



# The Society of Yoga Practitioners (TSYP)

## VOLUNTEER POLICY

### 1 Introduction

TSYP is a volunteer-led charity. The Trustees warmly acknowledge the huge contribution of volunteers, who give so freely of their time, skills and experience for the benefit of our members and our wider community. The Trustees are immensely grateful to them for their commitment and want to ensure that TSYP offers its volunteers a rewarding, enjoyable experience in a variety of roles and a supportive environment.

The Trustees have adopted this policy to ensure that the contribution of volunteers is properly recognised and valued, and that volunteers are clear about what to expect from the organisation in return. It sets out the principles and practices that will apply to volunteering and aims to create common understanding and clarity about roles and responsibilities. It applies to everyone in the organisation, including volunteers, any paid staff and contractors and those appointed to positions of responsibility.

### 2 Links to other policies

- Safeguarding Policy: <https://www.tsyp.yoga/about/policies/>
- Health & Safety Policy: <https://www.tsyp.yoga/members-policies-forms/>
- Guidance for working with vulnerable people: <https://www.tsyp.yoga/about/policies/>
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy: <https://www.tsyp.yoga/about/policies/>
- Expenses Policy: <https://www.tsyp.yoga/members-policies-forms/>
- Fees and Payments Policy: <https://www.tsyp.yoga/members/teachers-forms/>

### 3 Who is a volunteer?

Volunteers are the people who – unpaid – contribute their time, energy, skills and experience to enable TSYP to achieve our charitable purpose and to deliver services that benefit our members and the general public. This group includes the Trustees themselves, heads of department and anyone else who supports our activities on a voluntary basis.

Volunteering may involve taking part in one-off activities or in a longer-term, regular arrangement.

Volunteers are valued because they:

- Enable us to deliver a wider range of activities for our beneficiaries
- Enhance the quality of our work and the experience we offer to our members and the wider community
- Bring additional skills and fresh perspectives to the organisation that enable us to be innovative and grow our services
- Promote our cause within the wider community

### 4 Values and principles

TSYP is a registered charity and the Trustees are responsible for everything it does. They have a statutory duty to protect the charity's best interests at all times. This means they must ensure that volunteering benefits the organisation, our members and beneficiaries, and the volunteers themselves.



Volunteers are integral to TSYP's success, and the Trustees seek to maintain a cooperative, supportive working environment where everyone is clear about the role of volunteers.

The volunteer role is a gift relationship that is binding only in shared values, honour, trust and mutual understanding. No obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers in their voluntary activity, and likewise the organisation cannot be compelled to provide regular tasks, payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer.

Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual respect, support, reliability and reciprocity. Volunteers must adhere to any policies and rules that the Trustees have put in place, and, if things go wrong, work together with Trustees towards a resolution.

## **5 Rights and responsibilities**

Those who volunteer for TSYP can expect to:

- Know what is, and what is not, expected of them
- Have adequate support in their volunteering, including training where necessary
- Receive appreciation and recognition
- Volunteer in a safe environment
- Be covered by insurance in their role
- Be treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner
- Know what will happen if something goes wrong in the course of their volunteering and receive appropriate support
- Be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred on TSYP business
- Be able to decline to do anything they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable
- Be able to withdraw from volunteering whenever they want

Volunteers are expected to:

- Be reliable, open and honest
- Act in accordance with TSYP's aims and values
- Undertake tasks to the best of their ability and try to keep to agreed guidelines
- Respect the work of the organisation and not bring it into disrepute
- Comply with the organisation's policies on safeguarding, conduct and confidentiality

Volunteers will be asked to sign the volunteer agreement (see Appendix 1)

Additionally, volunteers will be required to maintain a record of all hours volunteered, for Charity Commission reporting purposes.

## **6 Volunteer support**

Volunteers will be assigned a named supervisor, usually a Trustee, whose role is to offer guidance, support and advice. This relationship is intended to ensure that the volunteer feels respected, valued and adequately supported to enable them to succeed in their role. The volunteer and the supervisor will determine together how this relationship will work.

