



Volunteer's and Leaders Policy

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Introduction:

Volunteers are an integral part of InterConnection Australia (ICA) and the duties they undertake are invaluable to the provision of our programs. The morale, commitment and dedication of an InterConnection Australia Leader are essential for our organisation to grow and develop and consistently meet our objectives with the standards possible.

A key priority to ICA is the occupational health and safety of our volunteers and to ensure that their behaviour and the manner in which they interact with clients are safe and responsible. This policy outlines the rules and regulations which have been developed by InterConnection Australia in relation to the recruitment, selection and use of volunteers as part of our programs.

The selection of a volunteer to become part of InterConnection Australia as a leader is not only based their willingness to donate their time, talents and enthusiasm but also on their proven ability to stand out as an exemplary role model amongst their peers.

ICA expects that a leader will not only immerse themselves into the camp program or activity and enjoy the benefits of a working holiday but also stay completely focused on the needs and welfare of the students and the goal to provide them with a unique holiday experience.

Scope:

This policy is effective as of the 1st of July 2003 and applies to all Executive Board Members, Volunteers and Contractors who are engaged by InterConnection Australia to provide services according to a pre-subscribed and defined role description.

The InterConnection Australia Executive Board will enforce this policy in its entirety until further notices or updates.

Section 1.0 – Recruitment of Leaders

1.1 As part of the provision of a camp program InterConnection Australia will commence a Leader Recruitment Program (LRP) by a specified date. The process outlined below will be managed by the Human Resources Manager. The LRP will be designed to recruit a pre-determined number of highly motivated, energetic and talented individuals above the age of 18 years old who are highly responsible and will proactively assist InterConnection Australia to consistently deliver a high level of service to our clients and their parents/guardians.

1.2 Positions Available - The positions which are to be filled at the discretion of the Human Resources Manager from the LRP may include but are not limited to:

- 1.2.1** General Leaders
- 1.2.2** Activity Coordinators
- 1.2.3** Assistant Activity Coordinators
- 1.2.4** Catering Staff
- 1.2.5** Pastoral Staff

1.3 Each applicant will be required to complete and sign the InterConnection Australia Leader Application Form and return it to the organisation by a nominated date. The information contained in the application form will be used in accordance with the ICA Privacy Policy (which is available at www.interconnection.com.au) and will be entered into a database for further correspondence and the provision of information.

1.4 Once the application is received by InterConnection Australia each potential volunteer will undergo a comprehensive screening process to ensure:

- 1.4.1** The applicant meets the needs of the organisation and the respective Project
- 1.4.2** To determine whether the applicant is competent and has the relevant skill set necessary to undertake and successfully complete the relevant job description to a high standard
- 1.4.3** To minimise the exposure of InterConnection Australia and its clients to any adverse or negative impact this may be caused by an incompetent or unsuitable volunteer
- 1.4.4** All volunteers are protected and feel confident that their colleagues are, like them suitable to the organisation, its ethos and values and the respective project and are competent to complete the task.

1.5 The Screening Process - This will include the following the stages:

- 1.5.1** The Human Resources (HR) Manager will publish a role description which will detail what the position involves, the duration and location of the program, any associated costs and training required to be eligible to apply.
- 1.5.2** The application process will be invitee only given that applicants will have had previous opportunity to express their interest in becoming potential leaders. Applicants can be nominated by members of the Executive Board where they are of a strong character and would be considered an asset to an ICA program.
- 1.5.3** The HR Manager will distribute an information letter and application form to all potential volunteers who have previously expressed an interest in becoming an ICA volunteer. The form is then completed and the accompanying declaration is signed prior to being returned to the HR Manager for processing.
- 1.5.4** At the discretion of the HR Manager or the Executive Director the applicant may be required to provide the details of two references (either from an employer or a personal referee) in order for the application to proceed. Failure to provide this information upon request will result in an automatic rejection of the application.
- 1.5.5** At the discretion of the HR Manager or the Executive Director the applicant may be required to attend an informal interview or participate in a phone conference in order to ascertain the suitability of the applicant in a variety of proposed situations which may eventuate during the camp program or subsidiary program. Failure to attend an interview or informal application discussion will result in an automatic rejection of the application.
- 1.5.6** All applicants will be advised in writing of the decision made in relation to their application. All successful applicants will be provided with additional information specific to the applicable program and will be required to provide evidence of a valid Police Records Check for any jurisdiction in Australia or complete a Police Records Check Application before their position is finalised.

- 1.5.7** If a Police Check reveals an offence which is contrary to the ethos and values of InterConnection Australia or has the potential to bring the Organisation and its reputation into disrepute the application will be rejected and the applicant advised accordingly in writing.
- 1.5.8** All successful applicants will be required to attend a compulsory group information and training session prior to the camp program commencing. This training session will outline the work design procedures for each applicant and provide them with a comprehensive outline of ICA policies & procedures which relate to the clients, activities, venue and overall camp program. The training session will provide the volunteer with the opportunity to ask any relevant questions relating to their role with ICA, their pending duties on camp as well as a comprehensive Policy & Procedure Manual.

