



Volunteer Practice Guide

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Introduction

Volunteering is essential to the development of our work and at the same time an opportunity for the personal development of the volunteer.

The first law of volunteering is that the relationship must be rewarding. The best sustained relationships are rewarding, provide security, happiness, fun and in which each party feels effective, respected and appreciated. This is no less true of the relationship between an organisation and a volunteer. People can volunteer in a range of areas and with time commitments ranging from a couple of hours to over fifty hours each month.

There are numerous reasons why people volunteer:

- to share skills
- to develop skills or keep them alive
- to feel part of a community
- to help others
- to earn academic credit
- to make new friends
- to be with a whole range of different people
- to keep busy
- to feel needed
- to get work experience towards a career
- for spiritual reasons
- for fun
- to donate professional skills
- to be part of a team
- because of personal experience
- to be challenged
- to develop skills

Volunteering can offer these and more but only if there is a deliberated pro-active policy and practice to ensure that individuals and the company give and get what they want out of the relationship. It is important that volunteers are fully supported Claque is committed to providing effective management structures for their volunteers but the policy and practice is dependent on the active input of the volunteers themselves.

This practice guide should act as a policy document and aid to good practice. It's a guide that should be constantly reviewed and developed.

Jon Oram
July 2010



1 Managing Volunteers

1.1 Attributes of Volunteer Co-ordinator & Volunteer Management Team

It is the plan of the Boards of Directors of Claque to appoint a Volunteer Coordinator, to focus on all volunteer matters. The Volunteer Co-ordinator would work with Claque Theatre and the Community Management Committee who may well wish to appoint a community Volunteer Management Team with special responsibilities. In appointing a Volunteer Coordinator and people for a Volunteer Management Team would collectively be looking for the following range of skills and experience:

1.2 Skills

- Volunteer project management
- Good communication
- Ability to delegation
- Able to produce and present reports
- Able to design, monitor and maintain policies
- Able to identify and organise appropriate training programmes
- Good leadership and people's skills
- Able to produce funding proposals

1.3 Experience

- Previous experience in management and administration
- Volunteer recruitment
- Support and supervision of volunteers
- Evaluation of volunteer projects
- Working as part of a team.

1.4 What Volunteer Management Team members and a Coordinator need to know

Before a Volunteer Coordinator or members of a Volunteer Management Team can begin to work effectively they will need a comprehensive induction into the work of Claque and its goals and ideals. This would include the following:

- The history of Claque.
- The ethos behind Claque's Volunteer programme.
- The philosophy and working practice of Claque.
- Details of on-going work and plans for future work.
- The financial situation of the company and projects.
- Details of all voluntary and professional roles.



1.5 Delegation

The Volunteer Coordinator and Volunteer Management Team will take overall responsibility for volunteer matters. Whoever takes on this role will need support from all other members of the organisation and will need to develop a capacity to delegate tasks to ensure that the job gets done and volunteers receive support.

Some suggestions to Volunteer Coordinators for successful delegation include the following:

- Really know the skills and ambitions of every volunteer
- Select the best not necessarily the most convenient person for the job
- Explain the tasks clearly before you assign them and offer clear direction for getting the job done
- Identify the resources and materials available for getting the job done
- Ensure people are given the appropriate training, supervision and induction into the activity
- Allow the selected person to develop his or her own working method
- Develop a reporting and monitoring plan
- Allow a probationary period to ensure your assessment of appropriateness on both sides is correct.
- If somebody leaves the team, ask if they can train in their successor replacement.

The rest of the guide is about the essential elements of Volunteer management to help create good practice. This should always be under review. Volunteers should be made aware of it and encouraged to read it and contribute their thoughts, ideas and experiences.



2 The Volunteer Policy

Our Volunteer Policy exists to ensure that volunteering is promoted and managed effectively. It helps to:

- Clarify individual and Team roles and responsibilities
- Define lines of communication and accountability
- Ensure continuity
- Establish values and directions
- Formalise current practice
- Acknowledge the worth and contribution of volunteers
- Develop the volunteers role within the organisation
- Clarify the volunteer's role for the benefit of both volunteers and paid staff

2.1 The Policy's ongoing development

These guidelines and the Volunteer Policy need to be continually developed by Claque, the Volunteer Coordinator and the Volunteer Management Team. All volunteers and staff need clear opportunities to contribute on a regular basis. Typical elements of a Volunteer Policy are covered in the following check list.

- How and why do we involve volunteers?
- Who is defined as a volunteer within Claque, Projects & the community
- Resources allocated to volunteer development
- Access to information for volunteers
- Volunteer confidentiality
- Who has the right to speak on behalf of Claque and to use organisational affiliation
- Relationships between volunteers and projects
- Relationships between volunteers and paid staff/staff
- Working on employment schemes (Community Employment, work experience etc)
- Recruitment practice
- Training opportunities
- Working conditions for volunteers
- Support and supervision
- Expenses
- Insurance
- Administrative issues (Data Protection, storing of volunteer information etc.)

When developing the Volunteer Policy and guidelines it is important to concentrate on the matters most relevant to us as an organisation, including questioning our approach to specific issues (e.g. volunteer/paid staff guidelines).



The policy should always be written in clear, understandable terms for anyone to read. Once changes to the policy and guidelines have been approved by the management committee and Claque board they need to be added and made available to volunteers and paid staff.

