



**the centre**

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# Volunteer Pathways

Your guide to volunteering at The Centre

Welcome to the team at The Centre, it's really great to have you on board! The Centre relies on fantastic individuals like you to help out with many of our programs and activities, and without all your time and energy we just couldn't do the things that we do.

This little book is designed to give you a quick introduction to volunteering with The Centre, and let you know a little about the organisation before you get started.

In this guide you will find:

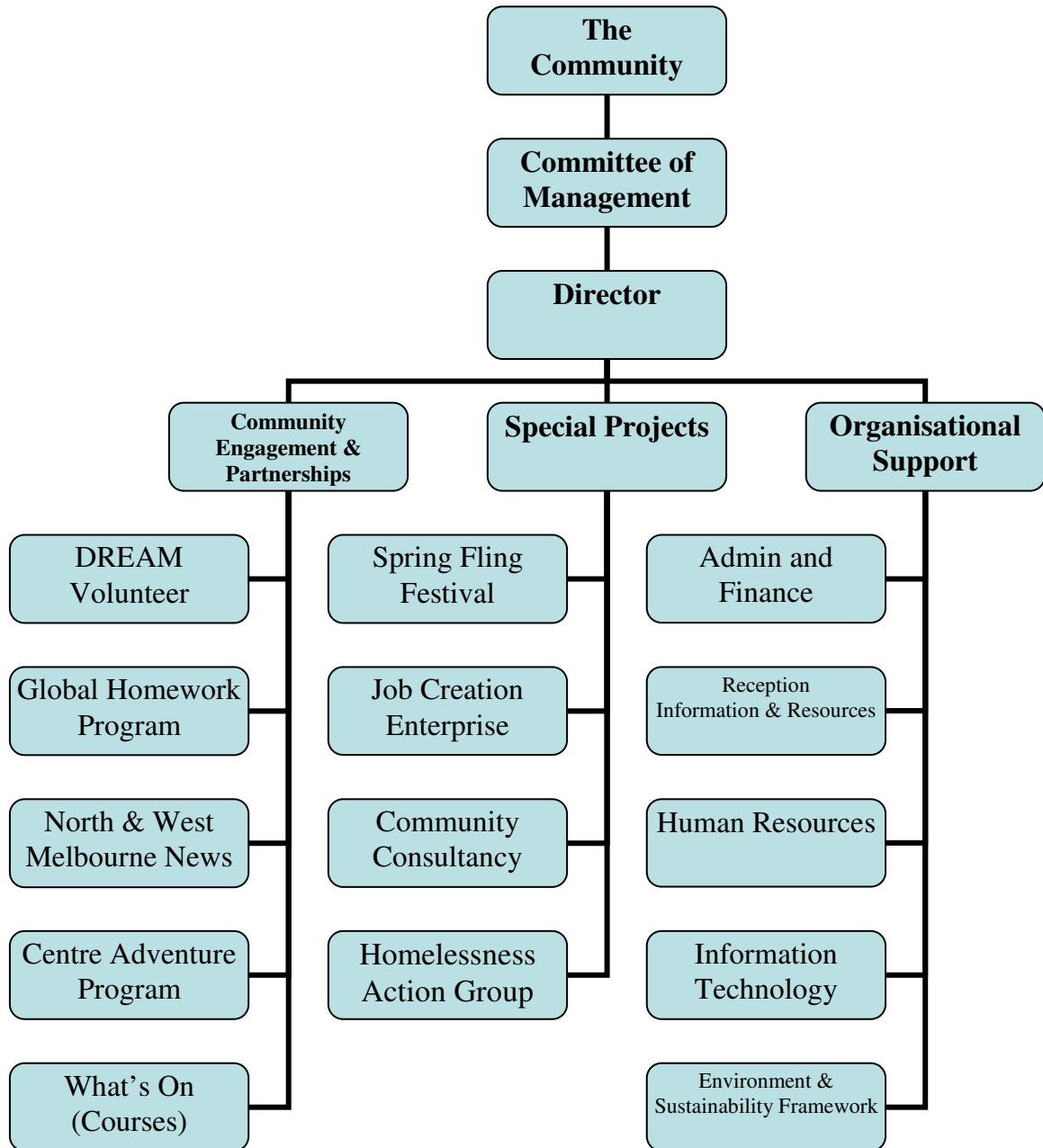
- 1. A quick history of The Centre**
- 2. Our vision and mission**
- 3. The Centre who's who**
- 4. I'm interested in volunteering; what's next?**
- 5. Our code of conduct**
- 6. Perks of the program**
- 7. Your commitment as a volunteer**
- 8. Complaints and grievance procedure**

**1.** The Centre was founded by local residents in 1976 and was an offshoot of the North Melbourne Library. Over the past two decades, The Centre has moved locations, changed name, increased its staff and volunteer base while continuing to grow and maintain innovative and relevant programs for the local community.

**2.** Our vision is to promote a sense of community belonging by providing resources, tools and space in response to community issues. With your valuable help, we are working towards:

Social Justice and equality  
Self-determination  
Inclusion and community participation  
A sense of community belonging  
Welcoming all forms of diversity

### 3. The Centre who's who....



### 4. I'm interested in volunteering; what's next?

Step 1: Decide which volunteering role tickles you fancy. Linden will be able to tell you more about the advantages and details of each role.

Step 2: Fill out a volunteer enrolment form. This is so you are covered by our insurance, we know how to get in contact with you and know who to contact in an emergency.

Step 3: A quick interview. This is so you can meet the volunteer coordinator, and get to know more about the program you're interested in. It's also so we can give you any relevant documents you might need to fill out like a police check or working with children check (The volunteer interview is the place to ask any questions you might have about the role, to make sure it's the right fit for you).

