



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF
SUSTAINABILITY
PROFESSIONALS

Volunteer Handbook

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1 Introduction

The International Society of Sustainability Professionals (ISSP) is the world's leading professional association of sustainability professionals. As a mainly volunteer-run organization, it is recognized that volunteer efforts are the main contribution to the overall success of ISSP and the continuous development and growth of the sustainability profession globally. Naturally, contributing to ISSP activities not only improves the association, it also benefits professionals in many ways, by:

- Earning CEUs
- Meeting other sustainability professionals from around the world
- Learning new skills and enhancing professional skills (writing, presentation, leadership, etc.)
- Networking with peers
- Maintaining connections with those involved in the profession

This volunteer handbook is developed to provide overall guidance and direction – to staff and volunteers – for all volunteer involvement and volunteer management efforts.¹

2 General Policies

There are a number of ISSP policies that apply to volunteer and staff roles included in the [Volunteer Interest Form](#). These policies are available on ISSP's volunteer web page and include the following:

- Code of Ethical Practice and Values. Include ISSP Sustainability Professional Code of Ethical Practice and Value and statements regarding: personal and professional integrity, ISSP governance, legal compliance, financial stewardship, ethical behavior, equal opportunity/inclusivity (no discrimination, harassment, or violence in the workplace), use/sale of ISSP's property (including copyrights and patents).
- Confidentiality. ISSP Staff, Board, and Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while working for ISSP or serving as an ISSP volunteer. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer's relationship with ISSP or other corrective action. Additionally, no one is permitted to remove or make copies of any ISSP records, reports, or documents without permission. Release of confidential information to unauthorized persons may result in immediate termination of your service, ethical and conduct inquiries, and possible legal action.
- Conflict of Interest. No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or program of ISSP, whether personal, philosophical, or financial shall be accepted or serve as a volunteer with ISSP.
- Harassment. Harassment of any kind is expressly prohibited by ISSP and will not be tolerated of ISSP Staff, Board or volunteers
- Intellectual Property Rights. Work done by ISSP staff or volunteers is the intellectual property of ISSP except as expressly described in the IP Rights Policy Statement.
- Whistleblower. ISSP staff and volunteers are expected to comply with all applicable laws and to

¹ The included policies do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. ISSP reserves the exclusive right to change any of these policies at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policies. Changes or exceptions of these policies may only be granted by ISSP's Volunteer Director or Executive Director and must be obtained in advance and in writing. Areas not specifically covered by these policies shall be determined by the ISSP's Volunteer Director or Executive Director.

raise concerns within the organization about occurrences that are not in compliance. No retaliation is allowed for raising such concerns.

- Equal Opportunity: ISSP does not discriminate against any person. All assignments made for volunteers are based upon availability, dependability, educational background, certifications, and/or member status.

Each volunteer must sign ISSP's Volunteer Agreement Form on an annual basis. The form indicates that all ISSP's policies, including this handbook, have been read, understood and will be adhered to.

3 Volunteer Policies

3.1 Definition

A Volunteer is anyone that performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the ISSP without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond Continuing Education Credits (CEUs).

3.2 Application Process

3.2.1 Volunteer Job Descriptions

The ISSP has many different volunteer assignments available and volunteer opportunities range from short-term commitments (several hours/month) to long-term committee roles (Board members/Committee Chairpersons) as described in the Volunteer Opportunities List. ISSP maintains descriptions for each volunteer role, including clearly defined requirements and tasks and activities for which the volunteer can take responsibility.

3.2.2 Recruitment and Placement

ISSP pro-actively recruits volunteers, with the intent of broadening and expanding the volunteer involvement within the sustainability community. The sole qualifications for volunteer recruitment shall be ISSP Membership and suitability to perform a task on behalf of ISSP. Volunteers may be recruited through either an interest in specific functions or through a general interest in volunteering which will later be matched with a specific function. No final acceptance of a volunteer shall take place without a specific written volunteer position description for that volunteer. In addition, volunteers are expected to be adequately prepared for the volunteer assignment.

