



## **SCDA VOLUNTEERING POLICY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Sussex Community Development Association (SCDA) was founded in 1997. Its main aims are now to:

- Develop sustainable community-based initiatives addressing economic, environmental, cultural and community issues, particularly addressing the needs of those most vulnerable in the community
- Maintain local community and user involvement in the development and delivery of services
- Maintain quality assurance standards within the organisation
- Develop financial sustainability for the work of SCDA through social enterprise
- Facilitate and support effective partnerships between the voluntary, statutory and private sectors to address community identified needs

1.2 SCDA recognises that volunteers have a real impact on the delivery of SCDA services by:

- Bringing new insight into SCDA's work, directly from the community in which we work. This can add to our understanding of how we can effectively respond to community need.
- Bringing added credibility to the organisation and acting as informal representatives for SCDA's activities in the community.

- Involving volunteers we contribute to the building and support of active and sustainable communities. Volunteering is a two way process and by working with volunteers we aim to up-skill local members of the community for the benefit of both parties and the community as a whole.
- 1.3 SCDA also recognises that there are people in our community who, for whatever reason, do not wish to undertake paid work but want to contribute more towards society.
- 1.4 A volunteer is anyone who freely chooses to undertake work for SCDA through the giving of their time, skills and experience without financial reward. There are two main types of volunteers, frequent and infrequent. Frequent volunteers will come to SCDA on a regular basis and normally be based in one location. Infrequent volunteers usually come on a one off basis or very infrequently to Forums, special events and focus groups.
- 1.5 In SCDA, volunteers help by:
- assisting with the delivery of our services
  - being active in projects and community-led activities supported by us

The relationship between SCDA and our volunteers is one of mutual respect with responsibilities and commitment on both sides.

We will work hard to ensure that our volunteers gain from the time they give to SCDA in terms of their own personal objectives and enjoying the time they spend volunteering with us.

## **2 STATEMENT OF INTENT**

- 2.1 SCDA aims to set up, manage and recruit to a volunteering scheme that meets the needs of its volunteers and the community in which it is based, with the following guiding principles:
- All volunteers will be asked to undertake specific responsibilities within SCDA however they will not replace or act as paid staff.
  - Volunteers will be treated with the same respect afforded to paid employees, and therefore must adhere to SCDA procedures for Health and Safety, Safeguarding Children Policy and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Equal Opportunities. However, they do not have the same rights as employed members of staff, such as the right to use the company grievance procedures but do have their own

procedures that will be followed by SCDA in the event of a complaint or wrong doing by a volunteer. (“Problem Solving – either by or for a volunteer”)

- Frequent volunteers will be recruited, inducted, and supervised by a designated member of staff, a Project Volunteer Co-ordinator within the specific project they will be volunteering in.
- Infrequent volunteers will often be service users, or people who are aware of SCDA and what we are trying to achieve in the community and are often approached by SCDA directly to play a role in certain activities.
- Frequent volunteers will be given a Volunteer Role Outline which outlines their voluntary activity, this is so volunteers know what to expect and what is expected of them in return. This role outline will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Volunteers are asked to read the role outline before they commence the volunteering role.
- Infrequent volunteers will be given a Volunteers Role briefing which gives an overview of the activity the volunteer will be involved in. This briefing will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis as the project change and develop.
- Frequent volunteers will be supported through regular supervision meetings with the Project Volunteer Co-ordinator.

2.2 SCDA will monitor and evaluate the Volunteering Scheme periodically to ensure it continues to meet the needs of its volunteers and the community.

### **3 SCOPE OF THE VOLUNTEER POLICY**

Unless specifically stated, the policy applies to all volunteers wherever they volunteer within SCDA

### **4 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE**

#### **4.1 General**

By involving volunteers we will be guided by the following principles of good practice:

- Tasks will be clearly defined so that all concerned with volunteers' activities are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities  
Volunteers will be asked to complete a record of the hours that they volunteer with SCDA. These records will be kept as a basis for monitoring and reporting to funders.
- Existing and future SCDA policies and procedures will be reviewed to ensure they reflect the importance of volunteers and the effect of these

policies on volunteers. They will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

#### 4.2 **Recruitment and selection**

- SCDA has an equal opportunities policy which will be adhered to when selecting volunteers
- Volunteer opportunities will be promoted through a variety of media organisations partnerships, SCDA website, posters, ensuring there is wide accessibility to the opportunities available.
- Frequent volunteers will be required to complete an SCDA Volunteer application form.
- The volunteer role outline or briefing will show the general requirements of a volunteer's role. There will also be an additional information sheet that asks volunteers to lay out the times which they may be available for volunteering roles
- Frequent volunteers will be invited to meet with the Project Volunteer Co-ordinator to discuss what they would like to achieve and what their goals are in volunteering for SCDA.
- It is our practice to request two references from frequent volunteers, both of which can be character reference or current or previous employers
- We aim to meet with people who offer to volunteer with as quickly as possible after the receipt of their application or telephone call enquiry
- As far as reasonably possible volunteers will be placed in Projects and activities which match their skills, talents and interests and, once placed they will be required to comply with SCDA's existing policies and procedures that apply to volunteers such as Health and Safety, Safeguarding children and Vulnerable Adults and Equal Opportunities.
- Some volunteers with SCDA, depending upon the role or the location at which they will be based will be required to have an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Each case will be judged on its merits, and a criminal record does not automatically disqualify someone from volunteering with SCDA. However people who are barred from working with children or vulnerable adults will not be able to volunteer with SCDA.
- If service user/clients attend a service user forum such as parent forum, youth forum, focus group or Sompriti Action group purely in the capacity

as a service user or advisor to the service they will not be deemed a frequent volunteer and therefore will not require a DBS or reference to be obtained.

