

## **Active Kindness 2025 Cohort – Information Sheet**

**Applications are now open for the 2025 cohort of the Active Kindness programme!** We are looking for 10 new trusts to join the programme which will run from 07/05/25 – 06/05/26.

### **Established Practical Help & Resources**

Trusts can access and use:

- the Volunteer Management Toolkit co-created by NCVO and the 14 Active Kindness trusts who participated in the programme in 2022 and 2023.
- the Active Kindness Podcast which is designed to complement the toolkit and provide more nuanced discussions about the practical challenges of implementing changes within trusts.
- A range of resources, information and learning documents from the 2024-25 cohort of 10 trusts who went through the programme. This includes:
  - Handbooks
  - Toolkits
  - policies.

Those who have been through the curriculum of workshops will also remain involved in the programme and can share learning, insights and recommendations.

### **One-to-One Support**

Trusts will benefit from structured one-to-one support from the programme manager at CLUK, through scheduled check in meetings and the availability of ongoing ad hoc help if needed. At the outset of the programme, trusts will be supported to produce an Action Plan setting out their goals and aspirations in line with their own local demographics and communities.

The Action Plan is a living document that can be amended and revised as time goes on to reflect the changing landscape of volunteering within the trust. The trust's progress towards the goals stated in its Action Plan will be monitored through check in meetings and informal progress monitoring.

### **Learning Curriculum**

CLUK is working in partnership with Katherine Perrin, a volunteer development expert, to develop and deliver a curriculum of monthly training and development workshops. Workshops will focus on both practical topics and more theoretical aspects of volunteering, ensuring participants have a comprehensive understanding of how they can best support and develop their volunteering models. Where appropriate, guest speakers will be invited to the workshops to provide input.

At the recent midpoint evaluation for the 2024/25 cohort, the learning programme has achieved:

- 100% “very good” or “excellent” rating across all participants
- 100% have been inspired to make changes
- 83% saying their confidence has been boosted “a lot” or “significantly”
- 83% saying they have improved their knowledge “a lot” or “significantly”

## Peer Network

The 2025 Cohort will form a support network for all participating trusts with likeminded participants forming strong and beneficial working relationships.

We also run informal virtual coffee meet ups to enable cohort members to come together between workshops and discuss their progress, ask questions to each other.

## Volunteer Management Software

All trusts interested in the 2025-26 cohort will be supported to use a volunteer management software to capture data from their volunteer offer. Thanks to National Lottery funding, and working in partnership with Volunteer, we can fund a standard software package free of charge for trusts (subject to a maximum number of logins and volunteers). We currently have 14 trusts onboarding onto the platform and can discuss any questions around the practicalities of this with any interested organisations.

If members are currently using a volunteer management software, there is no requirement to change platform or to use Volunteer but we would ask that high-level data from their existing platform is shared to enable us to capture consistent data across all participating trusts.

### Volunteero Volunteer Management Software – Active Kindness Offer

As part of the Active Kindness programme, CLUK and Volunteer are proud to be supporting leisure centres across the UK with best-in-class volunteer management software, enabling more efficient coordination and engagement of volunteers.

To ensure fair and consistent access, a standard software package has been agreed upon for each participating organisation. This includes licensing for up to 200 volunteers and 5 staff users per leisure centre. These figures were established based on initial averages across the first cohort of centres.

We recognise that needs may vary between organisations, and in some cases, additional staff licenses may be required. To support early adoption and minimise friction during onboarding, we have accommodated reasonable increases for the first cohort within the current cost framework.

However, to maintain sustainability and equity across the programme, we want to make all future participants aware that requests to exceed the standard licensing package may incur additional costs. These costs would need to be covered either by CLUK or the individual trust, depending on the circumstances.

This approach will help us manage resources effectively, avoid unnecessary over-licensing, and ensure that all participating organisations are set up for success. We encourage trusts to carefully consider their operational needs before requesting additional licences. For context, some requests to date have resulted in staff-to-volunteer ratios far beyond typical usage patterns.

We look forward to working with all partners to ensure Active Kindness delivers maximum impact through efficient, sustainable volunteer management.

### **How to apply?**



Submit an [Expression of Interest form](#) - deadline Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April.

Please note, if there are more trusts interested than spaces for the cohort, the unsuccessful trusts will still be able to join the Volunteering Special Interest Group and can apply again in subsequent years.

### **Important criteria for trusts to consider in their applications:**

Trusts must be committed to revitalising their volunteering model, with a desire to proactively engage in the programme, attend meetings, proactively feedback learning, good practice and reflections to the other trusts and to CLUK through meetings and workshops.

Trusts must appoint a member of staff to be the designated project lead, with protected time to engage with the programme. Ideally a second member to staff will be appointed to provide support to the project lead, to remain aware of volunteering developments in the trust, and to attend meetings in the project lead's absence.

Trusts will have (or will be committed to create) a volunteer development working group to support the delivery of the project with membership with representation from staff and/or volunteers at levels appropriate to ensure delivery of the trust's goals.

Trusts must commit to share data and information with CLUK and the programme's evaluation partners to enable evaluation and reporting on the programme to the National Lottery against the agreed KPIs.

### **Programme Principles and Aspirations**

CLUK are delighted to have received funding for this project from the UK Fund, part of the National Lottery Community Fund. The UK Fund's aim is to support communities to come together, to strengthen relationships between people who have had different experiences of life and to help make sure people from all backgrounds can shape the future of their communities.

*"Volunteerism is a critical mechanism by which social inclusion can be promoted... With its universality and value base, volunteerism opens up powerful pathways by which people can find their way out of exclusion"*  
United Nations Volunteers Issue Brief January 2014

CLUK strongly believes in the potential for trusts to use volunteering to build bridges between communities that have struggled to connect; to amplify volunteer voices and collaborate with them to design services for those groups which have been historically under-represented in leisure and cultural activities. Our programme hopes to equip trusts with the resources needed to collaborate with their communities, co-produce services, break down barriers and create an inclusive, accessible and equitable future for public leisure and culture.

Key to this is the recruitment of volunteers from currently under-represented demographics – we know that those who do not currently volunteer, or take part in movement and physical activity, stand to benefit the most from doing so. We encourage the recruitment of volunteers from under-represented demographics,

including but not limited to: disabled people, refugees and asylum seekers, the LGBTQI+ community, people who identify as women, and lower socioeconomic communities.

Trusts are encouraged to collaborate with stakeholders in their communities who are involved with underrepresented groups, for example GP surgeries, local charities, schools in priority areas and social housing organisations. Trusts can recruit volunteers to diversify the faces greeting customers at their centres and change perceptions about what 'sort' of person the trust is there for and introduce thoughtful volunteer roles specifically targeted at breaking down barriers to participation.

To find out more about the work done by Active Kindness alumni trusts in 2022 and 2023, please take a look at the [Active Kindness Evaluation Report](#). If you have any questions or would like to discuss your application prior to submission, please email [kirstycumming@communityleisureuk.org](mailto:kirstycumming@communityleisureuk.org)

**Ends.**