

## **Emerging Voices: Volunteering Policy (vs 1 Oct 2024)**

### **Introduction**

Emerging Voices is a music charity based in Yorkshire that enables adults with lived experience of mental ill health to reach their potential as musicians and artists in a collaborative and friendly environment. Our vision is to promote social inclusion and empower people who experience mental ill health through music.

As a predominantly volunteer-run organisation (our board members are themselves volunteers), volunteers are crucial to achieving our mission and providing a high standard of support and service to all who benefit from our various activities. This document is for guidance and information only and does not form a contract of employment.

In adopting this volunteer policy Emerging Voices wishes to:

- a) Formally acknowledge and support the role of volunteers in its work
- b) Set out the principles governing the involvement of volunteers and provide a set of guidelines to ensure good practice in working with volunteers
- c) Encourage and enable, rather than restrict, the involvement of volunteers.

This volunteer policy and accompanying guidelines are intended for use by the Emerging Voices team, its trustees and its volunteers. Please note, this guidance relates to those volunteers specifically working with Emerging Voices, and not those working for other organisations.

**Purpose:** This policy outlines the expectations, responsibilities, and guidelines for volunteers at Emerging Voices. It ensures a safe, respectful, and effective environment for both volunteers and the communities that we operate in.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all volunteers at Emerging Voices, including short-term, long-term, and event-based volunteers.

### **Volunteer Policy Statement**

Emerging Voices; Equality Diversity and Inclusion

- As an engager of volunteers, Emerging Voices is committed to a policy of equality, diversity and inclusion. These principles will apply to service delivery, recruitment, training, facilities, procedures and all support offered to volunteers outlined in this policy.

Recruitment & Selection

- Recruitment of volunteers will be from all sections of the community. Appropriate targeting may be used.

Information & Training

- Volunteers will receive full information about their chosen area of work and will be given a clear idea of their responsibilities to Emerging Voices
- Volunteers will be given induction and training in the specific tasks to be undertaken
- Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them.

#### Support & Supervision

- Volunteers will be assigned a named Trustee who will act as a contact person for supervision and support.
- Supervision will be given on a 3 monthly basis by the named Trustee.

#### Problem-Solving

- Emerging Voices recognises that problems can sometimes arise, and we aim to identify and resolve these problems at the earliest stage. Volunteers who have a problem of any kind should discuss it in the first instance with their named contact person.

#### Confidentiality

- Volunteers will be bound by the same confidentiality conditions as Emerging Voices trustees.

#### Expenses & Insurance

- Emerging Voices will ensure that there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses in line with our Volunteer Expenses Policy.
- Emerging Voices will reimburse reasonable expenses, though only when they have been agreed in advance.
- All agreed out of pocket expenses should be reimbursed on production of receipts.
- The agreed pro forma should be used and the volunteer should liaise with the Charity's administrator.
- Volunteers will be adequately covered by insurance while carrying out agreed duties.

#### Health and Safety

- All volunteers are covered by the same risk assessments and health and safety provisions as trustees and freelancers.

#### References

- Based on their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference.

#### Monitoring & Evaluation

- Emerging Voices will systemically monitor and evaluate its involvement of volunteers including volunteer feedback to ensure that lessons can be learned and quickly incorporated into this volunteer policy and services provided by the charity.

N.B. This document refers to other policies which will have been shared with volunteers as part of their induction process.

### **Guidelines for Involving Volunteers**

These guidelines are intended for use along with the policy statement. They give further detail on recommended good practice in the involvement of volunteers within Emerging Voices.

#### Recruitment

- Emerging Voices will not discriminate in recruitment, particularly on the grounds of gender, marital status, disability, race, colour, religious belief, political belief, sexuality, nationality, ethnic origin, age, trade union activity, responsibility for dependents or employment status
- To reach a wide section of the community, recruitment should be by a variety of means
- Positive action in recruitment may be used for specific voluntary tasks. For example, specific work with people with lived experience of mental ill health.

#### Initial Contact

- People interested in volunteering with Emerging Voices should be invited for an informal talk with the trustee volunteer contact John Ashton, or another relevant member of the EV team. They should:
  - a) Be given written information to take away or have this emailed to them shortly after the initial meeting.
  - b) Have their role explained (see appendix for role responsibilities) and how it fits in with Emerging Voices overall aims and ethos.
  - c) Have the next stages of becoming a volunteer with Emerging Voices outlined.
- If the volunteer wishes to proceed with moving to volunteering application at this stage, they should then follow the process outlined below.

