

CHINA EXCHANGE VOLUNTEERING POLICY

ABOUT CHINA EXCHANGE

China Exchange is a UK registered charity based at 32a Gerrard Street, London. We create opportunities for people to learn more about China, Chinese culture and London's Chinatown.

China Exchange is governed by a Board of Trustees and employs a core staff team to manage programming, fund raising, audience development and experience and public engagement. For our events, we have a casual team of paid event stewards. We raise money through donations, trusts and foundations, sponsorship and by selling tickets to our events. To help raise further funds to support our costs, we hire out our building when it is not in use for our own activities.

THE IMPACT WE MAKE

China: We want to help people understand, appreciate and be more curious about the influence that China has on the world. We think that understanding the world's second largest economy will be critical for Britain's future.

Chinatown: We bring people to Chinatown. We work to enrich and develop people's understanding and experience of the area. We are committed to gathering, documenting and celebrating the heritage of this part of London.

Accessibility: We welcome all members of the public and work to make China, Chinatown and Chinese culture available and accessible to people. We aim to make our work accessible by keeping ticket prices at low levels and presenting activities that are free.

Inspiring, interesting and insightful experiences: We ask people to spend their spare time with us. This means we take our role of providing enjoyable, inspiring and interesting opportunities very seriously.

ABOUT OUR PROJECTS & PROGRAMMES

We hold a range of activities and seek to develop ways to achieve our aims that are original and not widely available elsewhere.

ABOUT THIS POLICY

This policy applies to all China Exchange volunteers. It will be reviewed annually.

WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS

China Exchange holds projects and activities throughout the year. Only certain projects are designed for volunteer engagement and these are structured so that both the volunteer and the organisation have the best possible experience.

WHAT VOLUNTEERS CAN EXPECT FROM US

- To be treated fairly and respectfully: China Exchange provides equal opportunities for all staff and volunteers. We recruit, train and manage people fairly and show this by communicating clearly. We treat everyone with respect.

- To be an integral part of our volunteer projects: volunteering at China Exchange is available for specific projects where we can offer something rewarding and engaging for volunteers. We do not take general volunteers.
- To receive training: China Exchange will provide specialist training for volunteers through programmes designed specifically for the volunteer projects we are running.
- To be managed with care: you will know who is managing you and how they will communicate and give feedback to you.
- To be part of a network of volunteers: we aim to create a network of volunteers and a social environment in which to donate your time.
- To be recognised and appreciated: China Exchange will show recognition and appreciation for the time that you spend with us.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM VOLUNTEERS

- To understand your availability: we need you to be clear about what commitment you can make and when you are and are not available.
- To represent China Exchange and uphold our policies and standards: this includes health and safety, treating people fairly, complaints and compliments, how we use social media and confidentiality.
- To provide receipts for expenses promptly: Provide your receipts promptly to allow us to reimburse you promptly.
- To hear from you about what is going well and what can be improved about your time volunteering: talk to us about your experience.
- To be open to feedback and flexible if things need to change

RECRUITMENT

We have a fair and consistent process for selecting volunteers that is relevant and appropriate to each role.

Our volunteering communications will use language that is accessible and easily understood, using various formats and messages to attract a diverse range of applicants.

We will select volunteers according to project needs and aim to match volunteers' skills, knowledge, experience, motivation and availability to suitable projects. We will seek opportunities for tasks to be undertaken in ways that will provide identifiable benefits and motivation for potential volunteers. Staff will also discuss individual volunteer requirements to ensure that volunteers feel adequately supported in their role throughout their time as a volunteer.

We will ensure that all potential volunteers have a clear understanding of their role so as to support them in selecting an appropriate placement.

Reasonable adjustments may be made to the selection methods to suit the particular access requirements of applicants with any specific access needs.

ELIGIBILITY

China Exchange welcomes all volunteers who are eligible to spend their time with us. If you are on benefits, you are able to volunteer but need to check your arrangements with your Job Centre. If you are not a UK permanent resident or citizen, you may need to check your eligibility to volunteer with the Home Office.

