

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

1. Welcome letter

*"I always wondered why **somebody** didn't do something about that.
Then I realised **I am somebody**."*

Dear **Somebody**,

The Malaysian Centre for Constitutionalism and Human Rights (MCCHR) is founded by, and built on the spirit of volunteerism. Simply put, if there had been no volunteers, there would be no MCCHR today.

Volunteers were the ones who had inspired us to do what we do today. When we first started, we knew we could run this organisation only if we have the support of volunteers. Many of the MCCHR's activities have been implemented by more than 100 dedicated volunteers since its inception on 19 March 2011.

After more than three years, our volunteers have given approximately 2000 hours to execute more than 300 activities; from designing campaign posters to writing scripts for awareness-raising info-videos; from training young lawyers on human rights law to organising fund-raising events, just to name a few.

What do 2000 hours mean to us? Well, 2000 hours are equivalent to 250 working days. If we convert this into labour term, that is equivalent to **somebody** performing a full-time job for more than a year without any monetary gain in return. What's truly wonderful about this is that it wasn't just **somebody**, but many unique individuals who came together to make our work relevant.

For those who have said, "I am that **somebody** and I give a damn", we thank and salute you.

As we grow as an organisation, we realise that we must never forget our roots and how we started. What better way for us to do this than to develop this volunteer handbook to remind us that **somebody** is important and we need them.

This handbook acknowledges your presence in our work and the important role you play in keeping this organisation relevant and effective.

In a nutshell, all we really want to say is that we give a damn about you and we want to put a name to that **somebody** special.

Welcome to MCCHR and we hope you'll enjoy this journey with us.

The MCCHR team

January 2015

2. Volunteer policy

1. Volunteers of the MCCHR shall have the following rights:
 - a) To be treated with respect and dignity by the MCCHR employee(s) at all times;
 - b) To be provided with proper orientation on the organisational structure, prohibited conduct (**see Annex A**), and programmes of the MCCHR prior to the start of their volunteerism;
 - c) To be provided with the information and support necessary for the effective discharge of their assigned tasks;
 - d) To be entitled to participate in the grievance procedure as prescribed in **Annex A** should a volunteer feel his/her rights has been violated;
2. Volunteers of the MCCHR shall have the following responsibilities:
 - a) Treat the volunteering opportunity as a professional exercise. Volunteers shall observe all applicable rules, procedures, code of conduct, instructions and directives of the MCCHR;
 - b) Refrain from any conduct that would adversely affect the MCCHR and abstain from engaging in activities incompatible with the aims, objectives and interest of the MCCHR;
 - c) Adhere to the code of conduct (**see Annex B**) signed with the MCCHR;
 - d) Volunteers are not employees of the MCCHR and therefore cannot represent the MCCHR in any official capacity, unless authorised;
3. Termination of volunteering service
 - a) A volunteer may terminate his/her service by providing his/her assigned supervisor notice within seven (7) days. He/she may be asked to go through an exit interview upon termination to provide the volunteer an opportunity to share feedback of his/her experience with the MCCHR.
 - (a) The MCCHR reserves the right to terminate the service of a volunteer at any time if the volunteer has brought the MCCHR into disrepute, or undertake any activity that the MCCHR deems incompatible with the principles and values of the MCCHR, or found to have engaged in any of the prohibited conduct laid out in **Annex A**.

3. Frequently asked questions

Q: What will I gain from volunteering with the MCCHR?

You will be given an opportunity to become a contributing member of society, as well as helping the MCCHR grow as a leading human rights institution in Malaysia.

You will experience personal growth and professional development as you will be exposed to a diverse range of activities and challenges you would not normally experience in a classroom or office

environment. For example, you may be given an opportunity to work with the media on an interview, lead a training session for youths or attend an international human rights conference. You will also get to expand your circle of professional and personal network as you meet passionate people from diverse and interesting backgrounds.

You will be able to learn how to implement projects with limited funding; a skill any employer would appreciate.

You will be able to use the MCCHR's community space to organise event(s) that complements the objectives of the MCCHR for free (the date and time of the event is subject to the availability of the space).

Q: Do I need specific skills or qualifications?

No, unless specified by the project officer.

Q: How much time do I need to commit as a volunteer?

There are short-term assignments ranging from a one-off project to long term projects of up to 12 months or more. The MCCHR's goal is to provide a variety of volunteer work that suits the volunteer's skills, interests and availability.

Please speak to our project officer to determine the amount of time you need to commit to a particular project.

Q: Do I need to travel out of the city?

Rarely, but you may occasionally be asked to do day or overnight trips outside the city to conduct training workshops or participate in community meetings.

Q: Must I be able to speak Malay?

No.

Q: Can I claim any out-of-pocket expense incurred while volunteering?

In general, volunteers are entitled to travel claims if they are asked to travel out of the city (Kuala Lumpur and Klang Valley).

Please check with the project officer prior to you committing to any project.

Q: Will I be insured for any personal injury suffered from an accident occurred while volunteering?