Step 4: Induction. This is an introduction to the program leader, and to the program. During the induction we will arm you with all the know-how to get stuck into your role.

Step 5: Time to get-on into it!

\*If at any time you can no longer continue to volunteer with us, please let me know as soon as possible. This is to ensure that volunteer roles stay up to date. You can email me at [lindens@centre.org.au](mailto:lindens@centre.org.au) or phone me on (03) 9328 1126.

## 5. The Centre's code of conduct:

### Code of Conduct

Purpose: Developing a sense of community, through friendship, compassion, cooperation, learning, acceptance and belonging.

### Respect:

Developing tolerance and a commitment to social justice  
Acknowledging diversity  
Respecting difference  
Encouraging distinctiveness.

### Responsibility:

Being responsible for yourself and those around you.  
Being aware of safety, and the feelings of others.

### Support:

Supporting each other and encouraging personal growth.  
Supporting The Centre, publicly and privately, to achieve its vision and mission.

## Personal Integrity:

Acting honestly, ethically and consistently.

Being responsible and accountable.

Respecting confidentially. Carrying out responsibilities/tasks to the best of your ability.

Being your word and being reliable.

## Enrolment Etiquette:

Consideration for class mates and teachers by turning off mobile phones during class times.

Giving notice of not attending a class well in advance of the class commencing.

## Please be aware:

Anti social behaviour of any kind such as Smoking, alcohol, drug consumption, and offensive behaviour will not be tolerated at any time, in any program or activity run by The Centre.

## 6. Perks of the program

Because we value all of your time and commitment, we try to do everything within our power to ensure you are safe, happy and feel acknowledged for the great work you do with us. Therefore, as part of the volunteer program, you can expect:

- To be kept informed of up and coming Centre activities and events you might be interested in.
- To be regularly acknowledged by way of opportunities for professional development, training and certificates of thanks you can put into your resume or onto your wall.
- Special offers and discounts on some of The Centre's courses and activities if you are a regular volunteer.
- To be included in Centre social events for volunteers

## You should also expect:

- To be covered by The Centre's insurance while you are here working with us.
- To be treated with respect and recognised as a valued team member
- To feel safe at The Centre
- To be properly supported and supervised in your volunteer role
- To say no to any requests in which you feel you are being exploited
- Have your needs listened to
- To be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses. The Centre acknowledges the expense of travel to and from The Centre and offers reimbursements in the following ways:

### Public Transport

The Centre will reimburse volunteers for the cost of public transport (for a volunteer shift more than four hours long) to and from The Centre. Travel tickets must be produced for the days of travel, and presented at the end of each shift, or no later than one week after travel. Travel by taxi will not be reimbursed unless a prior agreement has been made.

### Private Transport

In cases where a volunteer is asked to use their own vehicle in performing work for The Centre, petrol and parking expenses will be reimbursed. Normal commuting to and from The Centre will be reimbursed to the equivalent cost of using public transport, for a volunteer shift of four hours or more. A log of parking fees and kilometres travelled is required to be kept on the log sheet provided. Parking fines will not be reimbursed.

### Meal voucher

Volunteers who work for more than four hours at a time, are entitled to a meal reimbursement to the value of \$10.

## 7. Your commitment as a volunteer.

In return, we expect you:

- Are reliable
- Respect the confidentiality of participants, fellow volunteers and staff
- Carry out your specified job description
- Undertake training as required
- Give notice before leaving
- Follow The Centre's code of conduct
- Obtain all necessary checks, such as a working with children check, or police check. As each program has a different set of guidelines, I will be available to let you know what you need, and help you with any paper work you need to complete.
- Be sensitive to others: Harassment based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, size, age, disability, sexual preference, that may include sexist or racist language, or physical or verbal abuse is a criminal offence and will not be tolerated at The Centre.
- Retain professional boundaries

8. At The Centre, we would like to make sure you are looked after, that you feel safe and that you are treated fairly and respectfully at all times, by all members of

staff, all other volunteers and all participants. If you are involved in a conflict with another volunteer or member of staff, here are the steps to take.

- STEP ONE:
- Try talking to the person.
  - Be clear about what you are unhappy about.
  - Suggest some ways that can help change or resolve the situation
  - Be open to all points of view being presented
- STEP TWO:
- If you are still unhappy make an appointment to speak to the Community Engagement Coordinator or the Director.
  - Explain why you are unhappy with the way the other person dealt with the problem
  - Say what you think would help resolve the problem
  - Be prepared to try different options
  - Clearly identify what you are prepared and not prepared to do to resolve the complaint or grievance.
  - Be clear about what the role you want the Community Engagement Coordinator to play in resolving the conflict or grievance.

An agreed course of action will be decided upon and may involve a staff member following up individuals and exploring the issues further. After this step, the staff member involved will then get back to you.

- STEP THREE:
- If you are unhappy about the outcome from the above mentioned interactions, you can appeal to the Director and ask to enter into a mediation process.

-At this stage a meeting will be scheduled with a mediator and the other party you have a complaint or grievance with

-You may wish to bring a friend, advocate or translator to help support you.

-An external and independent representative skilled in mediation will facilitate the meeting

STEP 4:

-If you are unhappy with the Director's suggestions or actions you may write about your grievance to the Committee of Management. Addressed to:-

The Chairperson

Committee of Management

58 Errol Street

North Melbourne VIC 3051

-This letter will go to the Committee of Management's next scheduled, meeting and you will receive a written response. Any decision that is reached at this meeting will be final.

If all else fails:

If the grievance process is not to your satisfaction and you can no longer continue to participate at The Centre, you will be assisted to find a suitable volunteer position elsewhere.