

Across the Nations Policy and Procedures for Safe Recruitment, Induction, Supervision, and Appraisal

Version 1.0

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Section 1: Recruitment, Welfare, and Safeguarding Levels Policies

Purpose:

Across the Nations (AtN) is a Charitable Organisation that is committed to providing services to remote vulnerable populations overseas including children and families as part of its activities through our network of partners.

This document's purpose is to set out the charity's:

- Policy on recruitment
- Recruitment procedure
- Policy regarding the welfare of our staff and volunteers
- Policy for the level of safeguarding and child protection training

Scope of this document

This document applies to anyone working on behalf of Across the Nations, or its partners, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, and volunteers.

Policy Statement

AtN is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff, volunteers, or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability, or offending background.

Recruitment

In line with safer recruitment practices we will:

- Give clear person specifications and role descriptions for all posts
- Statement on diversity and equality in recruiting regardless of gender, age, beliefs etc.
- Advertise all posts with a clear safeguarding and child protection statement
- Provide an information pack for people interested in the post
- Use a standard application form
- Ask applicants to complete a separate self-disclosure form
- Have a process for shortlisting candidates for selection, involving more than one person
- Have a face to face meeting with a panel of more than one person (this may be online)
- Ask for proof of identity and references before appointment

Welfare of our staff and volunteers

AtN considers the welfare of its staff, and those of our partner projects, as paramount. Recognising that many activities and projects are run in so called 'Hostile Environments' we commit to promoting the well-being of our staff and volunteers. We also recognise that many of these places call for a certain degree of resilience, life experience and fortitude to be able to work well in these environments. Our selection processes will take this account. The role of our senior staff is crucial in maintaining a healthy and positive working environment, and we will do our best to make sure that we appoint suitable people to these roles, and that they are well equipped to be part of the support network for our staff and volunteers.

We commit to inducting and orientating our staff well, with an ongoing process to ascertain the morale and integration into the wider team. At the same time, as part of this process we commit to annual appraisals to measure the effectiveness and welfare of our staff and volunteers. Appropriate adjustments can be addressed as a result of these appraisals. However, if serious concerns are raised during this appraisal, a decision will be taken with the appropriate HR managers, line manager and country directors to ascertain the ongoing suitability of a staff member or volunteer. AtN believes in ongoing training and Continual Professional Development, and part of the annual appraisal will address this issue. De-briefing will be done for our staff and volunteers at the end of an assignment, or at the end of an employment period. If at all possible, this will be done face to face in their country of origin, but if not possible will be done online.

In line with our bullying and anti-harassment policies (See – ***'06 Across the Nations Anti Bullying Policies'***), AtN believes that our staff and volunteers have the right to operate in an open, accepting environment that does not discriminate against them in any way.

Levels of safeguarding and child protection training

All AtN, and partner projects, staff and volunteers that have direct interaction with children or adults at risk must complete the NSPCC 3-hour Online Introduction to Child Protection Course. All AtN trustees must likewise complete this training.

If it is impossible to complete this training for any reason, like a language barrier or lack of Internet connection, a suitable replacement course must be agreed on with the AtN DSO and delivered locally.

Likewise, DBS checks must be carried out for all AtN trustees and staff from the UK. Project Partner's staff - if not from the UK are expected to complete the local equivalent of a DBS check, which is often run through the national courts / justice system.

The AtN DSO must complete the NSPCC 3-hour online Trustee safeguarding course.

Section 2: Policy of Recruiting Ex-Offenders

Purpose

Across the Nations (AtN) is a Charitable Organisation that is committed to providing services to remote vulnerable populations overseas including children and families as part of its activities through our network of partners.

This document's purpose is to set out the charity's:

- Policy on employing ex-offenders
- Checking process

Scope of this document

This document applies to anyone working on behalf of Across the Nations, or its partners, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, and volunteers.

Policy statement

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills, and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We will select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, and experience.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 enables some criminal convictions to become 'spent', or ignored, after a 'rehabilitation period'.

A rehabilitation period is a set length of time from the date of conviction. After this period, with certain exceptions, an ex-offender is not normally obliged to mention their conviction when applying for a job or obtaining insurance, or when involved in criminal or civil proceedings.

