Volunteering Policy
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Introduction

Alzheimer’s Research UK is the UK’s leading dementia research charity dedicated to diagnosis, prevention, treatment and cure. Backed by our passionate scientists and supporters, we’re challenging the way people think about dementia, bringing together the people and organisations who can speed up progress, and investing in research to make life-changing breakthroughs possible.

Purpose

This policy establishes the principles of Alzheimer’s Research UK in relation to volunteers. The relationship between volunteers and Alzheimer’s Research UK is based on trust, understanding and mutually-agreed expectations. The policy is based on good practice as recognised across the charity sector.

This policy enables us to:

- Establish the principles that Alzheimer’s Research UK adheres to in relation to volunteers.
- Explain our commitment to and expectations of volunteer involvement.
- Safeguard the fair and consistent treatment of volunteers.
- Manage expectations and provide a mechanism to raise a concern.
- Create clarity for all stakeholders on the role of volunteers within the charity.

This policy is to be considered alongside associated policies and all other volunteer related guidance.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All volunteers of Alzheimer’s Research UK
- All employees, contractors, suppliers and others working on behalf of Alzheimer’s Research UK who utilise the time, skills and abilities of volunteers as part of their work for us.

Why involve volunteers?

Alzheimer’s Research UK recognises the critical role of volunteers and how they contribute and enable the charity to achieve its vision, mission and objectives. Volunteers provide diverse abilities, reach and influence. The Charity is committed to: offering meaningful, flexible volunteering opportunities that have reciprocal benefits; providing appropriate levels of support and development, as well as fair and consistent treatment.

How does Alzheimer’s Research UK define volunteering?

In the context of our work, Alzheimer’s Research UK defines volunteering as an activity that involves the commitment of time, skills and energy, performing a role for the measurable benefit of the aims and objectives of Alzheimer’s Research UK. It is unpaid, and a choice freely made by each individual volunteer.

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Volunteering opportunities offered by Alzheimer’s Research UK are largely formalised roles inclusive of regular, one-off, remotely-based and ad hoc activity, and in some circumstances, short-term part/full-time volunteering. All volunteers are to be enrolled by Alzheimer’s Research UK before starting their role.

There are other informal ways people can freely give their time and energy. Often these opportunities are driven by campaigns or by organic, grassroots initiatives. Whilst this can be vital and valuable to furthering our cause, these activities are often self-selective and are not categorised as Alzheimer’s Research UK volunteering roles, and as such are not covered by this policy.

Our commitment to volunteers

As part of the volunteering experience, Alzheimer’s Research UK will:

✓ Provide a clear volunteer role description and outline of responsibilities.
✓ Respect volunteers and listen to what they have to say.
✓ Provide relevant resources, support, development and training opportunities.
✓ Ensure volunteers feel comfortable with the amount of volunteering they are asked to do.
✓ Provide a named contact for the role.
✓ Take steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of volunteers.
✓ Keep volunteers informed of Alzheimer’s Research UK's work and any changes affecting them.
✓ Recognise the contribution and impact of volunteers, celebrating their achievements.
✓ Reimburse reasonable out of pocket expenses
✓ Work within the scope of the Charity’s values, policies and procedures.
✓ Resolve any concerns fairly and promptly.
✓ Process and use personal data in line with relevant Data Protection law.
✓ Provide appropriate insurance cover for volunteers to carry out their role.

Our expectations of volunteers

As part of the volunteering experience, Alzheimer’s Research UK expects volunteers to:

✓ Support and respect Alzheimer’s Research UK values, policies, guidelines and ways of operating.
✓ Act responsibly and within the law, considering and upholding Alzheimer’s Research UK’s good reputation in their actions and conduct.
✓ Keep in regular liaison with their named contact, raising any concerns they may have.
✓ Read the policies, procedures and guidance documents they are given to provide the highest quality of volunteering.
✓ Remain accountable for their behaviour and actions, being open to learn, listen and receive feedback.
✓ Fulfil the commitment they have undertaken ensuring they are realistic about their availability.
✓ Attend development and training events relevant to their role.
✓ Operate in partnership with other volunteers, employees and the public; respecting the confidentiality of those they volunteer alongside.
✓ Keep Alzheimer’s Research UK informed about any changes in personal circumstances which may affect their volunteering.
✓ Pay into the correct charity account any funds they raise or receive for Alzheimer’s Research UK as soon as possible (in line with the guidance provided for your role).
✓ Ensure I am legally entitled and properly trained to safely drive any vehicle I use in the course of my volunteering.
Equality and Diversity

We are committed to equality and diversity and ensuring the fair treatment of all volunteers. No volunteer will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or be disadvantaged by requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to the role.

Recruitment & Selection

Alzheimer’s Research UK welcomes interest in volunteering from all areas of the community. People choose to volunteer for many different reasons and can offer a wide range of skills and experiences. Fairness is an important part of our recruitment and selection procedures and all potential volunteers are encouraged to speak with an employee about volunteering opportunities. Each role is explained in a role description developed by the Volunteer Management team.

All volunteers will be asked to complete a Volunteer Application Form. Some roles may include other processes such as informal interviews, references or trial periods to ensure the role is suitable for both parties. Criminal convictions do not automatically exclude prospective volunteers; the suitability of applicants is considered individually in relation to the nature and requirements of the role. Currently, all roles are restricted to those over 18 years of age.

Induction, Training & Development

As volunteers begin in their role we want them to feel confident and properly equipped. We are committed to investment in induction, training and development as appropriate to the role. All volunteers are expected to complete inductions that provide relevant information on roles, the charity and how we work with volunteers.

