



**Near Media Co-Op**

# **Volunteer Handbook**

**The policies stated within this handbook apply to all  
Near Media Co -Op volunteers and staff.**

**Queries should be directed to :**

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# Mission statement

- Provide* an alternative to mainstream media, a voice for those underrepresented or excluded, through training and access to distribution facilities across all media platforms.
- Serve* our community through distinctive programming, which honestly informs, and contributes to the entertainment, education and development of our community
- Foster* democracy and pluralism, global justice, media literacy and civil society appropriation of all media,
- Work* for social change, by promoting dialogue, encouraging artistic expression, offering alternative worldviews, and by acting as a forum for people who typically lack media access.
- Defend* the environment and human rights, particularly the right to communicate.
- Ensure* that we are editorially independent, accountable, transparent and participatory, respect the role of volunteers and the rights of workers and are linked to national and international media networks.
- Support* community building and values, interculturalism, and linguistic diversity.
- Encourage* exchange of diverse ideas, creativity, local traditions and collective actions
- Resist* discrimination, exclusion, violence and media enclosure.
- Promote* the development and use of new technologies and new communication and information services which lead to cultural democratisation.
- Recognise* The power of sound, image, and the spoken word to engage the mind and nurture the human spirit.

**Failte romhat! أهلاً وسهلاً بكم**

## **Welcome to The Media Co-op**

*If Community Media is the answer...what is the question?*

### **Near Media Co-op**

#### **Ownership**

Near Media Co-Op is the legal entity that owns near90fm, near tv productions and near online.

We are about 'Access', which emphasises our aspiration to afford equal access for every person and organization in our Community.

As a volunteer with this community development project we hope you will find your involvement enjoyable. We will do everything we can to keep you informed of, and involved with, developments.

Here is a brief outline of the ownership and management structure of this community media co-op.

The radio broadcast licence is vested in a legally registered co-operative, Comharchumann Cumarsaide Pobal Bhaile Atha Cliath Thoir-Thuidh Teoranta or, Dublin North-East Community Communications Co-operative Society Limited.

The Committee of Management of the co-op is elected at the Annual General Meeting. This Committee meets and elects its executive officers and various other sub-committees to run the project and its three platforms.

Trustees: At the 1995 AGM, Jack Byrne, Yvonne Hannon and Brendan Teeling were appointed as Trustees of the Co-op. At the 2006 AGM Dave O Connor and Vincent Teeling were appointed as Trustees.

In general programming terms we can experiment with alternative formats and treatments to ensure that we have a beneficial effect on our community, for example, community media should encourage all within its hearing to live democratically, to respect other opinions, to develop a living spirit of community. We could introduce new realities, alternative model of society, tell different stories, experiment with

dialogue techniques, and facilitate personal growth and community development.

We are developing a model for Community Media which will build on the following components:

**Finance:**

We are a not-for-profit project. We will secure our income from:

- \* Publicly funded community development initiatives, including training.
- \* A form of commercial Sponsorship based on a Canadian model, and
- \* A range of community supported fundraisers.

**Content:**

Our contents are based on the criteria of community development. This will be underpinned by regular qualitative research, and we will respond to this information with appropriate training and content developments.

**Ownership / Management:**

We are based on an accountable, democratic, co-operative model. We will be as decentralised as possible and will seek equality in all management and decision making structures.

The affairs of the Co-operative Society are conducted by the Committee of Management. The members of the committee are elected at the Co-op's A.G.M. One third of the Committee shall retire each year, but are eligible for re-election. Only members of the Co-op can stand for election, or vote. And each member has only one vote.

Membership of the society is open to individuals and organisations, they can apply for shareholding membership and upon subscription of €5 in shares by an individual or €25 for an organisation, may be admitted into membership.

The accounts of the Society are audited each year by a Public Auditor and copies of the annual accounts are available in the office, as are full Co-operative rules.

## **The Role of the Community Media Volunteer.**

Part of the title of our co-operative is ‘Community Communications’, and the purpose of community communications is to create a non-directive community development process that is enhanced by Information and Communications Technologies.

- Our task is to facilitate community identification of needs and the fostering of local initiation of solutions.
- We want to use our media to allow people to act instead of reacting, enabling people to express themselves on their own terms,
- We’ll provide direct channels of communication between the citizens and decision-makers to achieve accountability and dialogue about positive developments.
- What we are about is the initiation of an organisational process that the community build on to grow beyond the need for facilitation by any outsider.
- Personal and communal empowerment is our primary objective.

Across all three media platforms and through the dynamic melding of these technologies we seek to animate the citizens in community. This is an important aspect of our activity. Community animation focuses *on the process of change*, on organising and mobilising the competencies of people, instead of the resolution of an issue as an end in itself.

This approach is true for any community development activity. However, as we work with information and communication technology, we need to ensure that the process of training, enabling and disseminating people’s media creations is seen as a *process of empowerment*.

This will be an entirely different approach to all other media. Other media don’t see the process of empowerment as being their remit.

That is why an aware community media facility is so important. For without its existence, such deep empowerment would not happen within the media. This is an entirely different media skill to being a smooth radio DJ, a coiffured TV presenter, or an elitist IT nerd.

As a Community Media Volunteer, you are here to facilitate *real communication* across all these media within our community.

**Give up yer oul' hubris and take pride in your new media facilitation skills.**

## **COMMUNITY RADIO**

In becoming a 'community radio volunteer' you have joined a global movement which is emerging on every continent, e.g.

*Around the world two types of Community Radio have emerged:*

*\* Special interest: catering for jazz, classical or country music, educational, language or minority interests.*

*\*Geographic community stations: which offer a mix of community development programming, local participation and special interest music. Near90fm is in this category.*

*There is also the Community Radio Forum , CRAOL, which is the national organisation for community radio with almost 30 members.*

We are attempting to democratise the communications media. Accordingly, part of your task will be to teach people in our community how to become broadcasters/users and help them to use the project for real communication.

### **Research into Community Radio.**

Can community Radio achieve any of these tasks we have set for ourselves?

A report commissioned by the Independent Radio and Television Commission in 1997, two years after the first community stations went on air, found that community radios had a number of benefits, particularly the following;

- *Establishing and deepening intra-community linkages and dialogues of all kinds*
- *Acting as a community 'watchdog' and campaign supporter, and*
- *Sustaining and renewing a sense of community identity.*

And in 2002, a second piece of research commissioned by the Community Radio Forum and funded by the Broadcast Commission of Ireland found that;

- *With reference to community and voluntary groups, 99% of respondents felt that community radio was a beneficial resource.*

- *With reference to collaborative work between community radio and local statutory bodies, 71% of respondents felt that the statutory sector could benefit in its work from community radio.*

Since then, community radios have clearly established themselves as a significantly beneficial resource for community organisations and statutory bodies. And Near90 fm has been a prominent part of this development.

## **The Alternative to Mainstream Media**

This third sector in broadcasting is an alternative to both commercial and state media. Its most distinguishing feature is the participatory nature of the relationship between the project and its community. Both public service and commercial radio participate in some way in the lives of their listeners/viewers/users, announcing their events and playing their music. Most of these stations also offer their audience a chance to participate by requesting a particular song or by expressing an opinion on a topic selected by the station.