Management and Board members must sign a declaration to indicate that the policy is clearly understood before it is implemented.

2.1. Claque's present Volunteer Policy

- All volunteers offering their services to the Claque or their projects will have their offers dealt with promptly and be given a warm welcome and a personal induction which reflects the value we give to volunteers.
- Throughout the organisation it is recognised that volunteers play a very important role and their efforts contribute highly to the overall success of the organisation.
- The involvement of volunteers within the organisation will be encouraged and supported whenever possible.
- The role of volunteers will be clearly defined. In every situation where a volunteer is to be involved, an agreed statement of tasks should be drawn up and volunteers should be adequately prepared for the tasks which they will be undertaking.
- Volunteering will never be seen as a substitution for paid employment.
- It is important that the roles of all volunteers be clearly defined and agreed by both staff and volunteers.
- Having a clearly defined and agreed role for a volunteer helps the volunteer to understand what is expected of him/her. As far as possible specific activities should be identified for which a volunteer can take responsibility.
- Training will be given to all volunteers and will be reviewed and updated regularly.
- There will be ongoing reviews with volunteers and if necessary roles may be changed. Discontinuation of the volunteer's service should be rare and only after serious negotiation and support to reassign them.



3. Recruitment

Claque has a policy of total inclusion; everyone and anyone can participate and volunteer. Our task is to ensure each individual is given tasks and responsibilities appropriate to their needs and abilities. Many people who have never worked as volunteers in the past would consider doing so if they were asked. It's essential to promote volunteering opportunities so that everyone in the community is aware of the opportunities that are available to them.

Your Volunteer Coordinator and Volunteer Management Team are responsible for recruitment and overseeing the process through the stages outlined in this section. With appropriate training existing volunteers can fill these roles.

3.1 Role Descriptions

A role description needs to be drawn up for every task and responsibility role. The description should answer the following:

3.1.1 The context of the work:

- Is this a special job?
- Will they work alone?
- Will they be responsible for others?
- Will the volunteer work as part of a team?

3.1.2 The time commitment:

- How many hours per day, week, month ...
- Whether or not this includes travelling time,
- If there will be a strict schedule,
- If flexible time can be used,
- If this long term requirement.
- Information on costs,

3.1.3 Training/qualifications/support:

- Payment of out-of-pocket expenses
- Any training opportunities
- Requirement of particular qualifications/skills
- Support/supervision provided.

3.2 Equal opportunities

Claque runs equal opportunity policy and it's vital that it's adhered to. There will tasks that are exclusive, however, because of appropriateness and experience or because some tasks are positively favouring some groups.



Positive discrimination should be agreed and clearly thought through, that said these are some groups that may require special inclusion at certain times:

- Older/younger volunteers
- Volunteers with disabilities
- Long term unemployed
- Women/men
- Members of minority groups (e.g. ethnic minorities, Travellers).

If your Role Description encourages or discourages of these groups from volunteering you should consider the following questions:

- Are all your requirements vital or do they just reflect how things have been done in the past
- Must all volunteers be highly literate?
- Have you considered issues for volunteers with particular needs (e.g. accessible premises, sign language facilities?)
- Would payment of expenses encourage unemployed volunteers?
- Should you provide, or assist with, crèche facilities?

3.3 Application Forms

The information you need from an Application Form will vary according to the type of volunteer role. If you keep application information as files or on computer file you must ensure that you are in compliance with the Data Protection Act (1988). Files held by statutory agencies and related bodies (including volunteer records e.g. application forms) are covered by Freedom of Information legislation.

3.3.1 Range of information required:

- Name and address of volunteer
- Reasons for volunteering
- Relevant experience possibly names of referees
- Availability
- Future plans.

In some situations, involving literacy issues for example, it is helpful to assist potential volunteers while they fill in application forms. Sample Application Forms are included at the end of this section.

3.4 Promotion of Volunteering

It is important to plan promotional techniques carefully so that we reach a wide range of volunteers. Resources are often an issue so it is a good idea to keep an eye out for any opportunities for free advertising.



3.5 Ways to reach potential volunteers:

- Through personal contact.
- By distributing flyers/newsletters/mail shots to schools, colleges, libraries, hospitals, Citizens Information Centres etc.
- Through display of promotional posters in appropriate public places
- By giving talks in schools, particularly to transition year students, to women's groups, active retirement associations etc.
- Through membership of organisations. e.g. the Church, libraries, community groups.
- Through information days and exhibitions, e.g. in shopping centres, libraries or on the road.
- Through registration with Volunteer Bureaux.
- Via local and national media coverage (see below)
- Via the Internet (see below).

3.5.1 Using the media

If possible, you should try to open lines of communications with local radio stations and editors of local newspapers and other local organisation newsletters. As a part of a recruitment drive you might submit press releases on a specific event to both promote the image and to advertise the specific volunteering opportunities. Points to consider when writing for newspapers or preparing a radio piece:

- Start off with something memorable, a 'hook', to catch the attention of the editor or producer
- Provide key information based on the five Ws: Who? What? Where? When? Why?
- Keep your piece short and interesting and make sure that the recruitment message doesn't get lost in the middle
- Have a clear understanding of who has the authority to write or speak for your organisation.

