



Policy name:	Volunteer Policy
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Updated by:	
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Revision number	Date	Details of Change(s)
0	20/05/2025	New policy
Next revision	With annual review	Add updated recruitment policy

Purpose:

This policy sets out Magic Me's commitment to our volunteers and outlines the framework for a positive, safe, and mutually beneficial volunteering experience. It provides clear guidance for both volunteers and Magic Me staff on all aspects of volunteering, from recruitment and induction to support, expenses, and problem-solving, ensuring our practices align with our organisational values and best practice. The document is written to be easily understood by and accessible for new volunteers.

Key documents:

- [Complaints Policy](#)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Equal opportunities monitoring form](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy](#)
- [Safeguarding Adults Policy](#)

Values:

When you volunteer with Magic Me, you become an essential part of bringing our core values to life:



- **Creativity:** We believe in the power of art to connect and transform. As a volunteer, you will support participants to engage imaginatively, and contribute to our artistic projects to help create unique creative experiences for everyone involved.
- **Collaboration:** Our projects thrive on the diverse voices and active participation of everyone involved – older people, younger people, artists, staff, and, crucially, our volunteers. You'll be working alongside others, sharing ideas, and building connections that strengthen our community.
- **Inclusivity:** Magic Me is committed to creating welcoming spaces where everyone feels a sense of belonging and can participate fully, regardless of their background or ability. As a volunteer, you play a vital role in fostering this environment, ensuring all individuals feel valued and respected.
- **Thoughtfulness:** We approach our work with care, consideration, and a deep understanding of the needs and experiences of those we work with. Your empathy, attentiveness, and conscious engagement in your volunteer role will help ensure our projects are delivered with sensitivity and impact.

This policy outlines how we ensure your volunteering experience reflects these core values, providing you with the support, respect, and opportunities you need to thrive in your role and contribute to Magic Me's inspiring work.

Our commitment to volunteers

At Magic Me, we believe that bringing older and younger people together through arts projects strengthens our community through connection, creativity, and joy. Our volunteers are an invaluable part of this mission. This policy outlines our commitment to providing a supportive, fair, and engaging volunteering experience that reflects our values. We are committed to best practices in volunteer management, ensuring our volunteers feel valued, respected, and empowered to make a meaningful difference to the experience of our participants.

What Magic Me expects from volunteers:

- **Commitment:** To fulfil agreed-upon roles and responsibilities to the best of your ability, and to communicate promptly if your availability changes.
- **Adherence to policies:** To understand and abide by Magic Me's policies and procedures, including those related to Health and Safety, Data Protection, Safeguarding, and our problem solving and complaints procedures.
- **Respectful conduct:** To treat all participants, fellow volunteers, staff, and artists with respect, kindness, and professionalism, reflecting Magic Me's values of inclusivity and thoughtfulness.
- **Open communication:** To communicate any concerns, questions, or needs to your supervisor or relevant staff member.

What volunteers can expect from Magic Me:



- Clear roles: To receive a clear understanding of your role, responsibilities, and how your contribution supports Magic Me's mission.
- Support and supervision: To receive appropriate induction, training, and ongoing supervision from a designated staff member.
- Safe environment: To volunteer in a safe and inclusive environment, with due consideration for your well-being and health and safety.
- Respect and recognition: To be treated with respect, fairness, and appreciation for your invaluable time, skills, and commitment.
- Reimbursement of expenses: To have agreed-upon out-of-pocket expenses reimbursed in a timely manner.

Recruitment of Magic Me volunteers

We welcome and encourage applications from people from all backgrounds and particularly welcome local applicants who are from East London. Our recruitment process is designed to be open, fair, and transparent.

We recruit volunteers for various project-based roles through a variety of channels, including:

- Magic Me website: Our dedicated volunteer section will feature current opportunities.
- Social media: We share roles across our social media platforms.
- Community partners: We collaborate with local community organisations to reach potential volunteers.
- Student volunteer platforms: We engage with universities and colleges to attract student volunteers.
- Volunteer boards: We post on boards specific to the localities we work in such as Tower Hamlets and London.
- Job boards: Relevant volunteer roles may be advertised on general job boards.

Our recruitment process typically involves:

1. Application: Interested individuals can express their interest, often via email or an online form to a Project Coordinator/Manager, detailing their interest and availability.
2. Initial call/meeting: The Magic Me team will arrange a call or meeting to learn more about you, answer any questions, and discuss what to expect from volunteering.
3. Forms: Applicants are asked to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form to help us ensure we are reaching a diverse range of people reflective of the communities we serve. Additionally, volunteers are asked to complete a data collection consent form.
4. References and DBS: We will request a reference upon confirmation of a role. If you don't have a professional reference, a personal reference will be accepted. We will also require you to have an enhanced DBS (criminal record) check as you will be working with children and young people and vulnerable adults. You can start volunteering with Magic



Me before the DBS process is completed but you will need to be supervised during this work.

