

Volunteer Policy

Committed to Volunteering

Young Enterprise NI is building a connected world of young people, business volunteers and educators - inspiring each other to succeed through enterprise.

Volunteers are central to our ethos - without the help and support of our volunteers we could not reach the 90,000 young people aged 4 to 25 who are involved in our programmes each academic year.

Volunteers are vital to the work of our charity and we strive to ensure volunteers we recruit are fully supported at all times, and recognised for the unique contribution they make. Volunteers are a core part of our team, with a distinctive but complementary role alongside paid employees. They are integrated into the structure and operations of the charity and contribute strongly towards Young Enterprise NI's aims and objectives.

Who the Volunteer Policy applies to

Volunteers support Young Enterprise NI by giving their time to carry out roles which have been developed by the charity. Our volunteers help make the connection between the classroom and the world of business and employment, by bringing relevant insight and personal experience to our programmes. They also bring a wide range of skills that enable our programmes to be delivered to such a high standard.

The volunteering relationship is based on trust and does not involve the obligations associated with employment. No payment is made by Young Enterprise NI to people who give their time as volunteers. The arrangement is voluntary on both sides and either party can bring this to an end.

This policy is intended for Young Enterprise NI volunteers who have accepted an agreed role within the charity. It outlines the basic principles by which Young Enterprise NI works with volunteers. Our Head of Stakeholder Engagement is responsible for the overall management of volunteer involvement, including overseeing the implementation of this policy.

Getting Started

We want to ensure our volunteers have everything they need to get started and volunteers will meet with an assigned Young Enterprise NI representative. This representative will be the volunteer's designated point of contact with Young Enterprise NI and will provide support throughout their volunteering journey. To ensure this objective is met, each Young Enterprise NI staff member receives training in the management, supervision, training and support of volunteers.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

Young Enterprise NI is committed to providing equal opportunities for all volunteers and prospective volunteers. All recruitment and training will exclude any consideration of a volunteer's religious beliefs, political opinion, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, age, race or disability, or trade union membership or non-membership. The charity will not directly or indirectly discriminate on the aforementioned grounds.

Young Enterprise NI strive to create a diverse and inclusive charity within a diverse and inclusive community. We are committed to serving and representing all the people of Northern Ireland and wish to see all sections of the community represented among our volunteers.

We use fair, non-discriminatory and consistent recruitment procedures for all potential volunteers. Volunteer

opportunities are widely promoted throughout Northern Ireland, and we will endeavour to make recruitment and selection materials available in a format accessible to any individual or group, upon request.

We implement a fair, effective and open system in the recruitment and selection of volunteers and treat all information collected in this process confidentially. All potential volunteers will go through a recruitment and selection process that is appropriate to the role offered; however, we do accept applications from volunteers regardless of previous experience and strive to find an appropriate role for every volunteer who applies.

For more information, please read our *Equal Opportunities Policy* in full.

Responsibilities and Expectations

We recognise that volunteering is a two-way process. By involving volunteers we receive many benefits as a charity, including increasing the quality of our programme delivery; but we also do our best to ensure that our volunteers benefit too.

We want our volunteers to enjoy volunteering with us and we take our responsibilities towards volunteers very seriously. Young Enterprise NI volunteers will also be representatives of the charity, and therefore will be asked to act appropriately.

For more information, please read our *Volunteer Agreement* and *Volunteer Code of Conduct* in full.

Recruitment

The majority of our staff are involved in and dedicate a significant proportion of their time to volunteer recruitment.

All volunteers are asked to complete a Young Enterprise NI Volunteer Application Form. Volunteers who are planning to work with the same group of students in regulated activity and on a regular basis must also complete an AccessNI criminal record check before volunteering. We abide by AccessNI's Code of Practice and by process re-check volunteers every three years.

The recruitment process is conducted by appropriately briefed/trained staff and aims to allow both parties to give and receive sufficient information to assess whether the volunteer opportunities available match the potential volunteer's skills, qualities and interests. We do not require references for recruitment. If deemed unsuitable to volunteer, individuals will be offered an opportunity to discuss the outcome and identify possible alternatives within or outside of Young Enterprise NI.

For more information, please read the **Access NI Code of Practice** in full

Selection

Volunteers carry out various different roles for our charity that differ in terms of involvement and time commitment. We have developed a number of different volunteer roles, that not only help us meet our charitable objectives, but provide an extremely valuable volunteer experience.

At this stage, through an informal discussion with the volunteer's Young Enterprise NI representative, an appropriate role and school will be selected. Young Enterprise NI endeavor to match volunteers to a role which is suited to their background and skillset, and will work with them to find a role which meets specific personal and professional development needs. We also endeavor to match volunteers to a programme which is geographically convenient to the volunteer's workplace or home.

Volunteers are provided with a Volunteer Welcome Pack, containing a written letter of welcome from Young Enterprise NI, important contact information, information on our policies and a copy of our Volunteer Code of Conduct, which outlines the expectations and responsibilities of both the volunteer and Young Enterprise NI.

