



Volunteer Policy and Procedures

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Introduction

Made in Hackney exists to help people grow, cook and eat more plants – to improve not only the health of our communities, but the planet too. In line with this mission we seek to involve volunteers to:

- ensure our services and programmes meet the needs of our beneficiaries
- provide new skills and perspectives to our work
- increase our outreach and services with the local communities we serve

This document outlines what you can expect as a volunteer in terms of support MIH provides, and what MIH expects from you as a volunteer. These policies and procedures offer guidance and advice, and protect both parties in the event of anything out of the ordinary happening. It should be read by all volunteers and staff involved in MIH programmes and activities.

Principles

MIH recognises the unique and essential role of volunteers and fully acknowledges the importance of supporting them in their activities, providing training and ensuring they are treated with due care for their safety and well-being.

Volunteers willingly contribute their time and service, and in respect of this commitment they should feel welcomed. MIH hopes that the relationship is of mutual benefit and that volunteers gain satisfaction from the help they are giving.

Made in Hackney's Volunteer Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Creating an image of Made in Hackney and its projects that is inclusive and follows its Equal Opportunity Policy and commitment to Anti Racism and Diversity.
- Encouraging staff and existing volunteers to be open and welcoming to new volunteers and where appropriate, actively seek to involve and integrate them in their activities and within the organisational structure.
- Recognising that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their tasks effectively.
- Treating all volunteers fairly and valuing them, regardless of type of service or level of commitment, and being supportive should any difficulties arise.
- Ensuring that barriers to involvement are recognised and removed.
- Does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.

Recruitment and Selection

Made in Hackney will ensure that wherever possible, volunteers' roles are clearly defined and will ensure role descriptions are available to all new volunteers. These will include:

- The main duties of the role
- An estimation of the time commitment that is required
- Any skills, knowledge or experience that is required for the role

Made in Hackney will work with existing volunteers to adapt role descriptions and create new ones where necessary, so that their work can be properly recognised and supported, and to assist with the handover of the role when required. All volunteer role descriptions are held by Made in Hackney's Volunteer Manager, who will make them available when needed. Some are also on the Made in Hackney website.

Appropriate methods will be used to advertise for volunteers locally that take into account the principles of our Equal Opportunities Policy and commitment to Diversity and Anti Racism. All volunteer enquiries will be dealt with promptly and potential volunteers will be given the opportunity to find out more about Made in Hackney, the specific programme activity they're interested in, and the role.

Made in Hackney will endeavour to ensure that a volunteer applicant is suitable for a role before they are accepted as a volunteer. Where there is a choice of volunteers for a role, Made in Hackney will select the candidate based on merit. This might be their experience, knowledge or previous commitment to the organisation. Where Made in Hackney identifies that a potential volunteer is unsuitable for a role, the volunteer will be informed and if relevant and/or possible offered a more suitable opportunity within the organisation.

Volunteers will be selected for suitability through one or more of the following methods, dependent on the role;

- Application form, where help can be given if needed
- Informal interview
- References
- A DBS check (Disclosure and Barring Service) will be made if the role requires it
- Trial period

Induction and Training

Made in Hackney will ensure that all volunteers receive an induction and are provided the following information:

- Volunteer Policy and Procedures
- Volunteer Agreement
- Role Description
- Health and Safety Policy
- Expense claim procedure
- Contacts of other volunteers/staff where relevant to role
- Any other information relevant to the role.

Made in Hackney recognises the importance of developing its volunteers and will support them with their training needs wherever possible. Support may be in the form of:

- Certified Training eg. Food Safety, Emergency First Aid in the Work place, Child Protection, Safeguarding Adults at risk
- On the Job training eg. catering, project management, salesforce etc

Status and roles

There is no obligation for volunteers to work specific hours, although volunteers are expected to contribute a minimum of 20 hours over a 6 month period. The relationship is based on trust and mutual understanding and there is no legally binding contract. On starting, the volunteer will be asked to sign a 'Volunteer Agreement', which details what is expected from the volunteer, and what can be expected from Made in Hackney and the specific project they will be assisting.

Health and Safety

Volunteers are covered by Made in Hackney's Health and Safety Policy. Unsafe working can endanger the volunteer, their colleagues and members of the public. Volunteers should be familiar with the 'Health and Safety Guidance' supplied later in this Policy document. They must follow these guidelines and safe practices, including reporting any accidents that happen.

