

Volunteer Programme

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

APPLICATION

How do I apply to be a volunteer?

All you need to do is complete both the Application Form and the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. These can be found on our website here: www.nnfestival.org.uk/takepart/volunteer

Can I apply to be a volunteer by submitting a CV?

We are unable to accept CVs in replacement of our Application Form due to the specific nature of the details required within the application.

I cannot fill in the online forms. What should I do?

If you're experiencing a technical issue, try filling in the form using another device or seek assistance from a friend or family member. If you are struggling with the format, there are Easy Read versions available of the application forms. If you are unable to use these methods, please contact the Volunteers Coordinator via the email volunteers@nnfestival.org.uk. We can arrange to speak to you on the phone to complete your application, or we can send you a paper version of the form.

I missed the deadline for applications – can I still volunteer?

The deadline for applications is **midday on Monday 9th March**. Unfortunately, we cannot accept any applications submitted after this time. However, if you would like to be considered for volunteering next year, you can let us know your contact details and we will add you to our database. You will then be sent information in the New Year when volunteer recruitment for Norfolk & Norwich Festival 2027 is launched.

What happens after I submit my application?

Everyone who submits a completed Application Form and Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form will be invited to our 'Speed Meet' event. This is a chance for us to make sure we think you'll be a good fit for the Festival and for you to speak to members of the Festival team to ask any questions you may have about volunteering at NNF.

For those of you who are successful in your applications, there will also be a training session in April, which will provide you with the necessary information and training to carry out your role.

AVAILABILITY

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Applications Open	Wednesday 11th February
Applications Close	Monday 9th March
Meet & Greet at Guildhall	Wednesday 25th February
Speed Meets at Guildhall	Thursday 19th March or Friday 20th March
Norfolk & Norwich Festival	Friday 8th – Sunday 24th May

I have limited availability (due to work, uni, etc.) and would only be able to volunteer outside of my other commitments. Does this stop me from being able to volunteer?

No, it doesn't! The Festival aims to be as flexible as possible. We understand that all our volunteers have individual commitments that they need to work around.

How many hours/shifts does a volunteer have to contribute to the Festival?

The Festival aims to be as flexible as possible and understands that all our volunteers have other commitments. We want to hear from everyone, no matter how much or little they feel they can contribute in terms of time.

When do I provide you with my availability for the Festival?

When you are confirmed as a Festival volunteer, we will ask you to complete a form letting us know your availability throughout the Festival period (**Friday 8th – Sunday 24th May**) and potentially your availability before this. We'll then put together a rota of volunteering shifts for you based on the information that you provide.

Please note that there will be a deadline by which to return your availability to us; it's important for all volunteers to meet this deadline so that the Volunteers Coordinators can begin scheduling.

Does a greater availability mean I'll be given more shifts?

Not necessarily. We try to give our volunteers a relatively small number of hours to begin with, on the basis that extra shifts will always become available throughout the Festival. Then each volunteer can take on as many additional hours as they would like, particularly if they have chosen to be on the 'standby list' within their application. These will be the first people we approach should a new shift become available.

What if my availability changes after I have provided it?

We understand that your availability may change between providing us with it and the actual Festival. We do ask that you do your best to stick to your shifts once the rota has been sent out, but if your availability does change, we simply ask that you inform us as soon as possible.

TRANSPORT

Can I still volunteer at events outside the city if I don't have a car?

The Festival will aim to transport our volunteers to events outside the city if they cannot get there themselves. This could be via coaches, public transport

routes, car share, etc. However, though we will try, we cannot guarantee that this will always be possible.

We encourage you to let us know if you think getting to the Festival will be difficult.

Does the Festival reimburse travel expenses?

Volunteers Expenses Policy:

We want to aim to eliminate financial barriers for volunteers when attending shifts. If you incur volunteering related expenses, or you need to travel to a destination for your volunteer shift, you can be repaid for fares/mileage and reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

Out-of-pocket expenses we can reimburse:

- Bus tickets
- Taxi fare at late events
- Fuel consumption, 45p per mile (HMRC recommended rate)
- Car-parking

Any other expenses such as food, drink and clothes purchased during or in advance of shifts will not be covered. Volunteers will be provided with snacks and a Volunteer t-shirt.

