

Volunteer Policy

1. Introduction

The Rewilding Academy welcomes volunteers who wish to contribute to nature recovery, community engagement, and knowledge sharing. This Volunteer Policy outlines how we work with volunteers, what volunteers can expect from us, and what we ask in return. It aims to ensure a respectful, safe, and meaningful experience for all.

This policy applies to all volunteers engaged in activities under the Rewilding Academy name, whether in-person, online, or in partnership with external organisations.

2. Purpose of Volunteering

Volunteering at the Rewilding Academy may involve:

- Supporting field activities, restoration work, and monitoring
- Assisting with workshops, trainings, and events
- Contributing to communications, awareness, and outreach
- Supporting research, data entry, and knowledge development
- Assisting project teams, community partners or programme coordinators

Volunteers support the mission of the Academy but do not replace paid staff positions.

3. Status of Volunteers

- Volunteers provide their time by choice and are not employees.
- This policy and any agreements are not contracts and do not create employment rights or obligations.
- Volunteers are not entitled to wages or benefits.
- Reasonable expenses may be reimbursed if agreed in advance and supported by receipts.

4. Recruitment and Onboarding

The Rewilding Academy aims to be inclusive and fair in selecting volunteers.

- All volunteers will be asked to complete a basic application form.
- Certain roles may require references or background checks, depending on responsibility.
- Volunteers will receive an induction outlining their role, safety considerations, and relevant contacts.
- The Academy reserves the right to decline or discontinue a volunteer placement when necessary.

5. Roles, Expectations & Conduct

Volunteers are expected to:

- Represent the Academy respectfully and professionally
- Be reliable, communicate availability clearly, and notify if unable to attend
- Follow health and safety guidance and instructions
- Respect communities, local knowledge, cultural norms, and wildlife
- Maintain confidentiality when handling sensitive information
- Act in the spirit of cooperation, transparency, and shared learning

The Academy commits to:

- Providing clear guidance, instructions, and support
- Treating volunteers fairly, respectfully, and without discrimination
- Offering a safe working environment to the best of our ability
- Listening to concerns, feedback, and ideas for improvement

6. Representation & Authority

- Volunteers do not have the authority to represent the Rewilding Academy in media, official meetings, public statements, negotiations, or agreements unless formally authorised in writing by the Academy.

- Volunteers may not sign documents, enter commitments, or speak on behalf of the organisation.
- Any use of the Academy's name, logo, or branding must be approved in advance by an authorised staff member.

7. Safeguarding, Health & Safety

- Volunteers must follow all safety instructions provided by staff or site managers.
- Appropriate clothing, footwear, and equipment should be used for fieldwork.
- Incidents, injuries, risks, or near-misses must be reported immediately.
- If working with children or vulnerable people, safeguarding guidelines apply.

8. Data Protection & Confidentiality

- Volunteers may have access to internal information and should handle it responsibly.
- Personal data will be stored only as required for administration and communication.
- Information must not be shared publicly without permission.

9. Expenses

Volunteers may request reimbursement for pre-approved, reasonable expenses such as:

- Local travel and transport
- Materials purchased for project activities
- Communication or printing costs

Receipts are required for reimbursement.

10. Insurance

The Rewilding Academy provides insurance only for authorised volunteer tasks that specifically require coverage. Insurance is not automatic and applies solely to activities that fall within the agreed scope of work and have been formally approved. Any activities undertaken independently, outside assigned duties, or without prior approval are not covered.

11. Ending a Volunteer Placement

Either the volunteer or the Academy may end the placement at any time. We request, where possible, that volunteers give reasonable notice to allow continuity.

12. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 12–24 months or when necessary to reflect organisational changes, partner requirements, or legal obligations.

Acknowledgement

By participating as a volunteer, the individual confirms that they have read and understood this Volunteer Policy and agree to engage in good faith with the values and expectations outlined above.

REVISION HISTORY

All approved amendments to this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) are documented in the table below to ensure transparency and version control:

Revision ref.	Description of revision	Effective Date of Revision

Effective Date: 14 May 2025

Next Review: 13 May 2027