

BFC Volunteer Expenses Policy

Volunteers are integral to supporting the vision of Bridges for Communities (BFC): to make Bristol a welcoming and inclusive city and to support refugees and asylum seekers who are isolated.

BFC greatly appreciates and values the time given by volunteers to help support this vision and we are committed to ensuring that volunteers are able to claim back all costs necessary to perform their role if they wish to do so.

BFC needs to ensure that any expenditure is relevant to our charitable objectives and can be fully justified, therefore all expenses should be reasonable and not excessive.

It is also important that there is transparency with all payments and therefore all claims must always be supported by the relevant receipts for auditing purposes.

What can be claimed?

There are multiple ways an individual can volunteer with BFC and each of these roles may have different guidelines for claiming out of pocket expenses. As a result, outlined below is guidance on what expenses can be claimed by volunteers in each role.

b.friend

- Subsistence costs such as buying a tea or coffee for themselves and the person that they are meeting with or supporting. This would not normally include food unless they have asked the prior permission of the Project Manager.
- Volunteer's travel costs associated with visiting the b.friend partner e.g. to and from a local meeting place.
- If a volunteer uses their own car to get to and from the site of volunteering, contribution towards car parking may be claimed for, up to a maximum of £5 per day. Payment must only be paid to cover the duration of the time volunteering and wherever possible volunteers must use the cheapest car park available.

Resettlement b.friend

- Subsistence costs such as buying a tea or coffee for themselves and the person that they are meeting with or supporting. This would not normally include food unless they have asked the prior permission of the project manager.
- Travel costs associated with visiting the b.friend partner e.g. to and from a local meeting place.
- Travel costs (once a month for the volunteer and befriending partner) when accompanying a b.friend partner on a journey e.g. bus fare

- If a volunteer uses their own car to get to and from the site of volunteering, contribution towards car parking may be claimed for, up to a maximum of £5 per day. Payment must only be paid to cover the duration of the time volunteering and wherever possible volunteers must use the cheapest car park available.

Task volunteer

- Travel costs associated with the assigned task e.g. to and from the home of a resettled family.
- If a volunteer uses their own car to get to and from the site of volunteering, contribution towards car parking may be claimed for, up to a maximum of £5 per day. Payment must only be paid to cover the duration of the time volunteering and wherever possible volunteers must use the cheapest car park available.

Peer volunteer

- Travel costs within the month will be covered with the provision of a bus pass.

Walk With Me

- Volunteer's travel costs associated with travelling to and from a local meeting place.
- If a volunteer uses their own car to get to and from the site of volunteering, contribution towards car parking may be claimed for, up to a maximum of £5 per day. Payment must only be paid to cover the duration of the time volunteering and wherever possible volunteers must use the cheapest car park available.

Craft Collective

- Volunteer's travel costs associated with travelling to and from a local meeting place.
- If a volunteer uses their own car to get to and from the site of volunteering, contribution towards car parking may be claimed for, up to a maximum of £5 per day. Payment must only be paid to cover the duration of the time volunteering and wherever possible volunteers must use the cheapest car park available.

There may be exceptional circumstances where as a volunteer it may be desirable or necessary to make additional expenditure as part of this voluntary role. Any additional costs to those laid out above should be confirmed with the project manager via email prior to the expenditure.

For guidance on claiming expenses for all other voluntary roles not referenced specifically in this policy, please speak with the relevant Project Manager to gain prior authorisation.

How to claim expenses

Expenses should be claimed before the end of each following month, submitting the receipts on Volunteero or in an email to the Project Manager for approval. Expenses claimed more than a month later than the end of the month to which they relate may not be paid. For example, expenses incurred in May should be submitted for payment by the end of June.

Expenses submitted will be approved by the project manager and to the finance team for payment.

All expenses will be paid on or near the end of the month by bank transfer.

Car Usage, Mileage & Insurance

Any volunteers using their car in the course of their duties must have an insurance policy that allows business use, and that this insurance covers volunteering, or other confirmation from their insurer that they are allowed to use their vehicle for volunteering purposes. BFC does not cover any additional cost relating to an increase in car insurance. Evidence of insurance that covers volunteering must be provided to the Project Manager along with a copy of the volunteers driving licence. All volunteers have a duty to ensure the vehicle used for volunteering is safe and appropriate for the role, for example, seatbelts are in tack and car seats are used when transporting children.

The mileage rate is to contribute toward the cost of petrol, as well as the costs of running and maintaining the vehicle (servicing, oil, repairs, insurance, MOT, tax). Bridges for Communities will pay £0.35 per mile for travel in line with the guidance for each volunteer role. Mileage needs to be claimed using the Expense Claim Form, which can be sent to the volunteer from the Project Manager upon request. Mileage expenses can be submitted either via the Volunteero App, or via email to the relevant Project Manager.

Further information

Volunteers are expected to act honestly and responsibly and to submit fair and reasonable agreed out of pocket expenses in accordance with this policy. Any abuse or misuse of volunteer expense payments will be treated very seriously and may result in a volunteer being asked to cease their volunteering.

If you have any questions that are not covered by this policy then please be in contact with your project manager for further guidance.