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| ONSITE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM POLICY |
| Volunteer Program/ Engagement/Exhibitions |
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# Introduction

* 1. The Volunteer Program at the National Library of Australia (the Library) has been operating since 1989. The program offers the community an opportunity to play an active role in supporting and promoting the work of the Library. The Library values the important contribution that volunteers make, through Front-of-House and Behind-the-Scenes volunteer projects.
  2. The Library engages volunteers in tasks that, without their assistance, would not be undertaken or would not be completed for a considerable period of time. Volunteers are not used as an alternative to paid employment or to displace paid staff.
  3. Volunteers engaged to participate in the volunteer program play an important role in supporting the Library to achieve its strategic goals, and enhance its programs and projects by complementing the skills and resources of staff.
  4. The Library recognises the important role digital volunteers also play in supporting the Library however this policy does not cover digital volunteering.

# Policy Purpose

* 1. The purpose of this policy is to set out a framework for the management and implementation of the Library’s Volunteer Program.

# Policy Aims

* 1. To develop a vibrant Volunteer Program based on the changing needs of the Library, its collection and the skills of volunteers, in accordance with:
* APS Values and APS Code of Conduct as defined in the Public Service Act 1999;
* Volunteering ACT and the standards and practice of the national peak body, Volunteering Australia
* Work Health and Safety Act 2011

# Definitions

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| **Digital Volunteer** | A person who performs an agreed service for the Library online, or who participates in online activities which add value to the Library’s collections and services. | |
| **Comcover** | The Australian Government's self-managed insurance fund (refer to [Statement of Cover](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/comcover/insurance)) | |
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| **Health and Safety Representatives (HSR)** | Health and Safety Representatives are workers elected or selected for the role, who represent the health and safety interests of workers within their workgroup and for a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU). | |
| **Illness** | Sickness or disease. | |
| **Injury** | A disease (an ailment or the aggravation of an ailment) or a physical or mental injury (or the aggravation of an injury). | |
| **Officers** | Per the definition of the WHS Act the Library’s Officers are Council Members, the Director-General and all Senior Executive Service (SES). | |
| **Person Conducting a Business (PCBU)** | A PCBU conducts a business or undertaking alone or with others. The definition of a PCBU focuses on the work arrangements and the relationships to carry out the work. In addition to employers, a PCBU can be a corporation, an association, a partnership or sole trader. | |
| **Reasonably Practicable** | The term ‘reasonably practicable’ means - that which is, or was at a time, reasonable action to ensure health and safety, while weighing up all relevant matters including:   * the likelihood of the relevant hazards or risk occurring; * the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or risk; * what the person knows about the hazard or risk and the ways of eliminating or minimising the risk; and * the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk. |
| **Supervisor** | The person whom the volunteer reports directly to and supervises the work in the conduct of their engagement. | |
| **Coordinator, Volunteer Guides** | The person who administers the Volunteer Program. | |
| **Voluntary Worker** | Under Work Health and Safety (WHS) law a volunteer is a person who works for an organisation without payment or financial reward (but they may receive out of pocket expenses). The law also recognises volunteers as workers. This means that the Library must provide the same protections to its volunteers as it does to its paid workers. | |
| **Volunteer Agreement** | A signed document between the volunteer and the responsible Branch and Section Heads agreeing on the conditions of volunteering at the Library. | |
| **Volunteer Handbook** | A document to assist volunteers with their role at the Library. | |
| **Volunteer Program** | A program of approved activities undertaken by volunteers to support the Library and enhance its programs and projects. | |
| **Volunteer Project Proposal** | A signed document between the assigned volunteer’s supervisor/s, section manager/s and Branch Head/s approving the commencement of a volunteer project. | |
| **Work Health and Safety Act (WHS Act)** | The governing legislation providing for a nationally consistent framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces. The WHS Act sets out the requirements of workplaces to provide a safe workplace and provides advice and guidance on achieving this. | |
| **Work Health and Safety Codes of Practice (the Codes)** | Codes of practice are practical guides to achieving the standards of health and safety required under the WHS Act and Regulations. | |
| **Work Health and Safety Regulations (the regulations)** | The Regulations set out detailed requirements to support the duties defined in the WHS Act. They prescribe procedural or administrative requirements to support the WHS Act. | |

# Policy statement

* 1. The National Library of Australia’s policy on Volunteers provides an opportunity for the Library to enhance its programs and projects by drawing on the skills and experience of the local volunteer community.