- If the service users are then requested or volunteer to undertake a specific role for SCDA such as undertaking administration tasks, building data bases then they will have to become a frequent volunteer and will have to undertake a DBS and provide us with references.
- A record of hours for service users contributing to forums and focus groups will also be recorded for monitoring purposes.

#### 4.3 **Support for Volunteers**

- We will allocate financial and personnel resources for the management of volunteers in the annual budget - All volunteers can have their reasonable travel expenses reimbursed (subject to prior agreement with Project Manager and on production of receipt or ticket, or by claiming the actual mileage (based on HMRC rates)
- We will provide a full induction or mini induction programme to brief volunteers depending upon the role they are volunteering for, on SCDA and the relevant policies and procedures that apply to volunteers. They will receive copies of all relevant procedures and will be asked to sign to indicate that they have understood them.
- Frequent volunteers may have access to internal SCDA relevant training that will assist them to develop their capabilities and competence in relation to their volunteering role and or suitable employment outside of SCDA. They may also be able to benefit from other training opportunities; however, there is no obligation for them to attend any training or for SCDA to offer any training.
- We have appropriate Employer's Liability insurance which covers all our volunteers
- Frequent volunteers will meet regularly with the Project Volunteer Co-ordinator to discuss their role and how they are getting on. The role may be tailored to help them meet their own personal objectives and progress this will be done in consultation with the Project Volunteer Co-ordinator.
- Where possible, opportunities will be provided for changing / upgrading volunteer responsibilities as appropriate to SCDA needs and with the volunteers' agreement

- Volunteers will be made aware of SCDA's Problem Solving policy and of whom to contact if they have a problem with any aspect of their role.
- The Project Volunteer Co-ordinator will be assigned responsibility for dealing with complaints about a volunteer's conduct in accordance with the Problem Solving procedure.
- Volunteers will be informed of Job Opportunities within SCDA when they arise through the normal processes including the SCDA website, e mail and notice boards.

#### 4.4 **Rights and responsibilities of volunteers**

In engaging volunteers, we recognise the rights of volunteers to:

- Know what is expected of them and to be given clear information
- Have clearly specified lines of support and supervision
- Be shown recognition and appreciation
- Have safe working conditions
- Be insured
- Know what their rights and responsibilities are if something goes wrong
- Be offered training and receive ongoing opportunities for learning and development
- Be free from discrimination
- Experience personal development through their participation as volunteers
- Ask for a reference
- Be consulted on decisions which affect what they do
- Withdraw from voluntary work

We expect that volunteers will:

- Carry out their tasks in a way which corresponds to the aims and values of SCDA

- Work according to their role outline and within applicable SCDA's policies and procedures
- Be reliable
- Respect confidentiality and follow our confidentiality policy
- Attend training and support sessions if agreed
- Not discriminate against volunteers, SCDA employees, service users and others associated with SCDA
- Maintain the good name of SCDA.

#### 4.5 **Relationship with SCDA employees**

- We will ensure that SCDA employees at all levels are clear about the role of volunteers and have mutual respect for each other
- Volunteers will not be engaged in times of legitimate industrial action to do the work of paid staff. They may continue with their regular volunteering role but will not be asked to undertake additional duties that are done by paid staff
- Appropriate training, support and resources will be provided for those who work alongside volunteers and for those who have a managerial role in relation to them
- Volunteers will be given clear information about the roles undertaken by paid staff and of their value to SCDA.

#### 4.6 **Contracts and Service Level Agreements**

In entering into contracts or service level agreements which involve volunteers, we will ensure that:

- The role of volunteers is made clear and that satisfactory arrangements are in place for their management
- The terms of the contract or service level agreement provide for the necessary resources to do the work

- Arrangements are made to set out the roles and commitments of volunteers
- The impact of volunteering and its benefits are promoted and acknowledged
- We have an effective way of measuring the impact and benefit that volunteering brings to SCDA and the individuals who volunteer.

#### 4.7 **Reviewing policy and procedures**

- SCDA will, when possible produce an annual plan for volunteer involvement
- SCDA will monitor and review this policy and procedures on volunteering on an annual basis.

#### 4.8 **Responsibility for the policy**

Overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of the policy and procedures and the day to day implementation lies with HR.

Date policy created	October 2011
Review date of policy	January 2017
Policy created by	HR
Ratified by HR Sub Committee/SCDA Board	