No, the MCCHR does not provide insurance of any kind for its volunteers.

Q: Do you provide any training opportunity?

Yes, the MCCHR has conducted trainings on anti-harassment, design thinking, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and training-of-trainers for the *IdolaDemokrasi* workshop for volunteers.

Sometimes, you may even be asked to represent the MCCHR at international conferences, depending on your eligibility.

Q: What happens if I am unable to complete a project or commit to the hours required?

Although the MCCHR expects volunteers to treat volunteerism as a professional exercise, it understands that volunteers may become busy with work and other commitments. Please inform the project officer as soon as possible if you are unable to continue with the commitment. When your schedule frees up, please consider volunteering for another assignment.

Q: Will I be given a certificate of participation or a reference upon successful completion of my service?

Yes.

Q: Can children under the age of 18 volunteer?

Yes, but only with a written consent from their parents or legal guardians.

ANNEX A: PROHIBITED CONDUCT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Any form of discrimination or harassment, including sexual or gender harassment, as well as physical or verbal abuse and abuse of authority is prohibited.

- i. Discrimination is any unfair treatment or arbitrary distinction based on a person's race, sex, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, social origin or other status. Discrimination may be an isolated event affecting one person or a group of persons similarly situated, or may manifest itself through harassment or abuse of authority.
- ii. Harassment is any improper and unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person. Harassment may take the form of words, gestures or actions which tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate or embarrass another or which, create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Harassment normally implies a series of incidents. Disagreement on work performance or on other work related issues is normally not considered harassment and is not dealt with under the provisions of this policy but in the context of performance management.
- iii. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. While typically involving a pattern of behaviour, it can take the form of a single incident. Sexual harassment may occur between persons of the opposite or same sex. Both males and females can be either the victims or the offenders.
- iv. Abuse of authority is the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority against another person. This is particularly serious when a person uses his or her influence, power or authority to improperly influence the career or employment conditions of another, including, but not limited to, appointment, assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation or

promotion. Abuse of authority may also include conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment which includes, but is not limited to, the use of intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion. Discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, are particularly serious when accompanied by abuse of authority.

Volunteers shall not threaten, intimidate or otherwise engage in conduct intended, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the ability of other volunteers or employees of the MCCHR to discharge their official functions. Volunteers shall not threaten, retaliate or attempt to retaliate against such volunteers or MCCHR employees exercising their rights and duties under the Volunteer Handbook.

Volunteers shall not intentionally misrepresent their functions, official title or the nature of their duties to any entities or persons.

Volunteers shall not intentionally alter, destroy, falsify or misplace or render useless any official document, record or file entrusted to them by virtue of their functions, which document, record or file is intended to be kept as part of the records of the MCCHR.

Volunteers shall not offer nor promise any favour, gift, remuneration or any other personal benefit to MCCHR employees or to any third party with a view to causing him or her to perform, fail to perform or delay the performance of any official act. Similarly, volunteers shall neither seek nor accept any favour, gift, remuneration or any other personal benefit from MCCHR employees or any third party in exchange for performing, failing to perform or delaying the performance of any official act.

All volunteers have the right to complain about any prohibited conduct should it occur. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Every effort will be made to ensure that volunteers making complaints and others, who give evidence or information in connection with the complaint, will not be victimised.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If volunteers feel aggrieved about an aspect of their work, working conditions or conditions of service, the following procedure is designed to ensure that all volunteers have a fair and consistent means of taking up such grievances. The procedure is intended to provide a mechanism for resolving any grievance quickly and practically and should therefore reduce the likelihood of disputes arising.

The procedure is not, however, intended as a means of taking issue with MCCHR's organisation or structure. This procedure does not apply in cases where a volunteer is dissatisfied with any disciplinary action taken in which circumstances the disciplinary appeals procedure should be utilised.

Wherever possible, individual grievances should be resolved on an informal one-to-one basis with a volunteer's supervisor. Where such discussion does not resolve the matter, the following stages should apply:

Stage 1: Discussion of the Grievance between Volunteer and the Chief Executive Officer

The volunteer may request in writing a formal meeting to state their grievance and may be accompanied to that meeting by another volunteer. The Chief Executive Officer shall consider the points made by the volunteer and interview other relevant parties. On completion of the investigation, the Chief Executive Officer should communicate his or her response in writing within five (5) working days. If the grievance is initiated by the Chief Executive Officer, Stage 2 of the grievance procedure will automatically apply.

Stage 2: Discussion of the Grievance between Volunteer and the Directors of Liberal Banter Sdn. Bhd.

If the volunteer remains aggrieved with the decision under Stage 1 of the procedure, he or she may raise the matter in writing with any one of the Directors of Liberal Banter Sdn. Bhd. The grievance should be acknowledged in writing and a date set for the meeting. At that meeting, any one of the Directors of Liberal Banter Sdn. Bhd will consider the views expressed by the volunteer concerned followed by the Chief Executive Officer who will attend the meeting to explain the reasons for his or her original decision under Stage 1 of the procedure. A decision will be conveyed to all parties concerned within five (5) working days.

