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| ONSITE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM POLICY |
| Volunteer Program/Community Outreach Branch |
| Policy Number: PCY14/009 |
| Approved: 1 July 2014 |
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# 1. Introduction

The Volunteer Program at the National Library of Australia 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.

The National Library of Australia 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.

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.

The National Library of Australia recognises the important role digital volunteers also play in supporting the Library however this policy does not cover digital volunteering.

# 2. Policy Aims

## **2.1 Introduction**

## This policy sets out a framework for the management and implementation of the Library’s Volunteer Program.

## **2.2 Aims**

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|  | 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.
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# 3. Definitions

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| Volunteer | A person who performs an agreed service at and for the Library willingly and without pay |
| 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 |
| Volunteer Agreement | A signed document between the volunteer and the responsible Branch Head 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 supervisor/s, branch manager/s and Division Head/s approving the commencement of a volunteer project |

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# 4. Policy statement

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

# 5. Key roles and responsibilities

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| Volunteers Coordinator | Implements the Volunteer Program |
| Manager, Community Partnerships & Development | Manages the Volunteer Program within the context of the Library’s community partnerships |
| Director, Community Outreach Branch | Oversees the implementation of the Library’s Volunteer Program Policy |
| Volunteer Supervisors | Supervise and guide the volunteer with their project |
| Division Heads | Approve the Volunteer Project Proposal |

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# 6. Key outcome(s) and output(s)

Library volunteers support the Library through on-site participation in a range of projects that draw on their skills and experience and which support the Library’s strategic objectives. They do so within a safe and supportive environment.

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**7. Implementation process**

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| How will we implement this policy? | **7.1 Involvement of Volunteers****7.1.1** The Library accepts, at its discretion, volunteers who are enthusiastic and committed to the Library’s programs and goals. **7.1.2** 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 6 hours per month.**7.1.3** The Library’s Volunteer Program is distinct from other categories of non-paid work at the Library, such as work experience and internships. **7.1.4** Voluntary hours should not exceed 16 hours per week as recommended by the national peak body, Volunteering Australia.**7.1.5** For most projects the Library seeks a commitment of at least twelve months from volunteers.**7.2 Volunteer Recruitment and Selection for Projects****7.2.1** Volunteers may be recruited through press advertisement, online applications or by contacting the Volunteers Coordinator. The Library may actively recruit volunteers with specialised knowledge or skills.**7.2.2** 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 accepted onto the Volunteer Register. Accepted applicants will be kept on the Volunteer Register for 12 months and applicants will be contacted by the Volunteers Coordinator if an opportunity becomes available. **7.2.3** The Volunteers Coordinator may decline to accept the services of any potential volunteer.**7.2.4** 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. Applications will not be declined unless a genuine conflict of interest or perception of conflict of interest can be identified.**7.2.5** Areas of the Library that wish to utilise volunteers need to contact the Volunteers Coordinator directly. A *Volunteer Project Proposal* needs to be assessed and approved by all sections and Division Heads involved. This form ensures the project has the necessary divisional approval before commencing and clearly states what will be required from the volunteer. **7.2.6** The Volunteers Coordinator will assist with selecting the most suitable volunteer for the project from the Volunteer Register. This may include inviting expressions of interest from current volunteers and/or those on the Volunteer Register.**7.2.7** After an applicant has been agreed upon, they will be contacted for an interview with the Volunteers Coordinator and a representative from the interested branch. The interview will ensure that all parties come to a mutual agreement about the skills required, a task description and commitment of hours. **7.2.8** 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 their hours of duty. |
|  | **7.3 Volunteer documentation****7.3.1** 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)
* AFP National Police Check (information released by the AFP will include all unspent offences and offences against the person)
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|  | **7.3.2** Volunteer Agreements are required to have a project start and end date within a 5 year period. All agreements will be subject to review within that period.**7.3.3** By signing the *Volunteer Agreement* the volunteer agrees to the conditions of volunteer placement. **7.3.4** 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*](http://www.nla.gov.au/policy-and-planning/privacy-policy)

* *Work Health and Safety Policy* (PCY14/003)
	+ - [*https://my.nla.gov.au/node/10321*](https://my.nla.gov.au/node/10321)

