



Volunteer Handbook

Welcome to The Dock!

We're so happy you've decided to be part of the team.
Volunteers are at the very heart of Dock life.

This handbook gives you a brief overview of what The Dock is,
what it means to be part of the volunteering team and how best to
make your time as a Dock volunteer valuable for you, The Dock and
the Titanic Quarter.

Don't forget to keep up to date with what's happening by reading
[The Dock blog](#).

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What is The DOCK?



*"The DOCK is an ethos, a momentum,
a vision to build Life in the Titanic Quarter.*

*Under that umbrella,
countless expressions of that Life can flourish,
multiply and propagate."*



- Chris Bennett, lead chaplain

We believe life is:

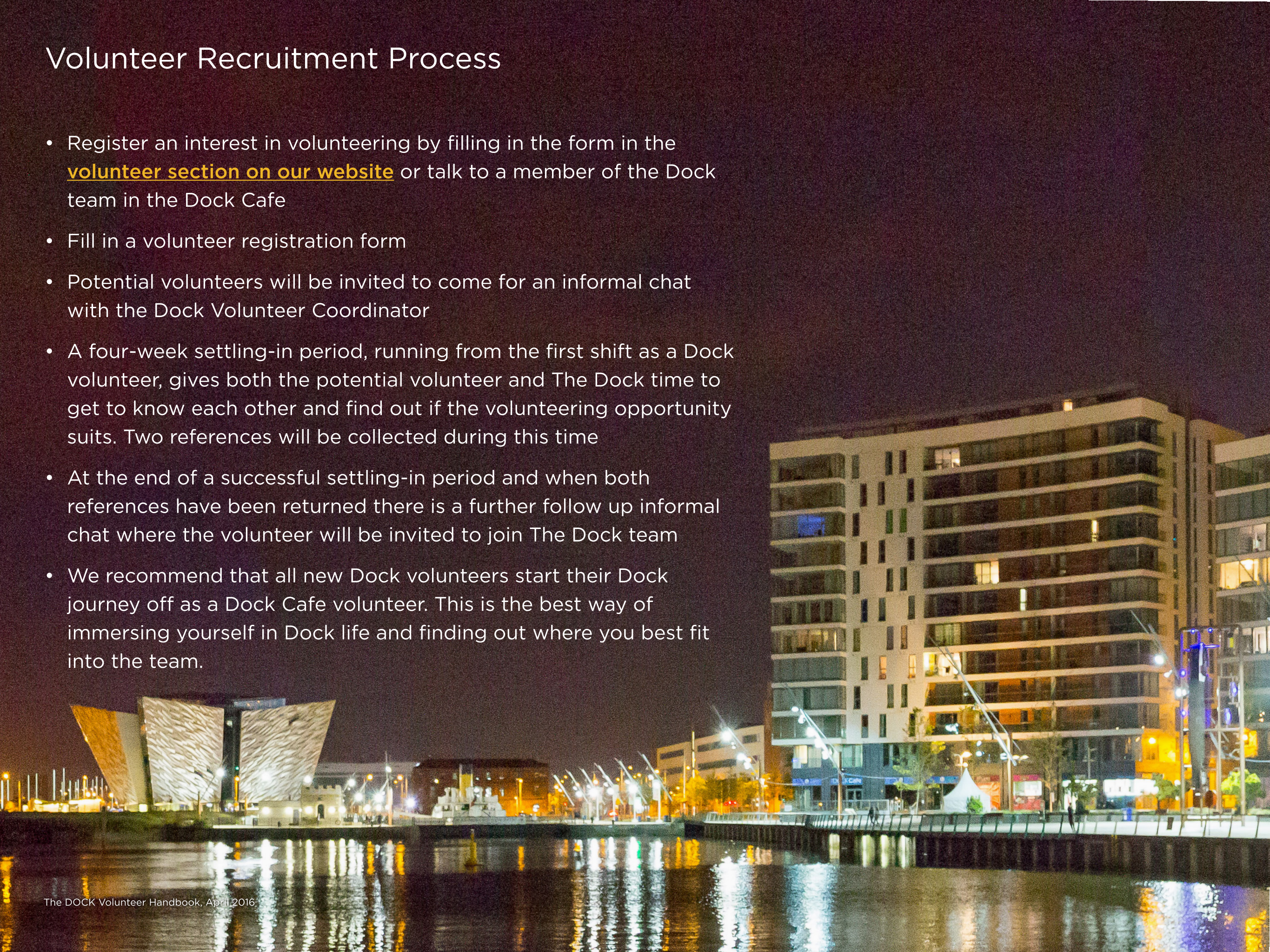
- **social** – living in community with other people;
- **spiritual** – living in relationship with God; and
- **shared** – living together with people from all backgrounds.

