



Volunteer Policy

For use by Network Ryde Staff and Volunteers

At Network Ryde, we believe that all young people should have the chance to succeed. We help young people build their confidence and offer them a safe space at our youth centre. Volunteers will play a crucial role in helping achieve our mission and we could not achieve our goals without their hard work. We are incredibly grateful for their support and want to make sure all our volunteers have a safe, rewarding, and enjoyable experience. The Volunteer Policy recognises the significant and valuable role volunteers play in supporting young people. This policy reflects our commitment to volunteering at Network Ryde and sets out a framework of procedures and best practice, which we will endeavour to follow when recruiting and working with our volunteers, to ensure that both volunteers' and Network Ryde's expectations are met. The policy is for volunteers recruited by Network Ryde and colleagues working with those volunteers. It will be provided to all volunteers at the time of their induction with Network Ryde. Responsibility for this policy rests with Network Ryde.

NETWORK RYDE'S VOLUNTEERS – DEFINITION

A Network Ryde volunteer is someone who, unpaid and of their own free will, chooses to give their time, energy, skills and expertise to support Network Ryde in achieving its aims. The arrangement is voluntary on both sides. The organisation's relationship with volunteers is based on trust and is not intended to have the obligations associated with employment. No payment, other than the reimbursement of agreed out-of-pocket expenses, is made by Network Ryde to people who give their time as volunteers. Network Ryde's volunteers support the organisation in several ways, including:

- Supporting young people for example by mentoring young people or offering help & guidance.
- Partnering with colleagues, for example by providing administrative support in our offices, helping to deliver different sessions or projects.
- Championing Network Ryde by helping to spread the word and connecting us with communities and partners.
- Building the community, for example by helping to recruit, train or support other volunteers.

We expect that both our volunteers and paid staff always aim to live the values of Network Ryde by being:

- Approachable – open minded and value diversity
- Approachable – be welcoming and engaging
- Non-judgemental – focus on the potential not the past
- Inspiring – lead by example
- Empowering – enable positive change
- Passionate about Network Ryde’s goals and delivering excellence.

OUR VISION FOR VOLUNTEERING

We believe that by harnessing the passion and skills of our volunteer community, we can achieve more for young people and are committed to engaging volunteers in this mission wherever possible. We aim to deliver a great volunteering experience so that our volunteers enjoy supporting us and feel well equipped to support the work of Network Ryde. To ensure that volunteers are at the forefront of everything we do, we aim to:

- Ensure that our volunteers understand what we expect from them, and what they can expect from us in return.
- Attract volunteers with the right skills to support young people and Network Ryde
- Deliver an excellent volunteering experience, through processes and ways of working, which makes it enjoyable and easy to support us.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Network Ryde is committed to building a diverse organisation that is responsive to the needs of young people. Network Ryde is also committed to equal opportunities at all stages of recruitment, selection and volunteering. Short-listing, interviewing and selection of volunteers will always be carried out without regard to protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Network Ryde will not condone, accept or ignore any forms of discrimination or unacceptable behaviour.

SAFEGUARDING

Network Ryde believes that all children and young people have the right to protection from harm, abuse and exploitation. The Safeguarding Policy will be shared with all new volunteers to Network Ryde as part of the process, Network Ryde's policies provides clear guidance on the behaviour expected of all staff, volunteers and other representatives in all activities with children and young people, whether they are delivered face to face or online. Where Network Ryde feels it is necessary, failure to meet the obligations of the Safeguarding Policy may lead to a volunteer being asked to step back from volunteering temporarily or permanently, or other appropriate action. Volunteers taking on roles at Network Ryde that will be required to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, this information will be highlighted during the application process. We welcome volunteers from a range of different backgrounds and having a criminal record will not necessarily bar someone from volunteering with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of their offence.