While we require a DBS check we still welcome the application of ex-offenders. Each applicant's case will be considered individually, taking into account the nature of the offence, its relevance to the volunteer role, and the time elapsed since the conviction. For any candidate with previous convictions, Magic Me will conduct a formal risk assessment of the specific volunteer role and the applicant's circumstances to make an informed decision about suitability. For roles involving direct contact with young people or adults at risk, it is likely that applicants with convictions for serious violent or sexual crimes will not be considered suitable.

Diversity, equality and inclusion

Magic Me is committed to treating all volunteers with fairness and equity, fostering an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome and able to contribute. We actively work to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities for all.

We believe that volunteering should be accessible to everyone. We are happy to discuss changes to roles to meet any additional needs that volunteers might have. In the first instance, please contact us directly to discuss your needs. We will do our utmost to adapt roles accordingly, considering adjustments such as:

- Flexible hours or alternative scheduling (where possible).
- Provision of specific equipment or materials.
- Adjusting tasks or responsibilities within a role.
- Ensuring project activity takes place at accessible venues.

Our aim is to tailor each volunteer role to suit the needs of the individual, recognising that some individuals may need additional support to volunteer.

To ensure our volunteer pool is truly reflective of the rich diversity of our local community in Tower Hamlets and broader London, we actively seek to reach out to and attract individuals from all sections of the community, particularly if they are currently under-represented within our organisation. We also invite new volunteers to complete a diversity monitoring questionnaire to help us understand the demographics of our volunteer pool and inform our community engagement efforts.

Volunteer induction and training process

To ensure you feel confident and well-prepared in your role, Magic Me provides a comprehensive induction and training process:



1. Welcome and introduction: You'll receive a warm welcome to Magic Me, learn about our mission, values, and how your role contributes to our work. You'll be introduced to relevant colleagues and team members.
2. Building tour: If your work involves a specific building, a tour will be provided to familiarise you with the space. This tour will include information about emergency evacuation arrangements, the location of first aid provision and first aid qualified staff.
3. Safeguarding training: All volunteers are required to complete online safeguarding training to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants, particularly young and vulnerable people. You can also see our [Safeguarding Children and Young People](#) and [Safeguarding Adults](#) policies for more information.
4. General health & safety guidance: You will receive essential health and safety guidance relevant to your volunteering activities. This will complement our main [Magic Me Health and Safety Policy](#) and specific risk assessments conducted for the project(s) you are working on.
5. Project observation: If desired, you will have the opportunity to observe project sessions before actively joining to gain a better understanding of the dynamics and activities. Usually your first session as a volunteer will be as a participant so that you can experience first hand the work of our artistic and programme teams!
6. Role-specific training: While ongoing training is minimal, if specific skills or knowledge are required for your particular role, we will provide relevant training or resources and are happy to discuss any additional training needs you feel should be addressed.

Volunteer expenses

Magic Me values your time and commitment and will ensure that volunteering with us does not leave you out of pocket.

We cover the following expenses:

- Travel expenses: Reasonable travel costs incurred directly for your volunteering activities. These include:
 - Travel to and from the place where you volunteer up to a maximum of London Transport Zones 1-6, unless otherwise agreed in advance.
 - Travel undertaken on behalf of Magic Me.
 - Travel by bike or car will be reimbursed at a rate set by HRMC's Approved Mileage Allowance Payments.
 - Magic Me will not reimburse parking charges or the Congestion Charge unless we have agreed these in advance. The maximum daily amount to be claimed is set at £7 unless agreed by a supervisor.
- The cost of a meal if you volunteer over a meal period, or for more than 5 hours in one session.
- Materials: All necessary materials required for your role will be provided by Magic Me.



Claiming Expenses:

- Expenses can be claimed via an expenses form which will be provided by your supervisor.
- Please submit your completed expenses form and any relevant receipts to accounts@magicme.co.uk ensuring that you copy in your supervisor.
- Generally, expenses will be repaid on the next available pay run after receipt of a correctly completed expenses form. Usually 1-3 weeks.

Supervision and support for volunteers

We are committed to providing a supportive environment for all our volunteers.

- Designated supervisor: Generally speaking, your primary supervision will be with a Project Manager or Project Coordinator from Magic Me. They will be your main point of contact for questions, guidance, and support related to your volunteering activities.
- Working with artists: Our associate artists lead most Magic Me project activities and they will brief volunteers on what is required of them at the start of each session.
- End-of-session check ins: We run informal end-of-session check-ins with staff, artists, and volunteers. These are valuable opportunities to provide feedback on how the session went, share your experiences, and receive feedback from staff and artists.
- Informal check ins: Informal check-ins will happen regularly, session to session, allowing for ongoing communication and support.
- Open communication: We encourage you to communicate openly with your supervisor about any questions, concerns, or support needs you may have.

Problem solving and complaints procedures for volunteers

Magic Me is committed to resolving any issues or concerns that may arise during your volunteering with us in a fair, timely, and constructive manner.

- Informal resolution: We encourage volunteers to always try to speak to their supervisor in the first instance if they have a concern or problem. Many issues can be resolved quickly through open communication. If your supervisor is unavailable or the issue is related to them, please speak to another Magic Me staff member (details of two key contacts below).
- Formal complaints: If a resolution cannot be reached informally, or if the issue is serious, you can follow [Magic Me's formal Complaints Policy](#). This policy provides a clear step-by-step process for making a complaint.