We aim to reach five distinct but connected communities:

- residents;
- students;
- professionals;
- tourists from across the world;
- visitors from greater Belfast.

Volunteer Recruitment Process

- Register an interest in volunteering by filling in the form in the [volunteer section on our website](#) or talk to a member of the Dock team in the Dock Cafe
- Fill in a volunteer registration form
- Potential volunteers will be invited to come for an informal chat with the Dock Volunteer Coordinator
- A four-week settling-in period, running from the first shift as a Dock volunteer, gives both the potential volunteer and The Dock time to get to know each other and find out if the volunteering opportunity suits. Two references will be collected during this time
- At the end of a successful settling-in period and when both references have been returned there is a further follow up informal chat where the volunteer will be invited to join The Dock team
- We recommend that all new Dock volunteers start their Dock journey off as a Dock Cafe volunteer. This is the best way of immersing yourself in Dock life and finding out where you best fit into the team.



What you can expect from us

We want to make sure that you enjoy your role and get the most out of it.

We commit to our volunteers that we will:

- always treat you with respect, consideration and appreciation;
- ensure you have a clear idea of your responsibilities;
- give you information about the training and support available to help you carry out your role;
- provide you with support through regular meetings or discussions (the format will depend on your role);
- offer you fair, honest and timely feedback on your work;
- update you on how your work has made a difference;
- give you the opportunity to change or take on additional roles. You may need to undertake a further application process and go through standard screening procedures for your new role(s).

What we can expect from you

We expect high standards from all our supporters, whether they are paid staff or volunteers.

To ensure you get the most out of your role, please try to do the following:

- always treat Dock staff, supporters and fellow volunteers with respect, consideration and appreciation;
- act in a professional way whenever you represent The Dock in public;
- act in a way that doesn't discriminate against or exclude anyone;
- provide as much notice as possible if you are unable to fulfil your volunteering commitment, or if you no longer wish to be involved in a project;
- if you don't fully understand your role and responsibilities, please ask the Dock volunteer coordinator for guidance;
- to reflect The Dock's fundamental principles, ethos and values.

Induction

On your first day you could be nervous. You may have some questions. Don't worry. We'll be there to support you and make sure it all goes smoothly.

You will be paired with your Dock buddy the first time you volunteer with The Dock. They will introduce you to your team and anyone else who you might be working with. They'll go over any introductory things you may need to know. Please use this opportunity to ask any questions and highlight any areas you're not sure about.

Take time during your first volunteering shift to read through the policies and procedures that are relevant to you.

You'll be given a Dock volunteer induction checklist which the Dock team will guide you through. Work through it at a reasonable pace!

If you'll be volunteering with us over a period of time, we include a settling-in period which gives us both a chance to assess how things are working out.

Training

We are committed to offering all volunteers clear and structured guidance for developing their role. This means that, right from day one, you should know exactly what you'll need to do in order to get actively volunteering as soon as possible.

But it's not just about the early days. We also know how important it is (both for you and us) that you keep on developing your skills and knowledge. We'll let you know of any training opportunities that come up. Also watch out for volunteer days where in-house and external training may be offered.

Reliability and commitment

It's very important that you're reliable and you stick to any arrangements you've made with us. If your circumstances change, please let us know as soon as possible.

If you're planning to go on holiday, please let us know that you'll be unavailable for certain dates and when you plan to return.

Support

The Dock offers our volunteers a chance to meet up as a team for mutual support around once a quarter. It's a 'chat over a cuppa' type of meeting and we think our volunteering team appreciate the informal nature of these meetings.

One to one support is available through The Dock volunteer coordinator.

The Essentials

As a volunteer, you'll need to be aware of the following policies and procedures at The Dock. Please take a few minutes to have a good read through and familiarise yourself with them. The full versions are available to read in the folders in The Dock Cafe office.

Health and Safety

It's important that you:

- carry out your volunteer role without endangering either your own health and safety, or that of colleagues, third parties and/or the general public;
- comply with all relevant instructions and procedures relating to safety and follow guidance provided by The Dock;
- inform the Dock volunteer coordinator of any personal health and safety requirements that you have.

Accidents and Incidents

All accidents and incidents must be reported as soon as possible. If you're in the Dock Cafe, report to the Cafe supervisor. If it's a Dock event somewhere else, report to whoever is in charge. If you feel that it's a real emergency, please contact the emergency services immediately.

Confidentiality

The Dock's confidentiality policy underlines our commitment to ensuring that any information held about volunteers, staff and beneficiaries will be handled sensitively. During the course of your role, you may be given sensitive information – for example, details about an individual's health or financial situation. It's vitally important that you understand and accept your responsibility not to pass on this type of personal information. Should you need to discuss any information you have been given, you can contact The Dock volunteer coordinator.

Data Protection

The Dock is committed to meeting its obligations under data protection legislation. The organisation will only use data in ways relevant to carrying out its legitimate purposes and functions as a charity, and in ways that are not prejudicial to the interests of individuals. Volunteers and staff will do their utmost to keep all data accurate, timely and secure, and not disclose such data except where there are reasonable grounds, subject to consent or legal requirement.

Diversity

We are committed to a policy of treating all volunteers and volunteer applicants equally and fairly. We accept volunteers based on their suitability for the role. The Dock seeks to ensure that our organisation and services are accessible to all. We are committed to getting fresh perspectives and insights by welcoming people from the widest possible variety of backgrounds, culture and experience.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted on Dock property. If you require smoking breaks during your volunteer shift, talk to the person supervising you.

Insurance

As a registered volunteer you are covered by our public liability insurance when carrying out your volunteer duties on our behalf. This covers our legal liability to pay compensation for injuries or illness to a third party or damage to the property of third parties, which are due to The Dock's negligence at fundraising or other events. Accidents unattributable to The Dock are not included.

How we Talk

When you're volunteering with The Dock, you may notice that we use a certain style of language. The way we talk is a key part of our personality and our 'voice' is an important tool for helping people understand who we are and what we do. It's essential that we maintain one voice – one that's consistent, clear, and easy to understand. One that expresses The Dock's passion for building life in the Titanic Quarter. Whether you're speaking on behalf of The Dock, drafting an email or writing a letter, it's well worth getting to grips with The Dock 'tone of voice'.

What we wear

As a volunteer for The Dock, you're also an ambassador for the organisation. You're responsible for presenting a positive image to visitors, clients and the community. Please use your judgement to dress appropriately for the activities you're asked to carry out. We provide a Dock branded apron and badge for you to wear if you're on duty in The Dock Cafe. If you're ever unsure about what to wear, just ask The Dock volunteer coordinator.

Keeping in touch

Social Media

These guidelines are for volunteers who use social networks in a personal capacity. The principles are straightforward: use common sense when posting anything online, recognise that what you say can never be completely private, protect The Dock's reputation, avoid duplication by not creating official-looking Dock profiles.

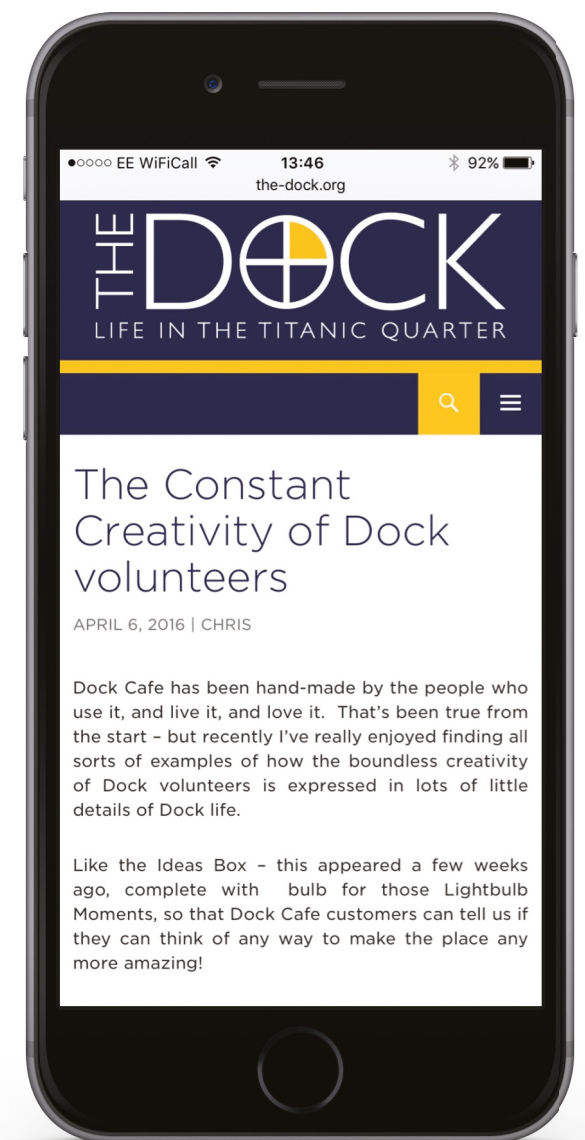
Use of Images

There may be occasions when photography will take place while you are volunteering, and the resulting photographs will be stored and could be used to help The Dock promote our services. In such cases, the onus is on the volunteer to communicate any wish not to be featured in a photographic shoot.

As a volunteer with The Dock we want to keep you in the loop.

You will receive our monthly newsletter, Dock Volunteer News, which is jam-packed with the latest information about everything the volunteer team is up to. You will also receive The Dock email update.

What's more, you can also [access our website](#) to find out what is happening in Dock life.



Problem Solving

Problems may arise in a number of ways. A volunteer may make a complaint about another volunteer, a member of staff or the organisation itself. A volunteer's performance may have declined, or someone may have made a complaint about a volunteer's work, attitude or conduct.

Dealing with complaints

Although dealing with complaints can be difficult, it can give us a positive opportunity to improve the way we do things and provide a better service for people. At The Dock we define a complaint very broadly, as 'a statement of dissatisfaction'. This covers any kind of comment – spoken or written – which relates to dissatisfaction, whether or not it's labelled as a complaint, and whether or not it needs a formal response. We have a centralised complaints procedure to ensure that we capture all feedback. If you wish to make a complaint or you receive a complaint from someone about your service or anything to do with The Dock's work, please pass the information on, in writing, to Susan Bennett, Dock Director, at susan@the-dock.org.

Problems with your volunteering role

If you encounter a difficulty with any aspect of the role, please talk to The Dock volunteer coordinator as soon as possible for advice and support. If the role isn't working out as hoped, please let us know. Together we can try to work out any difficulties. If it is agreed it can't work, this shouldn't be seen as a failure. Speak to The Dock volunteer coordinator about finding a more appropriate role.



The DOCK
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www.the-dock.org

The DOCK is the trading name of
The Dock Titanic Quarter,
a charitable company registered in Northern Ireland.
Registered company number: NI616637.
Charity Registration Number: NIC100504.

Aerial photography © Belfast Harbour

Original photography and design by The **Big** Wooden **Box** Ltd.
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The DOCK Volunteer Handbook, April 2016