



VOLUNTEER POLICY

1. Policy Statement

At Cooking Up, we aim to enhance the health and wellbeing of people facing challenging circumstances in the London Borough of Richmond and neighbouring boroughs, by enabling them to cook healthy, tasty food for themselves and their families.

Volunteers play a crucial role in helping achieve our mission and we could not achieve our goals without their hard work. We are incredibly grateful for their support and want to make sure all our volunteers have a safe, rewarding and enjoyable experience.

The Volunteer Policy recognises the significant and valuable role volunteers play in helping people facing challenging circumstances learn to cook cheap, nutritious food. This policy reflects our commitment to volunteering with Cooking Up and sets out a framework of procedures and best practice, which we will endeavour to follow when recruiting and working with our volunteers, to ensure that both the volunteers' and Cooking Up's expectations are met.

The policy is for volunteers recruited by Cooking Up and trustees working with those volunteers. It will be provided to all volunteers at the time of their induction with Cooking Up.

Responsibility for this policy rests with Belinda Marozzi, Cooking Up Trustee.

2. Cooking Up Volunteers - Definition

A Cooking Up volunteer is someone who, unpaid and of their own free will, chooses to give their time, energy, skills and expertise to support Cooking Up in achieving its aims. The arrangement is voluntary on both sides. The charity's relationship with volunteers is based on trust and is not intended

to have the obligations associated with employment. No payment, other than the reimbursement of agreed out-of-pocket expenses is made by Cooking Up to people who give their time as volunteers.

Cooking Up volunteers support the charity in a number of ways including:

- Facilitating cookery lessons for groups of up to 10 attendees
- Sourcing and transporting ingredients to the cookery lesson venue
- Providing administrative support to promote and organise the cookery sessions
- Creating engaging content for use on our website and through our social media channels
- Raising funds by helping to promote the charity and connect us with communities and partners
- Building the community, for example by helping to recruit, train or support other volunteers

We expect that our volunteers always aim to live the values of Cooking Up by being:

- Approachable - open-minded and value diversity
- Non-judgemental
- Inspiring - lead by example
- Empowering - enable positive change
- Passionate about Cooking Up's goals and delivering excellence

3. Our Vision for Volunteering

We aim to deliver a positive volunteering experience so that our volunteers enjoy supporting us and feel well equipped to support the work of Cooking Up. We are committed to making Cooking Up an excellent organisation to volunteer with. To ensure that volunteers are at the forefront of everything we do, we aim to:

- Ensure that our volunteers understand what we expect from them, and what they can expect from us in return.
- Attract volunteers with the right skills to support our service users and the charity
- Deliver a positive volunteering experience, through processes and ways of working, which makes it enjoyable and easy to support us.

4. Equality and Diversity

Cooking Up is committed to building a diverse organisation with equal opportunities at all stages of recruitment, selection and volunteering. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection of volunteers will always be carried out without regard to protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. This commitment is reflected throughout the charity's policies and procedures. Cooking Up will not condone, accept or ignore any forms of discrimination or unacceptable behaviour.

5. Safeguarding

Cooking Up's Safeguarding Policy will be shared with all new volunteers as part of the onboarding process. Failure to meet the obligations of the Safeguarding Policy may lead to a volunteer being asked to step back from volunteering temporarily or permanently, or other appropriate action.

Volunteers taking on roles that are eligible for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, or equivalent will be required to undertake a relevant check. If required, this will be made clear during the application process. As a minimum, we will verify the identity of all volunteers. We welcome volunteers from a range of different backgrounds and having a criminal record will not necessarily bar someone from volunteering with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offence.

6. Recruitment

Cooking Up will collect information on all prospective volunteers during the recruitment and selection process. Additionally, volunteers might be required to attend an informal interview to provide relevant information and explore their aspirations and the experience they can bring to Cooking Up. All involved need to appreciate that the interview is not a competitive process, and the sole selection criteria is suitability for the role. A personal reference might be required and taken up to help confirm suitability for volunteering and for specific roles.

All our regular volunteers must read and agree to this Volunteer Policy which outlines what is expected from the volunteer and what they can expect from Cooking Up. In commencing their the role, the volunteer commits to the aims, values and key policies of Cooking Up. They also commit to deliver the key tasks outlined in the relevant role description. This Volunteer Policy does not and is not intended to create a contract of employment between Cooking Up and volunteers.

When appointed, a named contact for that role will lead on the relationship management of the volunteer. This may be a Trustee, employee or a volunteer. The named contact is responsible for guiding and supporting the volunteer in their role and should be available to discuss any aspect of the volunteer's role.