A large number of positions within AtN qualify for DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service), Access NI or Disclosure Scotland checks which provide access to sensitive criminal record information about candidates. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosure service, Access NI and Disclosure Scotland service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, AtN must comply fully with the relevant legislation and DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We must undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual from working with AtN. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (England and Wales), Rehabilitation of Offenders Order 1978 (Northern Ireland) and Offenders Act Exceptions Order (Scotland 1974 - Amendment 2003) were introduced to ensure that ex-offenders who had not re-offended for a period of time since their conviction are not discriminated against when applying for jobs. Unless a position is exempted from the Acts, employers are not allowed to discriminate on the grounds of spent convictions.

A DBS, Access NI and Disclosure Scotland is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application packs, job adverts and recruitment briefs must contain

a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

If the post does not involve working with children or vulnerable adults, AtN will only require applicants to disclose 'unspent' criminal convictions as part of their application. The Society will advise applicants at the time when they first submit their application, the extent and depth of the vetting they will be subjected to before the role can be offered to them. This will enable any person who objects to the vetting process, for whatever reason, to withdraw their application early on in the recruitment process. Successful applicants will be required to consent to subsequent criminal record checks during employment as deemed appropriate by the charity or regulatory bodies.

Our checking processes

All staff or volunteers will undergo some form of pre-employment security check. The level of check will vary dependent upon the role and the access to children or young people.

Posts that do not involve direct access to children or young people are covered by the Rehabilitation of Ex-Offenders Act

In order to protect vulnerable groups such as children and young people, when staff are recruited into positions involving regular work with these groups, they are exempt from the ROA for those positions only and so AtN is entitled to ask the individual to disclose both spent and unspent convictions.

Section 3: Across the Nations Induction, Training, Supervision, Appraisal and Support Policy Statement

Purpose

Across the Nations (AtN) is a Charitable Organisation that is committed to providing services to remote vulnerable populations overseas including children and families as part of its activities through our network of partners.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Set out how the charity aims to train, supervise, and appraise the staff and volunteers working for Across the Nation's Charity and its partners
- Provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to training, supervision, appraisal, and support.

Scope of this document

This document applies to anyone working on behalf of Across the Nations, or its partners, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, and volunteers.

Guidelines

AtN and its partners are responsible for making sure that its staff are trained appropriately for their roles, are kept up to date with ongoing training including CPD. All AtN and partners staff are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy and follow its guidelines.

Policy statement

Across the Nations (AtN) is committed to developing and maintaining high standards of practice in relation to safeguarding children and adults and to supporting the staff and volunteers who work for AtN and its partners so that they are confident in their own practice and able continually to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.

AtN recognises that the provision of good quality induction, supervision, support, training, and appraisal contributes to the provision of high standards in service provision, role satisfaction and potentially the retention of individuals contributing to the safeguarding work of AtN.

Induction

Induction is a process which orientates a person to their job or role and provides them with essential information and support in the early stages to enable them to do it well. It is a planned process within set timescales and is led by the line manager or other designated support person. Induction is a vital part of the process by which people become familiar with their role and responsibilities, the context within which they perform their role, and what the expectations of them are in that role in relation to their conduct, practice and performance.

As far as possible, induction programmes will be tailored to the demands of the role and the needs of the appointee.

It is the responsibility of the line manager or their delegate to ensure that the appointee receives an induction that meets their needs. It is also the responsibility of the appointee to ensure that they are provided with an induction programme. The standards in the [‘Appendix A: Induction Form’](#) sets out the basic level of induction that new role holders should receive and suggested timescales for completion.

Training

It is recognised that there are many ways of gaining knowledge which are effective and valid; these include attendance at conferences, supervision sessions, meetings, consultation with colleagues, reading of books, journals etc., but for the purposes of this document, ‘training’ is used to refer to formal, organised sessions which are attended by the role holder and which have learning outcomes defined at the outset.

Training needs are to be matched by training opportunities so far as resources allow and all AtN staff will have access to training and development opportunities commensurate with their role and responsibilities.

Training courses will be provided “in house” at times by employees or role holders within AtN and its partners. At other times it will be appropriate for external training to be accessed.

Each AtN employee and volunteer, and those in partnership projects, will have the chance to discuss training opportunities in their annual appraisal. Please refer to the document: [‘Appendix B: Across the Nations Annual Appraisal Form’](#).

