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Lived Experience Influence and Participation Policy



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1. Introduction

“We’ll work alongside adults and young people especially those who are often ignored, so they can be a powerful force for change with Mind as a partner”
(Minds 2030 strategy)

This policy outlines national Minds approach to involving people with lived experience in shaping our work, including definitions, principles, values, roles and responsibilities, safeguarding, compliance, support, reward, recognition and payment for involvement work.

This policy was created with input from people with lived experience and children and young people we work with as well as Mind staff.

For support or questions around involvement work please refer to [roles and responsibilities](#).

2. Scope

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of national Mind, including employees, apprentices, volunteers, consultants/freelancers, trustees and/or anyone else providing services on behalf of the organisation. It is relevant to those working with people with lived experience, external to our organisation, who influence and participate in our work. It covers involvement work with adults and children and young people.

This policy does not apply to third parties we work with whose opportunities we may be involved in or share.

3. Key definitions

Lived experience is the unique perspective, insight and understanding that comes from living through or having lived through something.

For Mind, this includes:

- People with direct experience of mental health problems.
- Carers, family members and friends with experiences of supporting someone with mental health problems
- People who have experienced marginalisation that affects mental health, such as poverty, racial trauma, or other forms of discrimination.

Influence and Participation is working together with people with lived experience, who are impacted by our work, to co-design support, services & solutions for better mental health for all.

For different types of roles/activities people with lived experience are involved in and our ladder of influence and participation please see [Appendix 1](#).

Employment Status for Lived Experience activities

The contributions of people with lived experience are essential and make a real difference to Minds work. For clarity around employment status for people influencing and participating in our work:

- People involved in influence and participation activities are **not employees** of Mind and are therefore **not eligible for statutory entitlements** such as sick pay, maternity pay, or holiday pay.
- Most involvement activities do **not require a formal contract**, and individuals can choose to end their involvement at any time, without notice or consequence.
- For longer-term involvement, a **consultancy agreement** may be used, where the individual is considered an **independent contractor**.
- Involvement activities are recognised by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) as **‘service user Involvement’** and should not be confused with employment or assessed as capacity for work. People are recruited because of their personal experiences of mental illness and caring.

4. Why we involve people with lived experience in Minds work

Lived experience is a key enabler of Minds strategy:

“We’ll work alongside adults and young people especially those who are often ignored, so they can be a powerful force for change with Mind as a partner”

Minds Quality Mark requires lived experience to be embedded throughout the organisation:

Lived experience influence and participation and the principles of shared decision making are embedded throughout the organisation and enshrined in the vision, values, strategy, governance, and the design and delivery of services. People with lived experience are encouraged to put forward ideas to improve and innovate services.

Involving people with lived experience is essential to ensuring our work is accountable to and impactful for our beneficiaries. It enables us to:

- **Stay Accountable to Our Purpose:** We serve communities in ways that are meaningful, respectful, and responsive to their needs, not ours.
- **Improve the Quality and Credibility of Our Decisions:** Lived experience brings insight that challenges institutional blind spots, groupthink, and vested interests. It ensures our decisions are rooted in reality and resonate with the public, government, supporters, and funders.

- **Shift Power and Drive Inclusive Change:** Embedding lived experience helps shift power from being held over people to being shared with them. It supports co-creation of services that are dignified, equitable, and person-centred.
- **Enhance Impact and Use of Resources:** Lived experience involvement is fundamental to transforming mental health systems. It improves health and wider outcomes and leads to more effective, efficient use of resources.
- **Empower People to Lead:** People with lived experience are supported to meaningfully contribute to, influence and lead decisions that affect their lives.
- **Strengthen Our Workforce:** Staff become more connected to the everyday realities of mental health, better equipped to understand multiple disadvantage, and more confident in addressing intersectional discrimination.

5. Values and Principles

Our approach to influence and participation is guided by 4 core values:

Equality: We value everyone's contribution equally. People with lived experience and staff bring different but equally important skills and insights. We co create spaces and working together agreements to address power imbalances and foster mutual respect. We aim to create equity by identifying and removing institutional barriers to fair participation and decision-making.

Diversity: We celebrate diversity and actively include people from a wide range of backgrounds. We recognise that people's experiences are shaped by multiple, intersecting identities and systems of inequality. We prioritise equity by involving groups who face greater discrimination or unmet needs—especially children and young people, racialised communities, and people experiencing poverty.