3.5.2 Using the Internet

With internet access you can use e-mail or the web pages to advertise for new volunteers. You can use Claque's web site or create a volunteers web page with links to Claque and other sites such as projects.

3.6 Matching Volunteers to Tasks

The sample forms, Voluntary Opportunity Profile and Voluntary Organisation Profile included at the end of this section can be used to clarify individual attitudes towards the volunteer role and to match volunteers to the most suitable roles.



3.7 Induction Interview

An induction interview is of benefit to the potential volunteer and Claque. It should be a simple relaxed meeting which shares information about the volunteers, needs, expectations and hopes and Claque's needs, working practice and opportunities for volunteers.

3.7.1 What you need to know:

- The skills and experience of the potential volunteer
- Motives for volunteering (this information should match the application form details)
- The volunteer's expectations.
- Suitability for the volunteering roles.

3.7.2 What you need to convey:

- Necessary information about your organisation.
- Details of the volunteering role.
- Available support and training opportunities.
- Details of supervision.
- When you will contact the interviewee again.

The person/s who leads this interview should themselves have undertaken performance training so they can carry out an effective induction meeting. A sample Interview Form is included at the end of this section.

3.7.3 References

You may feel it necessary to ask for references for some specialist voluntary tasks, especially those which put volunteers into positions of authority and skills teaching.

There should be agreement to the facts that references are needed for specific tasks. References would not be a general expectation for short term or low key volunteering nor for existing long term volunteers who are promoted.

Checking references is a useful balance to personal assessment. You can ask for job skills references relating to paid or voluntary work and/or character references supplied by a responsible member of the community (e.g. doctor, teacher, social worker).

If writing to referees you should enclose some information (e.g. promotional flyer) on your organisation so that the referee will know what sort of reference information you require. Referees should be over 18 years of age and should not be close relatives of the volunteer.



Types of reference might include:

- Telephone contact with referees
- Request for letters of reference
- Standard reference form with specific questions.

Sample Reference Forms are included at the end of this section.

3.7.4 Screening

Screening is a legal or safety requirement in certain circumstance. Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) or police checks are often a requirement working alone with children. A health status check is necessary, if, for example, the volunteer role includes the lifting of disabled people. In certain other cases, additional screening might be required. Examples of roles for further screening include:

- Home visiting
- Work with children
- Work with frail elderly
- Work with people with disabilities
- Handling money.

The basic rules of screening include:

- A guarantee of confidentiality
- Informing the volunteer if you are requesting a police check
- Ensuring that the volunteer signs a consent form. If the Police agree to run a check on a volunteer you must obtain his/her written consent beforehand.

Official Police Screening can take from 3 to 6 months and technically applies to paid staff only. Volunteer screening can be obtained by the volunteer as follows under Section 4 of the Data Protection Act (1988).

3.7.5 Refusing volunteers

In order to protect the Claque as an organisation, existing volunteer managers and the welfare of participants in our care, there needs to be a formal refusal procedure.

Refusal to allow volunteers to undertake certain specific tasks will be more common than refusing volunteers altogether. As already said, Claque's key principle of inclusion means that refusal is a last course of action.



After assessing volunteer's appropriateness to tasks they should be monitored so they stay within the frames of references laid out by them. As they gain experience and training their range of activities will enlarge but we all have limits. Normally, with good communication and negotiation there shouldn't be too many problems, however there will be times you have to formally say no to volunteers.

How to say 'no' to a volunteer:

- Decide on a method of refusal: e.g. write a letter, request a face-to-face interview or make a telephone call
- Stress that you are following Claque's official policy
- Explain why you are obliged to refuse the application
- If you think the volunteer is not ready yet, say so
- Offer suggestions on building experience/skills
- If appropriate, offer alternative volunteering roles

3.8 Contracts and Agreements

It is reasonable to expect a firm commitment for a given period particularly if we are providing training and support for volunteer work. This won't apply to all volunteers and agreement needs to be agreed before you ask a volunteer to agree special terms. You might decide to adopt a less formal term than 'contract', such as Involvement Form or Volunteer Agreement, or write a personalised letter of appointment. Information of terms might include:

- Name, address and telephone number of the volunteer
- Description of the volunteer role
- Time commitment
- Starting date
- Training requirements and opportunities
- Name of volunteer's supervisor
- Reference to volunteer rights and responsibilities (see below)
- A confidentiality clause (see below)
- Details of probationary period (see below).

A sample Volunteer Involvement Form is included at the end of this section.

3.9 Volunteer Rights and responsibilities

When new volunteers join Claque or their projects you should provide them with a clear description of their rights and responsibilities as volunteers. Details will vary according to the nature of the work.

Some elements of a typical roles and responsibilities document are listed on the following page.