# Key roles and responsibilities

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| **Director, Exhibitions** | Oversees the implementation of the Library’s Volunteer Program policy |
| **Branch Heads** | Approve the Volunteer Project proposals within their Branch |
| **Program Manager, Curatorial – Exhibitions** | Supervises the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides |
| **Manager, Volunteer Supervisor** | Where a work area undertakes a volunteer placement the manager of the volunteer supervisor is required to ensure:   * Any changes to the volunteer supervisor is communicated to the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides * The volunteer supervisor has been briefed, and understands, their duties and responsibilities to the volunteer including their WHS obligations |
| **Coordinator, Volunteer Guides** | Implements and manages the Volunteer Program |
| **Volunteer Supervisors** | Supervises, trains and guides the volunteer with their project  Volunteer supervisors are required to keep the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides up to date on performance and progress of the volunteer including when the volunteer ceases their placement |

# Key Outcome

* 1. Library volunteers support achievement of the Library’s strategic objectives through on-site participation in a range of projects that draw on volunteers’ skills and experience, within a safe and supportive environment.

# Implementation Process

* 1. The Library accepts, at its discretion, volunteers who are enthusiastic and committed to the Library’s programs and goals.
  2. Volunteers are expected to work under limited supervision, have reasonable experience in working in a research and administrative environment, and be able to volunteer for a minimum of six hours per month.
  3. The Library Volunteer Program is distinct from other categories of nonpaid work at the Library, such as work experience and internships.
  4. Voluntary hours should not exceed 16 hours per week as recommended by the national peak body, Volunteering Australia.
  5. For most projects the Library seeks a commitment of at least twelve months from volunteers.

# Volunteer Recruitment and Selection for Projects

* 1. Volunteers will be recruited through an annual recruitment process, if required. Advertisement will be conducted through the Library’s Website and social media channels as well as external channels i.e. Volunteering ACT. The Library may actively recruit volunteers with specialised knowledge or skills.
  2. Interested volunteers are required to make an application to the Library by filling in a *Volunteer Program Application Form*. All applications will be acknowledged, however only applicants with the required skills needed by the Library will be invited for interview.
  3. The Coordinator, Volunteer Guides may decline, at their discretion, to accept the services of any potential volunteer.
  4. Existing employees of the Library must seek approval from their Branch Head before applying to become a volunteer. Approval for existing employees to participate in the Volunteers Program is discretionary and subject to operational requirements.
  5. Areas of the Library that wish to utilise volunteers need to contact the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides directly. A Volunteer Project Proposal needs to be assessed and approved by all Section and Branch Heads involved. This form ensures the project has the necessary branch approval before commencing and clearly states what will be required from the volunteer.
  6. The Coordinator, Volunteer Guides will assist with selecting the most suitable volunteer for a vacant position. This may include inviting expressions of interest from current volunteers.
  7. After an applicant/s has been agreed upon, they will be contacted for an interview with the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides and a representative from the interested branch. The interview will ensure that all parties come to a mutual agreement about the skills required, task description, commitment of hours and duration of project.
  8. Once placed in a program the volunteer will be assigned a supervisor from the relevant work area. A volunteer must be under the direction of a Library officer at all times during the hours of duty.