3.2.3 Application

Members interested in volunteering are required to complete the Volunteer Application Form to express interest in a special volunteer position and/or in volunteering in general. Applications are reviewed by the Volunteer Committee Chairperson (VCC), and he/she will contact the potential volunteer to discuss available opportunities and to consider next steps.

3.2.4 Interview

Prior to being assigned or appointed to a position, volunteers are interviewed by the VCC or the responsible person for the specific assignment. The interview should determine the qualifications of the volunteer, the commitment to fulfill the requirements of the position, and answer any questions that the volunteer might have about the position. Interviews may be conducted either in person or by any other means.

3.3 Volunteer Work Environment

3.3.1 Expectations

Volunteers are indispensable to ISSP and volunteers may expect to be given meaningful assignments, the right to full involvement and participation, and the right to recognition for work done. In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to support ISSP

goals in positive ways.

3.3.2 Supervisor

Each volunteer should have a clearly identified supervisor (e.g. board or committee member). The supervisor shall be responsible for management and guidance of the work of the volunteer and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance.

3.3.3 Evaluation

Volunteers shall receive periodic evaluations to review their work. The evaluation session is utilized to review the performance of the volunteer, to suggest any changes in work style, to seek suggestions from the volunteer on means of enhancing the volunteer's relationship with ISSP, staff and/or other volunteers, to convey appreciation to the volunteer, and to ascertain the continued interest of the volunteer in serving in that position. Evaluations should include both an examination of the volunteer's performance of position responsibilities and a discussion of any suggestions that the volunteer may have concerning the position or project with which the volunteer is connected. The evaluation session is an opportunity for both the volunteer and ISSP to examine and improve their relationship. Other volunteers involved in long term activities may receive periodic evaluations as well.

3.3.4 Recognition

A periodic volunteer recognition event will be conducted to highlight and reward the contribution of volunteers to ISSP. In addition, staff and volunteers responsible for volunteer supervision are encouraged to undertake methods of recognition of volunteer service on a regular basis throughout the year. These methods of informal recognition should range from simple "Thank You's" to a concerted effort to include volunteers as full participants in program decision-making and implementation.

Volunteers are encouraged to grow and develop their skills while serving with ISSP and are to be assisted through promotion to new volunteer jobs to assume additional and greater responsibilities. If so desired by the volunteer, the VCC should assist the volunteer in maintaining appropriate records of volunteer experience that would assist the volunteer in future career opportunities, both paid and volunteer.

3.3.5 Records Maintenance

A system of records will be maintained on each volunteer, including dates of service, positions held, duties performed, evaluation of work, and awards received (all if applicable). Volunteers and appropriate staff shall be responsible for submitting all appropriate records and information to the VCC in a timely and accurate manner. Volunteer personnel records shall be accorded the same confidentiality as staff personnel records.

3.3.6 Representation of ISSP

Prior to any action or statement, which might significantly affect or obligate ISSP, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from appropriate ISSP's Executive Director. These actions may include, but are not limited to public statements to the press, coalition with other organizations, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of ISSP as specifically indicated within their position descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications. In no case is an ISSP volunteer allowed to engage in lobbying efforts on ISSP's behalf.

3.3.7 Expense Reimbursement

Volunteers must have written authorization from ISSP's Executive Director prior to incurring any expense charged to or to be reimbursed by ISSP. To be reimbursed for any authorized expenses volunteers must follow the same process as ISSP staff.

3.3.8 Exit Interview

At the end of the volunteer assignment or if a volunteer chooses to resign, an exit interview may be requested. The purpose of this exit interview is to assist ISSP in identifying areas of improvement.

3.3.9 **Resign, Service, Discretion, Grievance**

Volunteers may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever the volunteer's relationship with ISSP. Notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible to the volunteer's supervisor.

ISSP may at any time, dismiss the volunteer for grounds, which may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Gross misconduct or insubordination
- Theft of property or misuse of ISSP materials
- Abuse or mistreatment of staff members or other volunteers
- Failure to abide by ISSP's policies and procedures
- Failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties

If a volunteer has a grievance concerning his/her work with ISSP, they are urged to bring the matter up immediately with the Executive Director or VCC; who is required to investigate the grievance and provide a response or decision within a reasonable period of time.