A volunteer has the right to:

- Receive information about the organisation's purpose, work and values and its policy on volunteers
- A clearly written description of the work and assigned tasks he/she will undertake
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Be seen as a valued part of the organisation through inclusion at training sessions, meeting, social functions, etc.
- Receive appropriate training
- Know who to turn to with problems and difficulties
- Be appreciated and have his/her work valued by Claque
- Make mistakes and learn from them
- Express his/her view, opinions, on a subject
- Be listened to and taken seriously by other members of staff
- Receive regular and constructive feedback on performance
- Work in a safe environment
- Be covered by insurance
- Have choices and be able to negotiate on those choices
- Be able to say no
- Carry out voluntary work without being exploited
- Be reimbursed for any agreed travel expenses
- Be consulted on matters which directly or indirectly affect work
- Be free from discrimination on grounds of gender, age, marital status, race, sexual orientation, religion and disability

A volunteer has the responsibility to:

- Be reliable
- Carry out work to the best of his/her ability and do so in a way that corresponds to the aims and values of Claque
- Attend the place of work at the times agreed
- Notify the appropriate person if he/she is unable to attend for some reason or is running late
- Agree to the organisation's Volunteer Policy
- Respect confidentiality
- Respect the rights of users and other workers within the organisation
- Be honest if there are problems
- Attend training sessions, support meetings if these are agreed as part of the volunteering role
- Give feedback, communicating relevant and important information to an appropriate staff member
- Be committed to the work but also to recognise that there are personal and external limitations on time commitment
- Acknowledge decisions made by others
- Ask for help or support when needed.



3.10 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the right and the responsibility of every volunteer involved in our activities. The volunteer has a right to privacy and confidentiality in relation to personal matters and must, in turn, respect the confidentiality of his/her volunteer role. To ensure that confidentiality will be respected by both your organisation and your volunteers, you can include an appropriate clause in the volunteer contract.

3.11 Probationary period

The probationary period can vary depending on the volunteering role involved and the type and length of training provided. A standard three to six month probationary period is used in many organisations but can be longer for volunteers who are providing a service for a limited number of hours each week. During this time the volunteer has the opportunity to begin to work effectively and any problems can be identified and resolved. The probationary period can end with a final interview between the volunteer and his/her supervisor. A final interview might include the following:

- A discussion of the volunteer's suitability to the current role
- Reassignment to a different role, if necessary
- Extension of the probationary period
- Feedback from the volunteer on how supportive the probationary period has been
- Termination of the volunteer's contract if the role seems unsuited.

3.12 Short Cut Volunteer Forms

The forms in **Appendix 1** concerning the various stages of volunteering can be altered to suit the particular circumstances of the volunteer and tasks. Changing and designing forms should be cleared with the Volunteer Co-ordinator or Management Team



4 Training

Claque must ensure that the highest possible level of service is provided for and by our volunteers through training activities designed to equip our volunteers with essential skills, knowledge and attitudes. Training is essential both when volunteers first join and on an on-going basis, if assigned tasks are to be carried out effectively. Equally essential is that the individual volunteers feel and experience real benefits through personal and social development.

4.1 The Training Strategy

The missions, objectives and strategies of Claque should shape the development of our training policies and implementation plans. This training policy should guide our organisation's training activities and clarify who is responsible for training, e.g. a training officer, Volunteer Coordinator or training team. It will also identify what resources are available for training. A training plan explains what will be done in order to implement the policy in a practical way.

4.2 The Training Policy

The training policy can contain statements about the following:

4.2.1 Claque's mission statement:

To build sustained community and stimulating personal and social development through performance

4.2.2 Summary of Claque's key aims:

The projects of the centre will be influenced by six integrated motives:

- Advance and promote the art and process of community plays
- Reinforce and support local cultural activities
- Develop enterprise in the community and schools
- Explore the social developmental potential of 'performance'
- Develop a commitment to a wholly inclusive community and a sense of place
- Practice and advocate environmental sustainability

Fundamental to helping someone's personal and social development is best brought about by engaging people in community based creative activity, to help them to see their creativity and their capacity to perform- to exercise their power to be someone other than who they are, to do more than they think they can and to reach beyond themselves.



4.2.3 Claque's recognition of the importance of training:

Training of key workers and volunteers is essential to meeting qualitative goals and our commitment to Social and personal development for everyone. Training should help facilitate the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the running of Claque but also respond to the personal development needs as identified by each volunteer, key worker and participant. Claque should offer formal as well as informal learning opportunities

The values underpinning training include:

- The promotion of development of Claque and its volunteers
- Volunteer involvement in the identification, design and delivery of training
- Overcoming barriers which might prevent access to training
- Implementation of training in a supportive atmosphere periodic review of policy and evaluation of programmes.

4.3 Training Needs

Training needs can be analysed on three levels: organisational, role description and volunteer support. Some ways of identifying these needs include:

- Listing the skills or areas of expertise needed by Claque e.g. architectural knowledge, environmental advice, graphics and marketing, web site design and management
- Considering Claque's or the projects strategy, identify new activities or changes and the skills/knowledge needed for them, e.g. organisational development/change
- Identifying areas of weakness e.g. large numbers of new volunteers in a certain area
- Examining volunteer role descriptions
- Listing the skills that volunteers already have
- Asking volunteers what training they need to fulfil their role well
- Identifying personal development needs of volunteers
- Involving volunteers in agreeing strategy and objectives and the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to meet these



4.4 A training plan

Once training needs have been identified the volunteer co-ordinator and volunteer management can devise a general training plan using the following guidelines:

- Priority/objective
- Task: what has to be done
- How the task will be achieved/process
- Timescale: start dates, duration, finishing date
- Costs

These guidelines can help to clarify that the requirements of both volunteers and the organisation are being met. A training plan should cover the following elements:

- Identification of an individual or team with overall
- Responsibility for volunteer training
- Provision of induction and on-going training
- Provision of in-house training
- Identification of outside training opportunities, e.g. conferences, seminars, etc.
- Timetable of events for specific period (six months to one year) to link with volunteers' availability
- Distribution of training information to all relevant people within your organisation
- Keeping records of all training provided which will be a useful reference point for both your organisation and your volunteers
- Identification of available accreditation for training (e.g. distance learning opportunities in educational institutions)
- Requests for reports from volunteers on all training events attended, outlining content and relevance to their volunteering role
- Regular (annual) evaluation of volunteer training

4.5 Evaluation of training

Evaluation of volunteer training is a vital element to the overall plan and will help to identify the kinds of training needed to develop Claque. It is useful to apply the why, what, how, who and when questions to evaluation when planning the training programme.

4.6 Induction training

All new volunteers should receive induction training to introduce them to the purpose, ethos and structure of Claque and clarify the volunteer role they are to fill.



Methods of induction might include:

- Provision of a standard induction pack including background information and a description of the day-to-day activities of your organisation
- Presentations/lectures
- Use of written material to back up oral information
- 'On the job' apprenticeship with supervision
- 'Shadowing' an experienced worker
- A combination of these over an extended period

Induction information might include:

- An outline of Claque's aims and activities
- Brief history and future plans of Claque
- Funding sources
- Services provided
- Outline of other organisations working in similar areas
- Policies and procedures used by your organisation
- Importance of volunteer confidentiality
- Introduction to supervision and support for volunteers
- A tour of the premises
- Introduction to colleagues
- Description of volunteer requirements and benefits
- Introduction to facilities and equipment
- What to do if something goes wrong

4.7 On-going training

Further training opportunities can take a variety of formats. For example, in-house training might be suitable when tasks are specific to daily tasks, while training with outside agencies can provide more general skills. The trainers might be staff or volunteers within Claque or might be speakers or tutors invited in from outside agencies to provide courses or give talks. Some of the most frequently used methods of training include:

- Practical demonstrations
- Action learning/learning by doing
- Training sessions (which can last a couple of hours or up to a number of weeks)
- Workshops, seminars and discussion groups
- Open or distance learning
- Mentoring
- Lectures and conferences
- Visits to other organisations
- Invitations for other organisations to visit you
- Courses leading to a qualification/accreditation



Volunteers should always be encouraged to identify training courses, seminars and conferences which will help them to develop the skills required for their volunteer role.

4.8 Training costs

Depending on resources, Claque might be in a position to fund a volunteers training, e.g. paying for outside courses or guest speakers. It is recommended that at least 3% of an organisation's budget should be allocated to training. We will be working mostly with very limited resources, but we might consider operating a barter facility with other organisations. For example, we might offer training in performance or listening skills in return for basic first aid training. We could also join with other organisations and invite outside speakers to provide lectures or practical demonstrations which would be attended by a number of groups.

4.9 Funding

The Volunteer Co-ordinator should keep a file of all information about training grants from newspaper advertisements, brochures, guides, press cuttings, etc. For example, some funding may become available from time to time for the publication of materials. Claque could apply for such a grant to fund the production of induction packs, or promotional material to use when recruiting volunteers. Before making any applications for funding you need to have a clear understanding of the following:

- Why funding is needed
- What your project is (e.g. training or publications)
- What results you expect
- Who will benefit
- Claque's track record
- Accounting

Successful applications will require clear accounts of the money, how it was spent and a report on activities. You may need audited accounts for large training grants.

5 Support and Supervision

5.1 Support

Support, whether it is structured or informal, should be available to everybody: volunteers, managers of volunteers and paid staff. Not only will unsupported volunteers not stay, but it is our mandate to ensure personal and social development, so it is important that all your volunteers receive the support and recognition they deserve.



The advantages of a good support system are:

- Volunteers feel appreciated
- Volunteers are encouraged to use their skills to the maximum levels
- It keeps your organisation aware of your volunteers' interests and concerns
- It helps to develop teamwork
- It makes for a healthier and happier community to work in
- It makes it fun

The following list suggests a range of approaches to supporting volunteers, some of which are dealt with in earlier sections of this Guide:

- Develop a Volunteer Policy
- Match your volunteers' skills to the needs of the organisation
- Provide a clear role description to all volunteers
- Provide a good induction programme for new volunteers
- Provide on-going training
- Provide adequate supervision (see below)
- Give your volunteers a voice.
- Pay out-of-pocket expenses (see below)
- Allow volunteers the opportunity to debrief, particularly if they work in stressful situations (e.g. by setting up a support group)
- Clarify the specific roles of paid staff and volunteers
- Set up a volunteers' comments box and consider any comments seriously
- Do not impose new policies or procedures on volunteers without their prior input
- Maintain regular contact with your volunteers even if they work away from the centre
- Consider providing crèche facilities
- If possible, provide parking facilities
- Set up a volunteer notice board
- Hold social events, e.g. occasional lunches or dinners
- Provide free tea/coffee facilities
- Make sure that all volunteers have equal access to support

5.2 Who is responsible for support?

As part of Claque's support structure, each volunteer needs to have a clearly identified person to whom they can turn if he/she has a problem or question. The Volunteer Coordinator or the individual responsible for training might take on the roles of support and supervision (see below). An alternative might be to provide training in support skills for experienced volunteers including listening, leadership and counselling skills. Supporting others can be very draining, so whoever is a responsible need to have access to their own support to avoid burn out.



5.3 Peer support

Claque should encourage volunteers to support each other thus creating a less formal support system. We should promote some informal structure to support volunteer meetings, e.g. by providing a private room for volunteers, suggesting a regular time for meetings and encouraging a rule of confidentiality. With this facility in place, volunteers will feel free to discuss their roles and experiences and talk freely about any difficulties they might encounter with the volunteering role.

5.4 Supervision

Forms of supervision will vary according to the nature of the volunteering role. For example, a volunteer who provides some direct service to community groups needs individual supervision to give him/her support while allowing us to evaluate his/her performance.

Roles requiring individual supervision include:

- Work with children
- Work with the frail elderly
- Work with people with disabilities
- Home Visiting

Supervision is the right of every volunteer as part of the ongoing support structure provided by your organisation. Even at its most fundamental, effective supervision will enable your organisation to provide any information the volunteer needs in order to fulfil his/her role, while allowing you to monitor volunteer performance. With good communication in place, volunteers can work effectively and problems can be quickly identified and corrective action taken.

5.5 Who is responsible for supervision?

Every volunteer needs to have a clearly identified supervisor so he/she will know who to go to with questions or problems. It could be the Volunteer Coordinator, or another more experienced volunteer could, with adequate training, be appointed to supervise the work of a new member of the team. Whatever form of supervision you use, a clause should be included in your Volunteer Policy so the procedure remains the same for all volunteers. This clause might include the following:

- Why Claque provides supervision
- Guidelines on confidentiality between supervisor and volunteer
- Procedures in cases of conflict
- Skills and training necessary for supervisors (see below)
- Claque's overall supervision procedures stating who has ultimate responsibility, e.g. Volunteer Coordinator or management committee



5.6 Supervisors: skills and training

The supervisor needs to have a clear understanding of the aims and activities of Claque as well as of the volunteer role under supervision. He/she should be a good communicator, a good planner and evaluator and be able to provide constructive feedback both to the volunteer and to the Volunteer Coordinator or volunteer management committee.

5.7 Volunteer Evaluation

A volunteer evaluation procedure can be developed involving reports from supervisors and feedback from your volunteers. This will help to ensure that everyone is working in harmony and to a common goal. Evaluation should be a positive experience for both the organisation and the volunteer. Once it is accepted as part of our standard procedure, questionnaires should be circulated among volunteers every 12 months or so. The supervisor can then arrange a meeting with his/her volunteer to discuss issues based on the questionnaire and on the supervisor's own observations. In this way, volunteers are encouraged to play an active role in their own on-going evaluation. On completion of successful evaluation you will find that both you and your volunteers feel that ideas for development of volunteering within your organisation have been identified.

An evaluation questionnaire can include the following:

- Name of the volunteer
- Title of the volunteer role
- The period being reassessed
- What the volunteer role objectives have been over the past 12 months
- To what extent objectives have been achieved
- Reasons why objectives might not have been achieved
- How the volunteer's performance might be improved
- Whether or not the role description accurately describes the work being carried out
- How the organisation might help to improve the volunteer's work
- What further training the volunteer is interested in
- What ideas the volunteer has for improving or developing his/her work, or that of Claque

5.8 Acknowledging Volunteers

It's vital that volunteers are appreciated and know that their contribution is valued. They need to feel equal members of the team and recognised as an individual.



Clague should offer a series of special benefits for volunteers as thanks. These should include:

- All the benefits offered to a 'members' scheme
- Free tickets for some shows and activities
- Special volunteer events, parties, workshops
- Reduced cost or free access to various facilities
- Send them a birthday card

5.9 What if things don't work out?

Depending on the findings of the evaluation, some corrective action might be needed, e.g. further training for your volunteer, reassignment to a different role. In extreme cases, a volunteer might be asked to leave. (In thirty years of community plays the company has only dismissed two people, both for reasons associated with the safety or integrity of others) For our protection and respect all dismissals should be discussed with the volunteer, put in writing and the volunteer should be given the opportunity to appeal your decision.

Problems leading to dismissal include:

- Breaches of confidentiality
- Abuse or safety of others
- Extreme disruption, constant damage or disregard of others work
- Theft, vandalism, dishonesty

Alternatives to dismissal include:

- Offering the volunteer the opportunity to appeal
- Offering a transfer to a less stressful area
- Providing additional supervision
- Helping the volunteer to make the decision to leave

5.10 Exit interviews

When a volunteer leaves, for whatever reason, we should organise an informal exit interview. The volunteer's supervisor is the most appropriate person to hold this interview and, unless leaving is due to completion of a project, he/she should try to ascertain why the volunteer is going. This interview also allows the supervisor to gain feedback on the volunteering experience and receive suggestions for improvements to your system.



5.11 Volunteer references

It is useful for Claque to have a clear policy in place covering the provision of references for volunteers who want them. All references should be cleared and signed by Claque's artistic director. Volunteer references can include the following information:

- Name and nature of your organisation
- Volunteer's name and role
- Duration of volunteer's commitment
- Standard of his/her work
- Their overall attitude

6 Expenses for Volunteers

It is useful to develop a standard policy on payment of out-of pocket expenses so that volunteers are not excluded on the basis of low income. Information on current rates and procedures for claiming expenses can be circulated among all volunteers in your organisation. What can be considered as out-of-pocket expenses?

- Travel undertaken as part of the volunteering role
- Telephone and postage costs
- Specialist protective clothing or other essential equipment
- Car insurance and vehicle running cost at agreed set amount per mile
- Subsistence (refreshments needed while volunteering)

6.1 How to pay expenses

Expenses should be paid regularly on the basis of an Expenses Claim Form and accompanying receipts. If you find that some volunteers are reluctant to accept costs you can suggest that they claim the amount due to them and donate it back into the organisation or to a charity of their choice. There is a sample Expenses Claim Form in **Appendix 1**.

6.2 Volunteering when unemployed

People who are registered as unemployed can become involved in certain forms of voluntary work without losing their Unemployment Assistance, Unemployment Benefit or any other entitlements, provided certain criteria are met.



7 Insurance for Volunteers

The insurance requirement for volunteers involved with Claque is, to some extent is dependent on the nature of the volunteer role and should be reviewed as work areas or projects are developed. If in doubt please check.

7.1 What should be insured?

- People
- Venues for events (e.g. fundraising events, talks etc.)
- Work/tasks
- Travel to meetings
- Cars, minibuses etc.

7.2 Forms of Insurance

- Public Liability insurance will protect both Claque and your volunteer should someone make a claim due to injury or damage to property
- Personal Accident insurance provides a benefit to volunteers in the event of injury.
- This will not affect any legal rights which they have and neither does it require any proof of negligence
- If the work is of a professional nature (medical, legal, financial) for which the volunteer has specific qualifications, insurance can be arranged through the volunteer's professional association or through Professional Indemnity insurance
- If the work involves the provision of information to clients professional indemnity may be required to cover legal liability.
- Car Insurance is arranged in the name of the volunteer owner/driver of the car and is his/her own responsibility

Claque can reimburse the volunteer for additional insurance expenses incurred in order to carry out the voluntary role. Details of insurance cover should always be checked with insurers before using a vehicle for voluntary activities.

8 Legal Structures

Claque is a charity and a limited company. As such we are registered with the Charities commission and Companies House. We have a Memorandum of Agreement and Articles of Association drawn up and lodged in the Companies Office.

Charity Number: 279311 Claque Theatre

Company Number: 14645336



9 The Volunteer Management Team

The Volunteer Management is the group of individuals responsible for the decisions made and actions undertaken relating to volunteers. This Team is made up entirely up volunteers and the Volunteer Co-ordinator.

9.1 The role of the Volunteer Management Team includes the following:

- Having a clear understanding of the aims and objectives of Claque and related projects
- Ensuring that plans are implemented and carried out within a targeted period
- Organising clear structures of accountability
- Ensuring that everyone on the committee is aware of others' roles
- Keeping proper records of committee meetings and of finances
- Ensuring that training needs are identified and satisfied
- Delegation of tasks to personnel

9.2 Management Committee skills

Working on a management committee is a significant form of volunteering and, as with all volunteering, it is important to match specific skills to particular roles. Necessary skills include:

- Communication skills
- Accountability
- Planning and administration
- Promotion techniques for your organisation
- Networking with other groups/organisations
- Negotiating with outside agencies such as funding bodies

Every Management Team needs to have a Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and committee members.

9.2.1 Chair

The Chair is the main spokesperson and facilitator on the Team. The responsibilities of the Chair include:

- Planning and running of meetings (or delegation as necessary)
- Ensuring that all necessary information is made available to committee members
- Ensuring that adequate records of meetings are kept
- Ensuring that plans decided on during meetings are implemented
- Representing the organisation at outside meetings
- Being available to communicate with staff
- Ensuring that Claque and projects operates according to the agreed volunteer strategy/policy



9.2.2 Treasurer

The Treasurer of a Volunteer Team is responsible for the financial matters of the Team and takes charge of the following:

- Drawing up an annual budget
- Administration of the Teams accounts
- Monitoring income and expenditure against the Teams budget
- Keeping the Team informed of the financial situation
- Developing budgets for new developments
- Working with the auditor
- Representing the Team in funding applications

9.2.3 Secretary

The Secretary on a Voluntary Team should be available to attend all meetings and is responsible for the following:

- Organisation of meetings, e.g. time and place etc
- Production of agendas and other necessary materials
- Taking of minutes
- Writing up and circulation of minutes
- Volunteer Management Team correspondence

9.3 Volunteer Team members

Team members must be committed to the values and policies of Claque and the volunteer programme and should agree to attend all meetings for as long as they sit on the Team. Their responsibilities in relation to meetings include:

- Being familiar with the agenda and all relevant materials before meetings
- Being able to present reports at meetings from time to time
- Participating in discussions and decision-making.

Hints when setting up the Volunteer Team:

- Make a list of Teams tasks for the year
- Group tasks under headings (research, fundraising, etc.)
- Identify what skills are necessary for each area
- Calculate the amount of time Team members will have to put in
- Consider who is prepared to take on particular roles/tasks on the Team
- Decide if the work can be shared
- Plan a training programme for Team members

END



APPENDIX 1 VOLUNTEER FORM SHORCUTS

- **VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM**
- **CLAQUE VOLUNTEER INTERVIEW FORM**
- **VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**
- **CLAQUE VOLUNTARY OPPORTUNITY PROFILE**
- **VOLUNTEER EXPENSES CLAIM FORM**



VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Post Code _____

Contact Telephone: _____ Mobile _____

E Mail _____

Date of Birth: _____

Brief Summary of Previous Voluntary/Community/or Work Experience

What skills, experience, hobbies or interests do you have which you feel might be useful to you as a voluntary worker

Are you in full/part time employment (outside the home)? _____

How did you hear about Claque?



VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM PAGE 2

Why do you want to be a volunteer with Claque?

Do you prefer to work in a group or individually? Group Individually

Do you prefer to work with children or adults? Adults Children

Do you have any experience working with children or adults with physical disabilities, mental disabilities or learning disability? If yes, please give details:

Is there any other relevant information?

Please tick the appropriate time when you would be available.

	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
10am- 1pm							
1pm - 4pm							
4pm - 7pm							
7pm – 9.30pm							

The initial basic commitment to Claque is a 1 hour induction meeting with a volunteer co-ordinator. Are you agreeable to us contacting you to arrange this meeting?
YES_____ NO_____

Signature_____ Date_____

This information will be kept confidential to us and will not be disclosed to any person without your permission. Please return this form to Claque.

Thank you for your interest.



CLAQUE VOLUNTEER INTERVIEW FORM

Interviewer:

_____ Date _____

Name of Volunteer:

_____ Phone _____

Review of Application Form

Clarify the information on Volunteer Application Form. Correct any information supplied on the form and place other comments below

Non- directive Questions

- What attracted you to Claque? Is there any aspect of our work that most motivates you to volunteer here?
- What would you like to get out of volunteering here? What would make you feel like you've been successful?
- What have you enjoyed most about past voluntary or other work?
- How would you like to be supervised? _____
- Would you rather work on your own, with a group, or with a partner? Why?
- What skills do you feel you have to contribute?
- What else do you need to know?

Match with Volunteer Position

Discuss potential volunteer positions and check to match their interests, qualifications, and availability

Position Comments



VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

This agreement is intended to indicate the seriousness with which we treat our volunteers. The intention of the agreement is to assure you both of our deep appreciation of your services and to indicate our commitment to do the very best we can to make your volunteer experience here a productive and rewarding one.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E Mail _____

Activities in which the volunteer will be involved

Where _____ Times _____

Commencing _____ Supervisor _____

Claque agrees to accept the above named volunteer and commit to the following:

1. To provide adequate information, training, and assistance for the volunteer to be able to meet the responsibilities of their volunteer job.
2. To ensure satisfactory supervisory support to the volunteer and to provide feedback on performance.
3. To respect the skills, dignity and individual needs of the volunteer, and to do our best to adjust to these individual requirements.
4. To be receptive to any comments from the volunteer regarding ways in which we might mutually better accomplish our respective tasks.
5. To treat the volunteer as an equal partner with the Claque's staff, jointly responsible for completion of the organisations goals and the fulfilment of its mission.

The Volunteer agrees to serve as a volunteer and commits to the following:

1. To perform my volunteer duties to the best of my ability.
2. To adhere to Claque's rules and procedures, including record-keeping requirements and confidentiality of organisation and client information. To meet time and duty commitments, except in exceptional circumstances, or to provide adequate notice so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Agreed to:

Volunteer _____ Date _____

Staff Representative _____ Date _____

This agreement may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either of the parties but will expire automatically on _____ unless renewed by both parties.



CLAQUE VOLUNTARY OPPORTUNITY PROFILE

Title of opportunity _____
(A relevant snappy title to attract attention)

Location _____

About the opportunity

Objectives (What is the end result)

Activities & tasks

Start & End date (if necessary) _____ to _____

Minimum & Max number of volunteers. _____ to _____

No of hours required per volunteer _____ (per week)

Min period of commitment _____

Level of commitment required for assignment

One-off Ongoing

Contact information

Name _____

Telephone no _____ E Mail _____

Administration Information

Are volunteers covered by insurance?

Personal accident on premises Yes No

Personal accident outside premises Yes No

If volunteer drivers use their own transport:

Yes No



Have you checked if their insurance covers injury to passengers?

Yes No

Volunteer expenses

Are travel expense paid? Yes No

Are meal expenses paid? Yes No

Other information

Interviews Formal Informal

Are references required? Yes No

Is a CRB check carried out? Yes No

Does the opportunity offer preparation/training?

Yes No

If there is a trial period? Yes No

If yes how long is it _____



CLAUQUE VOLUNTEER EXPENSES CLAIM FORM

Part One – Claim

This form is to be used to record those expenses you incur while volunteering for us for which you are to be reimbursed. The types of expenses for which we provide reimbursement are:

- Travel undertaken as part of the volunteering role
- Telephone and postage costs
- Specialist protective clothing or other essential equipment
- Car insurance and vehicle running cost at agreed set amount per mile
- Previously agreed items purchased to undertake tasks

Month _____

Date _____

Name of Volunteer _____

Type of expenditure	Item Amount

Total £ _____

These represent an accurate account of my expenses (please attach invoices)

Signature of volunteer _____



Part Two – Approval of Reimbursement Office Use Only

Cash payment received _____

Approved for reimbursement _____

Supervisor _____

Date _____

Payment issued

Part Three – Receipt of Payment

I acknowledge receipt of payment of above claim _____

Volunteer signature