



AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL: Volunteers Hosting Events Last updated April 2015

Introduction to Volunteering

Volunteers have been involved in almost every area of activity since the Australian Conservation Foundation's (ACF) inception in 1966. Traditionally ACF has attracted people with a range of backgrounds and skills, a shared commitment to the environment and a desire to help ACF achieve its goals.

ACF's volunteer program brings substantial benefit to:

- Our members by providing them with an opportunity for direct involvement in the day to day running of ACF;
- Our organisation by bringing specialist advice and skills into the organisation and through the provision of additional human resources to particular programs;
- The wider community by providing an avenue for community participation in specific campaigns or the organisation as a whole.

The contribution of volunteers remains vital to ACF's operations. ACF recognises and values the reciprocal nature of the relationship between organisation and individual and is committed to providing a volunteer program which both:

- Supports ACF's work; and
- Meets the expectations and needs of individual volunteers

ACF values the contribution made by volunteers and seeks to recognise that by:

- Acknowledging that the relationship between volunteers and ACF is a reciprocal one;
- Acknowledging that volunteers exercise free choice in committing to ACF;
- Acknowledging that volunteers deserve the same respect as paid employees, and that ACF can expect the same standards of its volunteers as it expects of its paid employees;
- Ensuring volunteers are not used to replace paid staff positions and only carry out work that they have agreed to;
- Providing an opportunity for the development of skills and experience;
- Providing support in the form of clear policy guidelines, training, recognition and support, and the provision of references if required.

The purpose of our volunteer program is to:

- Recruit and maintain a committed group of volunteers who assist the work of ACF;
- Attempt to provide volunteers with the level of responsibilities and involvement that meet their expectations;
- Help ACF achieve its goals.

Dealing with problems

Should any problems arise in the course of your involvement with ACF, please let your supervisor know. If this is not appropriate then you should see the People and Culture Manager. Contact details for both can be found in Appendix 1. You may also refer to the below information as to how certain problems will be dealt with.

If you are not feeling comfortable with your role, please let us know. We want to make your time with us both satisfying and rewarding.

ACF – About Us

Click [here](#) to find out who we are, what we stand for, our principles, governance structure and history.

Privacy Statement

As signing up as an ACF volunteer and in the course of doing so providing us with your information, you consent to your personal information (including your sensitive information) being collected, used and disclosed as set out in the ACF Privacy Statement and in the Privacy Policy, which can be found here: <http://www.acfonline.org.au/privacy-statement>.

Risk Management and Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S)

ACF is committed to providing a safe work place for all staff and volunteers and in return ask that volunteers accept their responsibility to work safely. This means working intelligently, with common sense and foresight. Events you hold as a volunteer will be deemed ACF events and will be covered by ACF's public liability insurance, provided you have undertaken all practicable steps to identify, assess and control any known risks to attendees and to provide a safe environment.

Please refer to the Safety Checklist for Events Guide (Appendix 2).

Volunteers are to report any incident immediately to their supervisor who will then refer the matter to the People and Culture Manager, or if they are not present, to the CEO. This includes any incident, accident, injury or near miss.

In addition, volunteers should alert the ACF if you observe or perceive a potential and/or unique risk relating to your area of work that may not have been addressed in this Manual.

Reimbursement

As indicated in discussion and in the Position Description provided, we are able to reimburse event costs for approximately 3 face to face catch ups with Climate Leaders per year, to an agreed value per event, to be spent on catering or venue hire (or other, if agreed by your supervisor).

These costs can be reimbursed either by invoicing ACF (contact details for invoice are in Appendix 1) or by providing receipts for costs along with your EFT details.

Intellectual Property and Confidentiality

Intellectual Property

As with staff, the intellectual property in volunteer's work belongs to ACF and cannot be used or sold without the permission of ACF. All confidential records, documents and other papers, together with any copies of extracts thereof, made or acquired by the volunteer in the course of their work shall be the property of ACF and must be returned to ACF on finishing volunteering for ACF. Where appropriate, with permission of the supervisor, volunteers may take copies of their work with them when they leave.

Confidential Information

All volunteers at ACF must at all times maintain the confidentiality of all Confidential Information and will not at any time during or after the period of volunteering disclose it, permit it to be disclosed, use it for yourself, use it to the detriment of ACF.

"Confidential Information" means any information (in any form, whether written, electronic or otherwise) belonging to ACF which might reasonably be expected by either party to be confidential in nature. This includes but is not limited to its employee information, client lists, donor lists, donor information, business and activities plans, strategies, financial information, intellectual property, financial information and business and activities information including future plans.