The nominated person with overall responsibility for the management and welfare of volunteers is the Chair.

## **7 Recruitment and selection of volunteers**



TSYP welcomes volunteers into a variety of roles and from a wide range of backgrounds. Volunteering opportunities will be promoted on the TSYP website, regular mailings, promotional material etc to ensure we reach a broad community, and especially people from under-represented groups.

Prospective volunteers will be asked to provide a brief CV and invited to an informal meeting with one or more Trustees and other colleagues. Volunteers for senior roles may be invited to observe management and/or Trustee meetings.

If the volunteer is not already known to TSYP, they will be asked to provide the names of two referees. If the volunteer is likely to be working with vulnerable people, they may be asked to undergo checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service ('DBS checks').

Volunteers are accepted on merit, the sole selection criteria being the individual's ability to carry out agreed tasks and their willingness to serve.

New volunteers will receive a proper induction and will work with their assigned supervisor to agree a clear task and/or role description, which will be subsequently reviewed from time-to-time. New volunteers be given all the necessary support and information to enable them to perform their role with confidence.

## **8 Training**

All volunteers will be told about any TSYP policies and procedures that are relevant to them. Supervisors will ensure that new volunteers receive any training that is needed to enable them to succeed in their role.

## **9 Expenses**

Volunteers may be reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses that they incur in their work for TSYP, subject to prior approval from the Trustees and presentation of the relevant receipts. Volunteers should record all expenses claimed for Charity Commission reporting purposes.

## **10 Insurance**

TSYP will maintain appropriate liability insurance for employees and third parties, including volunteers.

The organisation does not accept responsibility, or maintain insurance cover, for loss or damage of volunteers' personal possessions.

## **11 Data protection**

We collect personal information from volunteers for the purposes of coordinating volunteering activities and will only share that information outside the organisation with consent. We will add volunteers' details to our mailing list so we can keep them updated with news about TSYP activities. Volunteers can check what data we hold, have it changed or deleted by emailing [vicechair@tsyp.yoga](mailto:vicechair@tsyp.yoga). Our full Privacy Policy is on our website at: <https://www.tsyp.yoga/about/policies/>

## **12 Problem solving**



Even with the huge generosity and goodwill within our TSYP team, sometimes problems will arise. Our approach will always be to work cooperatively to achieve a positive and amicable outcome. We will act promptly, fairly and compassionately and listen considerately to the views of all those involved.

### Operational problems

Problems may arise in the day-to-day course of TSYP activities. Examples might include where a volunteer is:

- Struggling to do assigned tasks
- Feeling overwhelmed by the workload or the challenges of the assigned task(s)
- Not getting on with colleagues
- Not turning up when expected
- Feeling unhappy with things the organisation is doing or not doing

In the first instance, the volunteer and their supervisor will discuss the issues and concerns, with the intention to tackle the problem together and make things better.

The supervisor will:

- Make every effort to find out the facts of the matter
- Listen to what the volunteer (and anyone else involved) has to say
- Avoid assigning blame
- Ensure that the volunteer understands the problem and its impact on the organisation as a whole
- Explain what we would like to be done differently and what we will do to help
- Agree a plan of action and the arrangements for review

If things don't improve, the supervisor and volunteer will explore other possible solutions.

If the volunteer is unhappy with the outcome, they may ask for the matter to be reviewed by another Trustee or the Chair. The Chair will have the final say on what needs to be done.

TSYP accepts that, despite our best endeavours, the volunteer may wish to leave and we will do everything we can to ensure a parting on good terms.

### Serious misconduct

Sometimes problems involve behaviour so egregious that the Trustees might consider there is serious reputational risk to the organisation. Examples include where a volunteer:

- Is implicated in a bullying or harassment claim
- Shares confidential data without consent
- Is implicated in fraud or theft
- Appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs

Such cases will be handled in the first instance by the supervisor and the Vice Chair/ Trustee (not the Chair), following the procedure described above. However, if the balance of evidence suggests that the volunteer's presence within the organisation can no longer be tolerated, dismissal may be the only option.