Ill health

Volunteers must not attend activities if they are unwell and they should notify the Volunteer Manager if they are unable to attend. It is also the volunteer's personal responsibility to inform their manager if they are unable to perform a particular task.

Taking precautions and following COVID-safe health and safety practices and government guidelines during a pandemic are both the volunteers' and Made in Hackney's responsibilities. Made in Hackney will ensure that its premises are COVID-proof and follow government safety guidelines.

Insurances

Individuals volunteering on behalf of Made in Hackney will be provided with adequate insurance cover during their activities regardless of which physical location they take place. eg. in a kitchen, cycling as a meal delivery courier, at an event or online.

Individual volunteers registered with Made in Hackney will be indemnified by MIH's liability policies. If there is an accident resulting in injury to a third party/damage to third party property and it is alleged that the volunteer was negligent, Made in Hackney and/or insurers will deal with any liability

claim. The liability policy will apply if the volunteer suffers personal injury in an accident and consider negligence by Made in Hackney to be the cause. Of course, compensation would only be payable if Made in Hackney were proven legally liable for the accident. Made in Hackney owes a duty of care to its volunteers while they are acting on their behalf and this should be recognised when activities are organised.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

The MIH volunteer roles do not qualify as a 'regulated activity' where in 'unsupervised' contact with adults at risk, young people or children. Therefore, do not legally require the DBS, including checks against the 'barred list'. However, as a safeguard Made in Hackney will still conduct DBS checks for any volunteers assisting with family events with children and activities with young people. [The types of DBS check.](#)

Safeguarding

Everybody has a role to play in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults and children that they come into contact with. MIH's Volunteer Manager and/or MIH's Safeguarding Lead can talk with you about any issue you may have seen or witnessed that is concerning. Remember that this may not be in confidence, if it is deemed a Safeguarding issue. Please refer to the MIH Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy and Child Protection Policy.

Adult Safeguarding

There are people who are, or may be in need of community care services because of mental illness, disability, age or illness. This may make them more vulnerable to abuse. Individuals can also be at risk at certain times in their lives because of their circumstances, for example, they have become a victim of domestic violence or people trafficking. Please refer to the MIH Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy.

Child Safeguarding

A child is anyone under the age of 18. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child/young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can mean physical, sexual or emotional. Neglect can include failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter. Please refer to the MIH Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

What to Do

If you have any doubts or concerns about an adult or child, don't keep it to yourself or think that it is none of your business to get involved. Make sure you know the individual's name and, if possible, address and phone number. If the individual confides to you, ensure that you make it clear to the person that the conversation is not confidential and you will have to report it as a safeguarding issue. Report any safeguarding concerns **immediately** to the MIH Volunteer Manager and MIH Safeguarding Lead and refer to the MIH Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy or MIH Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy as appropriate.

Volunteer Agreements

Where volunteers are taking on a role with a level of responsibility or where it is expected to last for a period of time, they will be issued with a Volunteer Agreement setting out the support that will be provided by Made in Hackney and the expectations of the volunteer.

Volunteer Agreements are not intended to be a legally binding contract between Made in Hackney and the volunteer, and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party.

Expenses

Made in Hackney recognises that volunteers give their time and experience and so should not be left out of pocket through their voluntary activities. Made in Hackney will pay reasonable expenses capped at **£15/day** (for a meal and travel) incurred by volunteers in their service to Made in Hackney.

This can include:

- Travel within London to and from the place of volunteering with proof of purchase, e.g. tube, train and bus fares and parking charges. (Cost of longer train journeys will need to be agreed on a case by case basis)
- Meals taken whilst volunteering
- Mileage at 45p/mile
- Other travelling expenses (when agreed in advance)
- Contribution towards home internet expenses for volunteers working remotely eg. Project Assistants. The percentage is to be agreed in advance with the Volunteer Manager

Expenses are payable by Made in Hackney within 30 days of receipt of a completed 'Expenses claim form'.

Volunteer own car use

It is the responsibility of the volunteer to inform their own insurers if they are using their own car, or a car belonging to someone else, for volunteer work purposes (not just travel from home to their place of work) before using the vehicle for volunteer work purposes, as no cover will be provided by Made in Hackney or their local partners for any loss or damage to the volunteer's vehicle, howsoever caused.