At no time may volunteers remove Confidential Information from the premises of ACF or store it offsite or in a way that can be accessed offsite, unless permission is gained from your supervisor. Upon the ending of the volunteer period, all volunteers agree to return to ACF all records, whether in hard copy or electronic form, containing any Confidential Information which is in the possession or under the control of the volunteer.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest exists when

- a) a person has an interest separate from that of ACF that influences, or could reasonably be supposed to influence, their decision-making or the performance of their duties at ACF;
- b) there is an appearance of such an interest; or
- c) a person improperly uses ACF resources or their position at ACF.

Where a staff member or volunteer perceives that a situation or activity poses a potential conflict of interest, they are expected to declare it in one of the following ways, as appropriate:

- Where a conflict is identified in the course of a meeting, the person shall disclose the existence of a conflict immediately. The person may, but is not required to, disclose the nature of the conflict to the other participants in the meeting. The person shall, as soon as practicable, disclose the nature of the conflict to their relevant supervisor. Until such disclosure is made, the person shall not take part in any decision or activity relating to or arising from that conflict.
- Where a conflict is identified by a staff member or volunteer outside a meeting, that person shall notify the relevant supervisor immediately.
- Where a previously disclosed conflict becomes relevant to a specific decision or activity in which a staff member or volunteer is involved, that person shall again disclose the conflict.
- Where a staff member or volunteer has a question whether a conflict exists, that person shall notify the relevant supervisor immediately. The relevant supervisor will determine whether a conflict exists.

In the event of a conflict involving a staff member or volunteer, that person's relevant supervisor may determine that the person shall not take part in any decision or activity relating to or arising from that conflict, or may attach conditions to further involvement.

ACF is a non-partisan charity

ACF is recognised as a "charity" for a range of different purposes, among the most important being registration with the Australian Taxation Office ("ATO") as a "Deductible Gift Recipient" ("DGR") and an Income Tax Exempt Charity ("ITEC"). These entitlements are essential for ACF's continued success. Therefore it is important that the basis for ACF's recognition as a charity is understood and that actions are not taken that may inadvertently jeopardise ACF's status.

ACF recognises its constitutional and legal responsibilities to meet its roles and obligations as a charity. Therefore, ACF is committed to:

- ensuring its activities are aligned with the organisation's charitable purpose;
- remaining non - partisan and independent;
- undertaking an annual assessment of the organisation's activities in relation to its charitable purpose;
- meeting all relevant legal requirements for charities to ensure we maintain our charitable status and related tax deductibility and exemption benefits.

It is the responsibility of all ACF staff, volunteers, Board members and Councillors that they understand this policy and do not do anything to jeopardise ACF's charitable status and resulting tax exemptions.

For more information please read the *ACF-Organisation Policy - Maintaining Charitable Status* to which all ACF Staff and volunteers are bound.

Equal Opportunity, Discrimination and Harassment

Below is an explanation of ACF's commitments in relation to discrimination and harassment. It is expected that as a volunteer hosting ACF events, you will uphold these commitments and follow these principles in creating a safe and fair environment at events you organise.

Equal Opportunity

ACF is committed to equal opportunity and its effective implementation. ACF is opposed to discrimination on the basis of sex, race, age, physical or mental disability, religious beliefs, marital status, parental status, career status, sexual preference, political affiliation, industrial activity, pregnancy, victimisation, physical features or social and cultural backgrounds.

Applicants will be considered for voluntary positions in ACF solely on the basis of skill, aptitude and relevant qualifications.

ACF is committed to the equal participation of women and men in the organisation, including avoidance of sexist language and the provision on non-sexist voluntary position advertising, recruitment and selection process.

Discrimination

ACF believes that all employees and volunteers should be able to work in a supportive environment free of any discrimination (direct or indirect) or harassment.

Direct discrimination is when someone proposes to treat you or has treated you less favourably because of your age, sex, race, or other protected attribute.

Direct discrimination often happens because people have stereotyped views about what all or most people of a particular group are like, or what they think all or most people of a particular group can or can't do.

Indirect discrimination is when someone imposes or proposes to impose a requirement, condition or practice that has, or is likely to have, the effect of disadvantaging persons with a protected attribute (age, race, sex, etc). In this sort of case, if the requirement, condition or practice is not reasonable it is classed as indirect discrimination which is against the law and ACF's policy.

