

ORS Volunteer Handbook

Welcome

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with The OR Society. The OR Society takes the valuable contributions of its volunteers seriously. Volunteering remains central to the ethos of the organisation and the delivery of many of our services. You make a huge difference to what we can do and the quality of services we can provide. Thank you.

We aim to make sure that those who give up their time to support our work feel valued, useful, and proud to be part of The OR Society. This handbook contains important and useful information about volunteering with us. Please read it carefully and keep it somewhere safe to refer to when needed.

If you have any questions about the information in the handbook or during your time volunteering with us, please speak to your point of contact at the Society or the Deputy Executive Director who would be more than happy to help you.

About us

The Operational Research Society is the home of the operational research and analytics community.

We are a member-led organisation supporting professional operational researchers across industry and academia. We promote the understanding and use of operational research in all areas of life, including industry, business, government, health, and education. The Society is a registered charity that does everything from helping OR specialists push the boundaries of the discipline through publications and events to undertaking outreach work aimed at helping everyone from business leaders to schoolchildren find out about the benefits of OR.

Volunteer roles

There are a variety of volunteer opportunities available at The OR Society. These roles are outlined below, along with the relevant links to any additional information required for volunteers.

Board, General Council and other committees

The Society's strategic direction is decided and put into practice by the group of volunteers that make up its board, general council and committees.

Volunteers who serve on a committee are expected to contribute to the committee's aims and objectives and carry out their responsibilities as outlined in the committee's terms of reference. If you do not have a copy of your committee's ToR, please contact the Deputy Executive Director.

Regional Societies

Our regional societies exist to run local events and meetings of interest to its members in a particular region.

All of our guidance and information documents, as well as useful and necessary resources for running The OR Society's regional groups, can be found [here](#).

Special Interest Groups and Networks

The special interest groups, or SIGs, run in a very similar way to the regional societies – except their focus is on a particular sector (such as defence or analytics) or technique area (such as forecasting).

All of our guidance and information documents, as well as useful and necessary resources for running The OR Society's SIGs, can be found [here](#).

Conferences and other events

The Society runs an extensive events programme. Many of these events have volunteer committees to run them, and teams of stream organisers to help attract the 'content' and to help during the events themselves.

Information about volunteering on a committee or at an event will be provided by the [Event's Manager](#).

Journals

Volunteers make up the editorial teams running the Society's journals and are backed up by a large pool of reviewers who assess the papers that are submitted for publication. For further information, please contact the [Research and Publications Officer](#).

Pro Bono

Our Pro Bono OR scheme connects volunteer analysts with third sector organisations. A tailored handbook for this area of volunteering is available [here](#).

OR in Education (ORiE)

ORiE liaises with teachers, lecturers, students and other STEM organisations to promote OR and raise awareness of the importance of its real-world applications and career potential to students.

A tailored handbook for this area of volunteering is available [here](#).

The OR Society values

We ask all volunteers to adhere to these values:

- Rigorous: to be rooted in evidence and rational analysis.
- Inclusive: to be part of our vibrant, diverse community united by a common passion & purpose.
- Proactive: to lead on improvements to services, processes, systems, and outcomes.
- Supportive: to be helpful, responsive and customer focussed.

Volunteer policies

As a volunteer, you need to be aware of, understand, and comply with our policies. All relevant policies are outlined below:

- [Anti-bribery Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy](#)
- [Complaints procedure](#)
- [Expenses policy](#)
- [Data protection policy](#)
- [Health and Safety policy](#)
- [Recruitment and Selection](#)
- [Safeguarding policy](#)
- [Whistleblowing policy](#)

Anti-bribery Policy and Procedure

The Society is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in its business activities in the UK. This policy outlines The Society's position on preventing and prohibiting bribery, in accordance with the Bribery Act 2010. The Society will not tolerate any form of bribery by, or of, its employees, volunteers or consultants, or any person or body acting on its behalf. Senior management is committed to implementing effective measures to prevent, monitor, and eliminate bribery. The Anti-bribery Policy and Procedure can be found on the ORS website.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

The OR Society is committed to respecting equality and diversity in all aspects of our work. We value the contributions of those with diverse backgrounds and experiences and are committed to demonstrating good practice, advancing equality, valuing diversity, and promoting inclusion. We aim to provide a community where everyone feels able to participate fully and achieve their full potential.

Equality is about creating a fairer society, where everyone can take part and where everyone can be all they can be. Equality of opportunity has a legal framework to ensure protected groups are not discriminated against.

Diversity is about recognising and valuing difference, where everyone is respected for who they are.

Inclusion is where people's differences are valued and used to enable everyone to thrive at work.