Volunteer own bicycle use

It is the responsibility of the volunteer to inform their own insurers if they are using their own bicycle, or a bicycle belonging to someone else, for volunteer activity purposes (not just travel from home to their place of work) before using the bicycle for volunteer activity purposes, as no cover will be provided by Made in Hackney or their local partners for any loss or damage to the volunteer's bicycle, howsoever caused.

Remote volunteering

Volunteers may be asked to carry out remote volunteering from home, for example during the COVID19 pandemic. In such cases when there will be significant use of home broadband or personal phone, and when agreed in advance with the MIH Volunteer Manager, a proportion of these expenses can be reimbursed.

Supervision, Support and Welfare

Made in Hackney will ensure that all volunteers are offered support by the MIH Volunteer Manager who will provide ongoing feedback and support where required, discuss future development, air any problems and seek additional support if needed. In addition welfare activities will be offered when available eg. access to free yoga classes, cookery classes etc

The Volunteers Voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Made in Hackney and its project work.

Age limits

There is no upper age limit to volunteering for Made in Hackney. Anyone aged 18 or under wishing to volunteer will be required to show a permission note from a parent or guardian with their contact details. They will need to be closely supervised at all times, never left alone, and have a parent/guardian agree to bring and collect them from every volunteer shift.

Volunteers from outside the UK

Volunteers (including refugees and asylum seekers) need to have an appropriate visa or confirmation they are able to undertake work / volunteer activities in the UK

EU nationals can volunteer if they have settled or pre-settled status, a visa which doesn't prevent them from volunteering, or are enrolled in any EU funded volunteering programme in the UK.

Security

For security purposes Made in Hackney will require confirmation of identity and references. The Volunteer Manager is responsible for ensuring that all correspondence and personal details relating to the volunteer are kept secure and confidential in the online CRM salesforce.

Problems and disagreements

The relationship between the volunteer and the Volunteer Manager is one of mutual benefit and trust. Made in Hackney aims to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. If a volunteer has any problems or concerns they should first raise them with their main MIH point of contact. In such cases Made in Hackney will follow its grievance and disciplinary procedures which is available from the Volunteer Manager.

The Volunteer Manager will ensure that the volunteer's views are treated seriously and dealt with fairly. Where there is alleged serious misconduct the volunteer may be asked to suspend their activities until the matter is investigated (see 'Volunteer Code of Conduct') later in this policy.

The main principles of the MIH Grievance and Disciplinary procedures are:

- Made in Hackney will attempt to solve any problems before any formal complaint is made by discussing the issue with the volunteer
- Volunteers will have the procedure explained to them and will be supported at all stages
- Volunteers have the right to reply to any complaint and to appeal any disciplinary action that is taken
- Any grievance will be kept confidential other than to those directly involved in the disciplinary procedure
- The outcome of any grievance or disciplinary procedure will be recorded and copies provided to relevant parties

Ending the volunteer relationship

The relationship is not contractual and there is no obligation on the volunteer or Made in Hackney to give notice that the arrangement is to end. As a courtesy, however, and depending on the role the

volunteer should give at least two weeks' notice when resigning and Made in Hackney should provide two weeks' notice when ending the arrangement. There may be occasions where the arrangement is ended with immediate effect but this will be rare and usually only in the event of 'gross misconduct' (see 'Volunteer Code of Conduct').

For volunteers in longer term more critical roles such as project assistants (eg. a few days a week over six months) there will be an 'exit review' between the volunteer and the MIH manager responsible.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

Volunteers will be expected to adhere to the Volunteer Code of Conduct, a breach of which may lead to Made in Hackney implementing grievance and disciplinary procedures or ceasing the volunteer's involvement with the organisation.

The following sets out what we hope from you as a volunteer when you are representing Made in Hackney:

As a volunteer you will be representing Made in Hackney which has a long established record of integrity and respect, and members of the public are entitled to expect the highest standard of behaviour from anyone who works for the organisation – whether paid or voluntary. Service delivery should be courteous, efficient and impartial to all groups and individuals.

To help everyone know what is expected, we have a Volunteer Code of Conduct, which all volunteers and staff are required to follow, which is provided below. Any person who demonstrates unsatisfactory standards of conduct will be required to cease volunteering for Made in Hackney.

