

DEEPSTAMBH FOUNDATION

Volunteering Policy

Applicable Locations: Pune (Head Office) • Jalgaon • Delhi • USA

[A] Scope and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear framework for volunteer engagement at Deepstambh Foundation. Volunteering gives individuals an opportunity to contribute to building an inclusive society, while also enabling their own personal and professional growth.

Volunteers are at the heart of our mission. Deepstambh Foundation works to provide holistic, quality education for persons with disabilities, transgender individuals, youth from orphans backgrounds and lower income groups across our locations in Pune, Jalgaon, Delhi, and the USA. Volunteers play a vital role in making this possible.

We value the diverse skills and experiences that volunteers bring. They help us:

- Deliver our programmes more effectively through their expertise and commitment.
- Expand our reach within communities — both on-campus and remotely.
- Bring fresh ideas and perspectives that strengthen our work.
- Reinforce our credibility by freely choosing to support our mission.

[B] Legal Status of Volunteers

Volunteers of Deepstambh Foundation are not employees of the organisation. They are not entitled to staff benefits, nor are they governed by the Foundation's Staff Regulations or Staff Rules. However, all volunteers are governed by this policy and by the terms outlined in their Volunteer Contract and Description of Assignment.

The Conditions of Service (COS) set out the specific rules and expectations for volunteer assignments. The COS applies exclusively to volunteers and may be updated by the Foundation from time to time. Volunteers will be informed of any such changes in a timely manner.

Volunteers are expected to reflect the values of Deepstambh Foundation through their conduct and actions at all times.

[C] Privileges

Volunteers may receive certain privileges depending on the nature of their assignment and applicable agreements. The following conditions apply:

- All privileges are in accordance with existing agreements. No special arrangements will be made solely for volunteering purposes unless pre-approved.
- On-campus volunteers at Pune and Jalgaon will be provided with accommodation and meals during their stay, as mentioned on our website.
- Volunteers assigned to a government body or institution will be subject to the rules and regulations of that institution.
- Some assignments may involve working in community or field settings. Volunteers are encouraged to review the details of their assignment before accepting.

[D] Volunteer Engagement

Who Can Volunteer: Anyone with a heart to serve is welcome — students, working professionals, homemakers, and retirees alike. Deepstambh Foundation is committed to diversity and inclusion in its volunteer recruitment across all locations.

Age Requirement: Individuals aged 18 years and above may volunteer.

How to Apply: Prospective volunteers must fill out an application form via the Deepstambh Foundation website (deepstambh.org/volunteer) or through a shared link. This will be followed by an orientation session — online or in-person — to introduce the Foundation's mission, values, and available volunteer roles.

[E] Operational Protocol

Roles and Responsibilities: Volunteers will not take on fiduciary, managerial, supervisory, or certifying roles ordinarily held by staff. However, they may take on capacity-building or expanded responsibilities based on specific agreements. All tasks and expected outcomes will be documented in the Volunteer Engagement Contract and supervised by a designated reporting manager.

Types of Volunteering: Volunteers may contribute on-campus (Pune, Jalgaon or Delhi) or remotely. On-campus opportunities include teaching and mentorship, event coordination, and administrative support. Remote opportunities include content creation, online tutoring, fundraising, and outreach.

Time Commitment: Volunteers must commit to a defined schedule — whether a fixed number of hours per week, weekend sessions, or a project-based timeline. The Foundation will provide the necessary support and guidance throughout the engagement.

Supervision and Support: Each volunteer will be assigned a Volunteer Coordinator who will serve as the primary point of contact for guidance, queries, and support. Volunteers are expected to provide periodic updates on their work as required.

Recognition: Deepstambh Foundation recognises the contributions of all its volunteers. This may include certificates of appreciation, letters of recommendation, or acknowledgement at organisational events.

Conflict Resolution: Any conflict between volunteers, team members, or beneficiaries should first be raised with the Programme Head at the relevant location. If unresolved, the matter will be escalated through the Foundation's institutional mechanisms.

Exit Process: On conclusion of an assignment, volunteers will be guided through a structured exit process, which may include a feedback session and handover of any work in progress.

[F] Legal and Ethical Considerations

Safeguarding: All volunteers must sign and follow Deepstambh Foundation's Safeguarding Policy before starting their assignment. This policy ensures the safety and well-being of our students — many of whom are children and young people with disabilities or from vulnerable backgrounds. Volunteers are expected to treat all beneficiaries and team members with dignity and respect.

Programme Guidelines: Volunteers must follow the Foundation's operational guidelines when engaging with students, communities, institutions, and partner organisations at any location.

Ethical Conduct: All applicable ethical policies will be communicated by the HR & Organisational Development Department. Volunteers are expected to uphold these policies in both letter and spirit, and to maintain the highest standards of integrity and confidentiality throughout their engagement.

[G] Proprietary Rights

All intellectual property — including content, materials, reports, or any other work — developed during a volunteer assignment will be owned by Deepstambh Foundation or the relevant host entity. Volunteers will be granted a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to use such intellectual property only with prior written approval from the Foundation. Unauthorised use or withholding of organisational property may result in disciplinary or legal action.

[H] Policy Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains relevant and effective. Any updates will be communicated to all active and prospective volunteers in a timely manner.

[I] Communication

This policy will be shared with all volunteers upon onboarding and will be accessible on the Deepstambh Foundation website at deepstambh.org/volunteer. Printed copies will be available at our Pune and Jalgaon offices on request.