



Volunteering Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out its principles for volunteers at Fall into Place Theatre Company. This policy will be reviewed annually, to ensure it remains appropriate to the needs and skills of our volunteers and Fall into Place.

Commitment

Fall into Place aims to provide the opportunity for people seeking to participate in drama and/or strengthen their local communities through volunteering. We understand that volunteers can contribute in a variety of ways, and that each contribution is unique and should be valued. We also recognise that volunteering can benefit the local community, staff, workshops and the volunteers themselves. We greatly value all volunteer contributions and are committed to involving volunteers in roles appropriate to their skills and talents, in a supportive, positive and encouraging environment.

Fall into Place seeks to arrange volunteer roles efficiently and sensitively so that the great value of a volunteer's time is used to the mutual advantage of all involved.

Definition

For this policy, volunteering is defined as an activity or task that involves spending time, unpaid, seeking to benefit attendees of drama workshops, or Fall into Place Theatre more generally.

Statement of value and principles

Volunteering is a crucial activity that is valued and supported by Fall into Place. It is not intended to be a substitute to paid employment. The role of volunteers will complement but not replace the role of staff, and volunteers should never feel pressured or given more responsibility than they are comfortable with.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers.

The volunteer role is only binding in honour, trust and mutual understanding. There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, for a volunteer to attend. There is not a minimum amount of time to carry out tasks involved in their voluntary activity. Likewise, Fall into Place cannot be compelled to provide either regular work or payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer.



Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of reliability and a positive attitude on behalf of both the volunteer and Fall into Place directors and staff.

Volunteer Coordination

All volunteers will have a nominated member of staff – their Volunteer Coordinator - to carry out guidance and advice so that the volunteer can carry out their tasks effectively. Volunteers will be informed of their contact. Volunteers should always feel confident to ask questions and for further guidance if they are unsure, and Fall into Place encourages volunteers to feel confident staff will always respond to questions with a supportive, helpful attitude.

Recruitment and Selection

Fall into Place is committed to equal opportunities and believes volunteering is open to all, regardless of gender, pregnancy or maternity, race, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability. The acceptance of volunteers is based on merit and the individual's suitability to carry out agreed tasks. Please see our Equality and Diversity Policy for more information on this.

Volunteers who are considered unsuitable for a task, based on suitability of task only, will either be offered alternative voluntary involvement, or referred to the Volunteer Centre Leeds (or other relevant Volunteer Centre).

Some volunteer roles might require the volunteer to undertake a DBS check, which will be made clear to volunteers at the informal interview stage. All volunteers will be invited to an informal interview after registering interest, where the tasks required will be explained in more detail to ensure it will be enjoyable and appropriate for the volunteer to undertake. The volunteer will also be offered the opportunity to try out some of the tasks, to ascertain whether they are suitable and enjoyable.

Fall into Place may have short and longer term volunteer roles available. Short-term roles will be clearly explained at the informal interview stage.

For longer term (8 weeks +) or on-going roles, volunteers will be given additional support for 6 weeks, and then an informal review to ensure the task is suitable and enjoyable. At this point the tasks can be amended (to an extent depending on flexibility of role), reduced or extended as requested by the volunteer.

Volunteers will have a clear, concise task description and their tasks will be reviewed once a year. Volunteers will be given all necessary information and guidance to enable them to perform with confidence.

Training and Development



All volunteers will be made aware of and have access to all of Fall into Place's relevant policies, including health and safety, grievance and equality and diversity.

We seek to provide opportunities for training and development of skills for volunteers. Volunteers will be asked during the informal interview and reviews if they seek any training or new skills, and, where possible, we will seek to provide training opportunities relevant to their role.

Support, Supervision and Recognition

The Volunteer Coordinator will listen and respond to any concerns, and is available to offer guidance and support to their volunteers.

If the volunteer has a concern they do not feel they can approach their Volunteer Coordinator with, they can speak to one of the Executive Directors.

Longer term volunteers will have reviews every three months, which will enable the volunteer and co-ordinator to identify, monitor and evaluate the volunteer's involvement, recognise achievements, discuss any concerns or queries, and identify any additional needs.

Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their opinions and thoughts with Fall into Place, and are invited to attend some staff meetings or meet with other members of staff if desired.

Fall into Place values its volunteer's time and contributions greatly, and will recognise the contributions of their volunteers through twice yearly volunteering coffee mornings, thank you cards, and social media.

Expenses

Fall into Place will reimburse for reasonable out of pocket expense claims incurred for travelling from the office to the place of volunteering. A receipt of the journey/fare is required. Travel expenses need to be agreed in advance of travel by making an Executive Director aware of the cost.

Insurance

Fall into Place's insurance includes the activities of the volunteers and liability towards them.

We do not insure volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage.



Policies

Fall into Place expect all volunteers to adhere to core policies:

Data Protection Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Safeguarding Policy

We will advise the volunteer on all relevant policies and procedures and where to find them during induction.

Settling Differences

Fall into Place aims to treat all volunteers fairly and objectively. We will seek to ensure volunteer's views are heard, noted and responded to promptly, and aim for an amicable solution based on our guidelines for settling differences.

Initially, the Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for handling problems regarding volunteer complaints or conduct.

In the event of a problem that cannot be easily resolved through a discussion with the Volunteer Coordinator, all relevant facts will be obtained as quickly as possible. An Executive Director will then meet with the volunteer and endeavour to find a solution to the problem.

Ending a Volunteer Role

We understand that volunteering may need to come to an end for a variety of reasons. All volunteers will be asked to undertake an informal leaving interview, which will be used to improve and inform future volunteering tasks and management. Notice is not required, but for longer-term volunteers, two weeks notice would be appreciated where possible to do so.

In the event that a volunteer role is no longer required, Fall into Place will endeavour to find another suitable volunteering role in the company, or through the Volunteer Centre Leeds.

Fall into Place are happy to be approached for references. Please ask your Volunteer Coordinator as/when a need for a reference arises.



Rights and Responsibilities

Fall into Place recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- Know what is expected of them
- Have adequate support in their volunteering
- Receive appreciation and thanks
- Have safe working conditions
- Be insured
- Know what to do if something goes wrong
- Receive out of pocket expenses
- Receive appropriate training
- Be free from discrimination
- Be offered opportunities for personal development

Fall into Place expects volunteers to:

- Be reliable and honest
- Inform us as promptly as possible if you are unable to attend a volunteer session
- Respect confidentiality
- Make the most of training and learning opportunities
- Carry out tasks in a way that reflects our aims and values
- Work within agreed guidelines
- Respect our company and not bring it into disrepute
- Comply with all our policies

Volunteer Signature: _____

Date _____

Reviews

This policy was created Jan 2017.



Reviewed 24th May 2018 - Sarah Goodyear and Naomi Roxby Wardle.

Reviewed 26th June 2019 - Naomi Roxby Wardle

Reviewed 4th May 2020 - Sarah Goodyear