Community radio on the other hand, aims not only to participate in the life of the community, but also to allow the community to participate in the life of the station. Only Community media is based, unequivocally, on this reason for being. This is why it should always be distinguished from commercial and state media – neither of which seeks public participation, except when it suits them to do so. Other stations offer ready-made programmes; community media offers democratic access to the activity of programme making itself. Rather than being communicated at, people are offered the opportunity to communicate themselves.

Community radio has a completely different approach to almost all aspects of broadcasting, even music. Commercial stations can specialise in music, but only as a ‘niche marketing tool’. For us special interest music is broadcast by lovers of these genres. We display more passion for our music, we have more informed comment and we are more committed to audience participation.

A restructuring of how information is assembled and presented will offer us, both inside the co-op and outside, the power to control our own definitions of ourselves, of what counts as news and what is enjoyable and significant about our culture.

Both you as a volunteer and the people using our local community radio should be comfortable with our role. We have not been banished to the outer fringes of the media landscape, we choose to be here. We do not strive for the highest possible ratings but to create a medium of communication for local citizens.

We are not a failed, large commercial venture, but a successful, community radio. We are right where we should be to do our work effectively. We are not public service

radio in a new guise, we are an accessible social and cultural tool to be used by our community for personal and communal empowerment.

Knowing who we are and who we are not will keep us focused on the tasks ahead. Our community co-op has more in common with community development organisations than with the media sector. We will be more effective when we think of ourselves less as broadcasters and more as community activists. This won't stop you from developing your media skills, but it may help your other capacities.

***Fundamentally, what we want to say to you is that community media is as flexible and spontaneous as the human mind. The only limit is your imagination. We hope you continue to enjoy working with us to develop community radio.***

## **COMMUNITY TELEVISION**

As with radio, community television is growing across the world as an exciting resource for community development. There are literally thousands of community television channels in existence now for decades.

The growing global concentration of ownership of media, particularly television, makes it even more important to retain some part of the technology and output for community control and development.

In Ireland, the broadcasting act 2001 made provision for the development of a community television channel for Dublin. Our multi media centre is part of the process of developing content for this initiative.

In contrast to the thrust of commercial television, we will use our medium for personal empowerment and community development and the extension of the range of programmes to achieve this.

Our community television will:

- Provide access to training and production facilities to allow groups to promote their objectives.
- Energise community productions by providing equipment and advice to individuals and community groups.
- Enhance diversity in media content and open education options not otherwise available.
- Permit communities' continuous access to tell their own story.
- Deepen media literacy and critical viewing skills.

Community television will be an important means of making the many community development activities visible. Of bringing the many activist together and of encouraging a growing sense of community and citizenship.

Our task is to visually reflect the various communities of northeast Dublin, particularly the most excluded from existing television.

We should also inform ourselves about the hegemonic ideological nature of the output of commercial television and we should set about creating a more critically aware and media competent audience.

Our media co-op which was active in the establishment of Dublin Community Television Channel, we fully subscribe to the principles of that body, these are;

1. Empowerment of communities currently facing disadvantage or blockages in achieving social, economic and cultural objectives;
2. Participation in every aspect of the channel, as well as in the governance and development of the city, for all the communities and people of Dublin
3. Diversity, both by celebrating and linking the great diversity of communities of all kinds in Dublin and by widening the range of programmes available for people, including minority audiences, to watch.

We intend providing a dynamic and empowering medium for our area, to explore and building partnerships and interactions between individuals and groups.

We have set ourselves the task of devising programmes that are entertaining, educational and communally beneficial. The range of activities we propose will be broader than either public service or commercial television and will stretch our resources to the limit. It would not be possible to plan such a rich diversity of activities without the involvement of our television volunteers.

### **Broadcasting**

**Programmes made by Volunteers:** Shown on the website and on DCTV (NTL 802)

**Programmes made by community groups:** for training purposes & can also be shown on the website or on DCTV as requested.

### **Creative Development**

Everyone needs to start somewhere it is important to get out and start developing your skills with other volunteers. The more you practice the better you can become.

Television production is rarely done alone so it is important that you get to know other volunteers. Whether you are holding a boom, interviewing people or using a camera your role is an important one. Working on different types of projects, whether they are documentary, short films or talk shows, helps you to develop different skills.

Please also appreciate the time and energy other volunteers are putting into a production.

Having your work critiqued is an important part of developing your skills and volunteers should endeavour to open their own work up to be critiqued by other volunteers and also input into the development of others work in an honest, kind and friendly manner. In this way all volunteers can develop on the skills they have.

### **Production Processes**

There is a very distinct difference in the production process in community media when compared to commercial media. In community media part of the process is to treat people who are being interviewed with dignity and respect and in particular to include them as much as possible in how they are being portrayed.

While it may not be possible to include everyone in the editing process community media producers should endeavour to stay true to the context in which a person spoke rather than use editing to construct their own viewpoint.

Community TV an alternative not just because of who is making it but also because of how we make it and how we treat participants. Ask permission to film someone and if they do not wish to sign a release form **never** use the footage. Also if they sign a release form and subsequently change their mind, be open to discussing their issues. People can fear ridicule through media be aware of this and take the time to discuss what you are trying to do.

### **Equipment**

Equipment can be booked by volunteers with a proven track. We ask all volunteers to treat the equipment with respect, never to leave the equipment unattended and remember to charge batteries on their return so they are ready for the next person to use. **Remember by treating the equipment with care you mean will you will have access to it long into the future.**

Technical equipment by its nature may get worn or broken if you find there is something wrong with the equipment please let us know straight away rather than leaving it for the next person to find out while out on a shoot.

### **Content Committee**

Programmes made using Nearthv equipment or assistance should give a credit to Nearthv.

Nearthv has a programming committee through which programmes need to be cleared in order to be added to the Nearthv website.

DCTV aim to facilitate broadcast of programmes made by nearthv volunteers however they reserve the right to broadcast.

***Your challenge as a volunteer will be to facilitate others to make community television and through your own productions to help Near Media Co-op to create programmes to achieve these objectives.***

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Although the World Wide Web and e-mail interconnectivity is still in its infancy many claim that this new technology has enormous potential for grassroots participation in the political process and for global solidarity and networking for social change. We have yet to prove this to any significant degree, but there are encouraging signs and the potential makes the effort worth it.

Nevertheless, the present Internet does not correspond to the needs of community media activists. It is a medium still in flux. Firstly, the US military lost it to computer whiz kids and academics, and then the well-intentioned scholars lost it to globalisation and advertising. Now it could be the turn of community media activists and progressive campaigners to wrest control of use of this world spanning technology.

However, a reality check shows a depressing picture. As yet there is only one Internet and it displays the following characteristics.

- The US has more computers than the rest of the world.
- In a world with thousands of languages and cultures, 90% of the Web based information is in English and the bulk of the content is mainly of interest to US based users.
- The ten most important languages in the world, including Spanish, are largely underrepresented within the remaining 10% of content.
- The typical Internet user worldwide is male, less than 35 years old, with a university education and high income, urban-based and English speaking.
- Globally, they are members of a very elite minority. They are akin to the first users of books in the middle ages.