Volunteers will be provided with access to policies, procedures and role-specific guidance. Training will be required for some roles, however Alzheimer’s Research UK is committed to supporting all volunteers develop their skills through ongoing learning opportunities where relevant.

Supervision, Support & Recognition

Volunteers are provided with a named contact relevant to their role, offering them the chance to discuss all aspects of the volunteering experience. Employees will provide oversight and guidance, keeping in touch with volunteers to ensure they have access to the resources required to enjoy and excel in their role. Staying in touch helps to review progress and achievements and helps the Charity to recognise the contribution of volunteers. Volunteers may be thanked in person, publicised at a celebratory event, nominated for an award or recognised by other means; Alzheimer’s Research UK will always say ‘thank you’ in recognition of volunteer contribution.

Health & Safety

The Charity is committed to creating an environment that promotes the health, safety and wellbeing of all volunteers. Alzheimer’s Research UK aims to ensure volunteers are fully aware of their responsibility for safety and of the safety considerations relevant to the role. Volunteers that are active in the organisation or delivery of community events are to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure the safety of
themselves and the public (i.e. risk assessments) in accordance with general health and safety legislative requirements. Volunteers are expected to take care of their own health and safety, and that of their fellow volunteers, employees and the public. All health and safety incidents should be reported to the named contact.

**Safeguarding**

Alzheimer’s Research UK is committed to ensuring that every adult (with care or support needs), young person and child who participates in any activity can do so in a safe and enjoyable environment and should be protected from any form of abuse.

**Expenses**

It is our commitment that volunteers should not be out-of-pocket because of their volunteering activity. The Charity’s policy is to reimburse any reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred whilst undertaking the voluntary role (e.g. travel, accommodation) - subject to the production of VAT receipts and prior agreement of the named contact.

**Insurance**

Alzheimer’s Research UK’s public and employer’s liability insurance policy provides cover for the activities of volunteers. However, our insurance does not cover personal belongings. Volunteers are required to inform their insurance company prior to using their vehicle for the course of carrying out their role, to ensure they are adequately covered. Volunteers carrying out events are only covered by our insurance if a risk assessment has been completed.

**Confidentiality & Data Protection**

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining confidentiality in their role. Sensitive or personal information about volunteers, supporters, beneficiaries, employees or the charity’s work should not be disclosed. Please see the [Confidentiality Policy](#) for more information as a failure to maintain confidentiality may result in the volunteer role being ended.

Data privacy and security are a high priority. Alzheimer’s Research UK works to all the principles for obtaining, processing and using personal data as outlined in relevant Data Protection laws. Volunteers involved in the collection, administration or use of sensitive or personal data are required to comply with these principles. Unless an explicit part of the role, we ask volunteers to signpost all supporters directly to the Charity for data collection and processing. Please see the [Data Protection & Privacy Policy](#).

**Media & Intellectual Property**

Alzheimer’s Research UK retains the rights to any original works that volunteers produce during their role, unless otherwise agreed. Photographs (or similar) of/by volunteers may be used for promotional purposes.

Unless a specifically agreed requirement of the volunteering role, no story or comment should be given directly to the media. All requests should be referred to the named contact. Volunteers using personal and/or charity-branded social media accounts to promote the work of Alzheimer’s Research UK should do so
in a way that is consistent with the values of the charity and expectations outlined in this policy. Volunteers should speak with their named contact before undertaking any social media activity.

**Raising Concerns**

The charity recognises that sometimes difficulties can occur. It is important that any problem or concern is dealt with clearly, consistently and as promptly as possible in line with mutually agreed expectations. Dealing with concerns can be difficult, but it is a positive opportunity to improve and provide a better experience for all concerned. If the volunteering experience is not working out as hoped, in the first instance please liaise with the named contact, who will provide advice and support.

The Charity is committed to resolving issues in an informal manner at first and will work sensitively in doing so. Informal solutions may include: teamwork, problem-solving, retraining, mentoring, a break from the role, mediation, trial periods or similar, where appropriate. If an amicable solution cannot be reached, or if a formal concern is received, Alzheimer’s Research UK will follow the resolution process outlined in the [Raising Concerns Policy](#).

All charities face the risk of things going wrong. Alzheimer’s Research UK believes it has a duty to identify and take appropriate measures to remedy such situations. Volunteers are encouraged to report any wrongdoing by the Charity or its employees, which they believe has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.

**Taking a break or moving on from the volunteering role**

Certain circumstances (for example ill-health, bereavement, or other personal situations) may result in a need to take a break from volunteering. Volunteers should speak with the named contact about this where relevant – if appropriate, employees may raise this topic with volunteers in line with their duty of care.

The charity recognises that at any point in time, a volunteer may choose to stop volunteering in a specific role(s). It is the Charity’s hope that volunteers provide as much notice as is possible of their intention to stand down, informing their named contact as soon as possible. Your contact will want to record your reasons for leaving for monitoring/development purposes and may offer an ‘exit interview’. Feedback is encouraged to help improve the volunteering experience at Alzheimer’s Research UK.

Either party can bring a volunteer’s involvement to an end – volunteers may be asked to leave their role with Alzheimer’s Research UK if it has been identified that they have not met expectations outlined in this policy or that their contribution has not met the standards required for the role. Alzheimer’s Research UK can, at its discretion, suspend or end an individual’s role as a volunteer if they become inactive or unresponsive to communications. The Charity will endeavour to contact the volunteer, informing them of this decision, should this situation arise.

**Further information**

For further information regarding volunteering at Alzheimer’s Research UK please speak with your named contact or a member of the Volunteer Management team on 0300 111 5 555 or volunteer@alzheimersresearchuk.org