

SKILLS & VOLUNTEERING CYMRU (SVC)



Problem-Solving Procedure

Reviewed April 2025

	Problem-Solving Procedure
1.0	Introduction
1.1	<p>This procedure outlines how SVC will aim to solve any problems which may arise, and deal with any staff or volunteer concerns or complaints.</p> <p>Whilst working, or volunteering for SVC, it is hoped that all staff and volunteers will experience an environment where they feel comfortable and happy. However, from time to time, individuals may experience situations and circumstances which give rise to unhappiness or discomfort.</p> <p>We hope this procedure will ensure that you know how to deal with problems if they arise. It will help you find the most appropriate solution to the problem. But if you have any questions, or need any support, please contact SVC on info@SVCymru.org and we will provide you with support.</p> <p>SVC aims to resolve any issues that may arise during your employment or volunteering. We will ensure that any concerns raised are reviewed fully, efficiently and transparently.</p> <p>All complaints and concerns should be dealt with openly, fairly and quickly to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect you • minimise any disruption to our beneficiaries and project delivery • demonstrate that we truly respect our staff, volunteers and beneficiaries • protect the SVC community
2.0	Scope of Policy
2.1	<p>This policy applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All SVC volunteers; • All staff who support SVC; • The trustees of SVC; • SVC beneficiaries;
2.2	<p>It is hoped that all your questions relating to this policy have been clearly answered. However, if you have any questions which remain unanswered then please don't hesitate to contact the SVC manager – a.earls@svcymru.org</p>
3.0	Procedure – How to raise a concern or complaint?
3.1	Resolving things Informally
3.1	<p>At SVC, we hope that some situations might be possible to resolve informally. But it is your choice and right to choose whether you would prefer us to follow this process or the formal process.</p> <p>In some circumstances the discussion of the matter – perhaps with the help of an external person (mediation) – is sufficient to resolve an issue to the satisfaction of all.</p> <p>If you have a concern or a complaint regarding activities within SVC, the behaviour of someone you work with or, in fact, anything at all, you should raise the issue with your supervisor.</p> <p>We want to hear from you if something has happened on your volunteering that felt wrong, if someone has said something to upset you, if you have any</p>

	<p>concerns about your role or employment, or if you feel you have been discriminated against – anything that doesn't feel right – we want to know.</p> <p>If you don't feel comfortable contacting us directly then you can use the feedback section on our website to notify us anonymously too - Tell Us How We Are Doing! SVC</p> <p>Who to Contact?</p> <p>We are committed to providing an environment free from discrimination and mistreatment, where everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect. All complaints of bullying or harassment will be taken seriously and will be investigated fairly and independently.</p> <p>If an SVC staff member has an issue or concern regarding their <i>employment</i>, they can discuss this informally with the SVC manager. If the employee would prefer the matter is followed formally, please see the procedure detailed below in 3.2.</p> <p>If the problem concerns the SVC manager, the SVC staff member should initially discuss it with either the SVC Chairperson chair@svcmru.org , or the Human Resources (HR) Department at Innovate Trust (as the employers of SVC staff), call them on 02920 382151.</p> <p>If an SVC <i>volunteer</i> has an issue or concern regarding their <i>volunteering</i>, they should initially discuss it informally with either their Lead Volunteer, or their SVC Project Coordinator. However, if you feel uncomfortable raising your concern with either your Lead Volunteer or your Project Coordinator, then please contact the SVC manager (a.earls@svcmru.org) or the SVC Chairperson chair@svcmru.org</p> <p>Whoever you speak to will ensure that your complaint is being looked into, and that any steps needed to rectify the situation are taken. They will gather information to ensure they have a full account of the concern/ complaint.</p> <p>If your concern has a safeguarding element to it, your supervisor will refer this to the SVC manager.</p> <p>For more information on our safeguarding and EDI policies please visit our online policy area at – https://www.svcmru.org/pages/policies-and-procedures</p>
<p>3.2</p>	<p>Problem-Solving Procedure (Formal)</p>
<p>3.2</p>	<p>If you are not satisfied that the concern/ complaint has been effectively resolved after raising the matter informally, or if you think the matter is too serious to be managed informally, then you should raise your concerns formally.</p> <p>To do this, please contact one of the following: SVC manager – Adrienne Earls – a.earls@svcmru.org SVC Chair – Heidi Smith – chair@svcmru.org HR Department at Innovate Trust – call 02920 38215</p>

	<p>Please explain the issue, providing full details and request the matter is dealt with formally. If you prefer, then you are very welcome to ask another person to do this on your behalf.</p> <p>The concern/ complaint will be acknowledged within seven working days, and we will present a timescale for providing you with a response, normally within 21 working days from the date the complaint is received. This allows time to fully investigate the issue and provide you with updates.</p> <p>Following the investigation, you will receive a formal response to your concern/complaint, which will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of the investigation carried out; • key details about information that was found regarding your concern/ complaint. • information about any other actions to be taken as a result of your concerns/complaint: this might include a formal apology, help with accessing support from another source, additional training to be offered to those involved, dismissal of another person involved etc. <p>If, for any reason, more time is required to deal with the issue, you will be informed regarding the reasons for this, and we will give you a date by which we will respond.</p>
3.3	Review
3.3	<p>If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint or concerns raised, you may ask for a review. You should contact your lead investigator directly setting out the reasons that you are dissatisfied.</p> <p>They will either carry out the review of your case or appoint one or more Trustees (or HR staff members – for staff please also see Innovate Trust’s Grievance Procedures, Disciplinary Policy and Bullying & Harassment Policy) to carry out a review. Your request will be acknowledged for a review within seven working days and you will be informed of the name and contact details of the person(s) who will be handling the review, and the timescale for providing you with a response – this is normally within 21 working days from the date that the review request is received.</p> <p>The review will examine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the original complaint or issue raised. • the way it has been investigated. • the decision made and any agreed actions.
4.0	What is the process if someone complains about you as a volunteer?
4.1	<p>Resolving things Informally</p> <p>Your volunteer supervisor (SVC Manager, Project Co-ordinator or Lead Volunteer) will discuss the complaint with you. They will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • try to resolve the matter by talking things through/ organising mediation. • find out more from you about the issue and what might be causing any problems. • identify any goals and any changes needed to help you. • offer you extra support and training where necessary. • agree a deadline to review the situation with you.