Representing Made in Hackney

Please be polite to all members of the public. You are acting as the 'face' or 'voice' of the organisation on our behalf:

- Do not be tempted to give technical or specialist advice on subjects other than those you are comfortable with, unless you have been specifically requested to do so. We seek to avoid situations where the advice you give is factually incorrect.
- Please dress appropriately for the activities for which you have volunteered. For example comfortable fresh-change of clothes for a cooking class or kitchen assistant shift is recommended with non-slip close-toe shoes.

Personal beliefs and opinions

You must not allow your own personal beliefs and opinions to influence your work. The interests of relatives, friends or members of any group or society to which you belong must not influence the way that you do your volunteer role. No volunteer should use his or her position, nor any knowledge acquired during his or her work, for his or her own purpose.

Equal Opportunities and Equality issues

All members of the community, service users, staff and volunteers have a right to be treated fairly.

Made in Hackney operates an equal opportunities policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of, and commitment to our Equal Opportunities Policy, and share our commitment to diversity and anti-racism.

Complaints

Any complaints that you receive from members of the public need to be forwarded to the Volunteer Manager as soon as possible so they can be dealt with appropriately.

Use of Made in Hackney resources

Facilities, equipment, aprons, materials, etc. provided by MIH for use in your volunteer role must not be used for any other purpose. You are responsible for these items whilst they are in your care and they should be returned in the same condition as when they were supplied to you.

Absence and time keeping

If your role requires you to be at a specific place at a specific time, we ask you to make every effort to be punctual. As a matter of courtesy, we would ask you to tell the relevant manager in good time if you think that you will not be able to meet a time commitment.

Gross misconduct

We do not anticipate that you will commit any serious breaches of our code of conduct. To ensure that there is no misunderstanding, however, we feel it is important to clarify what might be construed as a 'serious breach'. The following are examples of conduct that we regard as gross misconduct. Any of these will result in immediate suspension of the volunteer.

- Theft or unauthorised possession of any property belonging to someone else.
- Serious deliberate or reckless damage to property.
- Falsification of reports, accounts, expense claims or personal application forms.
- Intoxication by reason of drink or drugs.
- Possession of illegal drugs.
- Serious breach of rules.
- Fighting or other violent, dangerous or intimidating conduct.
- Bullying, sexual, racial or other harassment of a fellow volunteer or an employee.
- Gross negligence or incompetence likely to damage our reputation.
- Conviction on a criminal charge.
- Receiving any sentence of imprisonment.
- Bringing our business or us into disrepute.
- Sending abusive, scandalous, obscene or defamatory communications of any kind including e-mail or on the Internet or any other media.
- Accessing or downloading any rude or obscene images or other material from the Internet or by email or text message or otherwise being in possession of rude, pornographic or obscene material or publications or images in any media at your place of volunteering or during

Health and Safety Guidance

This section gives guidance on good practice to ensure your safety.

The health, safety and welfare of you, your colleagues and members of the public are essential to Made in Hackney. This section of the policy aims to cover some of the risks that you may encounter while volunteering with Made in Hackney. We have suggested practical control measures that we would like you to follow to reduce these risks. Please read these guidelines very carefully and sign the accompanying 'Volunteer Agreement' to show your agreement.

We realise that we cannot provide a comprehensive summary covering every eventuality, and you have a personal responsibility to stop and think about the safety implications or risks associated with the tasks you undertake, and plan a safe way of working. If you are in any doubt about the risks that an activity poses, please seek advice from your Volunteer Manager. If you find yourself in a situation where you feel at risk, in danger or uncomfortable please discontinue the activity immediately and remove yourself from the situation.

Fire safety

When volunteering on site at a Made in Hackney venue or at other external venue you have a legal obligation to comply with the Fire Safety Procedure at the premises.

- Always make a point of finding out the escape routes and the fire assembly point.
- Always strictly observe any no smoking rules. If you are a smoker you should only smoke in designated smoking points.
- Always make sure that you do not block or restrict any fire escape routes.
- If you are working with electrical appliances, always do a visual check of electrical equipment to make sure it is functioning correctly, with no frayed or damaged cables or signs of overheating.

First aid and accident reporting

You have a personal responsibility for first aid and accident reporting arrangements.