Accessibility: We are inclusive and work to ensure everyone has the same opportunity to take part fully in activities in the way that suits them best. This includes supporting any reasonable adjustments and attention to language, physical and digital access, timing, and communication.

Reciprocity: We create meaningful, mutually beneficial opportunities for involvement. People with lived experience and national Mind both benefit from the work. We value contributions and show how they have made a difference.

These values guide our key principles of lived experience involvement work:

1. **Trauma-Informed Practice:** We create safe, respectful, and empowering spaces. We recognise the impact of trauma and work in ways that build trust, promote choice, and avoid harm.
2. **Transparency and Impact:** We clearly communicate the purpose of involvement and what people can expect. We give timely feedback on what has changed as a result and are honest about what's still to be done so people know their contributions are valued and lead to real action.
3. **Intentional Inclusion:** We are purposeful about why and how we involve people, and who we involving, with clear accountability to ensure meaningful impact.
4. **Open to Challenge:** We listen authentically and create space for people to speak truthfully, question decisions, and hold us to account. We respond to feedback with curiosity not defensiveness, recognising that challenge drives meaningful change.
5. **Valuing the whole person:** We recognise that mental health experiences are just one part of who we are. We value people's strategic insight, creativity, skills, and expertise, not just their personal experiences. People can advocate from lived experience without needing to share personal details.
6. **Cultural Humility:** We commit to ongoing self-reflection, learning, and openness to understanding diverse cultural identities, experiences, and perspectives of others. No single person or organisation holds all the knowledge.
7. **Anti – Racism:** We actively challenge all forms of racism and embed anti-racist practice across all involvement work. We centre lived experience, share power, and prioritise equity.
8. **Boundaries and Choice:** Involvement is always a choice. We support people to share their experiences in ways that feel safe and boundaried. People have the right to say no, step back, or change their mind. We help people to make informed decisions about their participation, and we have their consent ensuring people retain control over how their experiences are used.

9. **Mutual Benefit and Non-Extractive Practice:** Involvement should benefit both Mind and the people contributing their lived experience. We design activities that support people to develop, showcase, or evidence their skills and expertise. We work to avoid transactional practices by aiming to ensure involvement is purposeful, reciprocal and values people's time, insight and growth.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff: It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that lived experience influence and participation is embedded into national Minds work, where relevant. Staff, and anyone working on behalf of national Mind should consider the work projects that require lived experience input and build this into their planning. Staff should contact the below teams at the earliest opportunity for support.

The Lived Experience Leadership Manager: The lived experience leadership manager supports teams with involving adults (18+) in Minds work. If you are looking to involve adults in your work please fill out the [lived experience opportunity form](#) so you can access consultancy support for your work and ensure it follows our policy and processes. Contact livedexp@mind.org.uk.

The Youth Voice Network team: The Youth Voice Network team support teams to engaged and involve children and young people, creating opportunities for them to influence change. The Youth Voice Network engages children and young people aged 11 – 24. If you are looking to involve young people in your work contact youthvoice@mind.org.uk.

The Voices Team: The Voices team gathers and shares the experiences of people facing mental health problems, collaborating across Mind to present these in impactful ways—from social media quotes to national campaigns. We ensure all voices activity complies with safeguarding and data protection processes. The team fosters a safe, supportive and inclusive environment guided by voice [principles](#). Contact voicesteam@mind.org.uk.

The Media Volunteer Team: The Mind Media team work with media volunteers, led by the Media Manager (PR & Media Volunteers) and the Media Volunteer Officer. The Media team follows the Media Volunteer protocols tailored to the unique nature of media work while aligning with Mind's policies.

7. Safeguarding and Compliance

Safeguarding and compliance ensure the wellbeing and rights of people with lived experience and staff involved in any activities are supported.

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Training: Mind staff must complete Data Protection, Safeguarding and Equality Diversity and Inclusion training prior to any contact with young people or undertaking involvement activities with adults. If you are looking to work with Young People you must complete the CYP Safeguarding training.

DBS Checks: All roles must be assessed for a DBS check prior to any contact with children and young people or undertaking involvement activities with adults. Please contact the people team to arrange this.

Risk Assessments: To ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved, including people with lived experience, staff, and others, a risk assessment should be completed for all involvement activities. This helps us identify and plan for any practical, environmental, or safeguarding considerations (e.g. venue accessibility, tech issues, emotional safety).

