

## **Staff Volunteering during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic 2020**

### **Introduction**

The College is inspired by large numbers of people across our community who are volunteering to help with time, expertise, ideas and projects. Many have risen to the College's call to help the NHS and PHE.

Wherever it is possible, we want to be able to support those who would like to volunteer. This guidance applies to the specific circumstances relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and we will continue to update this guidance as the situation evolves.

We recognise that for some staff, particularly those for whom carrying out their own work from home is not possible and it is difficult to find suitable alternative work, volunteering may be beneficial for them personally as well as for the wider community. In particular, the College encourages any individuals who have been furloughed to explore the possibility of volunteering.

Where possible, the College is also willing to support staff members wishing to volunteer where they have the capacity to do so alongside their current role, or where altered operational requirements permit within normal working time.

### **How to apply:**

#### **1. External volunteering outside usual working hours**

Individuals who wish to volunteer outside of their usual working hours may do so.

#### **2. Imperial-managed volunteering opportunities within usual working hours**

Imperial-managed volunteering currently includes internal activities (e.g. visitor making) as well as external activities for partner NHS Trusts and some external organisations.

Requests received by Imperial members for College volunteers are being coordinated on behalf of the College via the Faculty of Medicine. Opportunities reviewed and approved for coordination through this process are being made available via the [COVID-19 volunteering SharePoint page](#) and applications should be made via the form available on that page.

Once an individual has registered their desire to volunteer, they will be alerted via SharePoint as and when opportunities arise. Staff should not feel under any obligation to volunteer and are free to decline any volunteering opportunity they are offered by the College if they wish.

Any member of staff wishing to accept an offer of volunteering during their normal working hours will need to speak to their manager in the first instance and discuss what they would like to do and how it may impact their work.

### **3. External volunteering opportunities within usual working hours**

This applies to individuals who wish to undertake voluntary work within their normal working hours that is not covered by the College's internal scheme.

Any member of staff wishing to volunteer during their normal working hours will need to speak to their manager in the first instance and discuss what they would like to do and how it may impact their work.

#### **Consideration of the request**

Where possible, managers will be supportive of requests for volunteering and deal with this as quickly as they can. However, they will also need to consider the likely impact of the absence on the staff member's role and whether this is likely to have an adverse impact on essential work and the wider team and may therefore discuss this with their Strategic HR Partner. As such, all requests to volunteer may not be possible.

Managers should ensure that agreement from the relevant Head of Department or his/her nominee has been given before final agreement is given.

For activities advertised through the [COVID-19 volunteering SharePoint page](#), each staff volunteering application will be routed to an agreed approver on behalf of the relevant Faculty/Department or central service before the application is approved.

#### **Recording Volunteering**

Any time taken to volunteer should be recorded on TeamSeer under category 'COVID-19 – Volunteering'.

#### **Memorandum of Agreement (MoU)**

For volunteering opportunities within the NHS that have been assigned through the Imperial-managed scheme, the College has signed Memorandum of Agreements (MoU) with the partner NHS Trusts which set out the obligations and responsibilities of each party, including additional requirements such as time recording.

Under this agreement, be it in on a part-time or full-time basis, individuals will remain employed by the College on their current terms and conditions of service.

#### **Clinically qualified staff volunteering for the NHS**

In some instances, where clinically qualified staff volunteer for front line NHS services, there may be occurrences where they are entitled to additional remuneration, for example where they are working extended hours on clinical rotas. In such instances, it is intended that the clinical member of staff would be paid an on-call payment at the same level as NHS colleagues doing similar roles and working the same rota.

#### **Staff who want to volunteer and are funded by external research grants**

For individuals who are employed by the College and are funded by external research grants, managers will need to check whether volunteering or time off for volunteering is permitted under the terms of their funding agreement with their normal Research Services representatives.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

If a DBS is required for the purpose of the volunteering work, then this should be arranged by the organisation hosting the volunteer.

### **Visas and Volunteering**

Individuals with a time-limited Right to Work in the UK must check that their visa conditions permit them to undertake voluntary work/volunteer. Staff should refer to [the guidance for Tier 2 & 5 sponsored workers](#) and contact the Compliance and Immigration Team should they require any further advice.

### **Additional Information and Support**

[College COVID-19 updates](#)  
[Leading and managing during COVID-19](#)  
[Policy changes in response to COVID-19](#)  
[Register of External Interests](#)