We could respond by ensuring that there is greater access to ICT facilities, locally and that is not a bad thing, but it is as always, the use to which we put such technology that's important.

The Internet is already a great tool for mobilising, alerting and linking people of similar interest. But it has a better chance of becoming a useful development tool if it links to the experiences of existing community media.

The Internet really needs to be connected to more popular media, such as radio and television to be effective tools that reaches significant numbers with development messages. That is how we hope to incorporate these various media.

Shaping the Internet, or part of it, in ways that serve the objectives of democracy, development and social change through participatory structures will be difficult but is worth the effort. The principles that guide open, diverse and democratic media include the following:

- Open access to the Internet.
- Unrestricted communication and robust community networks.
- Digital television dividend.
- Online privacy.
- A “spectrum commons” and a “dot commons”.
- Unshackled hardware, unfettered software and uninhibited wetware.
- Digital universal service.

We are developing a series of methods of using IT systems to enlarge our range of actions in support of community development and personal empowerment.

For example, we have an Internet Café, which is at the disposal of those who lack such a facility. We are expanding our Wireless Local Area Network. This project,

which provides Internet access without a dial up charge, is designed to get people within the area of Dublin northeast connected online as part of an IT community. This will link schools, community centres and housing estates in communities of interest and without a dial up charge.

We will train individuals and community organisations in a range of ICT skills so that they can utilise this new technology to access services, to share information and to link with similar action groups across the planet for collective actions on a range of global and local issues.

### **Convergence.**

We are also planning to use the convergence of the various technologies for community advantage. We will stream over the WLAN (Wireless Local Area Network) intranet, audio/visual material for those connected. We are also training people in the use of equipment to create 'Digital Stories and Digital Art.'

As you can see, we are devising a wide range of uses for these technologies and an exciting range of activities for those who are interested in IT. The difference between our operation and others is the social use we wish to put this technology to. This is new territory for IT development and our IT volunteers have a great opportunity to help us shape such use, which could influence mainstream evolution of ICT.

### **Archiving**

We are establishing an audio-visual archive to record and store the living history of our area.

***Your challenge as a volunteer will be to facilitate others in acquiring the knowledge to harness these technologies for community development and empowerment.***

## **CONTENTS POLICY**

*Provide access to training, production and distribution facilities;  
encourage local creative talent and foster local traditions, and provide programmes for the benefit, entertainment, education and development of their audience;*

Community Radio Charter for Europe, point 2

In keeping with the stated objectives of our Community Media Co-op, content will incorporate a positive emphasis on:

- \* Facilitating and supporting community development
- \* Contributing to the media diversity in our area.
- \* Encouraging education and life-long learning.
- \* Providing information on employment and other issues which will assist people in

meeting their information needs

- \* Providing access for a wide range of groups within the community, in particular minorities and those under-represented in public service and commercial media
- \* Providing a platform for local arts, musical, literary, sports, and other cultural activities
- \* Providing a platform for Irish culture, including the Irish language and Irish music
- \* Promoting civic pride

All of our proposed content will be measured against the co-op's objectives and the policy statement, and against any guidelines laid down from time to time by the Content Committee.

## **THE CONTENTS COMMITTEE (Radio)**

*We promote the right to communicate, assist the free flow of information and opinions, encourage creative expression and contribute to the democratic process and a pluralist society.*

Community Radio Charter for Europe, Point 1.

The Contents Committee is appointed by the Committee of Management. The Contents Committee also includes the Station Manager as she/he is central to the Schedule. The Committee's job is to plan the schedule, allocate time to new contents, revise the Schedule and individual programmes on a continuous basis, and deal with problems relating to broadcasting as they arise.

In keeping with the policy, contents will change from time to time. No one will OWN a particular time slot or programme, so if you are asked to move the time of the programme, or if the programme/area you are working on is dropped, please accept it in the spirit of the co-op. Naturally, the Committee will consult with you before taking any such decision.

## **Types of contents**

Contents will include:

1. Those made by volunteers within the project itself, such as local current affairs, arts, sport, specialist music and
2. Those made by groups within the Community.

Many volunteers will be involved for the most part in type 1, but there is a very important role to be played in providing help and support to groups taking part.

## **Content**

All contents, whether music or speech-based, should focus on local issues and local talent. In planning your programme please try to bear this in mind, as it is easy to lose sight of our objectives when you are caught up in the mechanics of actually producing content. This does not mean that national or even international issues cannot be dealt with; it just means that in dealing with them you should try to take a local or community angle – there is ALWAYS a local angle!

## **Style**

This co-op does not aim to have a particular "style" of broadcasting but we aim to AVOID particular styles. Commercial media has a particular "sound" and "look" which is instantly recognisable: if you tune into a radio station you will know if it is a commercial one almost instantly, whether you hear a "DJ", an advertisement, or even, sometimes, a piece of music. In fact, you could travel around Ireland listening to commercial radio and in many cases you would think you had never left Dublin. Near90fm should sound as though it comes from North-East Dublin. In other words, people involved in the co-op, and on the station should sound like themselves, speaking in their own accents, in their own language. We do NOT want to sound like a pale imitation of commercial media.

The question of style goes deeper than accents: it also covers such issues as our attitude to our audience. Serious issues are often treated sensationally and personal stories can be used in a way that exploits the person telling them. It is useful when making content to ask yourself if you are treating your audience, and indeed your guests (if any) with the respect and dignity due to all human beings.

## **Sponsorship**

You may feel that your area could benefit from a link with a sponsor. ANY such links need to be discussed IN ADVANCE with the committee. This is very important as our approach to Sponsorship is very specific and is part of our licence conditions.

## **Complaints**

From time-to-time complaints about particular items can arise. If you receive a complaint about your content, please let the Contents Committee know. If the Committee receives a complaint about your contents they will talk to you about it before taking any action.

## **COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

*We seek to honestly inform our community on the basis of information drawn from a diversity of sources and provide a right of reply to any person or organisation subject to serious misrepresentation.*

Community Radio Charter for Europe. Point 6.

Community Relations is not the same as public relations. Community Relations seek to establish co-operative relationships with people, voluntary community organisations, statutory bodies and local business in our area.

A good Community Relations plan is one which encourages all of us to constantly appraise, both our own actions and those of others in relation to the service we are providing for our community.

Our Community Relations Plan will set out to achieve two things:

- \* Our awareness of the community's needs and opinions of the co-op, and
- \* The community's awareness of the facilities and services available to them through the co-op.

Community Relations is a two way dynamic. Us telling the community what our aspirations are, they telling us what they think of our efforts so far, us reacting positively to this information and the community responding with fresh insights....and so on. This will be done regularly through evaluation.

The purpose of our Community Relations programme is to ensure each platform is of benefit to our community and is getting the credit for it.

Our Community Relations Committee will undertake to monitor and implement the following actions:

- \* Everything that will ensure that all involved (Staff and Volunteers) realises that they are part of the Community Relations Plan.
- \* Actions to ensure that the station remains an influence for good within our community.
- \* Actions to ensure continuous Community Awareness our activities.
- \* Getting our people out to meet the community, and getting the community in to meet station personnel.
- \* Ensuring that this community development project meets the needs of all.

