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Public Engagement Programme Volunteer Approach

This document sets out how the Public Engagement Programme team approaches interaction with volunteers, who is defined as a volunteer and our commitment to supporting volunteering.

Introduction

The Public Engagement Programme Imperial College London comprises of annual activities with the aim of embedding public engagement across the College and engaging a variety of public audiences with the College's research and science more broadly.

We aim to create mutually beneficial connections between staff students, the public and external collaborators. Volunteers are vital in delivering our public programme of events, including the Imperial Festival, Fringe series, community programmes at the White City campus and other relevant events.

Volunteer help is greatly appreciated and really does make a difference. We aim to recognise, value and support our volunteers.

Who delivers the public engagement programme?

We think it is importance to put volunteering in the context of how the programme is delivered at an operational and content level.

1. **Public Engagement Programme Team**

   Staff for which the management and delivery of the programme is their primary role or part of their job description. This team lead on the operations, content and staffing of the programme and are responsible for the management of supervisors and volunteers.

2. **Supervisors**

   Supervisors are invited by the Public Engagement Programme Team to support in a specific capacity as part of the programme. They will often be responsible for an area of the festival, or part of the events programme.

3. **Volunteers**

   A diverse pool of volunteers contribute to the delivery of the programme. Volunteers are recruited from across the College ('internal volunteers') and outside of the College (external volunteers).

   Whether internal or external, volunteers are considered volunteers when they give their time to assist with the **operational**, 'on the day' delivery of the festival.

   This means that internal or external contacts/researchers/content developers who have been given the opportunity to engage to wider public with their research, in delivering **content** for the programme rather than the operational delivery of the event, are not considered to be volunteers in this specific public engagement programme context.

Recruitment and selection

Volunteers are recruited in accordance with Imperial College London's Equality Objectives - we believe that volunteering should be open to all regardless of gender, race, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

At all stages of the recruitment process, we reserve the right not to accept potential volunteers or applicants.

Selection of volunteers

All volunteers are required to complete an expression of interest form via the volunteer portal or College website.

For safeguarding reasons, volunteers must be at least 18 years of age at the point of submitting their interest to volunteer.

- Internal volunteers will be encouraged to attend a skills based training session prior to their first volunteering shift.

- External volunteers will be required to attend an induction and skills based training session prior to their first shift.

Induction

We recognise that joining a volunteer programme, community or team, whatever the size and whatever the role to be undertaken, can be daunting.

All volunteers will receive an induction pack as part of their first training session when they begin voluntary work with us. This will include:

- information about our vision and mission;

- information on our aims and principles;

- the role of the volunteer;

- introduction to other volunteers and other staff and team members;

- tour of the site where possible;

- copies of all relevant policies, including this Volunteer Approach and Volunteer Privacy Policy;

- clear information on what is expected of volunteers and the training and support offered;

- essential procedures, including timekeeping and any required documentation.

Training

Training will be offered to help volunteers develop in their role.

External volunteers must attend a training session in order to volunteer. Internal volunteers are actively encouraged to undertake training as it will provide key skills needed to get the most out of their role.

Volunteers who have developed their skills at multiple events may be offered training to help them to take on a supervisor role. This is at the discretion of the volunteer manager.

Support and recognition

The public engagement team recognises the important contribution volunteers make to our organisation. We believe we should invest in our volunteers, and so will provide regular and on-going support, supervision and training to enable volunteers to develop their skills.

The contribution of volunteers in our organisation is invaluable. It is essential that volunteers' efforts are recognised and rewarded. Volunteers will be rewarded for their commitment in the following ways:

Support

- Volunteers will be assigned a named contact who will provide regular support throughout their time volunteering with us.

- Formal training opportunities.

- Informal advice and information sharing.

- Regular opportunities to feedback on the volunteering experience and public programme.

- Supervision and guidance during events.

- Subsistence (snacks or a meal dependent on shift length) will be provided.

- For internal volunteers, we encourage volunteers to seek TOIL when volunteering out of working hours, however this is at the discretion of the line manager.

Recognition

Volunteer recognition will be provided through:

- Integration within College wide volunteer reward and recognition processes and signposting to such processes where possible.

- Celebratory refreshments and socialising following events

- The opportunity to be nominated by your peers or the public engagement team for one of two volunteering awards: the Commitment Award (for most shifts completed) and the Volunteer of the Year Award (recognition of excellent enthusiasm and customer service). These prizes will be awarded at the end of the academic year.

- All volunteers who have volunteered at least one shift will be entered into an annual prize draw for all volunteers.

- These strands of recognition and reward will continuously be reviewed based on volunteer feedback.

Further information

Data protection

- The public engagement team will maintain records on all volunteers. All such information will be kept in accordance with the College's Volunteer Privacy Policy.

- Volunteers who process personal data as part of their assigned role must themselves comply with the Imperial College London Data Protection Policy.

Health and safety

- Imperial College London will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure volunteers' health, safety and welfare while at work in accordance with College Health and Safety guidelines.

- Volunteers will receive training to ensure that health and safety is protected. We will ensure you are aware of our procedures for accidents and emergencies, for example: relevant First Aiders and security personnel will be made known to you, and you will be shown the fire exit routes.

- The College does not insure a volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage. While we will aim to provide secure spaces to store valuables, we are unable to guarantee their security. Volunteers are encouraged to keep valuable items with them.

Safeguarding

- While there are no roles that will involve volunteers being alone with a child, it is important that all staff and volunteers are adhering to safeguarding procedures and report any concerns to a member of staff.

- The College may carry out DBS checks if deemed necessary.

- Volunteers will be briefed on the procedure for lost children before each event and are expected to follow this procedure throughout.

Equal opportunities

- All Imperial College London volunteers are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect in accordance with the regardless of gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age. Our commitment to this is outlined in the Imperial Expectations.

- We will do all we can to support volunteers who may require special assistance to fully engage with a volunteering activity in accordance with the College's Equality Policies.

- When representing Imperial College London as a volunteer we expect you to support our commitment to promoting equality.

Problem solving

- We aim to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. We seek to ensure that volunteers' views are heard and acted upon. We aim for positive and amicable solutions.

- We hope that you will have an enjoyable and rewarding experience volunteering with us. If you find that your role as a volunteer with us does not meet your expectations or if you feel we have not fulfilled our commitments to you, you are encouraged to let us know by email or in person. We will do our very best to try to resolve any issues or concerns.

Photography and Social Media

- While volunteering at events, images may be taken of you by College photographers and communications staff. If you do not wish to have your picture taken, it is your responsibility to communicate this to the volunteer manager or public engagement team prior or during the event.

- We encourage volunteers to share their positive experiences of volunteering on social media. We ask that this is done so in accordance with College Social Media Guidance.

Ceasing to volunteer

- Volunteers are not subject to any set notice period if they wish to cease volunteering. If you have already signed up for a shift, please ensure that you have informed your volunteer contact, or indicated that you are no longer available on the online platform.

- If there is grounds for immediate dismissal, for example theft, being under the influence of drink or drugs, harassment or any such other issues we will ask the volunteer to cease volunteering with immediate effect. Decisions will be taken at the discretion of the volunteer manager, with advice from wider teams, and will be non-negotiable.

Monitoring and evaluation

- We will systematically monitor and evaluate our volunteer programme.

- Volunteers are encouraged to suggest changes and improvements to the policy where they wish.