- Our Influence and Participation consultants, the Lived Experience Leadership Manager, or the Youth Voice Network team can support you in completing your risk assessment. For ongoing or repeated activities, a dynamic risk assessment may be appropriate and should be updated as needed.
- Media volunteer activities follow separate risk assessment procedures, as outlined in the Media Volunteer Protocols.
- All risk assessments must be signed off by the Safeguarding team. Please contact the safeguarding team for support - safeguarding@mind.org.uk.

Public facing roles: Where we are involving people in our work in public facing roles it is important to consider the psychological safety of people with lived experience. Asking them about their experiences, and whether they are prepared for potential public scrutiny should be part of the assessment or recruitment process. Should they disclose anything please complete an individual risk assessment with the support of Mind's Safeguarding Manager to decide next steps.

Safeguarding concerns: Any concerns about a person being at risk to themselves or others, or at risk of harm/abuse, should be dealt with in line with [Mind's Safeguarding Adults](#) or [Safeguarding Children and Young People Policies](#). The Safeguarding Team should be contacted for advice and a completed incident report form should be sent to the safeguarding inbox - safeguarding@mind.org.uk.

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Consent: Appropriate consent, including parental/legal guardian consent should be sought prior to participation, in line with [Mind's Data Protection Policies](#).

Data Protection: Where personal data is processed in involvement activities, staff should complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) ahead of commencing the activity. Please contact the compliance team (compliancehelpdesk@mind.org.uk) for any questions around whether a DPIA is required and support with completion.

Data management:

- Children and young people's data is recorded on the CRM and is managed by the Youth Voice Network Team.
- Media Volunteer data is stored on the CRM and managed by the Media Volunteer Officer, details of which are covered in the media volunteer protocols.
- Data and assets created with Mental Health Voices are stored on Brand Hub, our digital asset management system which uses the Brandworkz platform.

Online Platforms: Consider all risks when using online platforms. Zoom and MS Teams are preferred providers for video calls & conferencing. Zoom is the only platform used for sessions with young people. Please refer to Mind's Compliance and Quality team to ensure that the platform you are using is compliant.

Payment and Contracts: Contact LivedExp@mind.org.uk or youthvoice@mind.org.uk for support with payment, recruitment processes and contracts.

8. Recruiting people to be involved in our work

For support with recruiting people to be involved contact livedexp@mind.org.uk for adults or yvn@mind.org.uk for children and young people. Contact voicesteam@mind.org.uk if you are looking for people to speak about their experiences for an event or campaign. Contact Media Volunteer Officer or Media Manager (PR & Media Volunteers) for media requests.

For all influence and participation activities staff should be clear on:

- why they need to involve people and what difference it will make to the work

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- who they need to hear from eg. is a particular experience of the mental health system required or is this work relevant to a particular community.

When recruiting for people to take part in opportunities we aim to:

- Give people two weeks to express interest
- Be clear about who the opportunity is for (e.g. the specific mental health experience or skills needed) and how we will choose people to take part
- Explain what the activity involves and what is expected of people taking part.
- Say who else will be involved (e.g. staff, group size)
- Are clear about the time commitment
- Explain what support is available
- Are clear about any payment offered and the benefits of being involved
- Any application process is accessible and proportionate to the opportunity
- We respond to and give feedback to applicants to ensure people feel valued.

Further guidance for staff can be found in the [Opportunity Description Guide on the intranet](#).

9. Support

We are committed to ensuring that people with lived experience feel supported, safe, and respected throughout their involvement with Mind. We offer appropriate and relevant support before, during, and after involvement activities.

Support may vary depending on the topic, role, method, and age of participants, and can include:

- **Accessibility and Adjustments:** We work with individuals to identify and meet access needs to ensure full and comfortable participation.
- **Wellbeing Support:** We ensure appropriate support is in place. This could include a Mental Health First Aider, signposting to support services, and the option to complete a Wellbeing Action Plan for longer-term involvement. Specific wellbeing support can also be arranged, please speak with the Lived Experience Leadership Manager.

