

**Ipswich and District Talking Newspaper
(Sound On)
Charity no. 272773.**

Sound On Volunteer Induction Procedure

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When a new volunteer is recruited for a role in Sound On, it is important to ensure that they understand the role they play in enhancing the welfare of the service users, and helping to maintain the wellbeing of service users and other volunteers. This is in addition to the need for an understanding of the explicit responsibilities involved in the role for which they have been recruited. It is also important to bear in mind the difference between a request for volunteers, and an advertisement for a paid role. Volunteers are not employees and cluttering their lives with unnecessary extra administration burden risks losing their commitment. The induction process therefore requires as light a touch as possible to avoid the loss of a potentially valuable volunteer, while at the same time ensuring the suitability of the recruit, and maintaining the principles of Safeguarding and Equality and Diversity as specified by the relevant policy documents.

Recruitment of new volunteers should include the following steps:

1. (Optional) Advertise vacancies: Advertisements should include a request that applicants supply identification such as a driving licence, and nominate two referees (details below). Adverts should outline the objectives of Sound On, the responsibilities of the role for which volunteers are being recruited, and the expected time commitment required for the role.
2. Interview: This can be an informal conversation with a prospective volunteer, in which the interviewer (a member of the management committee) provides more details of the role and associated responsibilities. The interviewer should brief the committee on the suitability of the potential recruit, and the match between skills and requirements. The terms of the Equality and Diversity policy should be borne in mind to ensure that there is no discrimination relating to any of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality and Diversity policy.
3. DBS Check: Volunteers who are expected to visit listeners in their homes, e.g. to deliver or collect an MP3 player, should be verified via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS service) to determine that they have no convictions which would indicate that they are not an appropriate candidate for carrying out this task. The member of the management committee responsible for DBS verification should carry out this check in collaboration with Community Action Suffolk.

4. Follow up references: References should be requested from 2 referees, ideally one from a current or former employer, and one from an unrelated acquaintance who has known the potential recruit for at least two years. An alternative reference option exists where the potential recruit is already known to one or more members of the committee, in which case this will suffice assuming that they have known them for at least 2 years. References can be followed up informally as a conversation between a committee member and the nominated referees.
5. Inform the prospective volunteer as to whether they will be added to the rota or to the reserve list, or advise them that there are currently no roles suitable for their skill-set.
6. Required Training: For most roles within Sound On, the most appropriate form of training will involve shadowing a current volunteer to get an idea of the required tasks. In addition, all volunteers should receive training in the various policies and procedures currently in use within the organisation. This will include familiarisation with the Safeguarding, and Equality and Diversity policies and any associated procedures. In most cases familiarisation with the policies and procedures will be confirmed by an email or hand-written confirmation from the volunteer confirming that they have read and understood the relevant documentation.
7. Additional Training: At regular intervals, it is hoped that the organisation will be able to provide additional training to cover many of the issues related to sight-loss. This may take the form of group sessions covering issues experienced by people with varying degrees of visual impairment, together with an introduction to useful techniques (such as sighted guiding), and available assistive technology (liquid level indicators and other domestic equipment).