



ROSE OF TRALEE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FESTIVAL OF KERRY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER POLICY

Festival Mission Statement: *Connecting the global Irish Community*

Festival Overview

The Rose of Tralee International Festival celebrated 50 years in 2009, and is one of Ireland's longest running festivals. It is based around the selection of the Rose of Tralee, an international event that encompasses young women of Irish descent from Ireland and around the world, the final two nights of which are broadcast live on Irish television. Every year more than 30 Roses come to Tralee from all over the world, supported by friends and family. The Festival comprises Rose Selection, family carnival, fashion show, street entertainment and live concerts, in addition to welcoming visitors and delegates from regions worldwide represented by each Rose. During this time the town's streets are transformed into a feast of parades, music, circus, funfair, markets and live performances.

Volunteer Policy

The purpose of this Volunteer Policy is to provide all staff and Volunteers with clear guidelines, to prescribe limits of behaviour, assign responsibilities and explain Volunteer management systems and operating standards. The Volunteer Policy does not constitute a binding contractual or personnel agreement. We reserve the right to change the policy and to expect adherence to the changed policy. Volunteers and staff are expected to act in accordance with all Festival policies and procedures as outlined by this policy.

Why We Involve Volunteers

The Festival has a long-standing tradition of involving Volunteers from the local community and has always considered itself as belonging to the local community. An event, which was originally established to encourage tourism and investment in the local area, is ideally suited to, but not confined to, people with knowledge of the locality, the history of the Festival and of the story of the Rose of Tralee.

To organise such a large Festival with so many events taking place in a relatively short space of time makes Volunteers an essential component to the smooth running of the Festival. They act as the back bone of the Festival, without whom it would not be able to operate.

Who Can Volunteer With Us

Anyone over 18 years of age can Volunteer with the Festival (a few roles require over-16s, at the discretion of the Volunteer Co-ordinator), providing they match the role description and any physical requirements.

Volunteer Involvement

The Festival values the contribution that Volunteers can make through all aspects of their events and believes that Volunteering should be a mutually beneficial experience. In so far as the Festival benefits from the skills, enthusiasm and experience of Volunteers we believe that Volunteers should be able to gain a positive experience from the variance of jobs the Festival requires Volunteers for.

The Festival understands a Volunteer to be an individual who without financial compensation or expectation of financial compensation performs a task of his or her own free will at the direction of the Festival.

Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers

There are 3 distinct stages involved in the Volunteer recruitment and selection process.

Stage 1: The Volunteer must complete and sign the Volunteer application form

Stage 2: The second involves the organisation consideration of the application form

Stage 3: Screening

The recruitment process is committed to finding the most suitable Volunteer candidates for the specific positions. Volunteer positions have a

- Role Description which identifies the task involved in the position
- Person Specification which identifies the qualities and skills required to fill the positions

Selection is made in line with the role description, person specification and the selection procedures. Volunteers shall only be selected for involvement if they demonstrate a commitment to the Festival, match the position's role and person specification and successfully complete all 3 recruitment stages. The selection decision when reached will be communicated in person to the applicant. The decision will be recorded in writing on the candidate's Volunteer application form.

Management of Volunteers

The Festival is committed to managing Volunteers in a manner that meets the needs of both the Festival and the Volunteer.

The Volunteer Coordinators (Bryan Carr & Rebecca Kemp) are responsible for the management of Volunteers' involvement, including answering questions regarding policies, dealing with any complaints and grievances involving Volunteers, delivering induction and arranging training. The Volunteer Coordinators advise the Volunteer of their designated supervisor whose role it is to provide day-to-day advice and guidance relating to the voluntary work, provide support and supervision, and identify training needs for consideration by the Volunteer Coordinator.

Induction and Training

Induction is a process of guidance, training and learning for the Volunteer about the organisation, their Volunteer position and the organisation policies, operations and procedures. All Festival Volunteers are provided with an induction prior to the Festival and the commencement of their Volunteering with the organisation. During induction Volunteers will be provided with opportunities to discuss any questions about the Festival.

Where applicable, training will be provided to assist Volunteers with their position and its tasks. Stewarding has a critical input into the safety and comfort of patrons. Stewards will receive pre-event briefing and made aware, as necessary, of all arrangements and any contingency plans. The Festival will nominate suitable Volunteers for this training.

Relationships with Paid Staff

Volunteers are a core part of our team and enhance the capacity of and community involvement in the Festival with a distinctive but complementary role alongside paid staff.

Volunteers and staff are considered to be partners in implementing the mission and programs of the Festival. Clear roles are established to differentiate between paid staff and Volunteers to foster mutually beneficial relationships.

Support and Supervision

All Volunteers are allocated a designated supervisor upon commencing their Volunteering with the Festival. The Volunteer Coordinators appoint the Volunteer's designated supervisor whose role it is to provide advice and guidance relating to the voluntary work, provide support and supervision and identify training needs for consideration by the Volunteer Coordinators.