The Equality Act 2010 protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The Act protects people from discrimination based on the following protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race, religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The OR Society commits to:

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all members are recognised and valued.
- Creating an environment that promotes dignity and respect for every member.
- Not tolerating any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and to discipline those that breach this policy.
- Ensuring opportunities are accessible to all members.
- Encouraging anyone who feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns so we can apply corrective measures.
- Requiring members to treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Regularly reviewing all our practices and procedures so that fairness is maintained at all times.

Complaints Procedure

This disciplinary process applies in the event of any formal allegation or complaint by a member or non-member of the Operational Research Society against one or more of the Society's members. For an allegation or complaint to fall within the scope of this process it must concern a potential breach of the OR Society's [Code of Professional Conduct](#), rules, regulations, or procedures. The Complaints Procedure can be found on the ORS website [here](#).

Expense policy

The OR Society will reimburse the costs incurred by ORS volunteers following the guidelines below.

To claim for expenses, you must use The OR Society's Expense Claim Form which can be found on the ORS website.

All expenses incurred in one month must be claimed by submitting your expense claim form as soon as possible, with the supporting receipts for every item of expense together with an appropriate VAT receipt where charged. The Society reserves the right to delay and withhold

any payment where written approval has not been sought or where the specified deadline has not been met.

Travel Expenses

Wherever practicable, public transport should be used. Volunteers are asked to make every reasonable effort to find and use the cheapest fare (e.g. travelling standard class, booking advance or off-peak tickets, etc.). If rail travel is not practical, a car may be used. Mileage can be claimed at 45p/mile, along with any parking fees.

Any use of your own car for volunteering is subject to you:

- holding a full UK driving licence;
- ensuring that your car is roadworthy and fully registered; and
- holding comprehensive motor insurance that provides for volunteering use.

The Society accepts no liability for any accident, loss or damage, or claim arising out of any journey that you make whilst volunteering. The OR Society will not pay for the cost of any insurance policy on your own car. No costs will be incurred by The Society for any maintenance to personal vehicles.

Food Expenses

The OR Society will reimburse costs for subsistence/meals where necessary, provided a visit is longer than four hours in duration and food is not provided. The value that can be reimbursed is £10 per person for every four consecutive hours a volunteer is on Society business.

Overnight Accommodation

Volunteers are sometimes required to use overnight accommodation when:

- An event/meeting or series of meetings lasts more than one day.
- An event or meeting has an early start or late finish which means it is impractical or unreasonable to travel there or back on the day.
- It's more cost-effective to travel off-peak and stay overnight before a meeting that starts early.

The following are the maximum hotel costs that should be used (room-only price):

- Within greater London £150
- Everywhere else £100

These are room-only costs. Volunteers are encouraged to pre-order breakfast when making the booking if it's cheaper to do so.

There may be circumstances when suitable accommodation cannot be found within the agreed limits. In these situations, permission can be granted by the Executive Director.

Data protection policy

Volunteers must maintain confidentiality during their time volunteering with The OR Society.

Volunteers do not have a contractual duty of confidentiality but are subject to a common law duty of confidentiality. If you are given information 'in confidence' you are legally obliged to keep it confidential. It is also important for volunteers to understand the Data Protection Act.

Data retention

Volunteers should be aware that when they are acting on behalf of The OR Society, the data they collect or hold belongs to The OR Society, not to them personally.

The OR Society is the data controller of the data and the volunteer is the data processor of the data. The data processor agrees to process data only in accordance with [data protection laws](#) and in particular on the following conditions:

- The data processor agrees not to transfer the data to any outside party without the consent of the data controller, so as to keep all personal data confidential.
- Should the data be copied from the servers of the data controller then the data processor will ensure appropriate security measures are in place to protect the data, e.g. password protected.
- The data processor will immediately inform the data controller if there is a data breach or incident where the data may have been compromised. Contact dpo@theorSociety.com
- Upon completion of the project, the data processor will ensure that they no longer store the data and dispose of any paper documents appropriately.

The OR Society's Online Privacy policy is publicly available [here](#).

Health and Safety policy

The OR Society recognises and accepts its responsibility to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and health of its volunteers, and of other persons who may be affected by its' activities.

The OR Society's Responsibilities

We regularly review volunteering best practices to ensure that safety hazards are identified, and accidents are avoided where practicable. We will regularly monitor the safety of any equipment provided for use by volunteers. We will review our volunteer risk assessments annually.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers are obliged to take reasonable care for their own safety and for others who may be affected by their acts or omissions and to co-operate fully with us in the arrangements made in relation to Health and Safety matters.

