

Polish Abroad Volunteer Policy

Date adopted: 01/06/2016

Date to be reviewed: 01/06/2019

Volunteering with Polish Abroad

About us

Polish Abroad is a non-profit registered charity (NIC102361) established in 2008. The aims of POLISH ABROAD are to:

- Contribute to the advancement of citizenship and community development through social, cultural and educational projects undertaken either independently or together with organisations sharing the same objectives.
- Work in partnership with other community and charity organisations, their representatives and officials as well as other relevant organisations and agencies to formulate and implement constructive strategies to encourage the promotion of the Polish Community in the North West of Northern Ireland.
- Raise awareness among the wider community of the needs and rights and the contribution of the Polish Community in the interest of community relations in the North West.
- Bring together members of the Polish community to develop and advance their arts, culture and heritage.
- Advance the education of the Polish Community in the North West by providing educational opportunities.
- Advance the amateur sport among the Polish Community in the North West and its environs.

Purpose of our volunteer policy

Our volunteer policy has been created to show our volunteers and potential volunteers that we have spent time and care in planning how volunteers will be welcomed at Polish Abroad. It also outlines that all volunteers will be treated in a fair and consistent way. It should also help our volunteers understand what support is available to them and what they can expect from us.

Our vision and mission for volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to share your enthusiasm, skills and ideas whilst having fun and meeting like-minded people. By volunteering for Polish Abroad you will be making a positive contribution to community development in our area. Volunteers are vital to our work.

Attracting volunteers and volunteer agreement

We have a range of opportunities for volunteers to get involved in. These include helping with Polish Abroad Saturday School, running our library, helping run the Polish Anglers NI angling club, helping with our social media and website maintenance and many more.

Once we receive a copy of your completed registration form, a member of our team will get in touch with more information on specific opportunities and we can decide together which option best matches your interests and time availability and also our needs. Your help will be greatly appreciated and really will make a difference.

Access Ni Checks

Most volunteer roles will require an Access Ni check to inform Polish Abroad of any criminal convictions that a person wishing to volunteer may have. For example, any volunteer position which involves regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to an Access Ni check.

Induction and training

It does not matter how much you already know, as there will be opportunities to learn, and we have roles to suit every level of expertise.

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by one of our staff. This will include:

- Some information about Polish Abroad, our vision, mission and our future plans;
- the role of the volunteer;
- introduction to some volunteers;
- tour around our facilities and see some of our initiatives;
- copy of all the relevant policies including this volunteer policy and also our Health and Safety, Finance, Equality and Good Relations
- essential procedures
- information about training and ongoing learning opportunities

There will be a trial period of four weeks to give Polish Abroad and you time to discover if you are suited to each other. A review will be made midway through the trial period and also at the end. This is not an assessment, it is just so that we can be sure that you benefit the most from the volunteering experience and maximise the time you are giving freely.

Recognition and reward

We could not do the work we do without our volunteers. To acknowledge this we will always say thank you and show appreciation for a job well done. There will always be a listening ear or shoulder to lean on.

Expenses

We value our volunteers and want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. All reasonable out of pocket expenses, if required, will be reimbursed including expenses for travel and meals (if working more than 4.5 hours in one session). In order to claim expenses, an Expenses Form must be completed, a valid receipt provided and this should be handed in to the co-ordinator.

Insurance, health and safety, accidents and risk assessment

Polish Abroad has a valid insurance policy so that volunteers are covered by public liability insurance, which you are advised to read. It covers the volunteering activities you will be doing. We will keep reminding you of our Health and Safety Policy and give simple instructions on how to perform each task safely. We have clear procedures for accidents and emergencies and will always have a first aider on field sites.

Resolving problems

We hope that you will have a very enjoyable experience volunteering with us. However if your role as a volunteer does not meet with your expectations or with the commitments we have made to you, we want you to feel comfortable about letting us know. First of all, talk to the person who leads the team where you volunteer and he or she should be able to sort it out with you before it becomes a problem. If you do not feel this will resolve things you can speak to the Co-ordinator.

Confidentiality

We expect all volunteers to adhere to confidentiality guidelines which will be explained to you before you begin volunteering with us and this also includes use of social media and contact with any press.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Polish Abroad is committed to embracing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion. When representing Polish Abroad as a volunteer we expect you to support our commitment to promoting equality.

Volunteering whilst on benefit

You can still volunteer with us if you are receiving benefits provided that we follow the legal guidelines. We have information from the Jobs and Benefits Department which we can talk through with you regarding the hours you can do and what you can claim for expenses incurred through volunteering.