RECRUITMENT

Network Ryde will collect information on all prospective volunteers during the recruitment and selection process. Additionally, volunteers might be required to attend an informal interview to provide relevant information and explore their aspirations and the experience they can bring to Network Ryde. It is important for all involved to appreciate that the interview is not a competitive process, and the sole selection criteria is suitability for the role. A personal reference might be required and taken up to help confirm suitability for volunteering and for specific roles. All our regular volunteers must read and agree to the Volunteer Commitment which outlines what is expected from the volunteer and what they can expect from Network Ryde. In commencing their role, the volunteer commits to the aims, values and key policies of Network Ryde. They also commit to delivering the key tasks outlined in the relevant role description. This Volunteer Commitment does not and is not intended to create a contract of employment between Network Ryde and volunteers. When appointed, an appropriate named contact for that role will lead on the relationship management of the volunteer. This may be a colleague or a volunteer. The named contact is responsible for guiding and supporting the volunteer in their role and should be available to discuss any aspect of the volunteer's role. A volunteer will be informed in writing (letter or email) if their Network Ryde contact changes.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Volunteers will have a valuable set of skills, knowledge and attitudes gained from their education, work, previous volunteering, and life experiences. To help ensure that volunteers are appropriately equipped for their role, each volunteer must undergo the appropriate induction and training process prior to commencing their role, alongside continuous training, where appropriate, whilst volunteering with Network Ryde. Each volunteer will be provided with relevant management and support. This might include regular, appropriate and mutually agreed contact and volunteer supervision.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Volunteers must take reasonable care of themselves and others while volunteering for Network Ryde and follow any health and safety advice and instruction given for their role. Volunteers should cooperate with Network Ryde on health and safety matters, and immediately report accidents/incidents (including near misses – accidents/incidents that may have led to injury). Volunteers should not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare. Network Ryde will ensure that all volunteers are provided with the appropriate information, supervision and training required to enable them to complete voluntary work safely. This includes providing suitable systems and procedures and guidance is outlined in The Health and Safety Policy.

EXPENSES

Network Ryde will always look to reimburse reasonable expenses if there are financial barriers to volunteering. Please note that we will only reimburse expenses if previously agreed with the volunteer's named contact, based on their assessment of Network Ryde's requirements and the available budget. Where applicable, please speak to the Youth Work Manger, Session Lead or Administrator for further details on what expenses we cover and how to claim.

INSURANCE

Network Ryde provides Employers Liability, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity cover for all volunteers whilst working on Network Ryde activities. Network Ryde does not provide motor insurance cover. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement. All volunteers that hold Business Class motor insurance will be automatically covered for their work on behalf of Network Ryde.

DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Network Ryde will protect volunteer information in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Data will be held securely and confidentially and will only be accessed by authorised individuals. We expect all volunteers to comply with Network Ryde's Data Protection Policy and associated policies. When using Network Ryde devices or IT systems as part of their role, volunteers must read, understand and sign up to our IT agreement prior to starting their role. When volunteering with Network Ryde, volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about Network Ryde, its staff, young people supported by the organisation and third parties. All volunteers are required to maintain confidentiality and should not disclose the organisation's information during their volunteering services and any time afterwards.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

When signing our Volunteer Commitment, a volunteer assigns, by way of future assignment to Network Ryde, all Intellectual Property created by them as part of their role as a Network Ryde volunteer or credited to them during the term of their volunteering, provided that the assignment shall not include intellectual property which is not connected in any way whatsoever whether directly or indirectly with their volunteering.

FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

Although Network Ryde makes every effort to ensure that any experience of volunteering with us is positive and rewarding, we recognise that volunteers at times may have trouble within their role or they may want to share feedback or raise an issue with a member of staff or another volunteer. In the first instance, volunteers should talk to the Youth Work Manager or if an immediate issue arises the senior member in the session at the time. We will make every reasonable effort to resolve difficulties at an early stage and we always review feedback and learn from it. However, where the areas of concern cannot be resolved by these means our complaints procedure will be followed.

LEAVING NETWORK RYDE

Volunteers are free to cease volunteering with Network Ryde at any time by speaking or writing to their named contact. When deciding to finish volunteering with us, we ask that volunteers give us as much notice as possible to help us organise alternative arrangements. Upon leaving a volunteer role, we may offer an exit interview to reflect on their experiences and improve our volunteer opportunities. There are many different ways to support young people through Network Ryde and so we encourage volunteers to stay in touch and get involved in the future. There may also be times when Network Ryde will ask a volunteer to cease volunteering. This may be because the role no longer supports the needs of the organisation and its current work, or because the volunteer is no longer able to satisfactorily carry out a particular role. When this happens, we will endeavour to give as much notice as possible to the volunteer and try to find an acceptable alternative role. In all cases, the volunteer will be treated fairly, with dignity and respect.