In this event:

- A meeting will be arranged with the volunteer to discuss the matter in private
- The volunteer will be given enough notice of the meeting and the opportunity to bring somebody with them if they would like
- It will be explained to them that they are being asked to leave and why
- The volunteer will be treated with dignity and fairness, and will be thanked for their contribution to the organisation
- The meeting will be followed up in writing



The volunteer may appeal the decision by writing to the Chair, who may decide to ask another person, such as one of TSYP's 'elders' or legal members, to be involved in the review process to give an additional perspective. The Chair's decision will be final and will be communicated to the volunteer in person and followed up in writing.

If the Chair is conflicted, for example by significant involvement in the circumstances that gave rise to the possible dismissal, an appeal may be heard by another Trustee and/or one of the 'elders'/legal members.

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## The Society of Yoga Practitioners (TSYP)

### VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

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TSYP thrives on the work of our volunteers, who are an important and valued part of the team. The Trustees, volunteers themselves, hope that you will enjoy volunteering with us.

This Volunteer Agreement tells you what you can expect from us, and what we hope from you. We are committed to doing the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us positive and rewarding. We aim to be flexible, so please let us know if you would like to make any changes and we will do our best to accommodate them.

#### Part 1: TSYP

We, the trustees of TSYP, accept the voluntary service of *(name of volunteer)* beginning on *(date)*.

Your role as a volunteer is *(state nature and components of the work)*. This work is designed to *(state purpose of work in relation to its benefit to the organisation)*.

##### 1. Induction and training

We will introduce you to how the organisation works, your role in it and provide any training you need to help you meet the responsibilities of your volunteering role.

##### 2. Supervision, support and flexibility

We will provide you with a named supervisor, usually one of the Trustees or a head of department. They are there to support you in your role, share feedback and resolve any problems. Together, you and your supervisor will agree how you want this relationship to work.

We will let you know the standards we seek to achieve within the organisation and support you in achieving them, while always respecting your skills and dignity. We will let you know about any policies and procedures that apply to your role.

We will keep you informed of any possible changes affecting your volunteering.

We will listen to your views and will do our best to be flexible in how we use and develop your time and skills.

##### 3. Expenses

With prior agreement TSYP will reimburse reasonable and essential travel and other expenses incurred whilst doing your voluntary work, subject to compliance with the rules we have in place for claims and reimbursement as detailed in the TSYP Fees and Expenses Policy.

##### 4. Health and safety

We will provide a safe working environment and provide you with adequate training and feedback in support of our health and safety policy. We will provide adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst undertaking voluntary work approved and authorised by us.



**5. Equal opportunities**

We will endeavour to ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with our equal opportunities policy.

**6. Problems**

Should any problems, grievances or difficulties arise in the course of your volunteering, your supervisor will aim to resolve them in a fair, just and timely manner and in accordance with TSYP’s Volunteering Policy. If, after this, the issue remains unresolved or you are unhappy with the outcome, you will be offered the opportunity to discuss the matter with the Chair or another Trustee, and make a formal appeal if necessary.

**Part 2 The volunteer**

I, *<name of volunteer>*, agree to be a volunteer with TSYP and commit to helping TSYP fulfil its charitable purpose by *<insert description of role/duties>*.

My agreed voluntary time commitment is ..... *<can adapt if, say for Heads of Depts, the commitment may be open-ended>*

I will endeavour to perform my volunteering role to the best of my ability and to adhere to TSYP’s rules, policies, procedures and standards, including health and safety procedures and equal opportunities policy in relation to staff, volunteers and clients.

I undertake to maintain the confidential information of the organisation and of its clients.

I commit to meeting the time commitments and standards we have agreed, except in exceptional circumstances, when I will endeavour to provide reasonable notice of any absence or inability to work so that, if necessary, alternative arrangements can be made.

I agree to provide, on request, names and contact details of two referees who may be contacted to provide a testimonial on my behalf. *<may be deleted if not required>*

*If the role requires a police check:*

I agree to a police check being carried out where necessary.

**This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.**

**Volunteer signature**

**On behalf of TSYP**

.....

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**Name:**

**Name:**

**Date:**

**Date:**