

Volunteer and contributor agreement

Note: Please sign and return this document to team@antipovertycentre.org. Please get in touch with the co-coordinators if you have any questions about this agreement. Contact information is included at the end of this document.

As an Antipoverty Centre volunteer or contributor I agree:

- to participate in the work of the Antipoverty Centre and act in a way that is consistent with its principles and objectives (enclosed at the end of this document);
- to conduct myself in a manner that continues and strengthens an inclusive culture within the Antipoverty Centre and our community by upholding the following guiding principles in my behaviour:
 - solidarity,
 - equality,
 - social justice,
 - diversity,
 - democracy,
 - independence and
 - dignity;
- to act in good faith, make decisions in the best interests of the Antipoverty Centre and our community, have goodwill towards others involved in our work and be honest;
- to only undertake duties I am asked to perform, operate in cooperation with the Antipoverty Centre co-coordinators or their delegates and follow reasonable instructions;
- that everyone involved in the Antipoverty Centre's activities has a duty of care to minimise risks to everyone affected by its conduct;
- to notify the Antipoverty Centre co-coordinators or an Oversight Committee member of any health and safety issues or potentially hazardous situations that may pose a risk to me or others and report any accidents or incidents relating to staff, contributors, volunteers, members or the work environment;
- to use any property or equipment in my capacity as an Antipoverty Centre volunteer or



contributor safely and only for purpose of the role and, where applicable, return it to the organisation when requested to do so or when it is no longer needed;

- to let the Antipoverty Centre co-coordinators know if I wish to change the nature of my contribution (eg hours, role) at any time;
- to be open and honest in my dealings with the Antipoverty Centre and let the co-coordinators know if they can improve the support I receive, including any accommodations that would make it easier for me to contribute to the organisation's activities; and
- to alert the Antipoverty Centre co-coordinators if there are children participating in or present at an activity related to my role and complete a Working With Children check when requested to do so.

Our commitments

We value our volunteers. As a participant in the work of the Antipoverty Centre you are entitled to:

- be in an environment free from discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, disability or any other form of oppression;
- have the opportunity to work collaboratively, provide input and seek clarification and instructions in relation to your work with the Antipoverty Centre;
- have support from a co-coordinator or their delegate;
- have your privacy respected at all times;
- have costs that support and enable your participation in our activities covered by the Antipoverty Centre as agreed with the co-coordinators (such payments are not remuneration or wages);
- receive benefits such as training, free food, accommodation, event entry, clothing or equipment as agreed with the co-coordinators (where this occurs, it is on a gratuitous basis and is not payment in lieu of salary);
- a safe environment that complies with Occupational Health and Safety and Anti Discrimination rules; and
- insurance to cover you for the activities you are authorised to perform.



I affirm that I have read and agree to the above

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Address:

Signature:

Date:

Organisational contacts

If you have questions or need support at any time, please reach out to one of the below operational or oversight committee members.

Co-coordinators

Jay Coonan and Kristin O'Connell: coordinator@antipovertycentre.org

Oversight Committee

Mel Fisher, convenor: convenor@antipovertycentre.org

Fiona Moore and Greg Page, co-secretaries: secretary@antipovertycentre.org

Priya Kunjan and Mel Powersmith, co-treasurers: treasurer@antipovertycentre.org

Maiy Azize, ordinary committee member: member@antipovertycentre.org



Principles

Members of the Antipoverty Centre pay respect to Elders past and present and acknowledge First Peoples' sovereignty has never been ceded. We recognise First Peoples' connection to and stewardship of Country, which is rightfully theirs, and has been unbroken for at least 120,000 years.

Coloniser members of the Antipoverty Centre take responsibility for our complicity in the ongoing violence that began with invasion and the advantages gained through the stolen wealth we have inherited. We stand in solidarity with First Peoples in their pursuit of truth-telling, self-determination and justice.

We will take concrete steps to:

- prioritise creating space and opportunities at all levels for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who wish to participate our activities, including through affirmative action;
- support and amplify the work of organisations controlled by First Peoples;
- emphasise in our work the disproportionate harm done to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in systems that oppress us on the basis of class, disability, gender and sexual identity; and
- provide labour and other forms of material support, both financial and non-financial, in recognition that it is our duty to pay the rent.

The Antipoverty Centre promotes decolonisation, universality, collectivism, anti-racism and anti-capitalism.

We are activists who work collectively and individually to advance the rights and interests of all people living in poverty and those who are subjected to other forms of oppression. We believe the systems that depend upon value created by unpaid and underpaid labour, including through the existence of unemployed workers, must be dismantled.

We believe the experts in poverty are the people who live it.

We commit to:

- subvert hierarchy;
- foster access and inclusion;
- act with autonomy;
- participatory practice; and
- radical transparency.



The Antipoverty Centre's operations will be carried out by people who are subjected to harmful social security policies, including by exclusion from support. Our positions will respond directly, concretely and coherently to the material realities of living in poverty. We will foster collective ownership and approach our work with the aim of maximising opportunities for experts in poverty to have input and be platformed in both formal and informal ways.

Every person living in poverty is an expert and we recognise there are a diversity of views, experiences, and opinions in our community about how to address poverty. While seeking to build consensus for our proposals, we will respect the views of others who share our experiences and values even when they do not reflect the Antipoverty Centre's position. We do not tolerate any person who participates in our activities negatively discriminating against others who are marginalised or behaving in ways that compromise safety.

The Antipoverty Centre will not collaborate with or join another organisation in ways that undermine these principles and values. We will staunchly oppose policies that allow private organisations to derive financial benefits from the existence of poverty. We will not centre technocratic theories and proposals that alienate people by treating poverty as an abstract concept or necessary condition.

Experts in poverty and social security should have their labour valued and be paid for their knowledge, time and work. It is our responsibility to ensure that this expertise is compensated financially wherever possible in our activities.

We are committed to building trust by practising openness, transparency and accountability. We will publish information about our finances, who we work with and the projects we are involved in. As we grow we will work to develop an organisational structure and processes that decentralise and democratise operations and decision-making to the greatest extent possible. We will be vigilant of the ill effects of power and work actively to mitigate the risk of concentrating authority.

The Antipoverty Centre seeks to build support and capacity for emancipatory, grassroots, decentralised responses to state violence. We will participate to the greatest extent possible in all forms of activism, advocacy and policymaking that advance our objectives.

Adopted 17 February 2022



Objectives

1. To defend and advance the rights of people living in poverty and those experiencing harm on the basis of race, disability, criminalisation, gender, visa status or any other form of oppression.
2. To provide an avenue for people living in poverty to dominate social policy and advocacy work and create the conditions that enable opportunities for people living in poverty to take on leadership roles, be platformed and have their expertise recognised.
3. To reflect the diversity of people and experiences affected by harmful systems, policies and programs to the greatest extent possible in all policy and advocacy work done by the Antipoverty Centre.
4. To foster solidarity, encourage informal peer support, strengthen resilience and alleviate the social pressure and isolation that results from living in poverty by building a safe and inclusive community of people with shared experiences.
5. To use the Antipoverty Centre's platform and resources to amplify the work of other individuals and organisations whose values and objectives align, including by providing material support when possible and appropriate.
6. To increase understanding among the broader public of the harm being caused to people living in poverty and the underlying causes of these harms.
7. To shift negative public perceptions of people living in poverty, including by countering misinformation and myths.
8. To centre poverty in social, economic and environmental policy discussion, especially in institutions and contexts where the voices of people in poverty are minimised or excluded, and to reverse the normalisation of people who do not have direct experience of poverty being given prominence in these discussions.
9. To expose the structures and systems that exacerbate and rely on poverty for profit, including the state's use of private organisations (both for-profit and non-profit), to continue the stratification of racial, gender, sexual and class oppression.
10. To influence the positions and priorities of other advocacy, policy and political organisations, and eventually those of government.

Adopted 17 February 2022

