

# Nishkam Centre Policy

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## Volunteering

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<b>Approved by</b>	NCA board

## 1. Purpose

NCA wants the community to feel inspired to volunteer, this is done by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to volunteer and has an excellent experience of doing so within this organisation and any other organisation we work with. The purpose of this document is to give information to staff on NCA's perspective on the use and management of volunteers. It details our **aims, recruitment, training** and **support** we will offer to volunteers and our desire to increase the quality and quantity of volunteering within NCA's workforce.

### Our Vision & Values

The actions we take are driven by our Vision:

We are a renowned regional, national, and international exemplar Sikh -led institution that is sustained by the selfless service of the community to become a powerful force for vocational learning, enterprise, civic engagement, art, culture and heritage, and our values:

- Inspiration through spirituality
- Integrity
- Innovative approaches to social change
- Intercultural, interfaith and intra-faith dialogue, understanding and cooperation
- Interdependency of all in local and global context

## 2. Scope

This policy refers to community members wishing to work voluntarily at The Nishkam Centre. This policy also refers to staff wishing to volunteer their services to other organisations

## 3. POLICY STATEMENT

### 3.1 Introduction

NCA vision is to create opportunity and enthuse our workforce and the community. NCA will include volunteers within the organisation, but will also make time to support other organisations that may be able to benefit from our expertise. NCA value the communities in which they operate and is committed to offer volunteering opportunities that can help individuals within their careers; provide NCA with an alternative perspective within our workforce; and provide us with volunteers that demonstrate amazing skill and talent for future employment opportunities. It is important to note that volunteers are designed to add value to the organisation and should not, therefore, be scrutinised under the same work objectives as paid employees.

There must also be no competing interest to the organisation of which NCA staff volunteer, should this be the case written permission must be obtained by a line manager.

### 3.2 Definition

Volunteering includes any formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation or work for someone who is not a member of the volunteer's family, where only reasonable out of pocket expenses are paid.

A volunteer is someone who commits time, energy, expertise and skill for the benefit of others, through personal choice and without expectation of financial gain, except for payment for actual out of pocket expenses.

### 3.3 Aims

- NCA is committed to maximising the participation of volunteers in its existing work to maximising the creation of opportunities for volunteer involvement.
- Work with learning and development to deliver training to staff who may work with volunteers.
- NCA will work with Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha (GNNSJ) to increase the opportunity for our service users to volunteer.

- NCA will ensure that the appropriate organisational structures and financial arrangements are in place to support the participation of volunteers.

NCA also understands the importance of staff wishing to volunteer. NCA will support staff to volunteer their services if the work is conducive to the positive work NCA carries out within the communities in which we operate and that it does not influence decisions made in staff day job and that they do not use their position to obtain personal gain.

### 3.4 Conduct

Under the terms of the staff Handbook, activities outside the workforce are the business of the staff member, but in some circumstances could overlap with the interest of NCA. In this circumstance, the employee must declare the matter to their line manager in writing. If the duties overlap with the work carried out within NCA (i.e. Board Member). The request must be made to the Centre Director who will make the final decision. This applies equally to unpaid or voluntary activity. Any time off required as part of agreed activities within NCA time must be discussed with the line manager for permission.

### 3.5 Definition

NCA seeks to recruit volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds that reflects the makeup of the communities in which we work in. The following will apply when recruiting volunteers:

- Volunteers will be recruited from the local community. The Contracts Manager will manage the process and will match the volunteer with a department that they are interested in volunteering to.
- Details of volunteer's next of kin and contact numbers, etc, will be held on internal records and will be used, where necessary, for surveys and feedback requirements.
- Volunteer applicants will be given clear, complete and current descriptions of the tasks and responsibilities they would be expected to fulfil - this will be provided by the Centre Director.

NCA will require potential volunteers to make a declaration and sign a volunteer agreement in regards to:

- Any health issues which may be relevant to the volunteer placement;

- the accuracy of information provided on the application form; and
- treating all information obtained during the course of tasks assigned as confidential.

Once accepted to the position of volunteer they will be given a clear, complete and current description of the duties and responsibilities of the tasks they are expected to fulfil.

### 3.6 Equal Opportunities

NCA seeks to offer opportunities irrespective of gender, race, colour, nationality, disability, sexuality, marital status, responsibility for dependants, religion or age in order to be reflective of the communities in which we work in.

### 3.7 Time Commitment

Volunteers could be flexible in the time commitment required which should be agreed with the supervisor.

### 3.8 Training

Each volunteer will receive a specific induction on NCA and the role on which they are to volunteer within by their supervisor. Providing adequate and appropriate training for volunteers is a key element of good practice for organisations. The fundamental reason for training volunteers is to improve their effectiveness in achieving tasks and therefore meeting the needs of those they are providing their services to. Training should, in theory, enable volunteers to develop skills, examine attitudes and gain further knowledge regarding the work of the organisation.

### 3.9 Support and Supervision

Volunteers will require a higher level of support than employees and all volunteers should have a named person to which they can go to with any questions and queries. NCA will offer regular and appropriate support to a volunteer to ensure that they are well supervised. Supervision is designed to ensure that there is a two way dialogue which will allow for the development of the volunteer and the aims of the organisation to also be met. For internal staff volunteering to other agencies, it is important that their existing line manager is still available for any issues the employee may have regarding their volunteer placement.

### 3.10 Confidentiality

Volunteers are bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff. At the start of a partnership between a volunteer and NCA or any other organisation, the supervisor must discuss the company's rules surrounding professional boundaries and confidentiality.

### 3.11 Expenses

All volunteers to NCA may have their travel and other agreed expenses reimbursed. By reimbursing volunteer expenses the aim is to ensure that volunteering is accessible to all, regardless of income. It is important that volunteers are paid only 'out of pocket' expenses and not a weekly income for participation. In general, any reasonable expense incurred as part of volunteering activity should be reimbursed. This can include:

- Travel to and from work;
- travel while volunteering;
- the cost of any necessary protective equipment

**NOTE:** NCA is not responsible for the re-imburement of 'out of pocket expenses' for internal staff who are volunteering to another organisation. They must refer to the respective organisation's policy on this matter.

### 3.12 Insurance

Volunteers are covered under the following insurance:

- Employers liability insurance;
- public liability insurance;
- professional liability; or
- personal accident insurance.

### 3.13 Sikh Values procedure

Consumption of alcohol, meat, tobacco or drugs is NOT permitted on the Nishkam Centre campus. This includes the car park and all buildings within the perimeter of the GNNSJ campus.

### **3.14 Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Children**

All volunteers who will be coming into contact with vulnerable adults or children will be requested to complete the safeguarding training which is available at the Nishkam Centre.

### **3.15 Health & Safety**

All volunteers are covered by the Nishkam Centre Health & Safety policy.

### **3.16 complaints procedure**

All complaints should be discussed with volunteer mentors. If the volunteer still feels that the complaint has not been dealt with adequately then the volunteer can take the complaint to the operations manager. If again the volunteer is not satisfied then they can discuss the matter with the Centre Director.

If a volunteer wishes to remain anonymous then there is a suggestions box located at various points within the building.

If volunteers have any queries regarding any of the policies or procedures they should refer these to their volunteer mentors or Nishkam Centre management.