**7.3.5** 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 Safe Work Australia.**7.4 Performance Review****7.4.1** A two month probationary period applies to volunteers entering the program. During this time the volunteer’s supervisor will assess the suitability of the volunteer for the agreed tasks. The volunteer’s supervisor will liaise regularly with the volunteer and the Volunteers Coordinator and provide feedback to the volunteer to address any issues and to establish a mutually satisfactory placement. 7.4.2 If during this time an issue or incident is highlighted, the Volunteers Coordinator will meet with the volunteer and their supervisor separately. If the Volunteers Coordinator decides that the agreement is no longer mutually beneficial, the volunteer’s placement may be terminated.**7.4.3** Volunteers will undergo a performance review with the Volunteers Coordinator or their volunteer supervisor during the period of the project in regard to their performance and their demonstrated commitment to the Library’s role. **7.4.4** 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.**7.5 Termination of agreements****7.5.1** 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*.**7.5.2** Volunteers who are absent for more than 12 months from the Program will need to reapply to the Volunteer Program and will be placed on the Volunteer Register.**7.5.3** Both the Volunteer and the Volunteers Coordinator have the right to terminate the *Volunteer Agreement* at any time by giving the other written notice to that effect. **7.5.4** Potential reasons for the termination of agreements may 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 visitors or staff
* Too much 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
* Failure to adhere to the *APS Values* and *APS Code of Conduct* (as defined in the *Public Service ACT 1999*)
* Volunteer uses unsafe work practices in completing assigned tasks

**7.5.5** If after reviewing an incident or issue, the Volunteers Coordinator decides that the agreement is no longer mutually beneficial, the volunteer’s placement may be terminated.**7.6 Volunteer Conditions****7.6.1** Salary and ExpensesNo salary, wages or other financial consideration will be paid to a volunteer. Volunteers will not normally be reimbursed for miscellaneous personal expenditure such as car parking fees associated with their services as a volunteer unless specified in the Volunteer Agreement and endorsed by the appropriate Division Head.**7.6.2** ComcoverOn commencement a volunteer will be covered by the Library’s insurance coverage administered by Comcover.**7.6.3** SecurityAll 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.**7.6.4** Intellectual PropertyIntellectual property created by volunteers in the course of their work with 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.**7.6.5** Removal of Library PropertyNo item of Library property, including collection material, shall be removed from the Library for any purpose.**7.6.6** Induction All volunteers are required to attend the first available National Library of Australia staff induction course following their commencement in the Volunteer Program. The induction course provides an overview of the structure of the Library and an introduction to senior staff. The course covers areas such as security awareness and emergency procedures and may also include a guided tour of the Library.**7.7** PrivacyThe 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 a volunteer is obtained, or the Library is required or authorised by law to do so.All volunteers are required to adhere to the Library’s Privacy Policy PCY 14/004.**7.8 Work Health and Safety Compliance**The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 applies to the Library. Volunteers will be considered as ‘workers’ for the purposes of this Act. The Library’s Work Health and Safety Policy PCY14/003 aims to implement the Library’s obligations under the Work Health and Safety Act and related regulations and demonstrate the Library’s commitment to:Protecting the health of workers in the workplaceEnabling participative health and safety arrangements, andPromoting a culture of health and safety in the workplaceNon-compliance by a volunteer with the Work Health and Policy may lead to the volunteer’s agreement being terminated.<https://my.nla.gov.au/node/10321>Volunteers can also refer to the *Essential Guide to Work Health and Safety for Volunteers,* developed by Safe Work Australia. |
|  | <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/model-whs-laws/guidance/volunteers/Documents/Volunteers_Guide.pdf> |

# 8. Revision

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The Library’s Volunteer Program Policy will be revised in July 2017. The Volunteer Handbook will be revised annually or as required.

# 9. References and related documents

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| What are the key references for this policy? | The following documents and/or legislation were considered when developing this policy:* *Volunteer Program Policy* PCY10/018 September 2010
* *Privacy Policy* PCY 14/004 March 2014
* *Work Health and Safety Policy* PCY 14/003 December 2013
* *Volunteer Handbook 2014*
* APS Values and APS Code of Conduct as defined in the *Public Service Act 1999*
* *National standards for involving volunteers in not for profit organisations*, 2nd edition, Volunteering Australia
* The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
* *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*
* *Essential Guide to Work Health and Safety for Volunteers* developed by Safe Work Australia
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| Are there other documents related to this policy? | The following documents are related to this policy:* *Volunteer Application*
* *Volunteer Agreement*
* *Volunteer Project Proposal*
* *Volunteer Handbook 2014*
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