

Declaration of Rights of Volunteers

September 9th 2022, revised November 24th 2022.

“Act so as to treat people, whether in your own person or in that of another, at all times as an end, and not solely as a means.”

(Immanuel Kant *, 1724-1804)

Each volunteer should have the right to:

- 1. A clear and specific role description.**
- 2. An agreement that sets forth their responsibilities and role limits.**
- 3. Training and development opportunities that support their needs and roles.**
- 4. A clear and relevant voice in the democracy of their organisation.**
- 5. Be heard and respected.**
- 6. Be accepted and relevantly included, irrespective of their race, colour, ethnic inheritance, gender, gender expression, age, physical or mental ability, economic status, sexual orientation, or religious belief (or lack of such belief), unless limited by the provisions of UK law.**
- 7. Choose how, when, and where they implement their voluntary hours.**
- 8. Withdraw their labour as they see fit.**
- 9. Protection against exploitation or abuse.**
- 10. Protection against victimisation.**
- 11. Protection against harassment and bullying.**
- 12. Access to expenses to cover outgoings paid in the necessary pursuance of their role.**
- 13. Know how they are included under the organisation’s public liability protections.**
- 14. Knowledge of their natural rights as expressed herein, and those enacted under UK statute or common law.**

First draft written by Bea Groves-McDaniel with the assistance of Roxanne Groves-McDaniel. Reviewed, amended and approved by those attending the event on Volunteer Rights, 24/11/2022)

Note: Much of the above was gleaned from government sources, statements of international rights, and principles of ethics, democracy and inclusion.

(* Kant was a German philosopher who wrote extensively about moral rules and obligations)

Glossary of Definitions

Rights	A right is a freedom or capacity which people believe should not be taken away. It is a rule about what a person is allowed to do or able to have. A right is different from a privilege, which is something that must be earned.
Responsibilities	The fact of being answerable , or accountable for something within one's power, control, or management.
Democracy	Refers to a kind of decision making system where everyone affected by decisions have a say in how they are implemented, or where all members of an organisation participate in the act of governing its work.
Exploitation	The action of treating someone unfairly or cruelly in order to benefit from their work.
Abuse	An action that intentionally causes harm or injures another person. It can be physical, mental, sexual, social, etc.
Victimisation	Victimisation is when someone treats a person badly or subjects them to a penalty because they complain about discrimination, or help someone who has been a victim of discrimination.
Harassment	Harassment is subjecting someone to unwanted conduct , where the conduct has the effect of violating the person's dignity or creating an environment that is intimidating, hostile, degrading, or humiliating. It could include actions such as gossip, insulting jokes, deliberate exclusion, etc.
Bullying	Behaviour that hurts, intimidates or frightens someone less powerful, sometimes forcing that person to do something they do not want to do.
Natural rights	Natural rights are basic rights that include the right to life, freedom, safety, and the pursuit of happiness. Every citizen is entitled to these rights. They are inalienable (that is to say, cannot be taken away by any authority).
Public liability	Possible harmful or detrimental incidents that occur in connection with an organisation's activities, and which could be subject to legal action.
Statute	A written rule or law set out by a government, organization or institution
Common law	Any legal statement based on previous rulings made by judges. It is also sometimes referred to as 'case law'.