Supervision

Supervision is an essential means of providing professional support and guidance for safeguarding representatives and professionals that operate in fields that require professional supervision (E.g. counsellors, therapists, and psychologists). It is the process which ensures that the work of the AtN is compliant with national policies and procedures of recognised good practice standards.

Supervision includes discussion of roles and responsibilities, strategies for individual case management, strategies for prevention and management of risk in the community, appropriate use of resources, safe recruitment of volunteers, delivery of training programmes, ways of working with those accused or convicted of abuse and dealing with the emotional impact of the work.

Supervision ensures that responsibility for decisions about safeguarding matters is shared between the supervisee, their supervisor, and any commission approved by the supervisor.

Supervision supports the learning and development needs of the individual by identifying gaps in knowledge and practice and recommending ways in which to address such gaps. It can also highlight that learning is taking place and practice is improving and should be experienced by the supervisee as a supportive process.

Appraisal

The standards apply to role holders whether they are employees or volunteers.

Appraisal is a process that provides an opportunity for acknowledging achievements and success in a formal and focused way, as well as looking at areas of performance that require improvement or further development.

It is a shared process which culminates in a meeting between the role holder and their supervisor/manager, usually on an annual basis.

An annual appraisal of performance must be provided by a person appointed by AtN or its partners.

A formal appraisal must take place at least once a year and must be documented using: ['Appendix B: Across the Nations Annual Appraisal Form'](#).

Any areas of concern arising from the annual performance appraisal shall be reported to the Country Director and Chairman of the Board of Trustees, or Designated Safeguarding Officer if it is a safeguarding issue.

Support

“Support” means the provision of information, advice and guidance, and access to a named person responsible for this. It also means providing a listening ear when necessary.

In respect of AtN staff and volunteers, including those in partnered projects, support is to be given by their direct line managers. If this is not possible because it is not within the line managers technical capacity an agreed route of support must be agreed upon.

Support is not necessarily a one to one arrangement. It is a less intensive arrangement than supervision and can be provided in groups, during meetings or training events, by telephone or email contact, through newsletters or technical publications.

AtN staff and volunteers should not be left without contact or support for indeterminate periods of time. Lack of contact with and support from the local safeguarding structure can expose individuals to feelings of stress and avoidable risks.

Section 4: Across the Nations Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy¹

Purpose

Across the Nations (AtN) is a Charitable Organisation that is committed to providing services to remote vulnerable populations overseas including children and families as part of its activities through our network of partners.

The policy's purpose is to:

- To set out how the charities policy on equality, diversity, and inclusion
- Provide equality, fairness, and respect for all in our trustees, staff, and volunteers
- Make sure we do not unlawfully discriminate against, as defined by the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms, and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities.

The scope of this policy statement

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Across the Nations, or its partners, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, children, and young people.

Policy Statement

Across the Nations (AtN) recognises that certain people are discriminated against, is wholly opposed to this, and will take all necessary steps to eliminate discriminatory practices.

We intend to treat everyone equally, including issues of (But not limited to): gender, marital status, age, race, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, health, responsibility for dependants, political activity, physical, mental ill health and learning difficulties.

The aim is that our staff and volunteers are truly representative of all sections of society, and that each staff member feels respected and able to give their best.

AtN - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

This statement will be included in our publicity material and job advertisements and displayed on our website so that it is available to members of the public.

This policy applies to everyone in the AtN and those involved in partnered projects. Everyone has a responsibility to implement and abide by this policy by behaving in an anti-discriminatory way, and reporting cases of discrimination to their line managers.

¹ This policy is based on a template made available by acas at: <https://www.acas.org.uk/equality-policy-template> It also features elements of from advice from <https://www.makingmusic.org.uk/resource/how-create-equal-opportunities-policy>

The organisation commits to

- Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
- Promote a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued
 - This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity, and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination
 - All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities (*Please refer to AtN Anti Bullying policy Statement*)
 - Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice
 - Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence
- Make opportunities for training, development, and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation
- Decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act)
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law
- Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy
 - Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues

Objectives

To encourage a broader representation of different groups in the projects run by AtN and its partners

To have a broader representation from different groups on the board

AtN operates, often through its partners, in different parts of the world where discrimination may look different to the UK. We intend to identify where discrimination could exist and operate in a way that will attempt to bring balance in these places.