The purposes and benefits of supervision are to:

- Monitor and evaluate performance
- Clarify priorities
- Share information
- Discuss any issues the Volunteer may have
- Recognise and deal with existing and potential problems
- Identify and meet support needs
- Information sharing and record keeping

Information sharing and record keeping

All information is dealt with in accordance with Data Protection Policy and Data Protection Acts. A system of records is maintained on all Volunteers, to include their initial Application Form, Volunteer Role Description and Volunteer Agreement along with the overall Festival time, location and notes information. Volunteers are able to access their personal information freely upon request. Volunteers are entitled to all information relevant to the performance of their work assignments. Responsibility for ensuring that the Volunteer receives such information will rest with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Grievances

All Volunteers have access to a process to address grievances about any aspect of their work or how they are managed. If Volunteers are not satisfied that issues in relation to their Volunteering are being handled appropriately, they are entitled to have their concerns reviewed in accordance with the organisations Grievance Policy.

Volunteers' Rights

The Festival recognises that Volunteers have the right to:

- be involved and managed in accordance with equal opportunity laws and best practice
- be given accurate information about the organisation
- a job description and agreed working hours
- be offered training appropriate to tasks
- supervision and support
- access to a grievance procedure
- a safe working environment
- be adequately covered by insurance
- have their voluntary contribution recognised
- have their personal information dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection Acts

Operating Standards

The Festival expects Volunteers to abide by the following practices:

Attitude

A professional attitude in which the job comes first is expected and professional courtesy must reign at all times. Domination, aggressive and oppressive behaviour are not tolerated and must be reported to the Volunteer Coordinators when anyone encounters them.

Attendance

Working times are negotiated between the Volunteer Coordinator and the Volunteer and are as flexible as the tasks allow. All absences must be notified as soon as possible to the Volunteer Coordinator so that alternative arrangements can be made. Regular lateness or absence may result in termination of your involvement. When you arrive you must immediately report to the Volunteer Coordinator or supervisor, this is important in the event of a roll call during an emergency.

Teamwork

Co-operation and teamwork amongst the Volunteers, staff and clients is required and encouraged.

Insurance

Insurance is provided by the Festival to cover all Volunteers working on behalf and at the direction of the Festival. However drivers using their cars in connection with their voluntary work must inform their own insurance company to ensure adequate and continued cover.

Neat Dress & Personal Hygiene

As you are liable to come into contact with guests and members of the public, it is important that you present a professional image with regard to appearance and standards of dress. You may wear clothes appropriate to your responsibilities, but they must be kept clean and tidy at all times.

Work Space

Both from the point of view of safety and of appearance, work areas must be kept clean and tidy at all times.

Expenses

Volunteers give their time and skills free of charge to the Festival and cost incurred in Volunteering may never be allowed to discourage involvement. Where a prior agreement has been made on an individual basis the Festival will cover expenses. Payment will only be issued for agreed expenses and claims must be submitted in the standard expense form with receipts for consideration. All claims will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Copyright

All written material, whether held on paper, electronically or magnetically which was made or acquired by you during the course of your involvement with us is our property and our copyright.

Confidentiality

All information that is or has been obtained by you during, or in the course of your involvement, or has otherwise been acquired by you in confidence, that relates particularly to the Festival's business, or that of others with whom we have dealings of any sort, that we have not made public, is confidential, and a Volunteer shall not at any time, before or after the end of their involvement, disclose such information to any person without our written consent.

Volunteers are expected to exercise care to keep safe any documents or other material containing confidential information, and at the end of your involvement with us, or at any other time upon demand, return any such material in your possession.

Representation of The Festival

Volunteers must seek prior approval from the Festival before undertaking any representation on behalf of the Festival. This includes, but is not limited to, statements to the media, joint initiatives with other organisations and agreements involving contractual or financial obligations.

Dismissal

Volunteers who do not adhere to the Festival's rules or who fail to perform their Volunteer tasks satisfactorily may be subject to dismissal. A Volunteer's involvement will not be terminated until the Volunteer has an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with the supervisor. Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to, the following:

- gross misconduct
- being under the influence of drugs (including alcohol)
- theft
- misuse of equipment and materials

- abuse of clients and co-workers
- breaches of confidentiality
- failure to abide by policies and procedures
- failure to complete duties to a satisfactory standard

Dismissal will be communicated both in person and in writing to the Volunteer.

If a Volunteer is deemed to have behaved with extreme detriment to the Festival and its reputation and to the health and safety of others involved in the Festival, the Festival reserves the right to dismiss the Volunteer with immediate effect.

De-Brief Session

After all events the Festival runs a de-brief session with Volunteers to ascertain the experience both the Volunteer and the organisation had during their time together, suggestions that both parties may have to improving the position going forward, and the possibility of involving the Volunteer in the same or other capacity with the agency when the event comes around again. Where appropriate an offer of a reference may be made to the Volunteer.

Evaluation & Feedback

Constructive feedback on this policy document is always welcome. It must be given in writing or via a meeting process to the Volunteer Coordinators who will ensure that it is considered fully. The Festival is committed to reviewing its Volunteer Policy every 12 months or when necessary.

Date of last review: June 30th 2010