

## VOLUNTEER POLICY

### 1. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

NERAM is committed through its Strategic and Business Plan 2009 to promote community participation in the arts and in the region. Volunteers help NERAM to create a vibrant and connected arts community. Volunteers are encouraged to share their special skills, foster new interests and abilities, and support artistic expression within the community.

This Policy defines NERAM's approach to the recruitment, induction, training, evaluation, support and management of unpaid Volunteer staff working at the Art Museum. NERAM's Operations Manager oversees and supervises all volunteers.

### 2. DEFINITIONS:

Volunteers are defined as people who participate:

- 2.1 By their own choice
- 2.2 Without monetary reward
- 2.3 To the benefit of the community

### 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Staff	Roles & Responsibilities
Director	Provide a professional and safe working environment for Volunteer staff Recommend and authorise appointment of Volunteers Authorise recruitment of new Volunteers Authorise Position Descriptions Authorise induction dates and induction programs Participate in Volunteer induction programs where appropriate Supervise Volunteers working within area of responsibility
Operations Manager	Scope and assess tasks to be performed by Volunteers Liaise with NERAM staff to undertake Volunteer needs analysis Provide detailed description of the available task and role and draft position descriptions Develop induction training programs and materials in consultation with relevant staff Participate in the evaluation of the skills and knowledge that Volunteers can provide to NERAM. Organise interviews where appropriate Organise rosters or deployment of Volunteers in liaison with relevant staff Oversee ongoing communications with, supervision and training of Volunteers in consultation with relevant NERAM staff Undertake regular competency assessments of Volunteers
NERAM Staff	Supervise Volunteers working within area of responsibility Work alongside Volunteer staff in a supportive, professional and respectful manner

#### **4. RECRUITMENT**

**4.1** Volunteer staff will be recruited and selected for tasks in a fair, open and equitable manner.

**4.2** NERAM will interview each potential volunteer and assess their capacity to undertake the task involved.

**4.3** Recruitment decisions will be made on the basis of skills, abilities, personal attributes, time commitments, expectations and ability to match to an appropriate Volunteering role where they will be most fulfilled

**4.4** Volunteers need to complete the Volunteer Application Form.

#### **5. INDUCTION**

**5.1** Each Volunteer will be provided with

- NERAM Volunteer Policy
- NERAM Volunteer Handbook
- NERAM Code of Conduct

**5.2** Each Volunteer will complete an initial orientation of the Art Museum

**5.3** NERAM will complete the Volunteer Induction Checklist for each Volunteer

#### **6. TRAINING**

**6.1** Volunteer Training will be of a consistent quality and will include customer service and technical or specialist training and will be provided on a regular basis

#### **7. EVALUATION**

**7.1** Volunteers will be skills-matched to roles and tasks as far as is possible

**7.2** Volunteers will be provided with encouragement and feedback on their performance

**7.3** Volunteers who prove unsuited to a specific role or task will be offered other options where they exist, or

**7.4** When it is more appropriate to do so, Volunteers will be released from their duties, with reasons for doing so being communicated by formal meeting and then by letter.

#### **8. SUPPORT**

**8.1** Volunteers will be adequately supervised and managed

**8.2** Volunteers will be provided with information and training

**8.3** Volunteers will be provided with personal identification

**8.4** Volunteers will be recognised and celebrated, for example during Volunteer Week

**8.5** Volunteers will work alongside paid employees

**8.6** Volunteers will not be expected to undertake roles that they have not agreed to undertake

#### **9. MANAGEMENT**

**9.1** The Volunteer program and activities will be of consistent quality and adequately resourced

**9.2** Volunteers will be involved in relevant, meaningful and appropriate work

**9.3** Tasks and duties assigned to Volunteer staff will not be exploitative

**9.4** Volunteering will be encouraged and promoted to the community

**9.5** Volunteers will be provided with feedback on inappropriate behaviour or poor performance

## **10. PUBLIC COMMENT AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

**10.1** NERAM embraces the ideal of fair and open discussion, recognising the rights of individuals to their own opinions, and supporting the principles of freedom of speech. However, it is expected that Volunteer staff will restrict public expression of opinion or comment to matters that will not risk damage to NERAM's reputation and prestige and avoid representing a personal viewpoint as being that of NERAM.

**10.2** NERAM as the employer, is the owner of intellectual property created by staff in the course of their employment or engagement. This principle does not apply to use of skills in future employment or engagement but it does encompass confidential and commercial in-confidence material and other sensitive information.

**10.3** Volunteer staff must ensure that personal or confidential information obtained during the course of Volunteer work is never used for their gain or benefit or that of a third party, nor to the detriment of NERAM.

## **11. WORKPLACE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**11.1** It is essential that Volunteers follow reasonable direction given by NERAM staff in regard to safety practices and procedures.

**11.2** Under the Act, volunteers must take reasonable responsibility for their own health and safety as well as the health and safety of others by:

- Wearing appropriate dress for the tasks undertaken
- Knowing where the fire equipment, first kits, emergency exits are located. The location of this equipment will be pointed out during orientation.

## **12. DEALING WITH THE PUBLIC**

**12.1** The majority of services and programs NERAM provides involve direct contact with the community. The same applies to volunteers. Difficulties may sometimes arise and there are procedures in place to assist volunteers when dealing with the public.

