

The **Thalidomide** Trust

Interested in becoming a Beneficiary Volunteer?

Thank you for your interest in finding out more about becoming a Beneficiary Volunteer with the Trust. This pack provides some information to help you decide whether volunteering is for you.

Being a beneficiary volunteer can be a rewarding experience which benefits the whole beneficiary community as well as you as an individual. It is essential to the success of volunteering in the Trust that all beneficiaries have confidence and trust in the integrity of beneficiary volunteers, so, although any beneficiary can apply to be a volunteer, not all applicants will be successful. You must demonstrate that you have the skills we are looking for as well as understanding the sensitive and important commitment you are making.

To ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their abilities fairly we have a clear and simple but robust recruitment process in place.

- We write a clear role description and person specification that sets out the skills and experience that is required to undertake each beneficiary volunteer role.
- We have a simple application form where you detail how your skills and experience match the person specification (a blank application form is included in this pack so you can see the information we ask for)
- If your application form shows you may be suitable for the role you will be offered an online or telephone interview with a member of Trust staff and a current volunteer.
- If you demonstrate at the interview that you meet the requirements of the role then we will contact the people you have asked to provide a reference for you (on your application form).

If it has been a long time since you had an interview or had to fill in an application form don't be put off. We can provide some guidance and support to help you make sure you do the best application you can.

If you are successful in your application to become a beneficiary volunteer there are a number of further requirements –

- You will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement and a volunteer agreement (included in this pack)
- You will need to provide a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check – which tells us if you have a criminal record - that we will help you with and pay for.
- You may be required to undertake some training for the role.

We are committed to supporting and developing our beneficiary volunteers as they do a remarkable job and provide highly valued support. We have included some case studies in this pack to give you an idea of what being a beneficiary volunteer involves.

If you are interested and would like to find out more about becoming a beneficiary volunteer, please contact Annabelle Blackham, the Trust's Volunteer Coordinator, on 01480 474074 or Annabelle.blackham@thalidomidetrust.org. If you would find it helpful, we can arrange for one of our existing volunteers to talk to you about their experience of being a beneficiary volunteer.

The Thalidomide Trust

BENEFICIARY VOLUNTEER ROLES

Volunteering can make a real difference to a beneficiary's life whether they are receiving support or offering to support a fellow beneficiary. To meet the changing needs of beneficiaries the Trust is continually developing new roles for beneficiaries to enable them to get involved and contribute their skills.

Our current Beneficiary Volunteer roles are listed below with a brief role description.

1. Connect Volunteer

Overall purpose of role:

You will be helping beneficiaries to access and connect with services within their area by:

- Helping beneficiaries find a local service in order to troubleshoot their particular need (e.g. care, cleaner, dogwalker, benefits advice etc) and support them to access these services. This could involve making telephone calls on the beneficiary's behalf eg to set up appointments, or possibly accompanying them.
- Encouraging and enabling beneficiaries to become more confident and less isolated, by helping them to connect to the services around them.
- Communicating with other Connect Volunteers and the Health and Wellbeing team to provide a joined-up service.

2. Website Engagement Volunteer

Overall purpose of role:

Liaise with Connect Volunteers to source and post topical items of interest on the Trust website forum to promote discussion with the aim of increasing engagement from the wider beneficiary community. This will include:

- Working with Connect Volunteers and the Volunteer Coordinator to identify 'hot topics' amongst beneficiaries that could be included on the website.
 - Identifying relevant articles of interest from the web that would be of interest to beneficiaries and sharing them on the forum.
 - Monitoring and appropriately commenting on forum posts from the beneficiary community.
 - Encouraging other volunteers to comment on forum posts to drive up website traffic, in turn encouraging the wider beneficiary community to engage.
 - If possible, attend local beneficiary events near you to understand issues and topics of interest to the beneficiary community.
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3. Technical Support Workers

There are currently four Technical Support Volunteer roles in the following areas:

- Aids, Equipment & Adaptations
- Smart Home Technology
- Electric Vehicles
- IT and Internet Use

3a. Aids, Equipment and Adaptations

Overall purpose of the role:

- To keep up to date with the latest aids and adaptations.
- To share your knowledge with other beneficiaries and help them think about what will meet their individual needs.
- To provide support to find a supplier and with installation (if required).
- To encourage beneficiaries to think about how aids and adaptations could help them stay mobile and independent.
- To provide information about aids and adaptations for the website to ensure it is up to date.

3b. Smart Home Technology

Overall purpose of the role:

- To keep up to date with Smart Home technology.
- To share your knowledge with other beneficiaries and advise them on the suitability of this technology to meet their needs.
- To provide support to find a supplier and/or install the technology in their home.
- To provide information and case studies for the website to ensure it is up to date.