- **Clear Communication:** We provide accessible information about the purpose of involvement, roles, time commitments, and how contributions will be used. Content warnings are used where discussing .
- **Safe and Inclusive Spaces:** We offer quiet breakout spaces during events, create working together agreements and ensure people are briefed and supported beforehand.
- **Boundaries and Choice:** People are never expected to share personal experiences unless they choose to. We respect boundaries and ensure involvement is empowering, not extractive. People can step back or pause from involvement activity at any time as is needed to prioritise their wellbeing. This does not exclude them from being involved in future activities.
- **Preparation and Briefing:** We offer preparation sessions, briefings, or one-to-one support to help people feel confident and informed
- **Training and Development:** Relevant training is offered to support people in their roles and promote personal and professional growth.
- **Debriefing and Follow-Up:** After involvement, we provide space to reflect, ask questions, and share feedback.
- **Peer Support and Connection:** Where appropriate, we facilitate opportunities for peer connection and community-building among people with lived experience.

You should never assume that people need support or what that support should look like. People's support needs change over time and a conversation about what people might need to do this work should be asked regularly. The Lived Experience Leadership Manager is available to discuss support needs.

Please see [Appendix 2](#) for specific support considerations when working with children and young people.

10. Reward and Recognition

We celebrate and recognise the contributions of people with lived experience who influence and participate in our work, ensuring they feel genuinely valued. Taking part should support wellbeing, career development and ability to effectively contribute to other mental health work nationally and locally.

While financial recognition may be appropriate in some contexts, we also prioritise **non-monetary forms of reward**, including;

- **Thanking people for participating** in ways that are timely and meaningful.

- **Acknowledging and crediting contributions** in meetings, events, reports and communications
- **Providing feedback on outcomes and impact**, showing how involvement shaped decisions or led to change. Providing positive and constructive feedback on individual contributions.
- **Recognising emotional labour**, especially when personal experiences are shared, and ensuring appropriate support is in place to protect wellbeing.
- **Creating moments to celebrate achievements**, build relationships, and foster a sense of belonging and community. This could include promotion of their work or involvement in public-facing events.
- Providing **meals and refreshments** for in person activities
- **Offering development opportunities** for those involved in longer-term work such as training, mentoring, references, or co-facilitation roles.

We understand that people may want to be recognised in different ways. Please speak with the Lived Experience Leadership Manager for support.

11. Payment

We pay people who influence and participate in our work in recognition of their time, input, skills, experience and expertise in supporting our work.

Payment for involvement activities should be budgeted for within team and programme budgets, including to cover expenses and any accessibility requirements.

For payment amounts and processes:

- See [Appendix 3 for adults involved in our work](#)
- See [Appendix 4 for Youth Voice Network](#)
- See [Appendix 5 for exceptions to payment policy](#)

Key Payment guidelines

- Payment rates should be made clear when recruiting people to be involved in an activity and agreed before the activity commences.
- Individuals have the right to decline payments if they wish, request to be paid a lower amount or to spread the payments over a longer period.

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Whether an individual chooses to accept payments or not should not impact on them being able to participate in an involvement opportunity. If an individual declines payment staff should speak with the Lived Experience Manager to discuss alternative methods of reward and recognition.

Impact of Payment for Involvement activities on tax and benefits

- Mind does not accept responsibility for the impact that accepting a payment may have on someone's benefits and / or HMRC tax responsibilities. Due to the individuality and complexity of this, Mind cannot provide advice to individuals who participate in our work.
- It is **staff's responsibility to ensure participants understand they are responsible for declaring their income to HMRC and the Department of Works & Pensions**, prior to commencing an involvement activity.
- Expenses are not counted as income and should not impact on benefits or tax.
- If an individual chooses to be paid via a voucher, this can be actioned with approval from the Lived Experience Leadership manager. However, **vouchers count as earned income for most people**, including those on benefits, so we need to advise this should be declared to DWP.

See [Appendix 6](#) for further guidance and support we can offer for people on benefits around involvement payments.

Expenses

- No one should be out of pocket for any involvement activity with Mind. All reasonable expenses should be covered in line with Mind's Travel and Subsistence policy.
- All expenses should be agreed in advance, in writing prior to the activity.
- Expenses should be submitted on the involvement expense form separately to any payment for involvement activity. Receipts should be submitted alongside the expense form.
- Staff should also ensure there is budget to cover expenses arising from reasonable adjustments.

Please see [Appendix 7](#) for further guidance on expenses.

12. Monitoring of Lived Experience Involvement

Implementation of this policy will be led by the Lived Experience Leadership Manager in partnership with the Youth Voice Network team.