Requirements for reimbursement requests:

- All requests must be authorised by a member of the volunteers team.
- Supported by VAT receipts or invoices.
- Supported by a Mileage and Expense form.
- Submitted within 30 days of the incurred expense. Expenses which are outstanding for three months or more will not be paid unless there are mitigating factors.

If I work a late shift and finish volunteering after 11.30pm, do I receive safe passage home?

In any role, the Festival is particularly mindful of volunteers completing shifts in remote locations and finishing beyond 11.30pm; in these instances, we will

endeavour to ensure the volunteer's safety (through buddying, etc.) upon completion of the shift.

FOOD / DRINK

Is food and drink provided whilst volunteers are on shift?

Yes – the Festival will provide fruit and snacks for you during your shifts. However, we are unable to provide full meals. There will be water stations in Chapelfield Gardens to refill your own water bottles.

Does the Festival reimburse food expenses?

We are unable to reimburse expenses for any food or drinks bought. We ask that our volunteers prepare for their shifts and ensure that they have eaten before arrival to fully enjoy the time.

EVENTS / TRAINING

What is the 'Speed Meet' event?

The Volunteer 'Speed Meet' is a chance for us to meet this year's volunteering applicants and forms part of our recruitment process. It also gives you the opportunity to meet members of the NNF team and ask questions about what kind of roles are available. There will be three options of sessions to attend: one in the morning, one in the afternoon and one in the evening.

When and where is the 'Speed Meet' event?

All three 'Speed Meet' sessions will take place at the Guildhall.

Speed Meet Session 1	Thursday 19th March 14:00-15:30
Speed Meet Session 2	Thursday 19th March 17:30-19:00
Speed Meet Session 3	Friday 20th March 10:00-11:30

I am unable to attend any ‘Speed Meet’ sessions. Does this mean that I can’t volunteer?

You may still volunteer if you are unable to attend the ‘Speed Meet’; however, this event is also used to evaluate applicants’ suitability for certain roles. If you cannot attend, you may not be eligible to be selected for certain roles.

Please let the Volunteer Team know as soon as possible if you are unable to attend the Speed Meet and we will endeavour to arrange a short telephone interview.

What training does the Festival provide for its volunteers?

All volunteers will be invited to a training session towards the end of April. There will be two options to suit everyone’s availability.

Training Session 1	Thursday 23rd April 18:00-20:00
Training Session 2	Saturday 25th April 11:00-13:00

We view this session as a chance for all volunteers, both new and returning, to feel fully prepared for the sort of experience they may have during their contribution to the Festival.

The sessions will ensure that volunteers understand the Festival and its aims, the volunteering experience (including a variety of possible scenarios, with examples offered by returning volunteers, and how they should be acted upon), as well as basic Health & Safety measures.

There is also a Final Briefing where you will receive your Volunteer T-shirt, ID lanyard, and any other final key information.

Final Briefing	Wednesday 6th May 18:00-19:30
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Will I be trained to look after audience members with disabilities?

Access Training and Safeguarding will make up part of the training sessions. The Festival will host events and performances at a variety of venues around Norfolk and Norwich, and we do our best to make them accessible to all. At the beginning of your shift, you will be briefed on any information regarding accessibility at the venue, but of course, if you are unsure just ask your Event Manager or the Volunteers Coordinator.

What if I am unavailable to attend training? Does this mean that I can't volunteer?

Ideally, all volunteers will be able to attend one of the training sessions provided. However, if you are unavailable, then this does not mean that you cannot volunteer; we will find another way of ensuring you have access to the necessary material and knowledge to prepare yourself. The sooner you let the Volunteer Coordinator know of your absence, the easier it will be to make these alternative arrangements.

ROLES

Where can I find out what volunteering roles and opportunities the Festival offers?

