

SOUTHWARK PLAYHOUSE VOLUNTEER POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community: the environment of individuals outside one's immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice without concern for financial gain.

Southwark Playhouse believes in the value of voluntary activity as an important expression of citizenship and an essential component of a free and democratic society. It supports and promotes volunteering in public and third sector organisations. Southwark Playhouse takes responsibility for ensuring that volunteers within its own organisation are appropriately involved, valued for their contribution, and respected as colleagues.

In adopting this volunteer policy Southwark Playhouse wishes to:

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

This volunteer policy and accompanying guidelines are intended for use by Southwark Playhouse paid staff and volunteers.

OVERVIEW

Volunteer Ushers will be assigned a role by the Duty Manager on shift, roles will complement the activities of paid staff but do not replace or stand instead of a paid position. The role will be reviewed on a regular basis according to the needs of individual.

Volunteers are encouraged to use their initiative within the organisation as opportunities and circumstances allow. Southwark Playhouse encourages independence and self-reliance, but volunteers must always consult with their supervisor. This is especially important to avoid risk to individuals and others and to ensure all activities remain within the protection of Southwark Playhouse's insurance cover. Volunteers must always seek and obtain approval from their supervisor where there is likely to be an impact on the organisation's budget or other resources in carrying out their role.

Volunteering with Southwark Playhouse will reflect the best available practice. Southwark Playhouse works hard to ensure that volunteers are not exploited or treated unfairly or unreasonably. Southwark Playhouse acknowledges that it has responsibilities to its volunteers and similarly has expectations of them.

BEING AN AMBASSADOR

Whilst at Southwark Playhouse volunteers represent the organisation and play a positive role in raising its profile. Individuals should consider Southwark Playhouse's best interests and uphold our good name and reputation. They should also behave within the reasonable bounds of any relevant Southwark Playhouse policies and codes of conduct.

See our Inclusivity poster below which we have on display throughout our venues. We ask that our Volunteers uphold these values, as representatives of Southwark Playhouse:

“Southwark Playhouse is committed to being a welcoming and inclusive space for everyone, where discrimination of any kind is unacceptable.

We want to be a theatre where every person who engages with us is treated respectfully, is valued for their perspectives, skills, and talents, can communicate openly, and encouraged to develop to their full potential as a contributor to the success of the theatre and the communities we serve. Any discriminatory remarks or comments, be they racist, sexist, disablist, homophobic or any other will not be tolerated.

We expect everyone who enters our buildings to abide by these expectations, and for them to be actively aware of the impact their words or actions may have on others around them.”

DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Volunteers will need to exercise confidentiality and diplomacy on certain issues relating to the work and role of the organisation. In such circumstances volunteers must agree to adhere to a confidentiality agreement as defined by Southwark Playhouse. Situations where this applies will be made clear to the individual in the induction process and as part of their work at the theatre.

Southwark Playhouse recognises the need to comply with the various laws regulating the processing of personal data relating to individuals. Volunteers should recognise the risks involved when dealing with such information and fully understand the steps that they must take to minimise such risks. Volunteers who collect or administer any personal data on Southwark Playhouse clients and audiences will be required by law to comply with Data Protection. Volunteers have the same rights under the Data Protection Act as employees. Southwark Playhouse will comply with rules on personal data about volunteers held on a computer or in paper files.

Whenever processing any personal data, the individual should:

- ensure that their computer equipment is maintained and safe and is only used to perform the individual's particular job.
- ensure that all personal data is used, held, and disclosed only for the intended purposes.

- ensure that information is collected and processed in a prudent and lawful manner and should be kept up to date and accurate at all times.
- ensure that information is only to be retained for the period necessary for the purpose for which it is held.

If a volunteer has any concerns or questions regarding the processing or use of personal data, they should contact their supervisor in the first instance to be referred to Southwark Playhouse's Data Protection Officer (the General Manager).

DRESS CODE AND HYGIENE

Volunteers should always ensure that they dress appropriately when working at the theatre and, if needed, guidance can be sought from the Front of House Managers. Volunteers work in a customer facing role and should therefore ensure they are coming to volunteer in clean and presentable clothing. Clothes, and overall personal grooming includes assuring bodily odors reflect good hygiene standards.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Southwark Playhouse aims to recruit and select volunteers in accordance with the spirit of equal opportunity legislation and guidance. It will endeavour to ensure recruitment materials are distributed widely to all sections of the community and in formats appropriate to the differing needs of a diverse society.

It is Southwark Playhouse's policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of:

- Race
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Gender Identity, including gender reassignment, and non-binary persons.
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependents
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Age

To reiterate, Southwark Playhouse is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who work or Volunteer for Southwark Playhouse will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

EQUALITY COMMITMENTS

Southwark Playhouse is committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect.
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling the legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Complying with the theatre's Equal Opportunities Policy and associated policies

- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
- Regarding all breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

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