**12.2** An ID badge clearly stating volunteer status will be provided to each volunteer.

**12.3** A volunteer has the right to withdraw from contact when feeling uncomfortable with a situation.

**12.4** A NERAM staff member should be advised as soon as possible if a volunteer is subjected to verbal abuse

**12.5** In any difficult situation, a NERAM staff member should be called to deal with the matter.

## **13. GRIEVANCES**

**13.1** Most grievances can be easily and informally resolved by talking to the NERAM Operations Manager.

**13.2** NERAM's conflict resolution and grievance procedures are designed to deal with workplace issues and not personality differences. In the case of individuals experiencing personality conflicts, it is essential for both parties to recognise each other's rights and accept that, at times, people are different.

## **14. WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

**14.1** Any volunteers that are designated as having a Child Related role will be required to complete a declaration that they are not a prohibited person under the NSW Child Protection Legislative Framework.

**14.2** NERAM will also undertake "working with children" checks for all volunteers designated as having a Child Related role.

## **15. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT**

NERAM consider volunteers a vital resource in the organisation. Volunteering is about freedom of choice to work without monetary reward. Volunteers can, however, expect other rewards such as recognition for the work undertaken. A volunteer is contracted to perform a specific job with certain responsibilities, and in return, is entitled to certain rights.

### **Volunteer Rights**

Volunteers have the right:

- To be provided with a duty statement clearly stating the aim of the job and tasks to be undertaken.
- To be treated as a co-worker. This includes job descriptions, Equal Employment Opportunity, Occupational Health & Safety, anti-discrimination legislation and organisational grievance processes.
- To know the purpose and policies of the organisation.
- To undertake training for the job which is thoughtfully planned and effectively presented.
- To be provided with sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced and well informed.
- To be kept informed of organisational changes and the reasons for the changes.
- To be heard; to feel free to make suggestions; to be shown respect for an honest opinion.
- To have a part in planning (where required or at the discretion of the co-ordinator).
- To be asked for their permission before any job-related reference, police or other checks are conducted

### **Volunteer Responsibilities**

For the effort and time put into providing suitable opportunities to volunteer staff, NERAM has the right to expect volunteers:

- To be reliable, punctual and courteous
- To commit themselves to the length of the work or project.
- To carry out tasks as specified in their job description ethically and responsibly.
- To undertake an appropriate orientation and/or on-the-job training as required.
- To comply with the relevant policies and procedures of NERAM as required.
- To respect the rights of NERAM, its staff and customers by maintaining confidentiality.
- To ask for assistance when required.
- To accept support and supervision from NERAM staff
- To report any accidents or incidents to a NERAM staff member as soon as possible.
- To give at least 2 weeks notice of their intent to leave their volunteer position
- To adhere to NERAM's Code of Conduct.

Some of the activities you should not undertake as a volunteer include:

- Reconciliation and banking of monies received.
- Signing documents.
- Resolving complaints about service or staff.
- Determine a safe method of work where there is no standard operating procedure.

## **NERAM's Rights**

NERAM has the right:

- To select the best Volunteer for the job by interviewing and screening all applicants. This might include reference and police checks and, where appropriate, a prohibited employment declaration for roles that involve working directly with children.
- Make the decision regarding the best placement of a Volunteer.
- To expect that Volunteers will undertake all reasonable requests and directions given in order to perform tasks and activities by NERAM staff
- To expect Volunteers to adhere to their job descriptions/outlines and the organisation's code of conduct and Volunteer policy.
- To expect Volunteers to undertake training provided for them and observe OH&S regulations.
- To expect conscientious acceptance of responsibilities as to promptness, reliability and good performance.
- To expect loyalty to the organisation and only accept constructive criticism.
- To expect clear and open communication from the Volunteer.
- To express opinions about a poor Volunteer effort in a diplomatic way.
- To release Volunteers under certain circumstances.

## **NERAM's Responsibilities**

In order to enhance the volunteers' experience and comply with legislation and duty of care, NERAM will:

- Provide volunteers with a healthy and safe workplace
- Maintain a database of all volunteers and projects utilizing volunteers
- Interview, where appropriate and engage volunteers in accordance with anti discrimination and equal opportunity legislation.
- Provide clear written duty statements which define the agreed volunteer work/duties to be undertaken, the competencies and/or skills required.
- Provide volunteers with orientation and relevant training for their role
- Communicate clear expectations and provide the appropriate levels of support and supervision for volunteers.
- Continually evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of volunteers in the organisation
- Recognise volunteers as valuable team members, with opportunities to participate in relevant organisation decisions.
- Listen to volunteer's feedback.
- Formally and informally recognise volunteers' effort in the organisation.
- Provide appropriate and adequate insurance coverage for volunteer staff All registered volunteers are covered by NERAM's Public Liability insurance policies whilst undertaking Art Museum Volunteer work.
- Ensure that all voluntary work is undertaken on a voluntary basis and without coercion.
- Ensure that the work of volunteers supplements but in no way competes with the work of paid people.
- Reimburse volunteers for approved out of pocket expenses incurred on behalf of NERAM.