



HUMAN LIBRARY

Volunteer Policy

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, management committee, service users and the general public.

Outsiders Community Consultants CIC
Company Number: 7904099



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the human library

In 2000 a group of Danish activists called Stop the Violence were given the challenge to create an event that would reduce tension, and increase tolerance and understanding at a music festival. They created the Human Library - an interactive experience designed to challenge multiple prejudices, stereotypes and stigma that can be the cause of intolerance and discrimination.

Volunteers are at the heart of everything the Human Library achieves. Across the world, volunteers contribute their time, energy and commitment to the Human Library as Human Book and volunteer members of Staff.

Just like a regular library, a visitor chooses from a list of available titles. And just like a regular library, Librarians are on hand to help Readers choose their Books. The difference is that Books are *people* - Human Books - volunteers who give their permission to visitors to ask questions and share experiences.

Since 2000, the Human Library has grown to become an international equalities movement that encourages social contact that has challenged prejudice and discrimination in over 60 countries. The Human Library Organisation is based in Copenhagen, Denmark and is represented in the United Kingdom the Human Library UK website, owned and managed by Outsiders Community Consultants CIC, hereafter referred to as 'The Outsiders'.

who is this policy for?

This policy is for volunteers who are performing the one of the event roles of Human Book, Librarian, Matchmaker or Library Assistant at Human Library events organised and delivered by The Outsiders. This policy is also for volunteers who have accepted an agreed role within the company The Outsiders.

By becoming a volunteer you become an advocate for the international Human Library Movement. The relationship between The Outsiders and our volunteers does not involve any obligations associated with employment. The Outsiders makes no payment to volunteers, other than the reimbursement of agreed expenses.

our commitment to you

Volunteers are vital to the Human Library, without you we would not exist.

Volunteers help us to deliver our aims and objectives, and ensure that we meet the needs of our beneficiaries. The role of Human Book is always performed as a volunteer, as are the event roles of Librarian, Matchmaker and Library Assistant. We do not pay anyone to perform these roles and we never will.

Every step that we take towards challenging prejudice, stigma and discrimination, we take with you, as volunteers and The Outsiders working together.

And because volunteers are so important to us, we are committed to ensuring volunteers get the most from their experience, and receive the recognition they deserve for the difference they are making.

our principles of volunteering

- We will provide training for volunteers to undertake their role effectively
- We recognise that all volunteers offer unique skills and experience and we will work with them to use those skills and abilities to best effect within the company to support the aims and objectives of the Human Library Movement
- We will ensure that volunteers are given every opportunity to contribute to our work
- We will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff
- We expect that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work

our responsibilities

- To promote and regulate use of the Human Library methodology in the UK
- To support and train local Organisers to deliver events in their communities
- To organise Human Library events across the UK
- To promote the Human Library methodology to partners and supporters
- To manage membership of the Human Library Organisation in the UK
- To produce guidance material in support of the international Human Library Movement.

our expectations of you

- To support the aims and principles of the Human Library Movement
- To support, respect and adhere to our policies, guidelines and management decisions - including all aspects of methodology, equal opportunities, health and safety, data protection and use of our brand
- To always consider and protect the Human Library's good reputation in your actions and conduct
- To let staff know first if you have any problems so that we can find a solution together

your expectations of us

- To offer equal opportunities to everyone who wants to volunteer
- To match your skills and experience with the aims and principles of the Human Library methodology to find the appropriate volunteer role for you
- To provide training and support to help volunteers enjoy and benefit from their role
- To reimburse out of pocket expenses
- To make necessary arrangements to ensure your health and safety and welfare as a volunteer

human library volunteer roles

Book

Human Books are the crucial to the success of the Human Library and ultimately make the difference. Books give their permission for Readers to engage them in respectful conversation for up to half an hour.

- A detailed role description is in the Human Library 'Guidance For Books'

Librarian

Human Librarians issue Human Library Cards, record the number of Readers, and record every conversation that takes place at the Human Library. Human Librarians work with Matchmakers to ensure the safety of Books and Readers.

- A detailed role description is in the Human Library 'Guidance For Staff'

Matchmaker

Human Library Matchmakers work with a small number of Books. They are responsible for introducing Books to Readers, reading the 'Rights of the Book and Reader' before a conversation starts, and politely bringing the conversation to a close.

- A detailed role description is in the Human Library 'Guidance For Staff'

Library Assistant

Human Library Assistants engage with visitors and encourage them to become Readers. They also help collect evaluations, and assist Human Library Organisers in general duties at events, such as set-up and pack-away.

- A detailed role description is in the Human Library 'Guidance For Staff'

other volunteer roles

The Outsiders may create additional volunteer roles within their Human Library project.

Successful volunteers will receive a Volunteer Agreement establishing what we will provide, and what we expect of them. In addition, they will be given a clear role description. Neither of these documents is a contract; The Outsiders will not enter into a contract with any volunteers.

Volunteers are free to cease their role with The Outsiders at any time without giving a notice period. However, we would hope that where possible, volunteers would make every effort to honour any existing commitments. A telephone or email advising the decision to cease volunteering will suffice. An exit interview with a representative of The Outsiders will be offered.

Volunteer roles created by The Outsiders will not replace any roles that have previously been carried out by employees of The Outsiders. Where appropriate, The Outsiders may create a paid role that includes duties that were previously part of a volunteer role. If and when this case arises, the volunteer role will be terminated in advance of the creation of the staff role, and the volunteer(s) will be given the opportunity to apply for the post.