Training

Volunteers receive comprehensive training on their role, prior to programme involvement. We have clear volunteer training that is specific to each role we offer. Our staff are more than happy to provide volunteers with additional training as required making the training process flexible to suit each individual volunteer.

Support

It is very important to our charity that we provide adequate support to our volunteers at all times. To enable us to do this, each new volunteer is assigned a Young Enterprise NI representative who remains their personal point of contact throughout their time with our charity. The representative provides role specific training and ongoing support to ensure the process is as valuable as possible for the volunteer. The Head of Stakeholder Engagement and Volunteer Engagement Officer can also be contacted in case of emergency or if the designated representative is unavailable:

T: 028 9032 7003

E: volunteer@yeni.co.uk

We also endeavour to provide adequate and appropriate facilities, equipment and resources to enable volunteers to fulfil their roles.

Volunteers are able to attend a supervised volunteer taster session, if required, and this can be agreed with the volunteer and his/her Young Enterprise NI representative. This may allow volunteers to gain a better understanding of the volunteering role and to ensure all parties are satisfied with the arrangement.

Young Enterprise NI recognises the core role that volunteers fulfil at every level of the charity. It endeavours to communicate with volunteers in appropriate ways, including e-mail and social media. It also recognises the importance of seeking volunteers' ideas and opinions at regular intervals and conducts an annual volunteer survey.

Recognition

Young Enterprise NI appreciates the work of our volunteers and are aware of the need to recognise their contribution. Volunteers are personally thanked for their commitment by email after each session they have participated in, and will be thanked by their representative and the organisation by email at the end of each academic year. Volunteers will be invited to Young Enterprise NI events as appropriate. We regularly host volunteer recognition events to publicly recognise the contribution our volunteers have made to the work of Young Enterprise NI.

Health and Safety

The well-being and safety of volunteers is a priority to us. We take our commitment to Health & Safety seriously, and in turn expect our volunteers to contribute to maintaining a safe volunteering environment.

All volunteers must take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and other persons who may be affected by their actions. Volunteers should co-operate with staff by assisting them to fulfil their statutory duties and follow our Health & Safety Policy at all times. All accidents, incidents and dangerous circumstances must be reported to a Young Enterprise staff member.

For more information, please read our *Health & Safety Policy* in full.

Insurance

Volunteers are fully covered by our public liability and personal accident insurance through our licencing agreement with Young Enterprise UK.

However, drivers using their cars in connection with their voluntary work must inform their own insurance company to ensure adequate and continued cover.

Media Relations

No comments or stories should be given directly to the media, unless the volunteer's role specifically includes talking to the press or other local

media. Our media relations are handled by our Stakeholder Engagement Officer. Any requests from the press should be referred to your Young Enterprise NI representative.

Data Protection

The protection of personal privacy is an important concern of Young Enterprise NI. Young Enterprise NI complies with the regulations of the Data Protection Act 2018 to take all possible care to protect personal data held whether electronically or on paper.

For more information, please read our *Data Protection Policy* in full.

Expenses

Reflecting the current financial position of our charity, we are not in a position to cover volunteer travel expenses. Where a volunteer may be out of pocket through mileage or other transport costs, we expect the businesses that the volunteer represents to cover the cost as part of their overall contribution to our charity. We do however ensure that volunteers are provided with all the resources, materials, training and support needed to allow them to fulfil their role. Further, we endeavour to work with volunteers to match them to venues which are local to them, helping minimise travel time and expense. This policy on expenses is reviewed annually.

Complaints/Grievances

Young Enterprise NI aims to reflect the voluntary nature of our relationship with volunteers in all our policies and procedures for managing their involvement. Therefore, the volunteer's designated Young Enterprise representative deals with minor complaints or grievances about or by volunteers or their work through the usual support and supervision procedures, in the first instance.

However, we recognise our duty to protect the wellbeing and interests of all our stakeholders and therefore have a very clear and easily accessible formal complaints procedure in the case of more serious complaints.

For more information, please read our *Volunteer Complaints Policy* in full.

Where volunteers do not meet our charitable expectations, or breach our Volunteer Code of Conduct, we have a clear policy in place to deal with these situations.

For more information, please read our *Dealing with Difficult Situations Policy* in full.

References

Volunteer References are available on request.

Please note: Young Enterprise NI identifies roles for volunteers which extend the work of the charity. Volunteers are involved in numerous roles within the charity in which complement, but never substitute, the work of paid staff. Volunteers will not be used in times of industrial action to do the work of paid staff. They may continue with their regular tasks, but will not be asked to undertake additional duties. Volunteers can refuse at any stage to undertake tasks which they believe to be unrealistic; beyond the scope of the role or that they do not have the skills to carry out. Any changes within Young Enterprise NI which in turn may affect the volunteer's role will be communicated to the volunteer in writing by the Head of Stakeholder Engagement.

All aforementioned policies can be read in full at:

www.yeni.co.uk/volunteer