# Volunteer Documentation

* 1. Acceptance into the Volunteer Program is subject to the successful completion of the following:
* Volunteer Agreement;
* Statutory Declaration (concerning criminal charges, conflicts of interest and medical conditions); and
* AFP National Police Check (information released by the AFP would include all unspent offences and offences against the person).
* For front-of-house (FOH) Volunteers or volunteers whose role puts them in proximity to children or young people, Working With Vulnerable People (WWVP) check
  1. Volunteer Agreements are required to have a project start and end date. All agreements will be subject to review.
  2. By signing the Volunteer Agreement the volunteer agrees to the conditions of the volunteer placement.
  3. Volunteers are required to adhere to legislation observed by Library staff such as:
* APS Values and APS Code of Conduct as defined in the Public Service Act 1999
* Privacy Policy (PCY 14/004)

<http://www.nla.gov.au/policy-and-planning/privacy-policy>

* 1. Volunteers will be provided with a copy of relevant documents including the Volunteer Program Policy, the Volunteer Handbook and the Essential Guide to Work Health and Safety for Volunteers, developed by a Safe Work Australia.

# Performance Review

* 1. A two-month probationary period applies to volunteers entering the program. During this time the volunteer supervisor will assess the suitability of the volunteer for the agreed tasks. The volunteer’s supervisor will liaise regularly with the volunteer and the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides and provide feedback to the volunteer to address any issues and to establish a mutually satisfactory placement.
  2. If during this time an issue or incident is highlighted, the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides will meet with the volunteer and their supervisor separately. If the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides decides that the agreement is no longer mutually beneficial, the volunteer’s placement may be terminated.
  3. Volunteers will undergo performance review with the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides or their volunteer supervisor during the period of the project in regard to their performance and their demonstrated commitment to the Library’s role.
  4. Renewals or extensions are subject to volunteers having met their specified obligations under the previous agreement, and the Library having a suitable and meaningful role for the volunteer.

# Termination of Agreements

* 1. Volunteers are expected to be effective members of the organisation. Unsatisfactory voluntary work and/or inappropriate behaviour may result in termination of the Volunteer Agreement.
  2. Volunteers who are absent for more than 12 months from the Program will need to reapply to the Volunteer Program.
  3. Both the volunteer and the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides have the right to terminate the Volunteer Agreement at any time by giving the other written notice to that effect.
  4. Potential reasons for the termination of agreements include but are not limited to:
* change of personal situation or Library priorities;
* ill-health;
* inability to perform the agreed tasks satisfactorily;
* inappropriate behaviour towards Library staff or visitors;
* excessive staff time taken up by on-the-job training;
* volunteer's style of interaction prevents staff from meeting their work commitments;
* volunteer’s level of attendance is less than agreed;
* volunteer’s contribution is deemed ineffective by the work area or Coordinator, Volunteer Guides;
* failure to adhere to the APS Values and APS Code of Conduct (as defined in the Public Service ACT 1999); and
* the volunteer uses unsafe work practices in completing assigned tasks
  1. If after reviewing an incident or issue, the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides decides that the agreement is no longer mutually beneficial, the volunteer’s placement may be terminated.

# Volunteer Conditions

* 1. **Salary and expenses**

No salary, wages or other financial consideration will be paid to a volunteer.

* 1. **Comcover**

On commencement a volunteer will be covered by the Library’s insurance coverage administered by Comcover for third party incidents (public liability) and the like.

* 1. **Workers Compensation**Volunteers are covered under the Library’s Workers Compensation Scheme (Comcare) for injury or illness sustained as a result of their duties with the Library. All injuries or illness must be reported immediately to the relevant volunteer supervisor and the Coordinator, Volunteer Guides who will notify the Library’s WHS team.
  2. **Security**

All volunteers will be required to sign a current Statutory Declaration and an AFP National Police check with regard to criminal convictions and conflicts of interest. Volunteers must be willing to provide information for Library security purposes and may be asked to undergo the same security checks required of staff of the Library. Volunteers are required to comply with Library security policies.

