

SHEFFIELD READS

Volunteers Handbook



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Welcome

Dear Sheffield Reads Volunteer,

Welcome to Sheffield Reads! We are delighted to have you as part of our organisation dedicated to promoting literacy. Your decision to volunteer with us demonstrates your commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of others, and we sincerely appreciate your support.

At Sheffield Reads, our mission is to provide free books to individuals of all ages and backgrounds, nurturing a love for reading and enhancing literacy skills within our community. We firmly believe that by working together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of countless individuals.

As a volunteer, you play a vital role in helping us achieve our goals. Whether you assist in book distribution, engage in community outreach programs, or contribute your unique skills and ideas, your efforts will directly contribute to improving literacy levels and enriching the lives of Sheffield residents. By sharing your passion for books and promoting the joy of reading, you will inspire others to embark on their own literary journeys. The hours you do are completely dependent on yourself, and can be as little as you wish. Even an hour will make a difference. We also provide you with skills and experience that you can use in your own life, as well as the satisfaction from taking part.

We value your dedication and the time you commit to Sheffield Reads. To ensure that your volunteering experience is rewarding and enjoyable, we will provide comprehensive training and ongoing support. Our team is always available to answer your questions, address concerns, and provide guidance along the way. Together, we will create a warm and inclusive environment that celebrates the power of literacy.

Thank you once again for choosing to be part of Sheffield Reads. By giving the gift of reading, you are helping to transform lives, one book at a time. We look forward to working with you and witnessing the positive impact we can make together.

Warmest regards,

The Sheffield Reads Team





About the Organisation

At Sheffield Reads, our mission is to foster a culture of literacy and ignite a lifelong love for reading in the Sheffield community. We are dedicated to providing free books to individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and circumstances, ensuring that access to literature is a right, not a privilege. By distributing books and promoting literacy initiatives, we aim to empower individuals, enrich lives, and create a more inclusive and equitable society.

Our goal is to encourage literacy by making books readily available to everyone. We believe that reading opens doors to knowledge, imagination, and personal growth. Through our efforts, we aspire to inspire individuals to explore new worlds, broaden their horizons, and develop essential literacy skills that will positively impact their education, careers, and overall well-being.

We are driven by the belief that literacy is the foundation of a thriving community. By collaborating with local schools, libraries, community centers, and organizations, we seek to create a network of support that nurtures a lifelong passion for reading. Our dedicated volunteers play a pivotal role in our mission, as they bring enthusiasm, compassion, and a commitment to empowering others through the gift of books.

We are based out of Abbeyfield House and a Building on Brown street. While only a young organisation, we have had an impact on thousands of lives by distributing books at many local events, such as the Sharrow and Abbeyfield festival, and activities in the town hall itself.

Our future with your help, is to cater to special creative events we will set up ourselves, and more workshops around literacy working with our books. We wish too further expand our give aways at more local festivals.

Programs and Initiative

Book Distribution.

A programme of self initiated events and set ups at pre-arranged festivals. The prime objective is the distribution of books free, with accompanying assistance from the team who act as literary guides.

Volunteer Roles Available

Storyteller/facilitator (improved access to literacy)

Using books and reading to connect communities, to promote learning and improve well-being by delivering events and activities in the community. This can include reading aloud to groups.

Outreach Volunteer

To connect with community organisations to help us distribute free quality books where they can make a difference to literacy, educational attainment and quality of life. This can include tasks such as setting up the vents, and being at the give aways, helping match people and books.

Book Grader Role

To process and grade used books to determine whether they will be re-used (sold on-line, at markets or to wholesalers), re-distributed for free in communities where they can make a difference to literacy, educational attainment or quality of life or whether they are only suitable for sending for re-cycling..





Volunteer Policies and Code of Conduct

As a volunteer at Sheffield Reads, we greatly appreciate your dedication to our mission of promoting literacy and distributing free books. To ensure a positive and inclusive volunteering experience for all, we have established the following policies and code of conduct. Please familiarise yourself with these guidelines and adhere to them throughout your time as a volunteer:

Commitment and Reliability:

Please arrive on time and adequately prepared for your scheduled volunteer shifts. If you are unable to fulfil your volunteer duties, kindly notify us in advance.

Respect and Inclusivity:

Treat all individuals with respect, irrespective of their age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or background. Foster an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, heard, and included. Avoid engaging in any form of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

Confidentiality:

Maintain strict confidentiality regarding any personal or sensitive information you may come across during your volunteer work. Do not share any confidential information about individuals, including their reading preferences, personal circumstances, or any other details, without their explicit consent.

Professionalism:

Represent Sheffield Reads in a professional manner, both in your conduct and appearance, when interacting with the community and other volunteers. Refrain from engaging in any activities that may bring discredit to Sheffield Reads or undermine its mission.

Safety and Security:

Prioritise your safety and the safety of others while carrying out your volunteer duties. Follow safety guidelines and procedures provided by Sheffield Reads. Report any safety concerns or incidents to the appropriate person immediately.

Communication:

Maintain open and respectful communication with fellow volunteers, staff members, and the community we serve. Seek clarification or assistance when needed and provide constructive feedback to improve our volunteer program.

Personal Boundaries:

Respect personal boundaries and maintain appropriate relationships with individuals you interact with during your volunteer work. Refrain from engaging in any form of physical contact that may make others uncomfortable.

Use of Resources:

Utilize Sheffield Reads' resources, including books and materials, solely for the purposes of promoting literacy and supporting our mission. Obtain proper authorization before using or distributing any materials or resources belonging to Sheffield Reads. By following these policies and adhering to the code of conduct, we can create a welcoming and empowering environment that positively impacts the community we serve. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to Sheffield Reads.

Please sign below to indicate that you have read and understood the Volunteer Policies and Code of Conduct.

Training Materials

Public Engagement Exercises Top Ten:

1. Story Circles: Host story circles in parks or outdoor spaces, where individuals can take turns sharing their favorite stories or personal experiences. This activity fosters a sense of community and encourages storytelling as a means of expression.
2. Book Reading Events: such as markets or cafes. Volunteers read aloud from popular books and engage with passersby, promoting the joy of reading and distributing booklists or reading recommendations.
3. Themed Story Workshops: which revolve around a particular book or genre. Provide participants with copies of the book, and lead discussions and creative activities related to the theme.
4. Storytelling Games: like “Story Starters,” where participants take turns adding sentences to create a collective story. This exercise encourages creativity and collaboration.
5. Collaborative Book Drives: Partner with local businesses or community organizations to set up book donation drives. Encourage people to donate gently used books, and share information about Sheffield Reads and its mission.
6. School Visits: Visit schools in underserved areas and engage with teachers and students. Share information about Sheffield Reads’ free book distribution programs and organize book giveaways or reading activities.
7. Literacy Workshops: workshops on literacy and reading skills for parents, caregivers, or community members. Provide resources and strategies to promote reading at home and in the community.
8. Pop-Up Book Stalls: Set up in public spaces, events, or fairs. Engage with passersby, share information about Sheffield Reads, and distribute free books to those interested.
9. Bookmobile Outreach: Distribute books and engage with residents to encourage reading habits.
10. Interactive Storytelling: Choose captivating stories suitable for different age groups and encourage audience participation through questions, discussions, and creative activities related to the story.





Get Involved

Contact us – admin@sheffieldreads.org

Check out the website and come along to an event. <https://sheffieldreads.org/>