Reporting on lived experience involvement activity at Mind

- To help us understand and evidence who is influencing and participating in our work staff are required to report quarterly on who they have involved in their work. Staff will receive an opportunity code for reporting after filling out the [lived experience opportunity form](#). Reminders will be sent quarterly by the Lived Experience Leadership manager.
- We report to the board of trustees the numbers and percentage of people from racialised communities and young people involved in our work as part of our Equity reporting.
- Staff should send a feedback and demographic form to adult participants along with the opportunity code after the activity.
- **Staff do not need to report on young people they involved in their work via the Youth Voice Network.** Members of the Youth Voice Network data is recorded on the CRM and is managed by the Youth Voice Network Team who ensure the data is up to date, safe and reported on.

Resources to guide you on reporting on your activity are located on the [intranet](#).

Appendix 1: Role Definitions

People with lived experience may work with Mind on a variety of activities from focus groups to co-designing resources or programmes to sitting on steering groups. People with lived experience have told us this is their preferred term for undertaking involvement activities. They may also use terms like Lived Experience Advisor or Consultant depending on the work they are involved in.

Media Volunteers people with lived experience of mental health problems who share their experiences in the news – including on TV, radio, podcasts, online and in newspapers. They help raise awareness, break stigma, and influence public understanding.

Mental Health Voices share their experiences of mental health via campaigns, social posts and in information materials to help us raise awareness, push for change and fundraise.

Children and young people involved in our work via the Youth Voice Network are aged 11 – 24.

Lived Experience activities levels of influence and participation

Mind's Influence and Participation Ladder outlines five levels of involvement, showing how people with lived experience contribute to and shape our work. While all levels are valuable, we aim to create more opportunities at levels 3–5, where power is shared and people with lived experience lead and influence decision-making. Further information available [in this guide](#).



For more examples and checklists for each level take a look at our in-depth [Influence and Participation ladder guidance document](#)

Appendix 2: Support for Children and Young People

The support you offer a young person taking part will need to have a higher level of formality and planning. Speak to the Youth Voice Network and safeguarding team before undertaking activities with under 18's for support.

Always:

- Ask for the relevant written consent from parents / guardian / responsible adult of anyone under the age of 18 taking part. Please see the Children and Young People Consent Procedure.
- Ensure children and young people (16 and under) are accompanied to your event by a parent or guardian (always reimburse the travel costs for all attending); parents don't need to take part or be present during your event however they do need to be present at the beginning and end.
- Ensure you are aware of parent / guardian contact details should you need to reach them during an event. Make sure the child or young person taking part is aware you may contact them should they become distressed or unwell and are no longer able to take part.
- Read the Children and Young People safeguarding policy
- Consider who the best people to facilitate are and be present at your event. Would a facilitator experienced at working with young people be better placed to run the session? Do you need support from youth workers during the session?
- Ensure there are a minimum of 2 members of staff (Mind staff / external facilitator) who have been DBS checked present at all events. This ensures you have enough people to support anyone in need whilst also continue the event.
- Think of methods and language that will be appropriate and length of sessions.

Appendix 3: Payment for Adults involved in our work

If you require support with budgeting or are unsure what the appropriate payment is for your activity, please contact LivedExp@mind.org.uk.

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Influence	Examples: Discussion / focus groups, information reviews	Payment: Less than 1.5hrs – expenses only 1.5 – 3 hrs - £25 3.5 – 5 hrs - £50 5.5 – 7 hrs - £100	Associated costs No payment is due if the initiative or activity took less than 1.5hrs Travel is remunerated; staff to book in advance where possible Accommodation if length of journey requires this Subsistence costs in line with Mind’s allowable expenses e.g. Breakfast, lunch, dinner
Participation	Examples: Speaking to the media, taking part in our campaigning work, attending an event, photoshoot	Payment: No payment	Associated costs: Travel is remunerated; staff to book in advance where possible Accommodation if length of journey requires this Subsistence costs in line with Mind’s allowable expenses e.g. Breakfast, lunch, dinner
Volunteers	Examples: Administrative role, data entry, community events volunteers, retail role in our shops, carrying out tasks that don’t relate to lived experience	Payment: No Payment Please see the Volunteer policy for full details on required remuneration of expenses	

