Protection Act as employees. ONR will comply with rules on personal data about volunteers held on a computer or in paper files.

- **Copyright**

Volunteers may be asked if they would donate to ONR the copyright to any original works they may produce while in the course of volunteering.

In addition ONR expects volunteers:

- To co-operate with other volunteers and paid members of staff to achieve the aims of the organisation.
- To aim for high standards of efficiency, reliability and quality in all aspects of contribution.
- To encourage two-way communication with other volunteers and paid staff, fostering a pleasant and friendly atmosphere.
- To support and comply with ONR's Equal Opportunities Policy and help promote the diversity of staff and supporters.
- To work within the law.
- 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.

Equal Opportunities

ONR aims to recruit and select volunteers and work placements in accordance with the spirit of equal opportunity legislation and guidance. We will endeavour to ensure recruitment materials are distributed widely to all sections of the community and in formats appropriate to the differing needs of a diverse society. ONR has an Equal Opportunities Policy, which applies directly to ONR's volunteers. However, opportunities to tailor roles for those with additional support needs may be limited.

Screening and Police Checks

Checks for criminal convictions and detailed disclosures will only be made when needed according to the nature of the voluntary work being undertaken for the organisation. A risk assessment will be made to assess whether such checks are necessary by legal requirement or to minimise any risk to vulnerable client groups.

ONR will seek expert guidance on this matter as it arises from the relevant authorities. Criminal convictions are not necessarily a bar to volunteering. As volunteering opportunities vary widely across the organisation, each one will be individually assessed for the need for a DBS check and potential volunteers informed of the need for checks (if any) and reasons for it, during recruitment.

Review

We will regularly review our recruitment procedures and seek advice and support to ensure they are adapted to reach the widest possible audience.

Management, Support and Supervision

ONR strives to ensure a clear line of management, and appropriate support and supervision for volunteers, in accordance with their needs and the role they have undertaken. However, during events, volunteers may be requested take direction from any of the organisers.

If desired by the volunteer, ONR will assist in maintaining records of volunteer involvement, experience and achievements that will assist with their future career opportunities.

We aim to give volunteers all information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments. Supervisors will ensure volunteers are added to relevant mailing lists and provide them with access to all appropriate information, memos, materials and meetings that are relevant to their work.

Recognition

ONR will acknowledge the contribution of volunteers in its reports, publications and web pages and will encourage supervisors to seek opportunities for further informal and formal recognition.

Consultation and Review

ONR will regularly review and update its policies, practice and procedures regarding volunteers. Regular internal and external consultation will take place. Volunteers will be asked for feedback, either as a group or individually, to ensure their views are considered.

Where possible volunteer meetings will take place to address volunteer concerns and to offer mutual support and an overview of information.

Work Environment

Volunteers are entitled to a comfortable and safe environment and the correct tools and equipment in which to fulfill their roles.

Access to Property and Materials

Volunteers will be given appropriate access to the property of the organisation and those materials necessary to fulfil their tasks.

Volunteers will receive training in the correct operation of equipment. Property and material shall only be used when directly required for the volunteer task. Volunteers must seek assistance from the organisation if they are unclear or unsure about any aspect of the operation of equipment.

Health and Safety

ONR is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment to work in, and to providing appropriate instruction, training and supervision for the welfare of volunteers. Our full Health and Safety policy can be viewed on request.

Risk Management - ONR will undertake risk assessments of agreed activities for volunteers.

Insurance - Volunteers will be covered by ONR's insurance policies whilst undertaking agreed activities. Volunteers using their own vehicle to travel to events on behalf of ONR should ensure that they have appropriate motor insurance cover as this will not be covered by ONR's insurance policies.

Conduct - All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner and not put themselves or others at risk of injury.

Reporting - Volunteers will report any accident/incident or dangerous circumstance or occurrence to a paid member of staff, irrespective of whether any person has been injured.