Harassment and sexual harassment

ACF will not tolerate harassment of any kind to staff, volunteers or attendees at ACF events. At ACF and ACF events there is to be no sexual harassment, disability harassment, racist harassment, or any other type of unlawful harassment. This means no behaviour based on sex, race, age or other protected attribute that is:

- not wanted, not asked for, and not returned, and
- that is likely to cause a hostile or uncomfortable workplace by:
 - humiliating someone
 - seriously embarrassing them
 - offending them, or
 - intimidating them.

Any harassment claims should be taken to your supervisor or the People and Culture Manager as soon as possible. All claims will be handled promptly, confidentially and in a manner that is fair to all involved in the complaint.

Sexual harassment is unacceptable and unlawful. A person sexually harasses another if he or she -
“(a) makes an unwelcome sexual advance, or an unwelcome request for sexual favours, to the other person; or
(b) engages in any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in relation to the other person – in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all circumstances, would have anticipated that the other person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.”

The Act defines “conduct of a sexual nature” to include:

- “(a) subjecting a person to any act of physical intimacy;
- (b) making, orally or in writing, any remark or statement with sexual connotations to a person or about a person in his or her presence;
- (c) making any gesture, action or comment of a sexual nature in a person's presence.”

Whether the person intended to sexually harass his/her victim is irrelevant. It is how the victim feels that is important.

What to do if you feel someone is treating you unfairly, discriminating against you or harassing you

If you feel someone is treating you unfairly, discriminating against you or harassing you raise this matter with you supervisor or People and Culture Manager.

ACF will ensure that you are not victimised for speaking out. We will do our best to make sure that individuals are not victimised for either supporting someone else's complaint or for putting in their own complaint, regardless of its outcome.

If you treat someone else unfairly, discriminate against or harass them

If you have been responsible for treating another employee unfairly, discriminating against or harassing them, you may be disciplined and/or dismissed. If you have been responsible for victimising someone because they complained about discrimination or harassment, or because they supported someone else's complaint, you may be disciplined and/or dismissed.

Bullying

ACF will not tolerate bullying in the workplace or at ACF events. Bullying is unacceptable and unlawful. ACF and its employees are subject to various applicable laws which ensure ACF has a duty to provide so far as is reasonably practicable a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health and safety of staff and volunteers. Staff and volunteers have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and the health and safety of others in the workplace. Staff and volunteers also have a duty to cooperate with actions ACF takes to comply with workplace safety laws and this policy in particular.

Claims of bullying will be handled promptly, confidentially and in a manner that is fair to all involved in the complaint.

Should ACF find bullying has occurred, it will take action appropriate to the circumstances. Staff or volunteers found to have either committed or condoned bullying behaviour will be subject to disciplinary action.

The risk of bullying is minimised in workplaces where everyone treats their colleagues with dignity and respect.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated unreasonable behaviour directed towards a staff member or group of staff that creates a risk to health and safety. Bullying need not be intentional. A broad range of behaviours can be bullying, and these behaviours can be direct or indirect.

Examples of direct forms of bullying, where repeated or occurring as part of a pattern, include, but are not limited to:

- verbal abuse or threats
- putting someone down
- spreading rumours or innuendo about someone
- interfering with someone's personal property or work equipment
- physical assaults of any kind (occupational violence)

Examples of behaviours that may amount to indirect bullying, where repeated or occurring as part of a pattern include, but are not limited to:

- unjustified criticism or constant unconstructive criticism
- deliberately excluding or isolating someone from workplace activities
- deliberately denying access to information or other resources needed for effective work performance
- setting tasks that are unreasonably above or below a worker's ability
- excessive scrutiny at work
- taking credit for the work of others

Single incidents

A single incident of unreasonable behaviour, while not bullying, may have the potential to escalate into bullying and therefore should not be ignored. Such acts may also constitute unlawful harassment or, particularly in the case of threatened or actual occupational violence, may breach the criminal law.

What isn't bullying

Reasonable management actions carried out in a fair way are not bullying. These actions include:

- performance management, including setting performance goals, standards and guidelines
- allocating work to a staff member or volunteer
- deciding not to select a staff member or volunteer for promotion
- informing a staff member or volunteer about unsatisfactory work performance and implementing performance management processes
- informing a staff member or volunteer about inappropriate behaviour
- implementing organisational change
- constructive feedback

It is our expectation that all ACF staff and volunteers demonstrate an exemplary standard of behaviour in their dealings with one another, acting in a manner that is professional, courteous and respectful. In this way, issues of bullying should not arise.