REFERENCES

Volunteers may be asked to provide at least one proof of identity (which should also evidence their right to work and volunteer in the UK, for example, passport, full birth certificate) and the names and contact details of two independent referees, who should not be family members, to ensure the volunteering is safe for others. If volunteers are unable to provide the required documents (for example, refugees and asylum seekers) China Exchange will take appropriate action. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis depending on the volunteering activity being undertaken.

VOLUNTEERING ROLES & SUPERVISION

China Exchange will provide clear outlines of the volunteer roles available within any given project along with guidance of what is expected from the project. Volunteers will have a supervisor who will manage their experience.

HEALTH & SAFETY

We are committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of our volunteers. We want to make sure that volunteers are aware of and understand the health and safety risks associated with their role. We aim to provide volunteers with the appropriate information, instruction, supervision and training required provide a safe environment while volunteering at China Exchange.

INSURANCE

We will provide adequate insurance cover for you while you are undertaking activities approved and authorised by us.

EXPENSES

In contrast to the China Exchange core team, the event stewards and key holders, volunteers cannot be paid for their time. You will not be a member of staff and the regulations governing employment with China Exchange will not apply to you. For example, you will not be entitled to paid holiday if you take time off, or statutory sick pay when unable to attend any part of your volunteering when expected because you are unwell or indisposed.

Volunteering is, by its nature, a voluntary activity. The essence of this arrangement is that you are free to choose whether or not you carry out activities during the suggested hours, and, equally, there is no obligation on China Exchange to provide you with work or activities. Neither party expects an employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

Expenses must be a genuine reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses rather than a fixed amount per week. We will reimburse travel expenses up to £12 in accordance with our procedures set out below.

We will reimburse expenses properly incurred in accordance with this policy. Any attempt to claim expenses fraudulently or otherwise in breach of this policy would result in an immediate end to the volunteering arrangements.

Expenses will only be reimbursed if they are:

- (a) submitted to the Finance and HR Manager on the appropriate claim form;
- (b) submitted within 28 days of being incurred;

- (c) supported by relevant documents (for example, VAT receipts, tickets, and credit or debit card slips); and
- (d) authorised in advance by your supervisor or Manager at China Exchange.

Claims for authorised expenses submitted in accordance with this policy will be paid directly into your bank/building society account as soon as they are authorised and processed. Any questions about the reimbursement of expenses should be put to your supervisor or the Finance and HR Manager before you incur the relevant costs.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In the course of your volunteering, you may have access to confidential information in relation to China Exchange or our stakeholders. You will be required to enter into a separate legally binding Confidentiality Agreement under which you will undertake not to misuse or wrongfully disclose this information to any person either during your volunteering period or at any time afterwards.

To be clear, you must not disclose any trade secrets or other information of a confidential nature relating to China Exchange or, any of its associated companies or their business or in respect of which the China Exchange owes an obligation of confidence to any third party during or after your volunteering experience.

You must not remove any documents or tangible items that belong to China Exchange or, which contain any confidential information, from our premises, at any time, without securing proper advance permission from your supervisor.

For our volunteers to work with young or vulnerable people, we will need to secure Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks. China Exchange will meet any cost associated with these checks and the results will be held confidentially. If the CRB check raises any issues that may prevent you from volunteering with us, this will be discussed openly with you.

We will hold some personal information about you as one of our volunteers. This is likely to include your contact information and details for who to contact for you in an emergency as well as your bank details so that we can pay your expenses. This information will be stored confidentially while you are a volunteer with us and retained for up to 24 months after you end your volunteering time with us.

PROBLEM SOLVING & COMPLAINTS

We hope that volunteering with us is a rewarding, challenging and useful experience. There may be times when things do not work as you feel they should. If you have a concern about your volunteering experience at China Exchange, the first step is to discuss it with your supervisor. If this is not possible, or does not result in an outcome that resolves your concern, please then discuss it with the CEO of China Exchange who will reach a resolution.