Should you feel concerned over any health and safety aspects of your volunteering, this should be brought to the attention of the Deputy Executive Director immediately.

Fire Safety

When entering a new building, always make sure you have familiarised yourself with all emergency procedures including the fire procedures. You need to know where the designated fire exits are and where the fire assembly point is. This information should be available from the event organiser.

First Aid

All accidents and incidents must be reported as soon as possible to the onsite health and safety officer, whether any person has been injured or not. If you feel that it is a real emergency, please contact the emergency services immediately. You must also notify the Deputy Executive Director who will record the accident or injury that occurred.

Accidents, Near Misses, Hazards and Safety Risks

We all have a responsibility to report any potential Health or Safety hazard including infectious or other diseases, accidents, near misses or injuries associated with volunteering. Any accident, near miss or potential issue with ORS equipment should be reported to the Deputy Executive Director, who will keep a record.

Volunteers should be aware of potential trip hazards, both for their own safety and the safety of those around them. Ensure that any personal belongings or boxes from stand set-up (where relevant) are stored safely, ideally under a table.

Personal Safety

If you are travelling to an event, let someone know where you are going and what time you are expecting to return. If you think that you are going to run over your original timescales, let them know.

If you are at all concerned that you are being placed in a dangerous situation through your volunteering, you must discuss this with the Deputy Executive Director.

Manual Handling

Volunteering at an event may involve carrying boxes, moving furniture, or other manual handling. Please follow the guidelines below when carrying or moving anything.

Do:

- Lift with your legs bent.
- Keep your back as straight as possible.
- Keep the load close to your body.
- Hold the load at opposite corners.
- Ask for help if you want assistance.

Don't:

- Keep your legs straight.
- Bend your back.
- Carry something you are uncomfortable lifting.

Smoking while volunteering

It is against the law to smoke within a public building or in any enclosed area, and in business vehicles that are used by more than one person. Volunteers who smoke are permitted to take reasonable smoking breaks while volunteering however they must be taken in designated outside areas.

Expectant Mothers

New and expectant mothers must inform the Deputy Executive Director of their condition as soon as possible to enable us to review practices and to ensure the wellbeing of the persons concerned.

Alcohol and Drugs

You must ensure that you are fit to carry out your volunteering duties and not be impaired by the effects of alcohol or drugs, either legal or illegal. This includes the residual effects of drinking alcohol the night before.

Recruitment & Selection

The variety of skills and experience that volunteers can bring to the OR Society is one of our strongest assets.

The OR Society is committed to promoting diversity amongst its employees, volunteers, and members, and as such we seek to ensure there are no barriers to volunteering with The Society.

The following section outlines how volunteers are recruited for various posts.

Board, General Council, and other committee members

Each year, new committee members are nominated to fill the advertised vacancies and sit for a term of three years. The OR Society has a Nomination committee to ensure these committees have a succession plan which will provide continuity of cover and, where possible, encourage multiple applications for each relevant vacancy, to engage the membership in elections for vacancies.

Regional Societies and Special Interest Groups

Vacancies for committee members will be advertised on the OR Society webpage. The committees are elected annually by members of the group.

Conferences and other events

Vacancies for conference committees are advertised in InsideOR and on the OR Society webpage.

Journals

Editorial vacancies are advertised in Inside OR and on the OR Society webpage.

Pro Bono and ORiE

Anyone can volunteer for Pro Bono and ORiE.

You can register to become a Pro Bono volunteer [here](#).

You can register to become an ORiE volunteer [here](#).

Safeguarding policy

As an organisation that delivers charitable activities, The OR Society has a duty to safeguard volunteers, employees, and participants. We aim to run The OR Society in a way that actively prevents harm, harassment, bullying, abuse, and neglect. We have rules and procedures in place which keep people safe while they are taking part in our activities. We are ready to respond safely and well if there is a problem. Everyone in the organisation has a role to play in safeguarding, it is part of our day-to-day activities.

Our safeguarding policy is publicly available on the OR Society website and is reviewed on an annual basis.

Whistleblowing policy

The OR Society is committed to ensuring the highest possible standards of public service. This policy is intended to cover and help volunteers who have major concerns over wrongdoing within The OR Society where, due to unlawful or criminal action or other inappropriate acts or omissions, the interests of others or that of The OR Society is at risk.

Our Whistleblowing policy is publicly available on the OR Society website and is reviewed every three years.

Finally

We hope you have found this handbook useful.

We would welcome suggestions about this handbook and if there is additional information that you feel would be useful. Please contact the Deputy Executive Director with any comments or feedback about volunteering.

This handbook will be reviewed on an annual basis.