**Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)**

**Volunteers and Employment**

**VAE-009-01**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to outline the process for recruiting, managing, and supporting volunteers and employees for Out There Exeter (the "charity"). This SOP is designed to safeguard the rights of all individuals who contribute their time and skills to Out There Exeter, whether as volunteers or employees. It ensures that the charity acts with fairness and integrity throughout recruitment, management, and employment.

**Scope**

This SOP applies to all trustees, members, staff and volunteers involved in the recruitment, management, and support of volunteers and employees within the charity.

**Definitions**

* **Volunteer:** An individual who provides their services to the charity on a voluntary basis without receiving financial compensation.
* **Employee:** An individual who is employed by the charity and receives financial compensation for their services.

1. **Volunteer Recruitment**
   1. Volunteer Advertising

* Advertise volunteer opportunities on the charity's website, social media channels, and local job boards.
* Network with community organisations and businesses to identify potential volunteers.
* Attend fairs and community events to promote volunteer opportunities.
  1. Volunteer Application Process
* Develop a volunteer application form that collects relevant information about the applicant's skills, experience, and interests.
* Conduct reference checks for all potential volunteers.
* Interview potential volunteers to assess their suitability for the role.
  1. Volunteer Orientation
* Provide new volunteers with an orientation to the charity, its mission, values, and policies.
* Introduce new volunteers to relevant persons with volunteer management responsibility.
* Provide new volunteers with training on the specific tasks and responsibilities of their role.

1. **Volunteer Management**
   1. Volunteer Assignments

* Match volunteers' skills and interests to appropriate opportunities.
* Provide ongoing support to volunteers.
* Recognise the contributions of volunteers.
  1. Volunteer Engagement
* Encourage volunteers to participate in team-building activities.
* Provide volunteers with opportunities to develop skills and knowledge.
  1. Volunteer Retention
* Conduct regular check-ins to ensure their role satisfaction.
* Provide feedback and opportunities for professional development.
* Show appreciation for volunteers' contributions.

1. **Employee Recruitment**
   1. Job Posting

* Develop job descriptions to outline duties and responsibilities.
* Post job openings on the charity's website and relevant job boards.
* Advertise the position through social media and professional networks.
  1. Employee Application Process
* Review resumes and applications carefully.
* Conduct phone interviews to screen potential candidates.
* Invite shortlisted candidates for in-person interviews.
  1. Employee Onboarding
* Provide new employees with an orientation to the charity, its mission, values, and policies.
* Introduce new employees to their team members and manager.
* Provide new employees with training on the specific tasks and responsibilities of their role.

1. **Employee Management**
   1. Employee Performance Management

* Establish clear performance expectations for employees.
* Conduct regular performance reviews to provide feedback and set goals.
* Recognise and reward employee achievements.
  1. Employee Training and Development
* Provide employees with opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge through training and development programs.
* Encourage employees to attend conferences, workshops, and other professional development opportunities.
* Support employees in obtaining professional certifications.
  1. Employee Retention
* Conduct exit-interviews with departing employees to identify areas for improvement.
* Create a positive and supportive work environment.
* Offer competitive compensation and benefits.

1. **Compliance with Laws and Regulatory Bodies**
   1. Out There Exeter maintains a strong commitment to complying with all applicable laws and regulations, including those related to employment, data protection, and safeguarding vulnerable individuals.
   2. The charity is committed to complying with the following key employment and volunteer laws and regulations:
      1. Employment Laws

* National Minimum Wage (NMW)
* Working Time Regulations (WTR)
* Equality Act 2010
* Unfair Dismissal (Rights of Employees) Act 1996
* Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
* Data Protection Act 2018
  + 1. Volunteer Laws and Regulations
* Volunteers are not entitled to the same rights and protections as employees, such as the NMW, paid holidays, or sick pay. However, employers must still protect their health and safety.
* The charity should have written volunteer agreements in place to outline the volunteer's role, responsibilities, and expectations.
* For certain volunteer roles, the charity will need to conduct Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to ensure the safety of vulnerable individuals.
* The charity should have adequate insurance in place to cover volunteers in case of accidents or injuries.
* The charity will treat volunteers with respect and fairness and provide them with appropriate training and support.
  1. All volunteers and employees are required to familiarise themselves with and comply with the charity's policies and procedures, as well as all applicable laws and regulations.
  2. The charity provides training to volunteers and employees on relevant laws and regulations and encourages open communication regarding any potential non-compliance concerns. Any concerns about potential non-compliance should be reported to the Board of Trustees.

1. **Communication**
   1. All volunteer and employment-related communications should be routed through a Human Resources representative on the Board of Trustees.
   2. Regular updates on the status of volunteer and employee recruitment, management, and support initiatives are provided to the Board of Trustees.
2. **Commitment to Fairness and Respect**

Out There Exeter is committed to treating all individuals involved in its operations with fairness and respect. This commitment extends to all aspects of the volunteer and employee experience, including recruitment, selection, onboarding, performance management, and termination. The charity strives to create a work environment that is inclusive, welcoming, and supportive of all individuals.

**Review and Revision**

This SOP will be reviewed and revised annually to ensure that it remains relevant and effective, or as needed to reflect changes in the charity's strategies or the regulatory environment.

**Compliance**

Failure to comply with this SOP may result in investigation and disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal for employees and termination of volunteer appointments and membership of the charity, and a vote on removal of trustee.

**Version Control**

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