3c. Electric Vehicles

Overall purpose of the role:

- To keep up to date with electric vehicles.
- To share your knowledge with other beneficiaries and help them consider the suitability of an electric vehicle to meet their needs.
- To provide support to find more information and compare different options.
- To provide information and case studies for the website to ensure it is up to date.

3d. IT and Internet Use

Overall purpose of the role:

- To keep up to date with accessible IT equipment that will meet beneficiaries need.
- To help beneficiaries to get set up online and develop their internet skills to be able to use the internet safely and reliably.
- To help beneficiaries access the Trust website and use the beneficiary forum.

- To provide information and case studies for the website to ensure it is up to date.
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4. Volunteer Health and Wellbeing Champion

Overall purpose of the role:

The purpose of the role is to supporting and encourage beneficiaries to improve their physical and emotional health and wellbeing. This will involve:

- Helping beneficiaries make lifestyle changes, for example:
 - Opportunities to be active e.g. walking group/dog walking
 - Opportunities to connect with others e.g. discussion groups, mutual telephone support
 - Opportunities to focus on healthy eating e.g. weight loss groups, sharing meal plans and recipes
 - Sharing resources to assist with lifestyle changes e.g. fitness tracking, food diaries, forums.
 - Helping beneficiaries to connect with local health and wellbeing services and support them to access these services. For example, activity groups or opportunities, physiotherapists, personal trainers, Slimming World etc.
 - Encouraging and supporting other beneficiaries in making positive changes to their lifestyles.
 - Identifying health and wellbeing topics of interest for the Trust website.
 - Being active on the forum on health and wellbeing issues and encouraging others to engage.
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5. TalkTogether Volunteer

Overall purpose of the role:

- To provide a consistent and reliable 30 minute weekly telephone call to another beneficiary.
- To encourage and support them to become more confident and less lonely and isolated through your empathy and support.
- To make comfortable conversation that allows you to appropriately build trust and confidence and share experiences.

Specific Requirements

Time Commitment - You will need to commit to a minimum of one 30 minute call each week for a minimum of a year wherever possible. You will have an opportunity to discuss your availability as part of your volunteer interview, including your ability to commit more time if desired.

Communications Technology - You will need access to the internet, an email account and a telephone to become a TalkTogether volunteer. If you have a visual impairment, or a disability that may require specialist equipment or telephone/IT support, please highlight this on your application in question 2 and we will discuss this at your interview.

6. Lift Up Volunteer

Overall purpose of the role:

- To guide beneficiaries who wish to engage through the 6 weeks Lift Up programme
 - To encourage and support beneficiaries to engage with the process taking a step at a time to achieve optimum result from the process
 - To report any issues to the Lift Up coordinator promptly in order they are addressed as soon as possible
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7. Virtual Meeting Host/Facilitator Volunteers

Overall purpose of role:

- To create a welcoming atmosphere during online video sessions which provide connection opportunities for beneficiaries
 - To facilitate introductions where a new beneficiary attends or when others have not met before
 - To actively manage an online session ensuring that all participants have the opportunity to speak if they wish, are muted if required, and participants enabled to screen share if required (training available)
 - To be prepared before a session with open questions in order to keep the conversation lively and engaging
 - To liaise with the Volunteer Coordinator and other volunteers regarding ideas for future events
 - To report back to the Volunteer Coordinator in the event of someone not attending a session
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Role Applied For:

The Thalidomide Trust

Volunteer Application Form

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer.

Please provide as much information as you can on this form. This form will be kept strictly confidential.

Section 1: Personal Information

Your name	
Address	
Email address	

Section 2: Previous experience

1 Have you been a volunteer before? Yes No

If yes, please provide a brief description of the role and the organisation you volunteered for and tell us what you enjoyed about it:

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Section 3: Availability

- 2 When would you be available to volunteer for the Trust? Tell us how will you fit in volunteering around your other commitments ?**

Section 4: Skills, Knowledge and Hobbies

- 3 What skills and experience do you have that you think will make you effective for this beneficiary volunteer role (please refer to the role description and person specification)**

4 Please provide details of your interests and hobbies

5 Please explain why you would like to be a volunteer. What do you hope to gain?

6 Do you have any particular needs to enable you to fulfil the volunteer role you have applied for? For example, specialist equipment such as a telephone, IT support

Section 5: References

- 7 Can you please provide us with the name and contact details of two people who would provide us with a reference for you. (Please note that we will not contact your referees until we have spoken to directly and confirm you want to proceed.)