#### Selection

- All volunteers should complete an application form. This requires full contact details and two written references. If the volunteer is to carry out specialised work (e.g. marketing, finance,) the reference should relate directly to this
- If volunteers may be working with vulnerable people, or in positions of trust, they should be asked to provide information about any criminal convictions that they may have. They will also need to complete a DBS check

- All information should be dealt with in the strictest confidence and should not necessarily prejudice the person being accepted for voluntary work.

#### Acceptance

- Following the application, references and DBS check being acceptable, the applicant will formally become a volunteer by signing the Volunteer Agreement. This outlines both the expectations that Emerging Voices has of its volunteers, and what Emerging Voices will provide in return.

#### Records

- Minimum details should be kept on volunteers. This will include the reference, contact details, relevant personal experience, and any other relevant information such as emergency contact details
- Record keeping must be secure but accessible to other trustees if the contact trustee is absent
- The Data Protection Act enables people to access information held about them.

#### **Induction and First Sessions**

- An induction email should be sent to all new volunteers and should cover:
  - a) Background to Emerging Voices
  - b) Ethos/values, etc
  - c) Need for confidentiality
  - d) Details of supervision provided for the role
  - e) System for payment of expenses
  - f) Building orientation
  - g) Health and Safety, including Fire Safety
- Volunteers will be provided with a copy of the Emerging Voices Volunteering Policy
- Volunteers will be provided with a copy of the Emerging Voices Safeguarding Policy and required to sign their acceptance of this
- Volunteers will be required to complete safeguarding training or provide a recent certificate
- First sessions will vary for each type of volunteer role.

#### **Expectations of Volunteers**

Emerging Voices should expect volunteers to:

- a) Participate in induction sessions
- b) Adhere to the Code of Conduct and comply with all existing policies.
- c) Undertake voluntary work at agreed times and to the standard required
- d) Inform relevant staff or trustees if unable to attend.
- e) Give some notice if unable to continue volunteering.

- f) Raise any issues of concern relating to their voluntary work with their contact trustee or, if this is not possible, with another trustee.
- g) Uphold the values and ethos of Emerging Voices
- h) Behave in an appropriate manner to all participants in whatever capacity when volunteering, recognising they are a representative of Emerging Voices. This means being polite, friendly and encouraging to all.
- i) Respect confidentiality as appropriate.
- j) Not put themselves at risk, including being in a fit condition to work.

Volunteers should expect Emerging Voices to:

- a) Be treated with respect and without discrimination.
- b) Receive clear information regarding their tasks, responsibilities and the Charity's mission.
- c) Be clear what is (and is not) expected of them
- d) Provide adequate support for their volunteering.
- e) Recognise their contribution.
- f) Ensure safe working conditions.
- g) Provide appropriate training.
- h) Provide a working environment free from discrimination.

Time commitment

- At the outset of their engagement, volunteers will indicate to the contact trustee approximately how many hours they can commit to per month, as well as any areas of responsibility they may not be able to cover for a variety of reasons. If for any reason a volunteer is persistently unable to commit to the initial hours stated, their contact trustee will have a conversation with them to establish what would be a more realistic level of commitment. This is important so that both Emerging Voices and the volunteer are clear on what commitment is being agreed to
- Emerging Voices reserves the right to ask volunteers to leave and will give reasons in writing if requested.

Support, Supervision and Problem-Solving

- Appropriate support should be available to each volunteer. The type and level of support will depend on the needs of the volunteer and the nature of their role. Full information on this will be provided during induction. As a minimum volunteers will be given supervision every 3 months by the nominated Trustee.
- If a complaint about a volunteer arises, this will be dealt with in the first instance by the nominated Trustee. If the matter cannot be resolved it will be progressed according to the Emerging Voices Complaints Policy.

**Appendix:**

- *Possible Volunteer Role Responsibilities.*



• Home phone:

• Mobile phone:

### Part 3: Criminal convictions

• Do you have any **unspent** criminal convictions?

YES

NO

### Part 4: Volunteering with Emerging Voices

a. Which volunteer role are you applying for?

b. Why do you wish to volunteer in the above role?

c. What skills, qualities or experience do you have that make you suitable for this role?