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by the Board of Trustees and Senior Management.

Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Nominated responsibility for Induction, Training, Supervision, Appraisal, Support and Equal Opportunities:

Name:

Phone/email:

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice **annually**.

This policy was last reviewed on:(date)

Name:

Phone/email:

Signed:

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Date:

Appendix A: Across the Nations Induction Form²

Name of employee or volunteer: ³		Job title:	
Start date:		Date induction completed: (with signature of new starter)	

First day	Carried out by	Date	Notes
Welcomed by			
Show new employee where they will be working			
Introduce them to their line manager, colleagues, and senior managers			
Show new employee rest of organisation including facilities			
Outline health & safety and carry out relevant Security, Health & Safety Training			
First week	Carried out by	Date	Notes
Introduction to the company:			
Who's who, how it works and what it produces			
Future plans and Developments			
Brief history			
New employee's job:			
Explain it fully, how it fits in the organisation and work practices			
Outline expected performance and how it will be assessed			
Know where to turn for support and guidance in your job/role. - Supervision and support policy -			

² This form is largely based on the acas template found at: <https://www.acas.org.uk/checklist-for-induction-of-new-staff> AtN would like to thank acas for making this template available to the public.

³ This form should be used for employees or volunteers that are likely to be on field for at least 3 months. A quick overview of the relevant sections is acceptable for people on short term placements or visits.

Arrange dates and times for supervision or support sessions			
Possible opportunities for future development			
<i>New employee's terms and conditions of employment Run through...</i>			
them to ensure they understand and have them in writing			
This includes details of any probationary period			
... and hours, breaks, holidays and when they will get paid			
The organisation's important rules on: job performance discipline, absence, including because of illness and sick pay complaints against staff, such as bullying and harassment. Also say where more details can be found			
Other important rules such as use of the company internet, email, and phones			
Periods of notice			
Maternity/paternity/ parental leave/shared parental provisions			
Details such as dress code, parking, smoking, food, and drink			
Complete documentation on new employee's appointment for their personal file to be kept securely			
First month	Carried out by	Date	Notes
Towards the beginning of their time, and definitely before any interaction with children - complete NSPCC Online Safeguarding Training			
The organisation's commitment to being an equal opportunities employer			
Details of any employee representation, including any trade union membership			

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Towards the end of four weeks, an informal meeting with the line manager to assess how the new starter is adjusting to their role, and whether they have any particular coaching or training needs, or other concerns			
At three months	Carried out by	Date	Notes
<p>Review with the line manager how the new starter is settling in and performing</p> <p>This is also an opportunity to pinpoint any development needs, set timescales for achieving them and adjust work targets if required</p>			
At six months	Carried out by	Date	Notes
<p>If the new employee is on probation, then it is decision time – will they stay or go?</p> <p>Decision: <input type="checkbox"/> Stay <input type="checkbox"/> Go </p>			
<p>If they are staying, it is time for the line manager to look to the next six months, any new work objectives, and any experience, coaching or training needs</p>			
At 12 months	Carried out by	Date	Notes
<p>Ask the employee for feedback on their induction – what worked well?</p> <p>What could be improved?</p>			

Comments from employee:

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Appendix B: Across the Nations Annual Appraisal Form

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Guidance:

Please use this form to fill in the annual appraisal with an Across the Nations employee, volunteer, or staff member in a partner project. This annual audit should be carried out by the employee's or volunteer's direct line manager.

Please fill in this form in Word, print it, sign and date it. This should be then stored in the HR managers confidential filing system. A copy is to then be given to the employee or volunteer.

Appraisal

Job Knowledge

Does the employee have the knowledge/skill to carry out the job properly?

Select

Comments:

Safety Awareness

Does the employee have a good attitude towards safe working practice?

Select

Comments:

Dependability/Communication

Does the employee respond effectively to assigned responsibility?

Select

Comments:

Does the employee Meet attendance requirement?

Select

Comments:

Does the employee listen to directions from management?

Select

Comments:

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Training Needs

Courses recommended/required/wanted:

General Comments:

Employee

Manager

Signatures:

Employee or Volunteer's Name:

Signature:

Manager's Name:

Signature:

Date:

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