Information, guidance, training - volunteers will be given guidance, and where necessary, training, on health and safety procedures.

Personal Information

ONR will keep appropriate records for each volunteer. The details may contain the following: contact details, supervision and training records, tasks undertaken, review records, and copies of signed documentation

The file will be stored securely and will only be accessible to named staff involved with the support of volunteers. Volunteers will have the right to view any information held under their name. When references are taken up for potential volunteers the referees will be advised that the references may be seen by the volunteers. Information will be kept confidentially and in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

Expenses

We reimburse reasonable amounts that that volunteers have to spend on travel and meals while volunteering for us.

- **Meals and Subsistence Expenses.** If volunteers have to volunteer for more than four hours, they will be entitled to claim a reimbursement up to a maximum of £4. They must provide a receipt for what they buy in order to claim the cost back.
- **Travel Expenses.** Volunteers can also claim the cost of your travel by public transport to and from the place of volunteering and travel costs incurred whilst volunteering. Again they must provide a receipt in the form of a travel card, train/bus ticket or receipt from the ticket office. We will accept photocopies of travel cards or return tickets. The only exception to this is for claims for a mileage allowance. If they use they car, bicycle or motorbike we will reimburse them for travel at rates set by the Inland Revenue. Please note however that we can only reimburse mileage allowance in circumstances where there is a particular need for volunteers to use a car. If they just use a car by choice then we will only be able to reimburse the equivalent cost of public transport or whichever is cheapest. Volunteers must obtain prior agreement from their line manager to claim mileage expenses. Volunteers using Oyster pre-pay for travel in London should obtain a usage printout, highlighting the journeys claimed for and attach this to their claim. Oyster card top up receipts are not acceptable.
- **Receipts.** You must provide a receipt of your expenses. We ask volunteers to bring in receipts to protect them and the organisation. Receipts show exactly what volunteers have spent and prove that we are reimbursing them rather than making a payment. If we made a payment to a volunteer we could have problems with HM Revenue & Customs or National Minimum Wage Commission and volunteers receiving benefits or volunteers who are Asylum Seekers could get into trouble. By collecting receipts we can clearly prove that we have not made any payments and that any money paid out was a genuine reimbursement of actual expenses.
- **Making a Claim.** Volunteers' line manager will tell them how to go about claiming their expenses and where they can get hold of the claim forms. If volunteers are unsure about anything, they should check with their line manager before submitting their claim so that delays can be avoided. Please submit expense claims as soon as possible. Claims will be paid to volunteers by cheque and sent to their home address. If in any doubt, please check with a staff member about any of the above.
- **Expense Claim Forms.** The form should show: The volunteer's name and address. Their signature indicating receipt of monies. signature of approval given by a designated person in your organisation.
- **Volunteering and Welfare Benefits.** Volunteering should not affect benefits. The only money that volunteers receive from us is a reimbursement of expenses which is just us paying you back what they have already spent, and so does not count as a payment. If required as the volunteering host we can produce a letter for the benefits agency confirming a volunteer's status as a volunteer. If volunteers have any concerns regarding this they should contact their local volunteers services co-ordinator or volunteering contact.

Absenteeism

No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise can be imposed on volunteers to attend. However, it would be appreciated if volunteers could inform their supervisor of their absence as far in advance as possible.

Where a role requires good time keeping or regular attendance, ONR may ask a volunteer who is frequently absent or who attends erratically, to consider a different role, or to take a break from volunteering.

Moving on

ONR recognises that volunteers may cease their involvement at any time. ONR requests that where possible volunteers give as much notice as possible.

ONR also requests that volunteers give their reasons for leaving, share any learning points or recommendations, and whether or not they may wish to be involved again in the future.

This policy was created by Harry Ross

This policy has been approved and adopted by ONR management Committee:

Name: Harry Ross

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Harry Ross', written over a horizontal line.

Date: 01/05/2015

It will next be reviewed on: 01/05/2017