### Part 5: Your Health

• Do you have any health conditions that we should be aware of when you are volunteering with us?

### Part 6: Referees

Please provide us with the details of two people whom we may contact as referees, to comment on your suitability for volunteering in the above role. These can be friends or colleagues but NOT family members.

	Referee 1	Referee 2
Name		
Email		
Telephone		
What is your relationship to this person?		

### Part 7: Declaration and signature

I confirm that the information provided on this form is true, complete and accurate. I understand that any offer of appointment and subsequent volunteering is subject to satisfactory references and disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service at the appropriate level.

- Your signature
- Date

Emerging Voices will hold your personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (**GDPR**) and our data protection policy, which is on our website. Please indicate in the box below that you consent to our holding your details on our systems. **You can ask for your data to be removed from our records at any time, by phoning the mobile 07984 535629 or by email [admin@emergingvoicescharity.co.uk](mailto:admin@emergingvoicescharity.co.uk)**

- I give permission for Emerging Voices Music Charity to hold my details on record and understand that I can ask for these details to be removed at any time



# Emerging Voices

## Volunteer Agreement

Volunteers are an important and valued part of Emerging Voices. We appreciate that you've chosen to volunteer with us. We will do our best to make your volunteering experience enjoyable and rewarding. We aim to be flexible and supportive. We believe that the volunteer relationship is built on trust and mutual understanding.

This agreement sets out:

- suggested start and end dates
- the expectations from you as a volunteer
- what support you can expect from us when you volunteer

## Your Volunteer Role

- Your Volunteer Role is: Choir Supporter
- Your primary volunteer contact is: John Ashton (trustee volunteer contact)
- Suggested start date: 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024
- Suggested end date: Ongoing

## As a volunteer we ask that you...

- Strive for the best that you can do and complete your volunteering activities with dedication and commitment.
- Work in partnership with others at Emerging Voices to provide an excellent service for our beneficiaries.
- Be positive about and support the charitable work of Emerging Voices.
- Value and respect the rights of our beneficiaries.
- Meet agreed time commitments and give reasonable notice when you're not available so that arrangements can be made.
- Attend any meetings or training relevant to your role.
- Follow and operate within the policies and procedures of Emerging Voices, eg. Safeguarding.

- Maintain confidentiality of Emerging Voices’ activity, team, procedures and beneficiaries.
- Act responsibly and within the law.
- Let your primary contact know if you are having any problems or if you have any complaints, concerns or feedback.

**In return, we will...**

- Introduce you to Emerging Voices and your role within it.
- Give information about our work, policies and procedures.
- Communicate clearly regarding your role and its responsibilities.
- Provide a primary contact at the charity and ongoing support.
- Offer training for your role where necessary.
- Encourage a positive and supportive volunteering experience.
- Treat you in line with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.
- Ensure your health, safety and welfare while volunteering for us.
- Reimburse reasonable expenses, where they have been agreed in advance.
- Strive to resolve any concerns fairly and reasonably.
- Respect and listen to your feedback, and keep you informed of any changes.

**Signed**

This agreement is in honour only. It is not intended to be a legally binding contract and either Emerging Voices or the volunteer can end the agreement at any time.

Signed (volunteer)

.....

Print name.....

Date.....

Signed (Emerging Voices representative)

.....

Print name.....

Date.....

## Implementation Checklist for Volunteers

### Potential Volunteer:

- 1) Initial informal conversation with trustee volunteer contact (John Ashton) or other relevant member of EV team
- 2) Given written information (Currently: the relevant 'Role Description', which includes information on the charity and a link to the website).
- 3) Visit venue, activity and leader informally

### If wish to proceed:

- 1) Fill out Volunteer Application Form
- 2) Provide 2 References
- 3) Undertake DBS check

### If accepted:

- 1) Sign Volunteer Agreement to officially become a volunteer

### Induction and training:

- 1) Given Induction document
- 2) Given Safeguarding policy, traffic-light system and report form
- 3) Sign acceptance of Safeguarding policy
- 4) Be required to complete safeguarding training or provide certificate from last yr

### Induction and training session:

- 1) Varies for each role; talk through induction document and give building orientation, risk assessment and fire procedures

### Supervision:

- 1) 3-month phone conversation with trustee contact John Ashton