Reference 1

Name	
House Name / Number	
Street Name	
Town City	
Postcode	
Email address	
Telephone number:	
Relationship to Applicant :	

Reference 2

Name	
House Name / Number	
Street Name	
Town City	
Postcode	
Email address	
Telephone number:	
Relationship to Applicant:	

Please return your completed application form **by post to** Annabelle Blackham, The Thalidomide Trust, 1 Eaton Court Road, Eaton Socon, St Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 8ER
or Email the application form to: hello@thalidomidetrust.org

CONFIDENTIALITY FACTSHEET

Q What is confidentiality and why is it important?

- A** Confidentiality is defined as ‘the state of keeping or being kept secret or private’. Confidentiality is one of the key principles underpinning the relationship between the Trust and its beneficiaries.

What this means is that you can be certain that the staff within the Trust respect your privacy, understand and comply with the law and will not tell people outside the Trust personal things about you, without your consent. This is important for your peace of mind and for giving you confidence that you can talk to us.

Q What type of confidential information does the Trust record?

- A** As a beneficiary, we want to make sure that we have the correct information to enable us to communicate with you and advise and/or support you appropriately.

We keep the information we collect up to date, accurate and relevant. The kind of data we collect includes the following examples:-

Personal details

- Full name and address
- Date of birth
- Telephone numbers (landline and mobile)
- E-mail address
- Details of Third party contacts – e.g. your partner, carer or advocate.

Financial information

- Bank account details (so we can pay your Annual General and Health Grant)
- The amount of your annual grants and the balance on your Trust accounts
- Details of any Major Advances and Emergency Advances.

Health and wellbeing information

- Details of your original Thalidomide damage
- Any health problems and medical information you have told us about
- Records of your enrolment in research studies or responses to questionnaires
- Details of any aids and adaptations you use.

Q Who sees my confidential information?

- A** The information held on individual beneficiaries is only seen by Trust staff. All staff have access to your information as this allows the team to work together to support you and meet your needs. It also saves you the bother of having to explain things repeatedly, to different people, when you call us.

Confidential information about individual beneficiaries is not shared with the NAC (although NAC members also sign a confidentiality agreement) and NAC members are not party to any discussions in Trust meetings where personal identifiable information is shared.

CONFIDENTIALITY FACTSHEET

Q How can I be assured that that Trust staff will keep my information confidential?

A All staff working for the Trust have been fully trained about confidentiality. They have also signed an agreement as part of their contract of employment stating that they will adhere to the Trust's **Data Protection Policy** and treat all sensitive information on individual beneficiaries confidentially.

Q How will my information be stored?

A Individual beneficiary information is recorded on a secure computer system. Where paper records are made, these are filed securely in an individual beneficiary file in a locked cabinet. Only Trust staff have access to each beneficiary's records.

Q Will my confidential information be disclosed to anyone else?

A In almost all circumstances your personal, identifiable information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Trust without your full, informed consent.

Where information needs to be shared; for example where we need to write to your GP on a specific health issue; we will ask for your consent first, by letter or e-mail. We will show you a copy of any letter before we send it. And if for some reason we are unable to share the letter with you we will inform you and explain why.

If you have been referred to one of the Trust's beneficiary volunteers for support or agree to have a Holistic Needs Assessment done by a volunteer, they will have access to some personal information - such as your address and telephone number - with your consent. If you choose to share other confidential information with them, this will only be disclosed to Trust staff with your consent and will not be shared with anyone else.

Q Are there any circumstances in which information would be disclosed?

A There are some circumstances where we would disclose your personal information with others. If the Trust staff thought you, or another person, were at serious risk of harm, we would have a duty under our **Safeguarding Policy** to inform the relevant authorities. Where possible we would let you know before sharing your information.

Q What if there is something I don't want widely known?

A All the Trust team are non-judgemental professionals, with a high regard for each beneficiary's wish for privacy. However if you are concerned about a specific piece of personal information that you feel should not be shared with the whole staff team, please let us know and one of the Management team (Deborah, Katy or Suzanne) will talk to you about what we can do to restrict access to that information.

Q What happens if I feel my confidentiality has been breached?

A A breach of confidentiality can be very upsetting. It can weaken the relationship between you as a beneficiary and the Trust. If you feel this has happened, the Trust will investigate fully and take appropriate action in accordance with our **Data Protection policy**.

CONFIDENTIALITY FACTSHEET

Q Can I ask to see my personal information?

A Under the Data Protection Act 1998 you have the right to ask to see the information we hold on you. To do so, you will need to contact the Trust, either by telephone 01480 474074 or e-mail hello@thalidomidetrust.org and ask for a 'Subject Access Request' form. You will need to tell us what information you want to see and return this to the Trust office, where your request will be considered by the Director. Due to the sensitive nature of the information, we would generally expect beneficiaries to come to the Trust office to view the information.

Q What if there is something I don't want widely known?

A You can download a copy of our **Data Protection policy** from the Trust website or request a copy by phone 01480 4747074 or email hello@thalidomidetrust.org

If you would like to discuss a specific confidentiality issue, you can call one of the management Team (Deborah, Katy or Suzanne) on 01480 474074.