	Your volunteer supervisor will maintain confidentiality regarding your personal experience and any private or sensitive information. Your volunteer supervisor will, however, keep the complainant informed of any measures taken to rectify a situation.
4.2	Problem-Solving Procedure (Formal)
4.2	<p>If the issue has not been resolved through informal discussions – or where the problem is too serious to deal with informally – they will refer the issue to the SVC manager who will deal with the issue formally.</p> <p>The SVC manager/ Chairperson or HR staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issue you with written details outlining the complaint. • give you the opportunity to state your case. You are welcome to be accompanied by a person of your choice, who is not directly linked to the issue. • make recommendations depending on the nature of the concerns and what they find out about the issue, set further objectives, offer further help and/or make changes to the role and how you are managed. <p>If you are dissatisfied with the decision or process, then you can ask for the decision to be reviewed.</p> <p>Staff issues will be dealt with following the Policies & Procedures of Innovate Trust, as the employers of SVC staff.</p>
5.0	Unacceptable Behaviour
5.1	<p>In the following circumstances an individual may be asked to leave SVC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts of violence towards another volunteer, a beneficiary, a staff member or a member of the public. • Convictions of a criminal offence that undermines a volunteer's suitability for work with SVC. • Deliberate falsification of expense claims. • Deliberate falsification of income received by SVC. • Disclosure of confidential information relating to SVC or SVC's beneficiaries. • Harassment. • Malicious damage to property belonging to SVC, another volunteer, a beneficiary, a staff member or a member of the public. • Provision of false personal information, or failure to disclose information relevant to his/her work as a volunteer. • Theft of property belonging to SVC, another volunteer, a beneficiary, a staff member or a member of the public. • Racism • Victimisation • Discrimination <p>Several people may be involved in this decision including the SVC manager, SVC Board of Trustees and Innovate Trust as the employers of SVC staff.</p>
6.0	Code of Conduct

<p>6.1</p>	<p>Please note that SVC requests all volunteers abide by the SVC Conduct Agreement Form. Each volunteer is required to sign this form, which details the expectations of SVC volunteers. Additionally, SVC has a responsibility to ensure all volunteers receive high standards of support and volunteer management, as outlined in our Service Conduct Agreement Form.</p> <p>If you feel that SVC is in breach of their commitment to you as a volunteer, then in the first instance please report this to the SVC manager and/or the SVC Board of Trustees.</p>
<p>6.2</p>	<p>Standard of conduct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be committed to your project by turning up to sessions, being punctual and ensuring to tell your Lead Volunteer(s)/ Project Co-ordinator/ external contact if you are unable to make a session. A lack of commitment can be harmful to both our beneficiaries and the project. • We encourage all volunteers to ensure their attendance is being recorded. The methods to record your attendance differ across projects but might include; making sure your logbook is signed each session, signing the project register, recording hours on Duty Sheet or the SVC Centre. If you are uncertain about the process on your project, please speak to your SVC Project Coordinator. Treat everyone with fairness and respect. • Dress appropriately for your volunteering environment, and also be aware of the language you use – remember that you are acting as a role model and as a representative for SVC. • Do not share any personal contact information (including social media details) with beneficiaries. • Do not arrange to meet beneficiaries outside of volunteering. • Attend all necessary training or meetings that are required for your project. • Respect the confidentiality of those you are supporting. On certain projects you may be privy to personal and confidential information about beneficiaries. You should not discuss details about participants with family, friends or others not involved in the project. If you have any concerns, or are worried about something, please talk to an SVC staff member. • Maintain a Duty of Care to the people you work with by disclosing to SVC staff any information a beneficiary tells you that suggests they are at risk of harm or abuse. Following Child Protection and POVA procedures at all times. • If you have any concerns, or issues, regarding your project, or simply don't think it is right for you, then please talk to your Lead Volunteer or SVC Project Co-ordinator.
<p>6.3</p>	<p>The standard of conduct and performance volunteers can expect from SVC means that volunteers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be fully advised about their volunteering role and what is (and what is not) expected of them. • Have adequate support in their volunteering. • Receive appreciation and recognition. • Be insured appropriately, to ensure they are safe in their volunteering roles. • Know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers will receive relevant out-of-pocket expenses on presenting their receipts to the SVC office, this includes travel and project costs. • Receive appropriate training. • Free from discrimination and mistreatment. • Be offered the opportunity for personal development. • Reasonable adjustments. • Receive updates on Board meetings, Charity developments and upcoming events.
7.0	Other Policies relating to this Procedure
	<p>Please also see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SVC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy - SVC's Protection & Safeguarding of Youth Volunteers Policy - SVC's POVA Policy - SVC's Data Protection Policy - SVC's Social Media Policy - Zero Tolerance to Racism - <p>SVC staff members should also see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovate Trust's Grievance Procedures - Innovate Trust's Disciplinary Policy - Innovate Trust's Bullying & Harassment Policy