Section 2.0 Volunteer Behaviour Requirements Holiday Camp Programs & Subsidiary Programs

2.1 A volunteer of InterConnection Australia represents the organisation in interaction and contact with clients, their parents/guardians, sponsors, stakeholders and the community in general. As a result of this, InterConnection Australia imposes a minimum standard of behaviour on all volunteers of ICA in order that the activity and everyone involved with the program enjoys the experience to the fullest whilst remaining in a safe environment.

2.2 The ICA camp program has been developed with the aim that each client receives personal attention, as this is often a simple aspect which is missing in their lives. As part of this aim, it is an ICA founding philosophy that interaction during activities is often one of the best environments in order to develop a friendship and a sense of trust between the client and the volunteer.

2.3 ICA is committed to providing the parents of our clients with the confidence that they will be cared for the duration of the program and their welfare is our highest priority. Therefore whilst each activity may have applicable rules, regulations and guidelines which are designed to ensure the safety and well being of participants for that particular activity this section of the policy is concerned with general behaviour guidelines which are to be followed at any ICA program, event or activity where clients attend.

2.4 Behavioural Guidelines - The following behavioural guidelines apply to every Executive Board Member, Volunteer and Contractor involved in an official ICA program, function, event or activity:

- 2.4.1** At all times the volunteer is to act in the best interests of the client and the organisation to ensure their safety and well being is addressed to the highest standards.
- 2.4.2** At all times the volunteer will refrain from the consumption of alcohol and illicit drugs whilst participating in an ICA program. At no time will the volunteer attend an ICA event when clients are present in an intoxicated state.
- 2.4.3** The volunteer at all times will behave in a professional and courteous manner to the Executive Board members, other volunteers, clients and their parents, sponsors and stakeholders and the general community. They will have consideration for differences of ethnicity, language or physical disability and be accommodating to these at all times.
- 2.4.4** The volunteer will act honestly in their dealings with the Executive Board members, other volunteers, clients and their parents, sponsors and stakeholders, suppliers and the general community.

- 2.4.5 The volunteer at no time has the authority to search a student's bag or trespass on a student's property even where there is reasonable suspicion that they are concealing stolen, prohibited or illicit substances. Any concern should be directed to the Project Manager or Executive Director for further action.
- 2.4.6 The information provided by the volunteer in relation to their personal & medical details and relevant qualifications and training will be accurate and correct to the best of their knowledge.
- 2.4.7 The volunteer at no time will engage in duties or activities which are outside the scope of their duties and assigned role description. They will at all times provide a duty of care expected from them and ensure that they consistently achieve their goals and objectives of the role description.

2.5 Student Allocation - In order to achieve a level of personal care and attention and ensure that each student remains in a safe environment whilst fully participating in the camp program each leader will be given the responsibility for three clients. This small group will be given a Group Name which will be used to provide the group with an identity for the duration of the camp.

2.6 Leader Responsibilities - Each volunteer as a leader will be responsible for the following aspects of the client's safety and well being:

- 2.6.1 Ensuring that they have the opportunity to contact home upon arrival at the camp site if they wish to communicate to their parents that they have arrived safely
- 2.6.2 Ensuring that the client's personal hygiene is maintained to a high standard throughout the camp
- 2.6.3 Ensuring the client is eating during meal times and is staying hydrated especially during activities
- 2.6.4 Ensuring they are participating and enjoying the camp program
- 2.6.5 Ensuring that each client has been assigned to a room and has comfortable lodging for the duration of the camp.
- 2.6.6 Ensuring that each client is fully and adequately equipped for each activity according to the camp timetable & they are ready for departure at the pre-determined times.

2.7 Duty of Care to Clients - Whilst each student has signed an indemnity form releasing InterConnection Australia, its Directors and servants from all responsibility in the case of an accident, the law imposes a duty of care on all carers of minors. In order to minimise the risk of an adverse occurrence or accident the following areas have been identified as high risk issues and therefore need to be monitored

- 2.7.1 **Students go missing or are able to wander off the property**
Always know where those students who are in your direct care are and that you are with them at all times where it is appropriate. If you notice a student by themselves accompany them back to the main group.
- 2.7.2 **Student is injured or hurt because of play fighting**
Teenage boys will especially enjoy wrestling and "play-fighting". Undue rough play on the property, beach or in the parkland is forbidden and is a rule which needs to be duly enforced.

2.7.3 Student requires first aid or medical treatment

All medication, apart from an asthma relief device is kept with the property manager and will be dispensed according to the instruction provided by the client's parent or guardian. If a client requires medical attention or first aid please consult a first aid officer immediately

2.7.4 Water Activities

Water poses a direct risk and threat to the safety of our clients. Each client is asked to indicate their swimming capabilities and confidence on the medical form but a leader will need to pay special attention when around water to the whereabouts of their students. NO STUDENT IS PERMITTED IN THE OCEAN OR SWIMMING POOL WITHOUT A REGISTERED LIFEGUARD PRESENT

2.8 Supervision of Leaders - The amount of supervision provided by the Executive Board over volunteers will depend on their experience and time spent with the organisation and participating in its programs as well as the level of risk which may be associated with a particular activity or aspect of the camp program. The supervision of the volunteer and feedback provided will be aimed at ensuring that each party benefits from the relationship and that the individual has the best possible chance of achieving a successful job outcome.

2.9 Feedback & Comments - InterConnection Australia encourages feedback from its volunteers as it is an invaluable source of information on how our programs and service levels can be improved. Furthermore it provides us with the opportunity to realise relevant risks which exist within the program or activity. All complaints, suggestions or issues concerning a volunteer will be first addressed at an Executive Board level and if appropriate the subject may be raised with the individual at the discretion of the Board.

2.10 Mandatory Reporting - InterConnection Australia, being incorporated within the State of Victoria is subject to the laws of the state concerning the welfare of a child as defined by the organisation to an individual under the age of 18 years. Where a volunteer suspects child abuse of a mental, physical or sexual nature, the volunteer has a responsibility to report the issue to the Executive Board at the first possible opportunity and provide further and better particulars should the need arise. A volunteer should realise the serious nature of such a report and therefore should have reasonable grounds to make the allegation and ensure that it is not of a frivolous nature.

Section 3.0 – Training & Development

3.1 InterConnection Australia is committed to staffing its programs and activities with trained and qualified leaders who understand the ethos and values of the Organisation and are willing to work towards the achievement of the mission statement.

3.2 As part of this commitment ICA believes that the vision of “Best People...Best Camps” will enable us to recruit and train highly talented and dedicated individuals in order to provide a high level of service to client and their parents, stakeholders, sponsors and the community.

3.3 Training Sessions - The HR Manager in conjunction with the Executive Board will develop and organise a series of mid-week and weekend sessions during the calendar year to accommodate the provision of training in a number of key areas. The training sessions may be of a formal or informal nature and will generally involve the distribution of prepared materials to provide the participant with on-going reference library of applicable approaches, theories, concepts and activities.

3.4 The training sessions will provide for the provision of information on the following key areas:

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3.4.1 Behaviour and Anger Management Training

3.4.2 Activities Training – “How to host & coordinate an activity”

3.4.3 First Aid Training

3.4.4 Food Safety & Handling Training

3.4.5 Activity Specific Training

3.5 Training Session & Selection Whilst the training sessions are not compulsory, selection for camp programs will give preference to those applicants who have participated in the various training programs offered by ICA where they have been given the opportunity to attend.

Section 4.0 – Remuneration & Payments

4.1 Payments to Volunteers - As a volunteer, InterConnection Australia will make no remuneration payments to the individual for the personal exertion or participation within a program or for a specific event.

4.2 Program Costs to Volunteers - InterConnection Australia undertakes to pay for all direct costs associated with a camp program or subsidiary program (as defined in the InterConnection Australia Constitution & Governance Document) which are in excess of the advertised volunteer contribution.

4.3 Reimbursement of Expenses - InterConnection Australia undertakes to reimburse a volunteer for any authorised direct costs (within the limits of **Provision 4.4**) for a camp or subsidiary program which is incurred by them personally on behalf of InterConnection Australia. Reimbursement will be paid by cheque to the nominated person within 28 days of a completed Expense Statement being completed and lodged with the Business Manager where it is accompanied by the original or copy of the tax invoice from the supplier.

4.4 Authority to Incur Expenses - InterConnection Australia under this provision authorises a volunteer to incur an expense directly related to a camp program or subsidiary event to the maximum amount of A\$25.00 inclusive of GST. The Executive Board defines but does not limit a directly related expense to a purchase which is necessary to continue the provision of the service or activity which is part of the program. This may include the payment for fuel or consumable activity equipment such as bait. It does not include large items of equipment, food, drinks, lollies or other such consumables. Medical assistance items are excluded by this provision.

4.5 Reimbursement of Indirect Expenses Any indirect expenses associated with an event relating to travel, accommodation or meals may be reimbursed to the volunteer at the joint discretion of the Executive Director, Business Manager and Human Resources Manager. Any associated expenses which may be included under this provision will be provided to the informant prior to the activity commencing. The reimbursement process to be followed is provided under **provision 4.3**.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The effect of this policy is to serve as a series of documented guidelines which are designed to ensure that volunteers feel appreciated, safe and supported by InterConnection Australia and its Executive Board. The role of a volunteer leader within an ICA camp program is an integral part of the service provided and contributes significantly to the overall success of the camp.

5.2 The rules and regulations contained in this document have been implemented not to infringe upon the rights or freedoms of a volunteer but rather help make the ICA experience a worthwhile and enjoyable one and promote a team environment.

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