The **Thalidomide** Trust

Thalidomide Trust Beneficiary Volunteer Agreement

This agreement sets out our commitment to valuing you as a beneficiary volunteer and your commitment to the Trust when you become a beneficiary volunteer.

Our Commitment to you

The Thalidomide Trust agrees to:

1. Provide timely and thorough training as required for you to carry out your agreed role
2. Be clear about your role and the standards expected from you in carrying it out.
3. Provide support and supervision to help you meet the requirements of the role.
4. Be flexible to accommodate your needs as far as possible
5. Provide space for you to discuss any difficult interactions with beneficiaries
6. Reimburse reasonable expenses incurred by you in carrying out agreed tasks related to your volunteer role (in accordance with the Trust Expenses policy).
7. Endeavour to resolve in a fair and just manner any problems, grievances or difficulties which may be encountered while you volunteer with us.

Your Commitment

As a Beneficiary Volunteer of the Thalidomide Trust I agree to:

1. Undertake training as required.
2. Maintain the confidential information of the organisation and of its beneficiaries at all times in line with the Confidentiality Agreement.
3. Feedback any information where there are concerns following conversations with beneficiaries.
4. Advise the Volunteer Co-ordinator of any changes to my availability (e.g. holidays) giving as much notice as possible .
5. Perform my volunteering role to the best of my ability
6. Undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and provide this to the Trust. (The cost of this check will be met by the Trust.)

I,(*full name in capitals*), have read and understood the beneficiary volunteer agreement and the commitment.

Signature

The art of Volunteering - Jacqueline's story

Jacqueline Fleming is a woman of many talents.

Since leaving her job in Marks and Spencer, four or five years ago, she has been helping a friend run a craft shop, selling only items made in Northern Ireland; travelling to Scotland and England in the course of her work.

As well as working in retail she has volunteered for the Thalidomide Trust, on our TalkTogether programme; and run summer art classes on the Ards Peninsula, where she lives, in Northern Ireland.

Jacqui's interest in art has added a new dimension to her volunteering, but it was the TalkTogether work that started her off as a Beneficiary Volunteer.

"I decided to become a volunteer some years ago after surgery to my arms meant I had to reduce my working hours. I'd been thinking about it for a while and decided to find out more.

The Trust talked me through what I would be doing and I told them about the skills I thought I could bring to the role – and my passion for helping and encouraging others.

TalkTogether offers beneficiaries weekly phone calls to stop them feeling isolated, and give them the chance to talk about how they are, and what's happening in their lives.

I did a short training course, over two nights, to learn how to listen as well as how to talk to people, what to say and what to look out for in the course of conversations, respecting confidentiality. I also got support from the team at The Trust, so that I could raise any concerns, ask questions and offload. They were great"

Jacqui found being a TalkTogether volunteer challenging – but very rewarding: -

"It definitely took me out of my comfort zone, but it also helped me gain confidence and support people who were struggling. The best bit was seeing people gain so much from the weekly sessions that they didn't need me anymore!"

Lockdown has taken its toll on all of us – especially in Northern Ireland, where restrictions have been particularly severe, but Jacqui has found respite in volunteering: -

"With the shop having to close, I lost my focus and found I had time on my hands," Jacqui explains, "I was even disorganized in my creative activities, which I've always enjoyed.

I decided to set up a Creative Hub, for beneficiaries, online; inviting them to a monthly craft demo where they could revisit creative activities they might not have done for years, and try something they had never done before. Patchwork, foot painting, wood carving are just some of the things we focus on, as well as beginners' watercolour, and we have also done card-making.

Demand has grown so much we now meet weekly, on Zoom. We have a beginners' watercolour session most weeks, with a demonstration from me to start things off. I send an outline sketch to people beforehand that they can draw from scratch, ready to paint, or print out and fill in.

Zoom was quite daunting at first, but now it's second nature. We're working on card-making and a foot painter has also joined the group."

It's not all about art, though, sometimes the group just meets to chat: -

“Zoom gives everyone the chance to catch up and talk to each other, “Jacqui explains “which is really important, especially at the moment. There are chatty people and quiet people, but they all enjoy a bit of social interaction.”

Jacqueline has been delighted to see how everyone has got so much from the group.

“I love the joy in their faces when they create something” she says “and have seen them grow in confidence as well as ability. I’ve got a lot from the sessions as well. I’ve grown in confidence too, got a new focus and made some great new friends.”

Jacqui would definitely recommend volunteering to other beneficiaries considering it.

“It stretches you,” she reflects, “but it’s also so satisfying watching others ‘grow’, knowing that you have helped them. You also do a lot of growing yourself.”