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<p>Lived Experience consultants</p>	<p>Examples: Advisory group Steering / working group</p> <p>Lived experience co-designer/Peer researcher</p> <p>Defined pieces of work E.g. short listing for Mind Media awards, developing a resource or writing a report</p>	<p>Payment: £200</p> <p>£230 dependent on skills and level of experience needed.</p> <p>A flat rate can be defined for specific pieces of work, this should be discussed with the Lived Experience Leadership Manager during planning.</p> <p><u>Notes</u></p> <p>There may be occasions where a higher rate of pay is required, this should not exceed £400. Please note involvement payments should not be broken down and paid by an hour rate. Please consult with the Lived Experience Leadership Manager for support in deciding on the correct fee.</p>	
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<p>Training</p>	<p>Example: Independently leading development of and delivering training</p> <p>Delivering training (lead or co-trainer)</p> <p>Contributing your story to training session</p>	<p>Payment: £400 per day</p> <p>£200 per day (both) Travel, accommodation, and subsistence where relevant. Always check with the training department & Engagement manager before commencing, this is a guide only</p> <p>Travel expenses and subsistence where relevant</p>	
<p>Research</p>	<p>Example: Participating in research</p> <p>Planning and designing research / peer researcher</p>	<p>No payment – An incentive can be offered E.g. £20 gift voucher for taking part Please see Research policy for more information Travel is remunerated; staff to book in advance where possible</p> <p>See consultant fees above</p>	

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Influence and Participation Coaches		£350 per day (7 hours) Note the Lived Experience Leadership Team's budget covers coaches payment for supporting teams at National Mind	
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Payment method and process

- Payment should be made in a timely manner, sending the Payment for Involvement and Expenses for Involvement forms to finance once the activity is complete.
- Payments for involvement activity and expenses related to involvement activity are submitted on separate forms. This is to avoid confusion for HMRC and the DWP, as expenses do not count as earnings whereas payment does. Any expenses paid form part of the additional support offered to increase inclusion.
- Staff should fill in the date, activity, time spent and payment amount due as well as budget and budget holder signature. People involved need to fill in their bank and address details as well as a digital signature
- All payment for involvement forms need to be received from the individuals involved directly and not sent through or to be paid to another person.
- People may require support with filling out forms. Staff can support with filling in their details and send the completed form to them to approve. Once they have confirmed details are correct this can then be shared with finance as audit trail for approving payment.
- Once payment form has been received back this along with the email from the person requesting payment should be forwarded to finance for approval by the budget holder.
- Payment usually takes up to two weeks to be processed once the payment and expense forms are sent to finance.

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- Work should be paid for within the financial year the work is budgeted for. The financial year runs from 1 April to 31 March.

Note on use of vouchers:

- We have a responsibility to inform people that **vouchers count as earned income for most people, including those on benefits**. Individuals who receive vouchers as payment for work are required to declare these earnings to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).
- In some circumstances HMRC will treat vouchers as a gift and not subject to NI or tax deductions. In this case the DWP follows suit and treats the vouchers as a gift that does not affect benefits. This applies to low amounts such as a £25 voucher. **For some opportunities**, particularly those involving people experience poverty who are likely to be on benefits, **we may opt to use vouchers rather than payment on this basis. Please check with the lived experience leadership manager before advertising the opportunity.**

Appendix 4: Youth Voice Network Incentives

These incentive costs are a guide to help you with planning and could change depending on your opportunity. Please speak with the Youth Voice Network team who will confirm what your budget needs to be to thank young people.

Activity	Description of opportunity	Voucher Amount Costs are per person, per hour (unless stated otherwise) Costs do not include travel reimbursement if being hosted in person
Focus groups	Focus groups allow you to gather opinions on a particular topic in a small group setting	£20

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Information reviews	Information reviews can take place via meetings or email. They are used to ensure written; media, brand or other information is young person friendly and understandable. Where possible co-design is a better method of participation.	£20
Regular steering group	Regular steering groups can be set up when a project requires long-term oversight by young people.	£20
Co-designer	Co-designers work with a team or individual to create content or services as a youth expert.	£40
Panel member	Panel members sit on lived experience panels with others to share their experiences or opinions to influence change, normally this takes place publicly. For example, taking part in lunch & learn or The All Staff Briefing	£50
Co-facilitation/facilitation	Young people lead or co-deliver sessions such as focus groups or workshops.	£50
Taking part in research		£10-20
Social Media Video	Creating content for Mind's social media posts.	£10 per post
Filming days	Young people take part in filming/photoshoots for Minds work (excludes media volunteers)	£50 Half day £100 Full day
Interview panels	Young people are part of an interview panel to recruit Mind staff, freelancers, or external companies	£25 Half Day £50 Full day

Appendix 5: Exceptions to payment policy

Asylum Seekers: Paying anyone who is in the process of seeking asylum is incredibly risky for that individual and is likely to have a serious impact on their asylum claim. Asylum seekers are permitted to volunteer at any point during their claim, but this must not amount to engagement as an ‘employee’ or ‘worker’. Reasonable expenses may be covered, but the individual must not receive payment of any kind.

We may be able to offer thank you gift for sessions with asylum seekers, which may not count as earning if it is genuine gift and is not expected, usually up to £30. We would need to get in touch with tax office to get ruling for the gift, has to be non-cash voucher.

Please get in touch with the Lived Experience Leadership Manager for support.

Governance: We are unable to remunerate activities that are related to governance activities. This includes remuneration for people with lived and caring experience who are members of our Board of Trustees and choose to get involved in additional involvement opportunities.

Media Volunteers: Mind does not offer payment to our media volunteers for undertaking most media interviews. Payment is not feasible as it undermines the impartiality of our media volunteers, which is essential if we are to build trusting relationships with the media and for our volunteers to share their experiences with authenticity. This excludes expenses for media interviews which we must pay in line with Mind’s policies. Please speak to a member of the Media team for more information.

Mental Health Voices: Mind does not offer payment to our Mental Health Voices for sharing their experiences though they are recognised and rewarded in other ways (networking opportunities, event invites, skills building etc). There are some instances where payment is offered, including when a Corporate Partner is funding a project or when we’re taking up a considerable amount of someone’s time. If you have any questions, contact the Voices team.

Suppliers: If we are hiring a supplier with lived experience to carry out a piece of work which we are commissioning such as design work this should follow our normal procurement and supplier policy.

Appendix 6: Support for people on benefits around the impact of accepting payment

It is staff's responsibility to ensure participants understand they are responsible for declaring their income to HMRC and the Department of Works & Pensions, prior to commencing an involvement activity.

Accepting payment can have an impact on people's benefits, options & support we can offer include:

- The lived experience leadership manager can support with drafting a letter to the benefits agency explaining involvement work and payments.
- People can request to receive a lower amount to avoid crossing earnings threshold.
- People can opt to take part without accepting payment, if that feels right for them. Please speak to the Lived Experience Leadership Manager for support with alternative ways to reward and recognise people.

The below wording can be used to ensure people involved are aware of tax/benefits implications before activity commences:

Please note that payments for involvement activities, including vouchers, are usually treated as income and may affect the amount of tax you need to pay or the amount of benefits you are entitled to. Everyone's situation is different, so we recommend speaking to your benefits advisor or job coach before accepting payment. While we can't offer individual advice, we can provide a letter explaining your involvement to support any conversations you need to have. The below support services may also be helpful.

Support services

- **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)** You can find your local CAB on [the Citizens Advice Bureau website](#)
- **NIHR guidance** NIHR's guidance for members of the public includes a section with [information on welfare benefits regulations](#)
- **Disability Rights UK** Disability Rights UK website includes information and advice on benefits. You can contact 0330 995 0400
- **Turn2Us** Turn2Us is a charity providing financial information and support, including a benefits calculator, a 'find an advisor' tool, and free helpline: 0808 802 2000.

Appendix 7: Expenses

Travel: Travel should be pre-booked by Mind staff using our Clarity system wherever possible to ensure no-one is out of pocket to take part.

Subsistence should be offered, at the same rate as Mind staff if a person needs to travel over 3.5 hrs.

Accommodation: Accommodation should be offered if the participant has to travel over 3.5 hours to take part or in circumstances where it meets a reasonable adjustment. People should not be required to leave home before 7am or return after 9pm, without being offered accommodation. All accommodation should be booked by Mind staff using Clarity.

Other expenses: Other expenses which may be covered to ensure involvement opportunities are accessible to all include childcare, data payments, carer costs and translation. Costs should be agreed in advance, in writing. Receipts must be submitted with expense claims. For costs such as carer and translation we require an official invoice from the organisation providing the service. Please discuss with the Lived Experience Leadership Manager for support with expenses.

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Lived Experience Involvement Policy

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