Please see the Person Specification and Role Descriptions document on the Volunteer page of the website for more information about what kind of roles will be available this year. At our Volunteer Speed Meet we will endeavour to answer any specific questions about roles.

Can I undertake more than one role?

On some occasions volunteers will be able to choose to undertake more than one role during their experience contributing to the Festival.

I have submitted my application, but now wish to be considered for an additional role – am I too late?

If you decide at a later stage that you would additionally like to be considered for more roles than you originally indicated, let the Volunteers Coordinator know as soon as possible and they can adapt your application to reflect this. Similarly, if you decide you no longer wish to be considered for a particular role, just let either the Volunteers Coordinator know – ideally as soon after the Speed Meet as possible.

If my application is successful, am I guaranteed the roles I selected?

Whilst the Festival will endeavour to ensure that all applicants are happy with their allocation of volunteering opportunities, we cannot guarantee that everyone will get to perform the roles they would prefer. Some of our volunteering roles have more limited spaces than others; all applicants' suitability for individual roles will be assessed during the 'Speed Meet' event.

Do volunteer drivers use their own vehicles?

No. The Festival hires cars and vans for the duration of the Festival. You may have to use your own car or alternative transport to go to the hire company to pick up the hire car or vehicle for the Festival.

What sort of driving is required?

Festival drivers may be required to meet artists arriving at one of the four major London airports (LHR, LGW, STN, LTN) or to return them the next day from their Norwich hotel to the airport for their return journey after their last performance. You may have a driving assistant to share the journey with. Also, you may have to drive to collect equipment from another location to bring to the festival. If you volunteer as a driver, you may also be asked to be a driving assistant for someone else. Any expenses for driving - e.g. filling the vehicle up with fuel on return or a reasonable stop for refreshments – will be reimbursed, or you may get a small cash float up front to do this.

RESPONSIBILITY / ASSISTANCE

How much responsibility will I be taking on whilst volunteering?

You will be invited to undertake full training and induction in preparation for volunteering, which will outline volunteer levels of responsibility; should any issue arise that you are not equipped, trained or comfortable in dealing with yourself, you should seek the assistance of the Event Manager or a member of the NNF team to resolve the situation.

For example, if a child is lost or someone wishes to make a complaint etc., these issues will not be down to you to resolve. Your training will cover how you should refer these types of situations to the appropriate person.

PERFORMANCES / EVENTS

Will I be able to watch the performances at the events that I am volunteering at?

Whether you will be able to watch the performances at the event you are working at will depend on the nature of the volunteer role you have been allocated. In some cases, you may miss the start and the end of a performance, but have the opportunity to watch the middle once it is under way. Other roles will require you to work behind the scenes; these roles offer the opportunity to see the Festival from a different and exciting perspective.

Can volunteers express preferences regarding which performances they wish to steward for?

Whilst there is no harm in indicating your preferences, we cannot make any promises regarding which shifts you will be allocated due to the complexity of scheduling so many volunteers. We hope that all of our volunteers will be enthused about volunteering for the Festival generally and will be open to new experiences and events that they may not otherwise have considered. You may be pleasantly surprised!

OTHER

Are volunteers expected to be knowledgeable about 'the arts'?

As a volunteer, you are a representative and advocate of the Festival and the public may ask you questions about it. We ask our volunteers to have a good knowledge of the Festival programme and the events at which they are working, for their own confidence in working with people, but also to share this information with audiences and the public. There will be plenty of chances to pick up a Festival brochure; reading this will provide you with all the information you need!

Are there any restrictions regarding who can volunteer?

The only restriction is that all applicants must be 18 years of age or older as of 1st April 2026 to volunteer with the Festival.

I'd like to talk to someone about volunteering. Who can I speak to?

The Volunteer Coordinator is available to contact for any further questions at volunteers@nnfestival.org.uk. We can answer you via email or arrange a time to speak on the phone.

If you have any other queries, you can contact the main Norfolk & Norwich Festival phoneline on **01603 877750**.