The Community Relations Plan will engage in practical ongoing evaluation of the following areas:

- \* How is the phone answered?
- \* How are visitors to Near Media Co-Op received?
- \* How are queries and comments handled?
- \* How responsive is Near Media Co-Op to requests for access?
- \* How much help is given in backup, monitoring and follow-up to specific areas?

## **PROMOTIONS**

Promoting near90fm, near tv productions and near online is also part of the function of the Community Relations Committee.

The most positive benefits of promoting are:

- a. People become aware of the Co-op's existence.
- b. The three platforms become more popular
- c. Your work gets a larger audience, and
- d. Our co-op becomes more effective in its community development work.

### **Guidelines and Policy for promoting Your Programme.**

All promotional material must be approved by the Community Relations committee before being used or displayed. This is to ensure consistency. Talk to the committee, they may be able to signpost the event.

### **Display Material**

Posters also add to the attraction of your work. If you have a special feature or are inviting a guest in to talk on a topical subject, draw up details of a poster announcing this. The Committee will help you to produce and distribute these. Most shop owners, libraries, community halls etc. will display your poster – but ask before you display.

### **Recorded Promotional Material on radio**

If you would like a promo recorded contact [Dave@near.ie](mailto:Dave@near.ie) or speak to Alan Braddiish in the office ( [alan@near.ie](mailto:alan@near.ie)) The policy is to keep all promos to approx. 25-30 seconds.

### **Getting into the Community**

Another way to promote each platform is to go and visit public places. Shopping centre and community centre visits can be quite successful, as has been proven in the past. Also, becoming involved in the active life of our community can help us to promote our work. We need to use new technologies to do this more effectively. We aim to continue with these and other promotional actions, station volunteers and employees are expected to participate in these events, and to inform the Committee about upcoming event in their part of the community. Details can be left in the board pigeonhole.

### **Poster and Leaflet Drops**

This is carried out on an ongoing basis. We also have programme schedules printed up in the office. Take some and distribute to friends, organisations, and community groups in your area. This is an easy, inexpensive way of promoting our project. Cross promotion between the platforms is encouraged.

In conclusion if you have any ideas to promote our Community Radio Station, please contact any of the committee members.

## FINANCING COMMUNITY MEDIA

We are established as an organisations, which is not run with a view to profit and ensure their independence by being financed from a variety of sources

Community Radio Charter for Europe. Point 7.

The Co-op is not-for-profit entity. Commercial media makes programmes in order to make money. We make money in order to make media.

This Co-op is owned by a democratic, co-operative society and run by a voluntary Committee of Management. A public auditor audits all our finances each year and the information is publicly available.

This Co-op was asked to fund itself from a mix of advertising, sponsorship and community fundraising. We have decided to forego full-blooded advertising, as we feel that this is incompatible with community programming.

For example with radio:

We are experimenting with a form of commercial funding from local business termed Sponsorship Announcements. These return advertising to its original meaning of 'notification' and are a more candid model which is defined as follows:

Sponsorship Announcements contain the following information:

"The name of Sponsor, the business address and general description of the types of services or products that the Sponsor provides. These statements must not contain references to convenience, durability or desirability, or contain other comparative or competitive references. They can contain information about the Sponsors products, including price, name and brand name of the product."

We are encouraging this approach, as they are a more honest way to inform our listeners about local services available through local businesses, which are supporting our community station. Where possible, you should also seek to support our Sponsors.

Such 'Sponsorship Spots' are produced in-house by volunteers. They are broadcast on a bed of music and should be delivered in a neutral manner. See if you can spot the difference between them and ads on other radio stations.

## **SOCIAL FUNDING**

The relationship between our co-op and its funders is as important as the finance. We will therefore develop the following funding strategy.

### **PUBLIC**

Statutory bodies will be encouraged to provide core funding for our broad community development remit, also to provide programme-related grants and to contract us to deliver training services to eligible recipients.

### **COMMUNITY**

We will develop our community/listenership/viewership support by encouraging individuals and community organisations to support our various fundraising events.

### **PRIVATE**

We will seek local business Sponsorship, which is compatible with the Community Radio Charter. Caring organisations will also be encouraged to fund relevant projects. e.g. training in programme making for persons in their particular sector.

Such an approach seeks to develop a ‘Social Partnership’ between The Media Co-op and its funders who understand and support our broad community development aims.

We also seek to finance our Co-op from community events, such as pub quizzes and auctions and from grant aid from public and private bodies in relation to specific community development programmes and training projects.

All monies received go back into developing and promoting our project. We expect all volunteers, where possible, to support our community fundraising efforts.

## **POLICIES**

Co-op policy is set by the democratically elected Committee of Management of the co-operative, and is based on the best and most relevant information available to the committee.

Structures are in place for consultation with all persons involved through regular meetings, sub-committees, an internal newsletter and community consultations.

### **Some Policies You Should Know About**

#### **Access**

The Co-op is based on providing the widest possible access for persons and organisations in our area.

#### **Censorship**

This Co-op subscribes to the principle of each person's 'Right to Communicate'. Rights, however, bring responsibilities. If you are provided with uncensored time, (TV, radio or internet) you are expected to behave responsibly. Don't defame under any circumstance. Don't set out to shock or offend, unless the context of the piece requires it. If your content is censored and you're not happy about it, make a written report to the secretary, Committee of Management.

#### **Competitions**

As an alternative service to both commercial and national public service media, we are experimenting with alternative ways of doing things. One you should be aware of is our 'non-competitive' policy. This means that no competitions are allowed. Instead, if you have a gift to give away, you should ask your audience to submit their names for a draw for the item. No competitive questions are to be asked. Similarly, we will attempt to find non-competitive ways to promote the co-op, to encourage more involvement of the local citizens.

#### **Celebrity Free Zone**

As a co-op, which seeks to offer an alternative to that presented by other media, we do not promote the 'cult of the celebrity'. While we can acknowledge creative talent, we do not see ourselves as a publicity machine for celebrities, personalities or 'Very Important People'. In community project the celebrities are the local citizens. This list is not definitive, we'll no doubt add to it in the light of experience as we go along.

## **For Radio, Taking A Break**

Programme schedules are printed and distributed every quarter for publicity purposes. These schedules are many weeks in the preparation, if you decide to take a break from your programme, give the Contents Committee at least six (6) weeks notice. This will ensure that our printed programme schedule is not out of date as we publish.

## **Volunteer Sign-in**

We ask that all volunteers sign-in each time they are on Co-op premises. This is for insurance purposes. We ask for your co-operation in this.

## **Project Leaders**

From time to time, the Co-op applies for funding for specific projects. These are once off, and of limited duration. Ideally, each project should have a team. Why don't you get together with some other volunteers and offer to be a 'Project Team'. You will get production and administrative experience and the satisfaction of seeing a short-term project through to completion. You would not be asked to do more than one each year.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Near Media Co-Op is committed to equality of opportunity in all its employment practices, policies and procedures and to the creation of a working environment free from discrimination.

Near Media Co-Op's employment policy fully conforms to the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and accordingly, the Co-Op will ensure that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment due to any of the nine grounds contained in the Act (i.e. age, gender, marital status, family status, religious, race, sexual orientation, membership of the traveller community, disability), pay and conditions of work, training and work experiences and opportunities for career development and promotion. Selection, promotion and treatment of employees will be on the basis of their abilities and merits only and according to the requirements of the job.

