



VOLUNTEER POLICY

1. Introduction and Policy Statement

StAnza is Scotland's annual poetry festival. Our volunteers play an important role in the Festival, and make a vital contribution to the achievement of our aims, as well as benefiting from their volunteering experience.

This Policy sets out the arrangements that StAnza will make to ensure that voluntary work is organised effectively and safely, and complements the roles of freelance staff. Overall our relationship with our volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment, in which both StAnza and our volunteers have rights and responsibilities.

For the purposes of this Policy a volunteer is understood to be a person who undertakes voluntary work on our behalf, by choice and unpaid.

2. General Principles

In involving volunteers in StAnza's work, we will observe the following principles of good practice:

- Volunteer roles will complement rather than replace the work of freelance staff;
- Volunteers will be recruited through a fair and transparent recruitment process, in line with the principles and practices of equal opportunities in employment;
- The tasks performed by volunteers will be clearly defined, so that both freelance staff and volunteers are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities;
- As valued members of the team, opportunities will be given for volunteers to represent their views to StAnza on matters related to StAnza's activities;
- StAnza will maintain records relating to the initial recruitment and on-going work of volunteers. Records will comply with the Data Protection Act, and volunteers will have access to their records, insofar as these are not deleted after each festival;
- Other StAnza employment policies will apply to volunteers where stated, and where they do apply will be explained carefully to volunteers;
- The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored, and it will be reviewed formally at least every three years.

3. Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers

StAnza will adhere to its Equal Opportunities Policy when recruiting and selecting volunteers. We will ensure that all volunteering opportunities are widely accessible, through StAnza's website and other media, as appropriate. Information published about volunteering opportunities will specify the tasks to be undertaken and will draw attention to the benefits and experience to be gained from participation in volunteering.

StAnza's volunteers fall into several categories:

- student or other local volunteers recruited in the month before the Festival to work at the Festival when available depending on their other commitments;
- new and returning volunteers living beyond St Andrews and its environs who work full-time at the Festival;
- members of the StAnza Planning Committee and Board of Trustees who provide voluntary services during the festival and occasionally at other times during the year.

Anyone who offers to volunteer for the Festival will receive a courteous response and, if their offer is accepted, will be provided with further information at the appropriate time.

New potential volunteers will be provided with written task descriptions and actual duties of the voluntary role, and given indications of the time commitment and any necessary skills for the role. Insofar as appropriate and possible, placements will match the volunteer's skills, talents and interests with the voluntary work that needs to be carried out.

4. Rights and Responsibilities

StAnza greatly values the contribution of its volunteers, and as such commits to making sure that certain rights are conferred to them, and are carefully observed. These rights are set out below. They will be communicated to new volunteers at the commencement of their relationship with StAnza. They will also be communicated to freelance staff, who will make sure that the rights are upheld at all times.

The rights of StAnza volunteers are:

- to be given clear induction and information about their role at StAnza;
- to have clearly specified lines of support and supervision (a 'line manager');
- to be respected for their knowledge, skills, and contribution to StAnza, and to be shown appreciation;
- for their confidentiality to be respected at all times;
- to have safe working conditions which observe the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and related health and safety legislation;
- to be covered by StAnza's liability insurance policy;
- to be trained in relation to their role receive ongoing opportunities for learning and development, so far as possible;
- not to be discriminated against unfairly on any grounds;
- to ask for an employment reference from StAnza in respect of applications for employment to other organisations.

The responsibilities of StAnza volunteers are:

- to carry out their tasks in a way which corresponds to the aims and values of the StAnza;
- to carry out their voluntary tasks within agreed guidelines and remits, seeking advice from their supervisor as necessary;
- to respect confidentiality and to treat information received in the course of volunteering at StAnza according to the principles of confidentiality;
- to respect other volunteers, staff, artists and audience members at all times;
- to carry out their tasks with due regard to the health and safety of others;
- to attend training and support sessions where appropriate.

5. Support for Volunteers

As well as upholding the rights of volunteers (see Section 4 above), StAnza is committed to making sure that volunteers are well-supported throughout their association with the organisation, so that both volunteers and StAnza receive the greatest possible benefit from the relationship.

If a volunteer's actions are deemed to be detrimental to StAnza's reputation or to the enjoyment of StAnza's participants and audiences, the Director will have the right to take appropriate action.

Volunteers will be directed to information on legislation and policies that affect them, for example, Business Ethics and Equal Opportunities. The organisation's Grievance Procedure will be made available to volunteers and they will be informed of whom to contact if they have a grievance about any aspect of their work.

All volunteers will be offered appropriate access to support, with a named support worker, and will be informed whom to contact in an emergency.

Volunteers will be offered guidance and opportunities for on-the-job learning, with ongoing opportunities for learning and development provided so far as possible.

Volunteers will be provided with opportunities to change or upgrade their responsibilities, as desired by the volunteer and appropriate to the StAnza's needs.

In general StAnza cannot provide payment for volunteers' expenses, but exceptions may be made e.g. in the case of volunteers travelling some distance to undertake Festival work; this will be a matter for individual negotiation and agreement with the Director.

6. Role of Employed (freelance) Staff

StAnza will make sure that freelance staff at all levels are clear about the role, rights and responsibilities of volunteers, and that good working relationships are fostered between freelance staff and volunteers. The roles of volunteers and freelance staff will be complementary and mutually supportive. Volunteers will also be given clear information about the roles undertaken by freelance staff.

7. Annual Action Plan and Policy Review

The Director has overall responsibility for implementing, monitoring and reviewing this Policy. It will be reviewed formally in line with other policies to reflect organisational changes, best practice, operational experience and legislative updates, and in order to maintain its effectiveness.

Policy agreed: 12 May 2018