For discussions about problem-solving or complaints, you may wish to speak with:

- Head of Operations: Ben Butcher - benbutcher@magicme.co.uk



- Programme Director: Kate Hodson - katehodson@magicme.co.uk

We are committed to ensuring that all complaints are handled fairly, discreetly, and without prejudice to your volunteering role.

Resolving issues with volunteers

If a Magic Me staff member, artist, or another volunteer has a concern about a volunteer's performance, conduct, or any other issue, the aim is always to address it constructively and informally in the first instance.

The concerned individual should first approach the volunteer's supervisor to discuss the issue. The supervisor will then typically engage in an informal conversation with the volunteer to understand the situation, offer support, or identify if additional training might be beneficial. This informal approach often resolves concerns quickly and effectively.

Should the issue remain unresolved informally, or if it is of a more serious nature, a more formal review process may be initiated. This could involve a formal meeting with the volunteer to discuss the concerns, clarify expectations, and agree on a timeframe for improvement and/or specific conditions that need to be met. Magic Me is committed to treating all such matters fairly, respectfully, and with due consideration for the volunteer's contribution and circumstances.

Healthy and safety for volunteers

Your health and safety are paramount to Magic Me and all volunteers are covered under Magic Me's insurance policy. We are committed to providing a safe volunteering environment and ensuring that all volunteers are aware of and adhere to our health and safety procedures.

- Magic Me Health and Safety Policy: All volunteers are expected to be familiar with and abide by the principles outlined in the comprehensive [Magic Me Health and Safety Policy](#).
- Risk assessments: We conduct risk assessments for all our projects and activities to identify and mitigate potential hazards. You will be informed of any specific safety measures relevant to your role and your role and activities as a volunteer will be covered by this assessment.
- Emergency procedures: You will be made aware of emergency procedures, including fire exits and evacuation plans, during your induction and at project locations.
- Reporting concerns: If you identify any health and safety concerns or hazards, please report them immediately to your supervisor or any Magic Me staff member.
- Accident reporting: All accidents, however minor, must be reported to the Health and Safety Officer (Ben Butcher benbutcher@magicme.co.uk) immediately and an accident report form completed.



Confidentiality and Data Protection

Volunteer's data is protected in Line with [Magic Me's Data Protection Policy](#) and you have a right to access the data held on you at any point during or after your work with us.

Volunteers play a crucial role in maintaining the confidentiality and data protection standards at Magic Me.

- Confidentiality: During your volunteering, you may come into contact with sensitive information about participants, staff, or the organisation. It is essential that you treat all such information with the utmost confidentiality. Do not disclose or discuss any personal information (confidential or otherwise) outside of the Magic Me team.
- Personal devices: Photos of people are not to be taken on personal devices. Personal devices are generally not permitted in the room during project sessions, mirroring our policy for participants.
- Data handling: Volunteers will usually only be responsible for activities directly related to project delivery in the room. If your role requires you to handle or administer personal data, you will be provided with relevant online training to ensure compliance with data protection regulations.
- Magic Me Data Protection Policy: All volunteers are required to understand and adhere to the principles outlined in the Magic Me Data Protection Policy. This policy outlines our commitment to protecting personal data and your responsibilities in upholding this commitment.

Exit process and references

Magic Me understands that volunteers' circumstances may change, and that you may need to conclude your volunteering with us. Both volunteers and Magic Me may terminate the volunteer placement and whenever this happens it is ideally by mutual consent. We aim to make this transition as smooth as possible for everyone involved. Some advance notice would be useful by way of enabling cover.

- Notifying your supervisor: If you need to step down from your volunteer role, please inform your supervisor as soon as possible, giving as much notice as you can. This allows us to plan for continuity and ensure a smooth handover for the project.
- Exit feedback: We value your contribution and feedback greatly. You will be offered the opportunity to complete an exit questionnaire or have a brief exit interview with your supervisor. This is an opportunity to share your experiences, provide valuable learning points for Magic Me, and discuss whether you might be interested in future involvement.
- References: We are happy to provide a reference for volunteers who have consistently contributed to Magic Me projects. We will provide a reference for you upon request.



Continuous improvement of this policy:

Magic Me is committed to continuously improving our volunteer programme and the support we offer. We value the feedback from our volunteers as essential to this process.

- Annual review: This policy will be reviewed annually by Magic Me's SLT to ensure it remains current, effective, and compliant with best practices and relevant legislation.
- Feedback: We actively encourage volunteers to provide feedback on this policy, their roles, and their overall experience with Magic Me. You can share your suggestions informally with your supervisor or through the formal complaints procedure if appropriate.
- Volunteer surveys/discussions: Periodically, we may conduct surveys or facilitate discussions with volunteers to gather insights on how we can enhance the volunteering experience and the effectiveness of this policy.
- Learning from experience: We will review feedback, successful initiatives, and any challenges encountered to identify areas for improvement in our volunteer management practices and this policy.

Your input is invaluable in helping us make Magic Me the best possible place for volunteers to contribute and thrive and we welcome feedback at all times.