## **Sound and Vision and guidelines for volunteers**

### Background

Sound and Vision is a fund that comes from the TV licence fee. It is something that Near90fm and community media lobbied for for many years and it is set up to "develop community broadcasting" Broadcasting Act. Near90fm see this funding primarily as a method of maintaining and developing our co-op.

The Sound and Vision makes funding available to make certain types of radio and television programmes; history, heritage, arts, drama, Irish experience in international

and European context; Irish language, environment, documentaries, drama, children and youth programming.

### Policy

All projects are near90fm productions.

Proposals can be made to the contents (programming) committee 3 months in advance of deadline.

As part of a production team volunteers may be paid for facilitating/coordinating/organising/ producing/researching/etc. This is not a professional fee, but a reward for the extra volunteering time and effort that goes into these projects.

Usually 50% of the rate can be paid, the other half goes into maintaining the project. (there are exceptions for unemployed etc, where we would pay more than 50%)

Volunteers need to show:

- that they have an interest in the area
- that they have experience in making the kind of programme in question
- that they have a strong track record in delivering.

If there is no track record volunteers may be asked to volunteer with a programme area for a period of time before the proposal can be taken up.

Note: Near Media Co-Op are the legal owners of all material, there is also a policy on artistic ownership, whereby the co-op may retain as little as 10% ownership.

## **Environment**

Near Media Co-op realises the importance of addressing global and regional environmental problems, including the degradation of natural resources. It is essential to deal with problems that are seriously threatening the ecological balance of the planet as a whole, such as ozone layer depletion, global warming, biodiversity loss and deforestation.

There is now international consensus that degradation of natural resources, poverty and unsustainable patterns of production and consumption are not separate issues but are in fact closely interconnected and can be contributory factors to conflict within and between nations. In addition, collective action in these areas is necessary not only because many environmental problems require concerted action to achieve a satisfactory resolution, but also to avoid market and competitive distortion that might result from unilateral actions.

Near Media Co-op follows the guidelines established by the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 recognised the need to deal with the complex inter-relationship of these issues in a comprehensive and balanced manner, adopting Agenda 21 as a guide for this organisation in their pursuit of sustainable development, and specifically, referring to Chapter 36 of Agenda 21, dealing with reorienting education towards sustainable development, increasing public awareness and promoting training.

Near Media Co-op commits itself to increase public sensitivity to environment and development problems and involvement in their solutions and foster a sense of personal environmental responsibility and greater motivation and commitment towards sustainable development.

### **Media Co-Op – Code of Discipline for Volunteers**

The objectives of this Code of Discipline are

- to ensure that volunteers against whom allegations are made are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner, and

- to provide an adequate means by which impropriety can be dealt with effectively and the highest standards of conduct can be maintained.

All matters of discipline shall be dealt with by management in a manner that protects the dignity of the volunteer and shall not be administered by management in the presence of other volunteers, staff or the general public.

All volunteers shall co-operate fully in the investigation of allegations of impropriety, for example, by providing such explanations as are sought in the course of the investigation.

In cases where a volunteer has been found in breach of regulations or where conduct is otherwise unsatisfactory, a number of options shall be open to management in regard to disciplinary action, for example: suspension, dismissal.

There are several areas covered by disciplinary procedures:

- Unsatisfactory performances of one's voluntary duties.
- Absence without proper notification
- Any form of abuse or aggression
- Being unfit to carry out one's duties

The nature and/or degree of a volunteer's misconduct would generally determine the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken.

Management will write to the volunteer in question inviting them to attend a disciplinary meeting, explaining the reason for the meeting

A volunteer may bring another volunteer to the meeting, if they wish.

Following the meeting, management will discuss the matter and make a decision. The decision will be communicated in writing to the volunteer within 3 working days.

The normal course of events will be:

- One verbal warning
- One written warning
- Dismissal

The Committee of Management reserve the right to suspend a volunteer prior to, or upon the issue of a verbal or written warning.

In case of gross misconduct, management reserve the right to dismiss a volunteer.

## **Health & Safety Policy.**

### **Safety Statement:**

This statement sets out the health & safety policy of Near Media Co-Op and the means through which that policy is to be implemented. Our objective is to meet our duties and obligations to our staff and volunteers by providing a safe and healthy working environment.

It is Near Media Co-Op's intention to protect our employees from accident or ill health at work. Near Media Co-Op will seek to ensure that all our equipment and systems do not constitute a risk to the Health & Safety of our employees and we will consult with employees on risk improvements.

### **Our approach to Health & Safety as far as is reasonably practicable will be:**

1. To Provide a Safe Place of Work.
2. To continue to identify and control hazards.
3. To prevent as far as is reasonably possible, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the Safety, Health & Welfare of employees at risk.
4. To consult with staff on all Health & Safety matters.
5. To provide protective clothing and equipment where necessary.
6. To provide a safe means of entering and leaving the building.
7. To provide a safe system of work practices.
8. To provide appropriate information and training to staff members on a continuous basis.
9. To make Health & Safety a key issue.

### **Employer Responsibilities:**

The responsibility for the provision of a safe place of work rests with the Committee of Management of Near Media Co-Op. **Specifically these responsibilities are:**

- To maintain a safe and healthy work environment for employees, in addition to conforming to all current statutory requirements.
- To provide the appropriate type and level of training to enable employees perform their work safely and efficiently.
- To make available to every employee appropriate equipment to ensure Health & Safety.
- To maintain a vigilant and continuing interest in all Health & Safety matters relevant to both the co-op and staff.

### **Employee Responsibilities:**

As a valued employee of Near Media Co-Op you have a responsibility to yourself and your fellow workers to carry out your work in a safe and considerate manner.

Employees must:

1. Co-Operate with the co-op in maintaining a safe work place.
2. Report any potential hazards to management and not work in any hazardous conditions should they; in the employee's opinion exist.
3. Be aware of the nearest emergency exits and fire fighting / first aid equipment.
4. Never interfere with or misuse anything provided by the co-op in the interests of Health & Safety.

5. Read the co-op Health & Safety statement and obey all mandatory signs.
6. Not partake in any form of horseplay or prank likely to lead to injury to you or others.

### *Appendix 1*

## **Accident or Near Miss Reporting Form**

Date, Time and Place of the incident.

Name, Address, Occupation and Age of the injured person.

Circumstances, including cause and nature of the injury and the arrangements made for its treatment. (See Appendix 1)

### **Smoking/Alcohol and Drugs:**

It is not permissible to attend work under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs. The smoking of tobacco products is prohibited in the offices of Near Media Co-Op. Smoking can take place outside the co-op building at least 3 metres distance away from door entrances and windows.

This smoking policy forms part of the overall Health & Safety Policy and any breach will be dealt with under the Co-op's disciplinary procedure.

Visitors, contractors and temporary members of staff are expected to abide by the terms of this policy.

### **Manual Handling:**

Manual Handling is defined as the "transporting of a load by one or more employees and includes lifting, putting down, pushing, carrying or moving a load, which by reason of its characteristics or of unfavourable ergonomic conditions involves risks, particularly of back injury to employees".

This is a priority issue because it is a major cause of accidents in the workplace. It is Near Media Co-Op's policy to minimise the need for manual handling of loads and so therefore should be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable.

Employees must check the weight of the load before attempting to lift it and if the load is too heavy get help. **When lifting, follow the following basic principles.**

1. Relax the knees. Lowering movements should start at the knees not the head.
2. Get close to the object to be lifted. Get a good balance by keeping the feet apart. One foot will automatically be ahead of the other.
3. When in position, bend the knees and lift with the strong muscles in the legs.
4. Lift gradually, smoothly and without jerking, keeping the object close to the body and the back straight.

#### **Training:**

The co-op is committed to identifying the safety training needs on an ongoing basis. Staff will be involved in the identification of hazards in the office and advised of the particular hazards pertaining to their area. Staff will be trained to respond to such hazards in order to prevent accidents/injury to themselves, their colleagues and clients.

All staff will be trained in emergency procedures and where appropriate, staff will be trained in the use of special machinery and equipment. All staff will be trained in the correct techniques involved in safe manual handling.

#### **Consultation:**

The co-op is committed to consulting with its staff members regarding safety, health and welfare in the office. Staff is involved in the identification of hazards and are trained in dealing with the hazards identified.

The safety statement will be included in Induction Training and staff will be advised on how to deal with any problems that arise.

#### **Reporting of Accidents:**

Staff are required to report all accidents and near misses, whether resulting in injury or not, to management. Under the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work General Application Regulations 1993, employers must report certain occurrences to the Health & Safety Authority and ensure records are kept on site for a period of 10 years. The following details are required:

- Date, Time and Place of the incident.
- Name, Address, Occupation and Age of the injured person.
- Circumstances, including cause and nature of the injury and the arrangements made for its treatment. (See Appendix 1)

All accidents will be investigated by a member of management and a written report prepared. Corrective action will be taken where necessary to avoid a reoccurrence. Accidents involving persons who are not members of staff but are visiting or working on the premises must also be reported.

#### **Fire Procedures:**

In the event of a fire and providing there is no danger to the persons concerned every effort should be made to extinguish or contain the fire pending the arrival of the fire brigade. The magnitude of the outbreak must dictate whether attacking the fire should take priority over reporting and evacuation.

All staff should be familiar with the exit routes and should also know the location and type of fire extinguishers in the office.

**If you discover a fire you should:**

- Activate the fire alarm.
- If there is a reasonable hope of extinguishing the blaze, attack the fire immediately.
- Do not under any circumstances, expose yourself to danger.
- Leave the building by the nearest fire exit and proceed to your designated assembly point.

**If you hear the alarm you should:**

- Switch off any equipment under your control and leave the building by the nearest fire exit.
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
- Once outside, do not enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so.
- Management will on occasion perform fire drills to ensure that procedures are known and followed in the event of a real fire.

**Guidelines for VDU users.**

As part of their duties some employees spend long periods of time using visual display screens. Any necessary adjustments will be made to avoid RSI, eyestrain and other ailments associated with work on screens, which must be adjustable for height, tilt and brightness. No employee will be asked or expected to work any computer which is not in proper working condition, or does not meet the highest specifications. Employees working continuously on-screen should alternate tasks so that at least 10 minutes during each 60 minutes of work is spent doing off-screen type of work. This work is to be undertaken away from the screen, but does not constitute a break. Employees who habitually use VDU's have the right to an eyesight test, the cost of which will be met or reimbursed by the co-op.

**Hazard Analysis:**

A hazard is anything at work that might cause harm e.g. Electricity, Hot Surfaces, Lifting Heavy Loads, Slippery Floors, and Poorly Lit Stairways etc. Staff must be aware of the potential hazards and risks involved and report specific hazards to management.

A hazard analysis will be carried out once a year by Management. Particular attention will be paid to areas of high risk i.e. Floors, Stairs and Manual Handling.

The co-op will remove hazards by engineering means where necessary.

**First Aid:**

First Aid boxes are provided to ensure that first aid supplies are easily accessible when required in an emergency. First Aid boxes are located at Northside Civic Centre Office, Near TV productions office and Near Online Office. They are to be checked weekly and shortages replaced. Employees have an obligation to ensure that First Aid Boxes, like any safety equipment, are not tampered with. Free access to First Aid Boxes must be maintained at all times. Painkillers cannot be provided in the First Aid Boxes.

**Security:**

Responsibility for building security rests with the management company of the building (i.e. CDC and Civic Centre) All visitors must comply with whatever security arrangements are in place. In some cases a swipe card is required for entry, in others a sign-in book is used. Any difficulties should be brought to the attention of the Project Co-Ordinator or Committee of Management.

### **Tobacco Policy**

Since 29th March, 2004 the Irish government has implemented a ban on smoking in the workplace. This ban was introduced as part of the public health (tobacco) Act, 2002 (Section 47) Regulations 2003. The purpose of this ban is to offer protection to employees and the public who are exposed to the harmful and toxic effects of tobacco smoke in the workplace.

Near Media Co-Op is obliged to protect the health of staff, customers and visitors to their

premises. Any person found guilty of breaching the ban may be subject to a fine of €3,000. Breaches of the smoking regulations will be dealt with under the Near Media Co-Op disciplinary procedure.

### **Alcohol & Drugs**

Near Media Co-Op is committed to providing a safe and productive environment for its volunteers. In keeping with this commitment, the following rules regarding alcohol and drugs of abuse have been established for all volunteers, regardless of position. The rules apply to all volunteers and/or their guests while they are on Near Media Co-Op premises or elsewhere on Near Media Co-Op business.

- The manufacture, distribution, possession, sale, or purchase of controlled substances of abuse on Near Media Co-Op property is prohibited.
- Being under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or substances of abuse on Near Media Co-Op property is prohibited.
- Volunteering while under the influence of prescription drugs that impair performance is prohibited.

### **E-Mail and Internet Use**

Electronic mail enables Near Media Co-Op to communicate promptly and efficiently with customers, suppliers, other community organisations and volunteers. While e-mail brings many benefits to Near Media Co-Op in terms of its communications, it also brings risks to Near Media Co-Op. For this reason, it is necessary for Near Media Co-Op to set down specific rules for the use of e-mail and internet within Near Media Co-Op.

Every volunteer has a responsibility to maintain Near Media Co-Op's image, to use electronic resources in a productive manner and to avoid placing Near Media Co-Op at risk of legal liability based on their use.

E-mail is not to be used for private purposes and should not be used for any

purpose other than Near Media Co-Op business.

Near Media Co-Op has access to the internet which enables staff to obtain information specific to their role within Near Media Co-Op. Employees requiring access to the internet will need the approval of management. Internet connections are intended to support Near Media Co-Op business or the professional development of employees. General internet access will only be provided with the permission of management.

## **Child Protection Policy & Guidelines**

Near Media Co-Op is a communally owned, democratic, not-for-profit project open to all organisations and individuals in Dublin North-East. Near Media Co-op runs Near90Fm, Community Radio for North-East Dublin, NearTV Productions which provides community television content to Dublin City Community Television (DCTV) and NearOnline which provides IT and Internet training to community groups and individuals.

Child Protection is an issue of concern to all those working with young people today. Child Protection is about ensuring the well being and safety of all children and young people in our care. Near Media Co-Op is committed to providing a safe environment for any children or young people under 18 years of age with whom it interacts. We undertake to apply this child protection policy throughout the organisation by setting up detailed procedures and steps to be implemented across all areas of Near Media Co-Op.

The procedures can be categorised under the following headings:

1. Child-Centred Approach
2. Good Practice
3. Inappropriate Behaviour
4. Physical Contact
5. Health and Safety
6. Form of Consent for Working with Children/Young People
7. Further Information and Training

### **1. Child-Centred Approach**

- Treat all children and young people equally.

- Listen to and respect children and young people.
- Involve children and young people in decision-making, as appropriate.
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability).
- Use appropriate language (physical and verbal).
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere.
- Offer constructive criticism when needed.
- Treat all children and young people as individuals.
- Respect a child's or young person's personal space.
- Discuss boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions, as appropriate, with children and young people and their primary carers.
- Agree group 'contract' before beginning session.
- Encourage feedback from group.
- Use age-appropriate teaching aids and materials.
- Lead by example.
- Be aware of a child's or young person's other commitments when scheduling rehearsals or activities, e.g., school or exams.
- Be cognisant of a child's or young person's limitations, due to a medical condition for example.
- Create an atmosphere of trust.
- Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation.

## **2. Good Practice**

- Register each child or young person (name, address, phone, special requirements, attendance, emergency contact).
- Make primary carers, children/young people, visitors and facilitators aware of the child protection policy and procedures.
- Have emergency procedures in place and make all staff aware of these procedures.
- Be inclusive of children and young people with special needs.
- Plan and be sufficiently prepared, both mentally and physically.
- Report any concerns to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures.
- Encourage children and young people to report any bullying, concerns or worries and to be aware of anti-bullying policy. (For further information on anti-bullying policy see 'Our Duty to Care', Fact sheet 2, Department of Health and Children, 2002).
- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour.
- Evaluate work practices on a regular basis.
- Provide appropriate training for staff and volunteers.
- Report and record any incidents and accidents.
- Update and review policies and procedures regularly.
- Keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children.
- Ensure proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved.
- Don't be passive in relation to concerns, i.e., don't 'do nothing'.
- Don't let a problem get out of control.
- Avoid taking a session on your own. If this is not possible then it should be in an open environment with the full knowledge and consent of primary carers.

- Avoid if at all possible giving a lift to a child or young person and if you do then make sure that primary carers are informed.
- Maintain awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner.

### **3. Inappropriate Behaviour**

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children or young people.
- Don't use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language.
- Don't single out a particular child or young person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus or attention.
- Don't allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Don't hit or physically chastise children or young people.
- Don't socialise inappropriately with children or young people, e.g., outside of structured organisational activities.

### **4. Physical Contact**

- Seek the consent of children or young people in relation to physical contact (except in an emergency or a dangerous situation).
- Avoid horseplay or inappropriate touch.

### **5. Health and Safety**

- Don't leave children unattended or unsupervised.
- Manage any dangerous materials or equipment.
- Provide a safe environment.
- Be aware of accident procedure and follow accordingly.

## **Grievance Policy**

Grievances will occur in the normal course of interaction in any organization.

It is accepted that failure to provide a procedure to deal adequately with these grievances, as they arise, will inevitably lead to disputes affecting not only the aggrieved party but all those involved in the organisation.

It is Near Media Co-Op's intention to settle amicably, at all times, any disagreements between it and individual volunteers or groups of volunteers, or between volunteers themselves.

All grievances will be dealt without undue delay and at the earliest possible stage of this procedure. A senior member of management will ensure that all grievances will be dealt with consistently and fairly having regard to:

- Near Media Co-Op Policy
- Custom and Practice within Near Media Co-Op
- Third Party precedents

#### Stage 1.

You should first raise the matter with the platform co-ordinator (i.e. Near90fm, Near Tv, Near Online) who will make every effort to solve the problem as quickly as possible. The matter will be discussed informally by the volunteer or volunteers concerned, with their immediate supervisor and agree any corrective actions.

#### Stage 2.

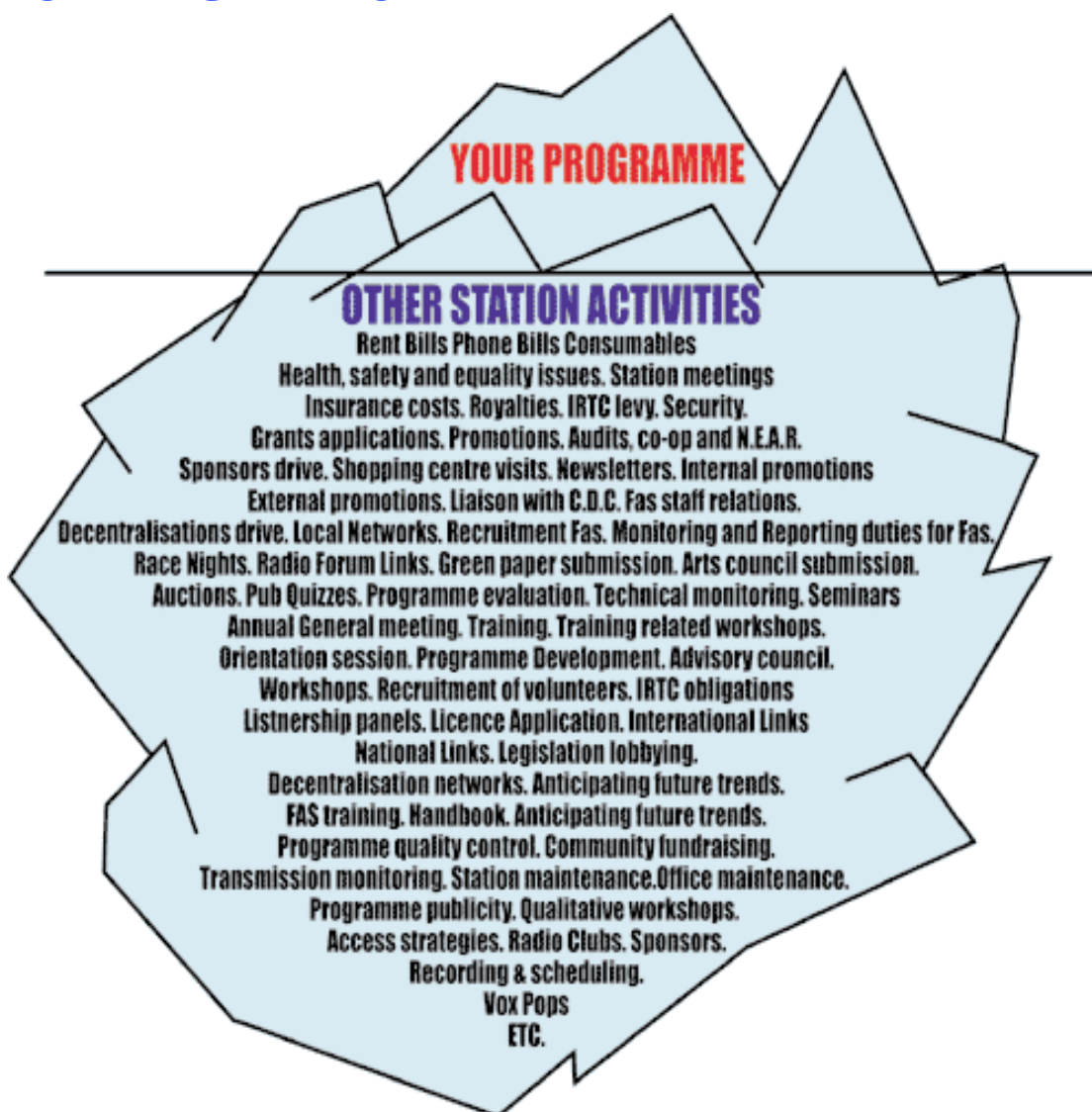
If you feel the problem has not been solved within a reasonable time of if you feel the solution is unsatisfactory, the matter will be referred to the project co-ordinator.

A meeting will take place within seven working days.

#### Stage 3.

Should the matter remain unresolved, it will be referred to the Committee of Management.

## ICEBERG EFFECT



Think about all of the other activities that go on to support your voluntary input. Pick some out and offer to help.

You may be interested to know that it costs the station about €10,000 per year to sustain each radio programme.

### Local and Global

Community media is both local and global in that we wish to use information technology to allow local people develop their communications skills and achieve their communications needs. While, at the same time, using new information technology, such as the Internet, to link our community with other communities around the world to share information and support each other.

To these ends, near90fm is part of CRAOL, the emerging Irish community radio network, we are also affiliated to A.M.A.R.C.-Europe, and AMARC International, a global network of community radio stations similar to our own.

In this, and other ways, we are linked through aspirations and technology to similar community groups across the planet in an organically growing web committed to human rights, environmental rescue and cultural diversity.

And finally, can we paraphrase what James Joyce told Seamus Heaney:

*"Let go, let fly, forget.  
You've listened long enough.  
Now strike your note.  
You are fasted now, light-headed,  
Dangerous,  
Take off from here .....  
....it's time to swim out on your  
own and fill the elements  
with signatures on your own  
frequency." .....*

Seamus Heaney. 'Station Island' Section XIL.

## **THE COMMUNITY RADIO CHARTER FOR EUROPE**

Recognising that Community Radio is an ideal means of fostering freedom of expression and information, the development of culture, the freedom to form and confront opinions and active participation in local life; noting that different cultures and traditions lead to a diversity of forms of Community Radio; this Charter identifies objectives which community radio station share and should strive to achieve.

### **Community Radio Stations**

1. Promote the right to communicate, assist the free flow of information and opinions, encourage creative expression and contribute to the democratic process and a pluralist society;
2. Provide access to training, production and distribution facilities; encourage local creative talent and foster local traditions; and provide programmes for the benefit, entertainment, education and development of their listeners.
3. Seek to have their ownership representative of local geographically recognisable communities or of communities of common interest.
4. Are editorially independent of government, commercial and religious institutions and political parties in determining their programme policy.
5. Provide a right of access to minority and marginalised groups and promote and protect cultural and linguistic diversity.
6. Seek to honestly inform their listeners on the basis of information drawn from a diversity of sources and provide a right of reply to any person or organisation subject to serious misrepresentation.
7. Are established as organisations, which are not run with a view to profit and ensure their independence by being financed from a variety of sources.
8. Recognise and respect the contribution of volunteers, recognise the right of paid workers to join trade unions and provide satisfactory working conditions for both.
9. Operate management, programming and employment practices which oppose discrimination and which are open and accountable to all supporters, staff and volunteers.
10. Foster exchange between community radio broadcasters using communications to develop greater understanding in support of peace, tolerance, democracy and development.

## **VOLUNTEERS' CHARTER**

We recognise and respect the contribution of volunteers, recognise the rights of paid workers to join trade unions and provide satisfactory working conditions for both.  
Community Radio Charter for Europe Point 8.

Volunteering to produce social benefit is an expression of humanitarian concern, allowing an individual to make a personal contribution to life in the community. As a volunteer with The Media Co-op you will have certain rights and responsibilities. We

set out below the current charter for volunteers.

### **A Volunteer's Rights**

1. The right to participate in the co-op's policy making processes. This can be done by attending meetings and /or by applying for membership of the co-op.
2. The right to information regarding the co-op's affairs, its management structures policies, financial affairs etc.
3. The right to be heard, and to have his/her views and opinions taken into consideration in framing policy or in determining operational procedures, and rules and regulations.
4. The right to training and development.
5. The right to adequate grievance procedures.
6. The right to seek a change in role or function.
7. The opportunity to advance personal objectives, e.g. career training in communications or journalism, provided only that it does not clash with co-op or Community media objectives.
8. The right to pre-agreed out of pocket expenses, where the co-op's policies so permit.

### **A Volunteer is obliged to**

1. Understand and, by his/her actions, support the aims and objectives of the Co-op.
2. Have a commitment to the Co-op over and above merely presenting or producing in his/her own area. This means working on sub-committees, attending meetings, supporting our social and fundraising functions etc.

3. Accept the authority of the Committee of Management or its designate(s) in all matters affecting the Co-op, including management structure, programming policy, programme content and quality etc.
4. Accept the Co-op's right to establish rules and regulations.
5. Accept the Co-op's disciplinary procedures including the right to discontinue an individual's voluntary service.
6. Honour the commitment made to fulfilling the agreed role or function within the Co-op, to the standards set by the Co-op.
7. Participate in and contribute to the Co-op's internal evaluation processes.
8. Conform to the legal requirements of radio programming and broadcasting.
9. Accept that all information compiled and all programme material made using the Co-op's equipment and facilities, is the property of the Co-op unless express permission is given to the contrary.
10. Maintain confidentiality about matters in regard to which the Co-op deems it necessary.

## **VOLUNTEERS DO'S AND DON'TS CHECK LIST**

**DO** Think about why you do voluntary work.

**DON'T** Start your voluntary work until you know exactly what is expected of you.

**DON'T** Over commit yourself, Offer only as much time as you are able to give regularly.

**DO** Stretch yourself to give a little more than just your specific area time.

**DO** Make an effort to understand the evolving nature of the project you have joined.

**DON'T.** Carry out any task if it is against your wishes or principles. Discuss it with the person in charge.

**DO** Stick to any arrangements you have made. If you are going to be late, let someone know.

**DO** Most of all, enjoy the experience.

### **In Summary**

Besides making your programme, you are **ENTITLED** to become involved in all station activities.

Besides making your programme, you are **EXPECTED** to become involved in all station activities.

## **VOLUNTEER WARRANTY**

I, the undersigned agree to:

Uphold the ethos and follow the guidelines of Near Media Co-op.

When in charge of broadcasting or production I agree:

That anything contravening the libel, slander and defamation laws shall not be broadcast.

That anything likely to incite or promote crime or hatred shall not be broadcast.

That anything which is sub-judice (prohibited from entering the public domain by the courts) shall not be broadcast.

That the privacy of any individual shall not be unreasonably encroached upon.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: