

Regen SW - Volunteers policy

Regen SW is an independent centre of sustainable energy expertise for the South West, and beyond. We aim to contribute to the development of a low carbon economy through working with the sustainable energy sector to increase:

- the number of green energy jobs in the region
- investment in the region's sustainable energy businesses
- the number of 'green' megawatts of energy produced and
- energy efficiency measures

Regen SW is an independent, not for profit organisation. Regen SW has a wide remit of work and activities which are outlined in our business plan.

Regen SW is regularly contacted by people who have recently finished their study, or are looking for experience of working in the sustainable energy sector and due to lack of space and time; we've been unable to take advantage of this fantastic opportunity before. However, we have recently moved offices and have been able to recruit a number of new staff which means that we are able to develop our approach to working with volunteers (also referred to in this document as interns).

This policy outlines:

- Why we plan to use volunteers and how this will help us to meet our aims
- How we will work with volunteers

If you have any questions about this policy or our approach to working with volunteers please speak to the operations manager.

Aims for working with volunteers

Regen SW has a very wide remit and some of the work that we'd like to do is unachievable without the support of volunteers.

We recognise that working with volunteers may give us access to recent academic thinking, different and complementary skills and new ideas. This will help us to enhance our working environment as well as the work we do.

The activities that we ask volunteers to do will make a real difference to both Regen SW and our stakeholders. We aim to create opportunities where there are clearly identifiable benefits so that volunteers know what they are doing and why.

Volunteers will be given a 'mentor' at Regen SW. The aim is for that member of Regen SW staff to develop their supervision skills and to have the opportunity to benefit from working directly with a volunteer.

Benefits we can offer:

- For individuals interested in working in the sustainable energy sector, spending time in our offices and working with our stakeholders would be helpful in broadening an understanding of the opportunities in the area giving an insight into the public and private sector and access to businesses.
- For new graduates it would also give experience of working in an office and a professional environment.
- Regen SW is a well respected organisation whose outputs are valued by the sector so working for Regen SW would enhance a CV.
- We will ask volunteers to do meaningful work which fulfils the volunteers career development aims.
- We will credit all work that volunteers undertake which is shared with external parties properly so that volunteers have proper evidence of their experience.
- Volunteers will have the opportunity to attend team meetings to get an experience of the way that the organisation works.
- Volunteers will also be given the opportunity to attend relevant Regen SW events.
- All volunteers will have an opportunity to feed back to Regen SW and will be given advice and feedback on their personal development objectives if they want it. In some cases the volunteer's main Regen SW contact may agree to forward CVs to companies who may be relevant, or to act as a reference.
- We will add details of volunteers who spend time with Regen SW to our website
- We will pay for any travel or subsistence expenses that the volunteer incurs in line with our 'travel plan'.

Working with volunteers

Volunteers can expect the follow whilst at Regen SW:

- Volunteers will be appointed a 'mentor' so they are clear on who to approach with queries or problems
- Volunteers will be taken through an induction checklist which will include health and safety, fire procedures, meeting staff members and details of how to use the office systems
- Before volunteers start they will be given a volunteer agreement which clearly sets out the programme of activities and Regen SW's expectations
- The office manager and volunteer mentors will monitor the time spent on supervising the intern and find ways to ensure that the relationship continues to be productive for both parties.
- Volunteers will have restricted access to Regen SW's files and information for data protection.