7. Training and Support

Volunteers will have a valuable set of skills, knowledge and attitudes gained from their education, work, previous volunteering, and life experiences. To help ensure that volunteers are appropriately equipped for their role, each volunteer must undergo the appropriate induction and training process before commencing their role, alongside ongoing training, where appropriate, whilst volunteering with Cooking Up.

8. Health and Safety

Volunteers must take reasonable care of themselves and others while volunteering for Cooking Up and follow any health and safety advice and instruction given for their role. Volunteers should co-operate with Cooking Up on health and safety matters, and immediately report accidents/incidents (including near misses - accidents/incidents that may have led to injury). Volunteers should not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.

Cooking Up will ensure that all volunteers are provided with the appropriate information, supervision and training required to enable them to complete voluntary work safely. This includes providing suitable systems and procedures and guidance is the risk assessments for every venue Cooking Up holds classes in.

9. Expenses

The work of Cooking Up is critically dependent on our network of volunteers. We are very grateful to volunteers who do not claim expenses; however, we will always look to reimburse reasonable expenses if there are financial barriers to volunteering. Please note that we will only reimburse expenses if previously agreed with the volunteer's named contact, based on their assessment of Cooking Up's requirements and the available budget.

10. Insurance

Cooking Up provides Employers Liability, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity cover for all volunteers whilst working on Cooking Up's activities. Cooking Up does not provide motor insurance cover. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement.

11. Data Protection and Confidentiality

Cooking Up will protect volunteer information in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Data will be held securely and confidentially and will only be accessed by authorised individuals. Please see our Privacy Policy on the website for further information about how we collect, manage, and use the personal data of our volunteers. We expect all volunteers to comply with Cooking Up's Data Protection Policy and associated policies.

12. Confidentiality

In the course of volunteering with Cooking Up, volunteers may be privy to sensitive information. It is important to observe confidentiality when discussing this information and not publicly disclose:

- Information about sensitive matters
- Information about named individuals (such as Cooking Up staff/trustees or course attendees and their families)

Confidential information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
- Used to humiliate, embarrass, or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

Breaches of confidentiality

In the event of a breach of confidentiality, we will inform the chair of Trustees as soon as possible who will investigate the matter further.

Volunteers understand that if they breach confidentiality they may be suspended.

13. Social Media

Volunteers should abide by Cooking's Up social media policy and not:

- Accept friend requests from course attendees
- Disclose any information which is confidential or would breach data protection principles
- Make comments online about any employees/trustees of Cooking Up or any of the course attendees

12. Intellectual Property

When signing our Volunteer Commitment, a volunteer assigns, by way of future assignment to Cooking Up, all Intellectual Property created by them as part of their role as a Cooking Up volunteer or credited to them during the term of their volunteering, provided that the assignment shall not include intellectual property which is not connected in any way whatsoever whether directly or indirectly with their volunteering.

13. Feedback and Complaints

Although Cooking Up makes every effort to ensure that any experience of volunteering with us is positive and rewarding, we recognise that volunteers at times may experience difficulty within their role or they may want to share feedback or raise an issue with a member of staff or another volunteer.

In the first instance, volunteers should talk to their named contact to try to resolve the issue, get advice or share feedback. We will make every reasonable effort to resolve difficulties at an early stage and we always review feedback and learn from it.

However, where the areas of concern cannot be resolved by these means, please refer to our organisational Feedback and Complaints Policy, which can be found on our website. In line with this policy, feedback and complaints can be submitted to Cooking Up via email: belinda@cookingup.org

There may be occasions where we may have concerns about a volunteer's behaviour or approach. In this case, we will approach the volunteer directly to discuss any concerns they may have amicably and openly and resolve difficulties at an early stage.

14. Leaving Cooking Up

Volunteers are free to cease volunteering with Cooking Up at any time by speaking or emailing their named contact. When deciding to finish volunteering with us, we ask that volunteers give us as much notice as possible to help us organise alternative arrangements. Upon leaving a volunteer role, we may offer an exit interview to reflect on their experiences and improve our volunteer opportunities.

There may also be times when Cooking Up will ask a volunteer to cease volunteering. This may be because the role no longer supports the needs of the organisation and its current work, or because the volunteer is no longer able to satisfactorily carry out a particular role. When this happens, we will endeavour to give as much notice as possible to the volunteer and try to find an acceptable alternative role. In all cases, the volunteer will be treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

Please sign below to show your agreement with the above Volunteer Policy.

Name:

Date:

Signature: