

# THE RHODES TRUST VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT AND VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

## THE RHODES TRUST VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

### The Rhodes Trust mission and values

The Rhodes Trust's ("the Trust") mission is to build a better world through global fellowship programmes that develop and connect compassionate, innovative, and public-spirited people committed to solving humanity's challenges. The Rhodes Trust recognizes that the world needs leadership from ethical, creative and courageous people who are able to bridge cultures and disciplines. It therefore:

- Helps people of talent from all walks of life realise their potential to build a better world;
- Fosters leadership through diverse and inclusive learning communities;
- Amplifies impact through lifelong fellowships of mutual support, inspiration and collaboration.

**Volunteers – including Trustees and Selectors – play vital leadership roles in delivering this mission.**

Based at the University of Oxford, UK, the Trust's core programme is the Rhodes Scholarship ('the Scholarship') which is the oldest postgraduate scholarship programme in the world, providing transformative postgraduate educational opportunities. The Scholarship brings together and develops exceptional young people from all over the world, and in all fields of study, who are committed to being of service, impatient with the way things are and have the courage to act.

The Trust is committed to achieving an environment in all of its operations characterised by professional, dignified, courteous and inclusive conduct, where everyone is treated with respect and all interactions reflect a fundamental acknowledgement of the worth of every person.

### Code of Conduct Aims

The core aim of this Code of Conduct ("the Code") is to support your volunteering activities by providing you with guidance regarding key issues and additional policies that all of the Trust's volunteers need to be aware of. It also seeks to set out fundamental behavioural expectations within the Rhodes community of volunteers as it is important that the Rhodes Trust ensures that the conduct of all people connected to our work is in keeping with the Trust's mission and values. It aims to ensure that those representing it avoid using any potential privileged or asymmetric positions of power or abusing relationships of trust for the benefit of themselves or others.

Whilst recognising that the Rhodes Trust is a global organisation and that local laws and cultures differ considerably from one country to another, the Trust is a UK Registered Charity (No. 232492) and, as such, its activities, definitions, policies and procedures are developed in line with UK law.

**This Code applies to everyone associated with the Rhodes Trust as a volunteer, regardless of age, location or relationship to the Trust.** 'Volunteer' is defined using the UK National Council of Voluntary Organizations definition of volunteering as: any individual or group undertaking "any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives." **This Code of Conduct should be read alongside any Code of Conduct (or other relevant policy or procedure) which the volunteer is subject to by virtue of any activities that Rhodes Trustees and Volunteers may be involved with for partner programmes (such as the Schmidt Science Fellows Selectors Code of Conduct). Volunteers should ensure they comply with all policies and procedures to which they are subject through their activities. However, where there is a conflict with this Code of Conduct, this Code of Conduct should take precedence.**

The Code is designed for your guidance and protection, although, in line with the [Volunteer Disciplinary Policy and Complaints Procedure](#), a breach may result in the termination of our volunteer agreement with you/your organisation and, in some cases, may lead to prosecution.

### The Rhodes Trust's commitments:

The Trust commits to providing a friendly, empathetic and supportive volunteer community, delivering professional support, guidance and relevant training to volunteers that will enable them to make a positive collective impact in their roles. The Trust commits to champion equity and embrace a diversity of identities, backgrounds and perspectives as a core tenet of its values, as well as its volunteering practices.

It also commits:

- To make this Code of Conduct ("the Code") and other relevant policy and procedure available publicly on the Rhodes Trust website and internally on its portals;
- To engage with Volunteers, including Trustees and Selectors, about the Code, automatically requiring for them to read and, where the engagement is substantive and sustained, for them to agree to abide by the Code;
- To review this Code and its associated policies, at least every two years, updating it as necessary. Any feedback received from volunteers will be fed into these reviews;
- To seek, whenever possible and appropriate, to resolve complaints and conflicts in restorative ways. In line with the [Volunteer Disciplinary Policy and Complaints Procedure](#), the Trust will provide prompt and equitable investigations of all

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- Reports of Prohibited Conduct using transparent policies, procedures, and reporting;
- To strive to protect the privacy of all affected individuals, except in circumstances where there is a significant risk of harm, where there is a need for other specific individuals to know on a confidential basis or where legal obligations otherwise require;
  - To fair process and natural justice for all parties. And to treat with respect any applicant, Scholar-Elect, Scholar in Residence, Alumni Scholar, Fellow or other person who discloses or submits

a complaint(s) of violations of the Code or against whom such a complaint is lodged. The Trust will make no presumption of innocence or guilt and will respect the right of complainants to make their own decisions about seeking criminal or civil recourse.

## Volunteer Code of Conduct:

***In undertaking volunteer duties for the Rhodes Trust, I recognise that I am viewed as its representative and agree to regulate my conduct in line with the requirements of this Code.***

### **I will:**

**Maintain the Trust's integrity and reputation in my dealings with others by ensuring my professional and personal conduct is demonstrably consistent with the Rhodes Trust's values and standards. I will:**

- Contribute to a working environment characterised by mutual respect, integrity, dignity and non-discrimination and will challenge any form of harassment, discrimination, intimidation, exploitation or abuse. I understand that prohibited conduct of these forms is described in full in the [Glossary for Rhodes Trust Conduct Policies](#);
- Ensure that my relationships and behaviour are not exploitative, abusive or corrupt in any way, ensuring that I manage the power that comes with my volunteer position with appropriate restraint;
- In conducting my duties towards the Trust, endeavour to report any such behaviours or malpractice by myself or others to an appropriate individual in line with the [Volunteer Disciplinary Policy and Complaints Procedure](#).
- Once published, to comply with the requirements of the Trust's *Safeguarding Policy* at all times.
- Refrain from any conduct which could reasonably be considered to bring the Trust into disrepute
- Be sensitive to, and respectful of, local customs and culture; I will if necessary seek (and will receive) support and advice from the Rhodes Trust.

**Perform my volunteer duties and conduct my private life in a manner that avoids possible conflicts of interest with the work of the Rhodes Trust. I will:**

- Declare any financial, personal or familial interest (or other close intimate relationship) – or any circumstance which may be perceived by others as a conflict of interest - in matters which may impact on the work of the Rhodes Trust (e.g. relationship to Scholarship applicants and beneficiaries, contracts for goods or services);
- Read the Rhodes Trust's [Guidelines on Dealing with Conflicts of Interest](#) and notify an appropriate representative of the Rhodes Trust, e.g. a member of Rhodes House staff involved with the volunteer activity or National/Regional/District Secretary (where relevant) of any external professional, political or other public office roles that I undertake in either a paid or voluntary capacity, that may reasonably create any conflict, or perceived conflicts, with my role at the Trust;
- Where the giving and acceptance of gifts is normal cultural practice, will ensure that such gifts are under the value of £100 and will report such gifts to an appropriate representative of the Rhodes Trust (see above). In the rare instance in which a gift is received and is deemed at fair market value to be over this £100 threshold, will report this directly to the Warden and/or Board Chair and, where appropriate, make arrangements to pass such gifts to the Trust;
- Act against any form of corruption and not offer, promise, give or accept any bribes in line with the [UK Bribery Act 2010](#). Even where the giving and acceptance of gifts is normal cultural practice, I understand it is always unacceptable to receive money, offers of employment, employment, sex or sexual favours or other such inappropriate gifts from applicants, Scholarship beneficiaries, schools, companies or other persons and institutions, whilst acting as a volunteer for the Rhodes Trust;

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**Use the data and resources to which I have access by reason of my volunteer association with the Trust responsibly. I will:**

- Handle information containing identifiable personal details and other, potentially sensitive, personal data pertaining to applicants, Scholars-elect, Scholars, Fellows, partner organisations or other individuals or institutions, confidentially and lawfully in line with any [data, IT or other policy or guidance](#) provided by the Trust or its partner programmes;
- If deemed necessary by the Trust due to the nature of my role, I will sign a **Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement** (see below) confirming that I have read and understood the basis on which personal data is used. This is compulsory for all volunteers who participate in the selection process for the Rhodes Scholarship or its partner programmes;
- If handling data related to the Rhodes Scholarship selection process, I will ensure this information is handled securely, is solely used for the purposes of selecting Rhodes Scholars, and is immediately and permanently deleted or destroyed on the completion of screening and selection in line with the [UK Data Protection Act 2018](#). Any loss, confirmed or potential, of personal data must be reported immediately to the Trust's Deputy Warden for Selection & Scholar Affairs at: [selection@rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk](mailto:selection@rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk).

**Uphold and comply with the law and, in particular, all relevant charity regulations and have due regard to the Trust's policies in my relationships with applicants, Scholars-elect, Scholars, Fellows, Trustees, volunteers, staff, partner organisations or other individuals or institutions that I come into contact with during my volunteer association with the Trust. I will:**

- Ensure that my conduct is consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and fundamentally acknowledge the inherent worth and rights of every individual;
- Refrain from engaging in any illegal conduct in the UK or overseas.
- Abstain from sexual or other inappropriate contact with applicants for the Rhodes Scholarship or its partner programmes (in exchange for assistance or any other reason), recognising the inherent unequal power dynamics and that such behaviours can undermine the integrity and credibility of the Trust's work. I understand that this, and other prohibited conduct of a sexual nature, is detailed in full in the Trust's Safeguarding policy (once published).
- Be aware of the position of trust, power and responsibility that you may have in your role in relation to applicants or others and be mindful of this in your interactions and decision-making. The safety and wellbeing of applicants and other individuals who you may come into contact with by virtue of your role as a volunteer (and particularly any children and/or adults at risk, as defined in the relevant Safeguarding Policy, once published) is, and must always be, paramount.
- Refrain from the use, or possession of, illegal substances or consumption of alcohol to excess whilst in Rhodes House or while otherwise undertaking volunteering activities for the Rhodes Trust;
- Inform the Trust of any relevant criminal convictions or charges I have had prior to, or face during, my volunteer association in which the Trust may have a legitimate interest;

**Act within [the governing protocols of the Rhodes Trust](#) and abide by its policies and procedures, [which can be found here](#).**

**I understand that violation of these policies may result in termination of my volunteer role with the Rhodes Trust.**

## **The Rhodes Trust Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement (VCA)**

**I understand that the information provided to me in relation to my role as a Rhodes Trust volunteer is confidential.**

**I will:**

- Only use this information, which includes personal data of applicants, Scholars Elect, Scholars in Residence, Scholars Alum and other members of the Rhodes Community, for the purposes for which it was provided;
- Understand that any data is not to be kept after the relevant task has been completed;
- Refrain from disclosing or distributing any of the aforementioned information to any third party, including fellow Scholars, without prior and written permission from the Rhodes Trust Chief Operating Officer: [data.protection@rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk](mailto:data.protection@rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk);
- Ensure that any digital or hard copy information provided by the Rhodes Trust or its volunteers is kept safe, secure, and confidential for the duration that it is in my possession;
- Either return any data to an appropriate member of the Rhodes Trust staff / volunteers or I will permanently delete or destroy it, as soon as I have completed the task for which it was supplied to me;

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- Destroy any information I do save locally or print out as soon as it is no longer needed (see guidance on deleting or destroying information);
- For functions that do not require individual identification, I will anonymise the data, removing any information that is personally identifying.

**Additionally, as a volunteer involved in the Selection process:**

**I will:**

- Conduct my activities within the application platform itself, in preference over downloading information, where possible;
  - Where there is a need to share information off-system, I will do this in a secure manner and I will also ensure that this Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement is first completed by all recipients;
  - Understand that my access will be revoked after the selection cycle is completed and will be reinstated for any subsequent selection rounds that I facilitate.
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- I understand that this agreement applies to Rhodes Trust data shared before, as well as after, I have indicated my agreement to this document.

**I have read carefully and understand the Rhodes Trust’s Volunteer Code of Conduct and Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement. By ticking the box to indicate my acceptance of this document, I hereby declare that I agree to abide by its requirements and commit to upholding the standards of conduct required to support the Trust’s aims, values and mission.**

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