

# RSCDS VOLUNTEER POLICY

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The aims of The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) are to:  
...promote and develop Scottish Country Dancing worldwide for the benefit of present and future generations, by:
- promoting and encouraging Scottish country dancing for all ages and abilities;
  - providing technical support to Scottish country dancing by maintaining high standards of teaching, training musicians, and publishing supporting information;
  - supporting and widening the network of RSCDS Branches and other Scottish dance groups who share our objectives.
- 1.2 In the RSCDS:
- Volunteers are a major resource, making a vital contribution to the achievement of our aims. Recognising volunteers already are important stakeholders in the RSCDS, we encourage, develop and support their involvement in our work, acknowledging that the role of the volunteer is to complement and not replace the role of paid staff;
  - A volunteer is understood to be a person who is elected or appointed to voluntarily undertake a range of duties/tasks, which the RSCDS will organise effectively;
  - A volunteer may serve on a management committee, be active in events organisation and/or help in the delivery of services and with projects the Society supports;
  - The relationship with volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment. Both the RSCDS and volunteers have rights and responsibilities. We acknowledge that many RSCDS volunteers view their work as a donation to the Society, and hope volunteers will enjoy the experience, gaining from it in terms of their own personal objectives.

## 2. Purpose and Advantages of Policy and Procedures on Volunteers

- 2.1 The RSCDS purpose in adopting this policy is to:
- highlight and acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers;
  - reflect the purpose, values, standards and strategies of the RSCDS in its involvement of volunteers;
  - recognise the respective roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers and RSCDS;
  - confirm the RSCDS commitment to involving volunteers in its work;
  - establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers;
  - clarify the roles of volunteers and address the relations between volunteers, those who engage them, and those who receive their services;

- help to ensure the ongoing quality both of the volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by our volunteers;
- acknowledge the current areas of volunteer involvement.

2.2 The advantages of this policy are:

- It provides a basis for the expansion, if required, of volunteer involvement;
- It views volunteer involvement as a valuable way to add choice for RSCDS members, through a resource we can afford neither to lose nor employ as a cheap alternative to paid staff;
- It includes a framework for recruiting and supporting volunteers;
- It commits the RSCDS to acknowledge and adequately support the financial, personnel and resource costs of the volunteer programme. For volunteers this is likely to include the costs of recruitment, training where required, support and supervision, along with out of pocket travel expenses.

### 3. General

3.1 In involving volunteers, the RSCDS is guided by principles of good practice:

- Volunteer tasks will be clearly defined, so all concerned with their activities are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities;
- The RSCDS will comply with the Data Protection Act, and use nomination/application forms;
- Volunteering opportunities will complement, not replace the work of paid staff;
- The RSCDS will provide opportunities for volunteers to present their views;
- All existing and future policies will be checked as to how they affect volunteers;
- In line with other RSCDS policies and procedures, the volunteer policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

3.2 Recruitment and Selection:

- Volunteering opportunities will be promoted in accordance with our written method for recruiting volunteers to ensure equality of access and will specify the task to be undertaken;
- Volunteers will be required to complete a volunteer nomination/application form; they may also be co-opted;
- Written job descriptions will outline duties, time, commitment, required skills & experience and to whom the post will be accountable (the line manager);
- References for volunteers will be requested as appropriate;
- Volunteers with appropriate skills, talents and interests will be sought at regular intervals or as opportunities present;
- Volunteers must comply with existing policies and procedures once in post.

3.3 Support for Volunteers:

- The RSCDS holds appropriate insurance for its volunteers;
- At induction, volunteers will be given information on legislation and policies relevant to them, including Health and Safety, Data Protection, Human Rights and Child/Vulnerable Adult Protection. In these respects, volunteers are

treated like paid staff for liability purposes. Volunteers will be given an emergency contact, and will be clear about what out of pocket expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim;

- At induction, volunteers also will receive clear information on the management structure for volunteers, including the RSCDS policies and procedures for dealing with complaints against a volunteer or for unsatisfactory performance of a volunteer, and the grievance process for volunteers;
- Volunteers can expect to meet regularly with their line manager to track progress against the RSCDS Strategic Plan, resolve any issues, review the volunteering experience and identify any training or further support needs;
- Volunteers are encouraged to provide each other with mutual support within the bounds of confidentiality.

### 3.4 Volunteers on Management Committees/Management Board

3.4.1 To support its Committee/Board Members the RSCDS will provide:

- induction on the role and responsibilities of committee/board members and the work of the organisation;
- The name of the staff member with specific responsibility for the relevant committee/management board;
- opportunities to meet with other staff members, as appropriate;
- written information and reports in good time on matters related to the governance of the RSCDS, its Constitution, and other relevant areas of legislation;
- other information, support or training, as required.

### 3.5 Rights and Responsibilities

3.5.1 In engaging volunteers, the RSCDS recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- know what is expected of them and receive clear information and induction;
- have clearly specified lines of support and supervision;
- respect, confidentiality and privacy;
- be shown appreciation;
- have safe working conditions;
- know their rights and responsibilities;
- be paid out of pocket expenses;
- be offered appropriate training opportunities;
- be free from discrimination;
- be consulted on decisions that will affect what they do;
- withdraw from voluntary work.

3.5.2 Volunteers should:

- carry out their tasks in accordance with the aims and values of the RSCDS;
- work within agreed guidelines and remits;

- respond promptly to communications, attend meetings as requested, perform their duties/tasks to the required standard and within agreed time scales;
- respect confidentiality;
- respect other volunteers, RSCDS members and staff;
- respect the human rights of others;
- carry out their tasks with regard to the health and safety of others;
- attend training and support sessions, where appropriate.

### 3.6 Relationship with Paid Staff:

- The RSCDS will ensure all paid staff are clear on the roles and rights of volunteers, and that good working relationships are fostered between paid staff and volunteers;
- The roles of volunteers and paid staff are complementary and mutually supportive;
- Appropriate support is provided for all those who work alongside volunteers and/or have a managerial role in relation to volunteers;
- Volunteers will be clear about the roles undertaken by paid staff and their value to the RSCDS;
- Management Board volunteers (Trustees) observe fair standards and conditions of employment, health and safety, and equal opportunities in respect of paid staff.

### 3.7 The RSCDS Strategic Plan:

- The RSCDS Strategic Plan will inform annual action plans for individual volunteers.

### 3.8 Responsibility for Reviewing Volunteer Policy and Procedures:

- Overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of the volunteer policy and procedures lies with the Chair of the Management Board and, on a day-to-day basis, with Committee Convenors who act as line managers to volunteers, senior paid staff and volunteers.