Complaints procedure

If you believe that you or someone else is being bullied, harassed or discriminated against, do not ignore this behaviour.

Informal Options and Processes

Inform the person that his/her behaviour is unreasonable/inappropriate, that you are offended and want it to stop.

Seek advice and assistance from your supervisor or from the People and Culture Manager.

Making a Formal Complaint

A written or verbal formal complaint of bullying may be made to your supervisor, their manager or the People and Culture Manager. If you do choose to make your complaint in writing please ensure that your letter is marked Personal and Confidential.

Inappropriate Behaviour and Volunteer Dismissal

All staff and volunteers are expected to act in a suitable manner at all times. At ACF we provide a positive and safe work environment and expect all staff and volunteers to uphold these standards. Certain rules of conduct and behaviour apply as this ensures a harmonious work environment for all concerned.

Volunteers are to be treated with the same respect as paid staff and the policy for terminating the involvement of volunteers is the same.

If any volunteer behaves in a manner that is dangerous, harmful, contrary to ACF's ethical or environmental policies or otherwise inappropriate, dismissal may take place.

If any volunteer feels that they are being unfairly treated, or wishes to seek advice about behavior and dismissal, please consult the People and Culture Manager.

Resignation of volunteers

Volunteers are an invaluable resource to ACF but it is recognised that due to changing circumstances the volunteer may need to resign from their voluntary position. ACF asks all volunteers to give as much notice as possible to their supervisor and/or the People and Culture Manager before leaving ACF.

All volunteers are asked to provide their supervisor with an update on the progress of their work and to return any books, materials or files (electronic or otherwise) belonging to ACF before they leave.

Feedback to ACF

ACF is committed to constantly improve our Volunteer Program and all feedback regarding a volunteer's experience at ACF would be greatly appreciated. If the volunteer is leaving due to any sort of problem or dissatisfaction with ACF it would be beneficial to ACF if they notified their supervisor or the People and Development Manager as to their reasons.

Confidentiality will be respected and maintained with regard to all feedback, unless permission is explicitly sought otherwise.

Appendix 1 – Contact details

Supervisors:

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Community Organiser, Climate Reality Australia: Work: Mon-Thu

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People & Culture Manager:

Brad Armstrong

People & Culture Manager

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Appendix 2 – Safety Checklist for Events

EVENT ACCESS AND EGRESS

- ✓ Entry / Exit areas are clear and accessible for staff and expected attendees
- ✓ Entry / Exit area are adequate for emergency exit and emergency services
- ✓ Thoroughfares are well defined and clearly marked

AMENITIES

- ✓ Adequate provision /location of toilets and hand washing facilities
- ✓ Availability of drinking water for staff and attendees
- ✓ Adequate shade from sun / availability of sunscreen as required for attendees

EVENT SIGNAGE

- ✓ Adequate signage for any hazardous /restricted areas
- ✓ Clearly signed First Aid services and fire extinguisher locations

FIRE PREVENTION

- ✓ Suitable fire extinguishers / fire blankets are in appropriate areas, tested and in date

FIRST AID

- ✓ First Aid Stations suitably located, clearly signed and accessible
- ✓ First Aid facilities suitable for type of event
- ✓ Effective means of communication provided between event personnel and First Aid facilities or personnel

WEATHER CONDITIONS

- ✓ Current Australian Bureau of Meteorology information is checked for adverse weather conditions (www.bom.gov.au)
- ✓ Weather conditions are planned for and monitored, e.g. non-slip mats, shade, sunscreen and drinking water available

ACCESSIBILITY

- ✓ Ramps are in place to provide access into buildings
- ✓ Disabled Access Parking is available close to the event
- ✓ The event itself is easily accessible (e.g. for patrons in wheelchairs, with prams, using walking aids, etc)
- ✓ Entry / Exit area is easily accessible (e.g. for patrons in wheelchairs, with prams, using walking aids, etc)

HAZARDS

- ✓ Hazards identified and risks assessed and controlled to minimise potential for injury or harm.

Hazards can be related to security, vehicle safety, fire/electrical, slips and trips, food safety, manual handling, cultural/personal issues, transport, weather etc.

Prioritise risks by assessing both likelihood and consequence of the risk occurring, then control the risk by eliminating it, substituting hazardous materials or methods with less hazardous alternatives, isolating or enclosing the risk, and/or by ensuring safe operating procedures and equipment are in place.