* 1. **Intellectual property**

Intellectual property created by volunteers in the course of their work within the Library is the property of the Library. The title to, and ownership of, intellectual property (including copyright) rests with the Library. This includes written material such as reports, research papers, publications as well as databases, website material, software, artwork, photos and film.

* 1. **Removal of Library property**

No item of Library property, including collection material, shall be removed from the Library for any purpose by volunteers.

* 1. **Induction**

All volunteers are required to complete the National Library of Australia staff induction and the Work Health and Safety Training courses following their commencement in the Volunteer Program.

* 1. **Privacy**

The personal information about volunteers collected and held by the Library will only be used for the purpose of providing volunteers with information about the Library’s programs, assessing volunteers for projects and activities, and services which may be of interest. The Library will not disclose personal information to a third party unless the consent of the volunteer is obtained, or the Library’s is required or authorised by law to do so. All volunteers are required to adhere to the Library’s Privacy Policy PCY 14/004.

# Work Health and Safety Compliance

* 1. The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 applies to the Library. Volunteers are considered ‘workers’ for the purposes of this Act.
  2. As a worker, volunteers have specific legal obligations and responsibilities when undertaking their duties with the Library:
* Take reasonable care not to create or increase the risk to their health and safety, or that of others;
* Cooperate with management is providing a safe and healthy workplace including complying with any reasonable instruction, policy or procedure; and
* Report any incidents or hazards immediately to their supervisor who must lodge a WHS Hazard/Incident ticket to allow appropriate follow up by the Assistant Director Safety, Wellbeing and Inclusion
  1. Non-compliance by a volunteer with the WHS Act, Regulations, Codes of Practice or the Library’s internal policies or procedures may lead to the volunteer’s agreement being terminated.
  2. Volunteers can also refer to the Essential Guide to Work Health and Safety for Volunteers, developed by Safe Work Australia. <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/essential-guide-work-health-and-safety-volunteers>

# Work Health and Safety Risk Management

* 1. Section 17 of the **WHS Act**sets out that a duty imposed on a person to ensure health and safety requires the person:
* to eliminate risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable; and
* if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate risks to health and safety, to minimise those risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
  1. Effective workplace WHS management is the responsibility of all workers. However, subject matter experts including the Assistant Director Safety, Wellbeing & Inclusion and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) can provide guidance and consultation relating to processes and control strategies for effective risk management plans.
  2. The Library’s Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS) articulates the Library’s WHS approach to risk and must be consulted to determine when and how risk should be assessed and managed. The WHSMS includes templates for risk analysis.
  3. Effective risk management requires commitment from leaders responsible for managing and operating a business or undertaking. Continuous promotion, reinforcement, consultation and discussion demonstrate to workers the importance of WHS within the Library and encourages expected behaviours for work health and safety practices and processes.

# Review and Consultation

* 1. This policy is to be reviewed five years from date of effect.
  2. The Volunteer Handbook will be revised annually or as required.

# References and related documents

* 1. The following documents and/or legislation were considered when developing this policy
* Volunteer Program Policy PCY10/018 September
* Privacy Policy PCY 14/004
* Model Code of Practice: [How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks (2018)](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1901/code_of_practice_-_how_to_manage_work_health_and_safety_risks_1.pdf)
* [Work Health and Safety Management System](https://my.nla.gov.au/sites/default/files/WHSMS%20-%20August%202019%20PDF_0.pdf)
* [Model Work Health and Safety Bill 2019](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/2003/model-whs-bill9-december2019.pdf)
* [Model Work Health and Safety Regulations 2021](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-01/Model-WHS-Regulations-1January2021.pdf)
* Work Health and safety policy PCY14/003 December 2013
* Volunteer Handbook
* APS Values and APS Code of conduct as defined in the Public Service ACT 1999
* <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/policy/national-standards-and-supporting-material/>
* <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/essential-guide-work-health-and-safety-volunteers>
  1. The following documents are related to this policy.
* Volunteer Application
* Volunteer Agreement
* Volunteer Project Proposal
* Volunteer Handbook