Stage 3: Arbitration

Should the grievance still remain unresolved following all stages of conciliation, each side will have the unilateral right to refer the matter to arbitration.

ANNEX B: VOLUNTEER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

1. I will ensure that I undertake my duties in the interest of the MCCHR. I will uphold and promote the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct;
2. I will be guided by the motivation to devote my knowledge and abilities without regard to financial benefit;
3. I will ensure that my conduct is consistent with and reflects the principles and values of the MCCHR;
4. I will show respect for all persons equally regardless of race, gender, religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, language, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, political conviction, or any other distinguishing feature. In the spirit of respect for all persons, any form of discrimination or harassment, including request for sexual favours or sexual harassment, as well as physical or verbal abuse is strictly prohibited;
5. Although I am not expected to relinquish my political conviction, I will not engage in any activity that may be inconsistent with the non-partisanship required of persons affiliated with the MCCHR;
6. I will avoid any action and, in particular, any public statement, which may adversely reflect the MCCHR;
7. During my volunteering period, I may be asked to contribute to communication initiatives, including media activities that promote the work of the MCCHR. I am expected to ensure that such communications are approved by the MCCHR, prior to release and distribution; and
8. I shall not disclose any confidential information obtained in the course of my volunteering service to any third parties without prior written consent from the MCCHR. This includes but not limited to information pertaining to financial status and operations such as budget information, donations of money or gifts in kind, information pertaining to staff or other volunteers. I shall not discuss these matters after I have left my volunteer position at the MCCHR.

ANNEX C: LIST OF VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

The MCCHR offers a comprehensive list of volunteering opportunities as seen below.

1.	UndiMsia!		
A.	<p>Information (Providing non-politically biased and user-friendly information on issues affecting young Malaysians)</p>	<p>i.</p> <p>ii.</p> <p>iii.</p>	<p>Production of information, education and communications (IEC) materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Researcher b. Copy/script-writer c. Editor d. Graphic designer e. Translator f. Director for videos g. Editor for videos h. Cast for videos i. Subtitling for videos j. Distribution of IEC materials <p><i>IdolaDemokrasi</i> workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop training manual b. Trainer c. Facilitator d. Workshop organiser <p>Resource centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Catalogue books b. Write book review c. Event planner and organiser
B.	<p>Process (Facilitating young Malaysians in their engagement with elected representatives and community leaders)</p>	<p>i.</p>	<p>MyMP project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data collector b. Web-editor c. Web-developer d. Web-designer
C.	<p>Action (Empowering young Malaysians to form youth action groups)</p>	<p>i.</p> <p>ii.</p>	<p><i>Sekolah Aktivisme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Coach b. Trainer c. Develop coaching manual <p>Strategic Legislative Advocacy Campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Organise community forum, road shows, etc. b. Legal research c. Draft press statement d. Develop campaign materials
2.	Strategic Litigation		
		<p>i.</p> <p>ii.</p> <p>iii.</p> <p>iv.</p>	<p>Court reporter/writer</p> <p>Trainer</p> <p>Researcher</p> <p>Litigator</p>
3.	Other		
		<p>i.</p>	<p>Accountant</p>

	ii. Blog curator iii. Blog editor iv. Blog writer v. Communication strategist vi. Fundraiser vii. Legal trainer viii. Management of volunteers ix. Marketing/Branding consultant x. Merchandise designer xi. Monitoring and evaluation xii. Stock-keeping xiii. Tax consultant
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VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with the MCCHR.

The information you provide will be stored in confidence under the provisions of the Personal Data Protection Act 2010.

Personal details

Name: _____ Mr. Mrs. Miss. Ms.

Postal Address: _____

Telephone: (Home) _____ (Mobile) _____

E-Mail: _____

Date of birth: _____
Day / Month / Year

If you are involved with us as a volunteer and an emergency arises, whom should we contact?

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Telephone: (Home) _____ (Mobile) _____

Your skills and interests

1. Have you ever done any voluntary work before? Yes No

If you answered yes, please tell us a little about the experience.

2. What has motivated you to volunteer with us?

3. Do you have any particular skills or qualities that you could use in your voluntary work?

4. When are you available for voluntary work? My time is flexible

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

5. How long do you intend to volunteer for?

(Note that some opportunities demand long term commitment, e.g. management of volunteers, blog editor and curator, branding consultant, etc.)

Other information

1. How did you find out about volunteering with the MCCHR?

- NGO event/function
- Leaflet/poster
- LoyarBurok website
- UndiMsia! website
- Other website _____
- Word of mouth
- Media Radio / Television / Newspaper
- Other _____

Is there any additional information you would like to bring to our attention? [Eg. Please tell us which project or activities you are interested in. Refer to Annex C for the list of volunteering opportunities offered by the MCCHR]