Recruitment of volunteers

The recruitment of Human Library volunteers by The Outsiders is an ongoing process. We value the breadth and range of experiences and skills that volunteers give the Human Library. Volunteers will be given an application form, and once completed an informal interview will be carried out in order to ensure that applicants are suitable for the role they are applying for. If selected, volunteers will complete a registration form.

We will base our selection on the ability of the applicant to perform the role concerned, taking into account any effect participation in the Human Library movement may have on the health and wellbeing of all parties especially the volunteer themselves, the Human Library brand, and the principles and reputation of the Human Library Movement.

Age

In most cases you will need to be over 16 years of age to volunteer independently and under-18s will be asked for parental/guardian consent. People younger than 16 may get involved in some aspects of volunteering with us if they are accompanied by a responsible adult. We do not have an upper age limit for volunteers, but there may be situations that require us to ask someone to stop volunteering if The Outsiders considers the act of volunteering a risk to the person concerned or others around them.

Equality and Diversity

You will be volunteering for a company and movement that celebrates equality and diversity. We are committed to equal opportunities and this is reflected in the The Outsiders' policies and practices.

For more information please refer to our Equality and Diversity Policy.

Safeguarding

Safety of children and vulnerable adults is something The Outsiders treats with the utmost seriousness. Our practices and policies are designed to minimise risk to children and vulnerable adults at all Human Library events organised by The Outsiders.

A child is legally defined as 'any person who is under the age of 18 years'. The Outsiders are required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and as The Outsiders may on occasion deliver services specifically for children we are committed to ensuring our Safeguarding policy is fully inclusive and does not exclude any potentially vulnerable individuals who we may come into contact with. The broad definition of a vulnerable adult is 'a person who is 18 years of age or over, and who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation'.

While it is important to recognise that certain groups of people are legally defined as vulnerable, we have adopted a fully inclusive and integrated policy that applies to all employees, volunteers and service users and which creates a safer environment for all and ensures that no one is left out.

Data Protection

The Outsiders will collect and store personal data for the sole purpose of Human Library activity. Personal data supplied by you will be used for the purpose of administering Human Library events. On some occasions it may be necessary share your personal information supplied with a Human Library Organiser from a partner of supporting agency. The Outsiders will never share your information with a third party without your prior permission.

The Outsiders promises that it will take all reasonable steps to ensure that its staff are aware of and trained in their responsibilities for data protection, that its systems are built securely and minimize the risk of breaching confidentiality, and that it respects the consent to use and share the information that you provide.

Confidentiality

The Outsiders deals with many issues of a confidential or sensitive nature. We are required to treat information acquired about volunteers as confidential. Our Confidentiality Policy has been written to ensure that any person involved with The Outsiders, in whatever capacity, is protected from having information about them passed to others without their knowledge or consent.

All volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed whilst volunteering on behalf of The Outsiders, whether this information involves a specific individual (staff, volunteer, client, or other person) or wider organisational business.

Resolving Concerns & Complaints Procedures

If you have any concerns about your volunteering, please talk to a member of The Outsiders immediately. The Outsiders takes the concerns of its volunteers very seriously and will make every effort to resolve any difficulties.

The Outsiders will seek to resolve any problems you may have fairly, simply and quickly. We will look upon all grievance claims seriously and take all reasonable steps to ensure that there is no unnecessary delay in procedures.

For more information please refer to our Grievance and Complaints Policy.

Expenses

Volunteers may request reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, such as travel, and if devoting a whole day to The Outsiders, a sandwich lunch or equivalent. Payment of expenses must be authorised by a member of The Outsiders staff in advance, and receipts will be required.

Insurance

Every The Outsiders volunteer will be covered by our public liability insurance at Human Library events or in an office or building rented or owned by The Outsiders or an organization working in partnership with us.

Health and Safety

The Outsiders is committed to ensuring your wellbeing and safety whilst volunteering and, in turn, we expect our volunteers to contribute to maintaining a safe work environment.

All The Outsiders volunteers must:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of yourself and other persons who may be affected by your actions
- Co-operate with staff by assisting them to fulfill their statutory duties
- Follow our health and safety policy and measures put in place by The Outsiders or any organization whose premises you may be working on
- Report accidents/incidents or dangerous circumstances to a paid member of staff, whether or not any person has been injured
- Be aware of actions to take when an emergency arises and who, from The Outsiders, to contact for support.

Media Relations

There may be times when you are asked by to give comments or stories to the media about your involvement with the Human Library.

As a volunteer with The Outsiders you are expected to act as a positive advocate for the Human Library when speaking to the media. You must abide by our policies, principles and values and communicate these with consistency and clarity. If The Outsiders asks you to talk to the media on our behalf we will provide you with training or guidance on in how to communicate the Human Library. If you are independently contacted by the media you must inform The Outsiders before giving comment. Any comments made by volunteers that could bring into disrepute either the Human Library, or The Outsiders, or are seen to damage the brand and reputation of the Human Library Organisation, are the sole responsibility of the volunteer and will not represent the views of The Outsiders. Comments of this nature may result in disciplinary proceedings. For more information see our Volunteer Code of Conduct.

Copyright, Intellectual Property and Photography

The rights to any original works that you may produce in the course of volunteering with The Outsiders will belong to the company, unless otherwise agreed. This includes photography, artwork, graphic design and written work, including the results of research.

We may use photographs of volunteers carrying out their roles for promotional purposes, such as in guidance material, online or in other documentation relating to or owned by The Outsiders or the Human Library Organisation. You may, of course, request that an image is withdrawn.