- Always make sure that you are familiar with the location of the first aid kit and first aid arrangements.
- All accidents or near misses must be reported to your closest MIH contact on the day, who will record the details in an Accident Report Book.
- If you are involved in an accident or near miss you have a legal obligation to report the incident to the person responsible on site, in addition to the Volunteer Manager.

Infectious diseases

Working in an external environment can expose you to an increased risk of infectious illnesses and diseases such as COVID19. Exercising a high level of personal hygiene is very important.

- Follow government and medical guidelines on taking precautions during the COVID19 pandemic. See MIH Health and Safety COVID19 Policy.
- Always wash your hands before handling and preparing food, eating, or after handling soil based products.
- Ensure all cuts and open wounds are properly dressed.
- Ensure you are protected against Tetanus (seek advice from your GP).
- Ensure you always use gardening gloves when involved in food growing classes

Slips and trips

You need to remain particularly vigilant that your activities do not pose an increased risk to yourself or members of the public.

- Take personal responsibility for keeping your work area free from trip hazards.
- Make sure that liquid and food spillages are cleaned up as a priority. If necessary, advise people in the area of the slip hazard.
- Undertake regular checks to make sure your work area is hazard free.
- Always wear comfortable footwear appropriate to the task that you are undertaking.
- If you are unable to deal with any hazards, you must report them to the responsible site safety officer immediately.

Manual handling of heavy loads

Manual handling covers a wide variety of activities including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling and carrying. If any of these tasks are not carried out appropriately there is a risk of injury. Read about [safe handling of heavy loads in the Health and Safety Executive](#).

Driving

You are required to fully comply with all Road Traffic Act Regulations covering areas such as speeding, driving with due care and attention, and vehicle maintenance. In addition, you are advised to comply with the following:

- You will need to check with your vehicle insurer that you are covered to use your vehicle for voluntary work.
- When driving alone, if you possess a mobile phone, ensure that you carry it with you at all times and make sure that it is fully charged and has credit.
- Do not use any type of mobile phone, including phones used on a hands free system, when the vehicle engine is running.

Cycling

You are required to fully comply with all Road Traffic Act Regulations. In addition, you are advised to comply with the following:

- You will need to check with your vehicle insurer that you are covered to use your bicycle for voluntary work.
- Wear a high-visibility vest when cycling.
- We advise wearing a bike helmet even though it is not a legal requirement.
- Working bike lights for the front and back of your bicycle.
- Scheduled maintenance of your bicycle as recommended.

Lone working

Please refer to MIH's Lone Working Policy. It is unlikely you will be in a situation of being alone whilst you are volunteering for Made in Hackney. However, in circumstances when this may happen, (such as a cycle buddy drop out when delivering community meals,) it may be more difficult to get assistance in the event of an incident. You have a personal responsibility not to put yourself in a situation where you are threatened or at a high level risk.

- If you are carrying out an activity with an increased risk to safety you are strongly advised to ensure you are with another volunteer or colleague.
- Never put yourself in a situation where you cannot seek assistance if an incident occurs. If you have a mobile phone always have it charged up. If you anticipate regular lone working carry a personal alarm device. Take particular care not to become isolated.
- Always ensure that someone knows where you are (eg a relative or friend) and how long you will be there.
- If you feel particularly vulnerable due to the location or situation, please seek help or leave.

In the event of threatening behaviour from a third party;

- Seek assistance if you are in a position to do so.
- Never meet aggression with aggression. Stay calm. Do not try to outsmart the person verbally.
- Make sure you have a clear escape route and seek a location where you know other people will be.
- Report the incident immediately. Ring 999 in an emergency.

Remote volunteering, working from home

- Volunteers who work significant amounts of time on the computer are advised to take breaks from the screen at least every hour.

Confidentiality & Data Protection

During the course of voluntary activities, volunteers may have access to confidential information. In these cases volunteers are expected to use their discretion and maintain confidentiality. Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.

MIH may contact you via email or phone in connection with your volunteering activities but for no other reason. You can ask to see what data is stored about you at any time. If you no longer wish to receive emails from us you can request to OPT OUT and we will take you off our system. Our [Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy](#) is available to read on our website.

Adoption and Policy Review

This policy was updated by Made in Hackney on 20 April 2021 and the policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, in consultation with the; Trustees, staff and volunteers.

Date Approved by Trustees: 20th April 2021

Date Update Due: April 2022