

Northey Street City Farm

Volunteer

Policy & Procedures

Volunteers

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Volunteering

Is based on personal motivation and choices, freely undertaken

Is a way of furthering active citizenship and community involvement

Takes the form of individual or group activities generally carried out within the framework of an organisation

Enhances human potential and the quality of daily life, building up human solidarity

Provides answers for the great challenges of our time, striving for a better and more peaceful world

Contributes to the vitality of economic life, even creating jobs and new professions

(ref. Volunteering Australia)

NSCF Philosophy of volunteering

Northey Street City Farm belongs to the community in that it is a public resource that promotes environmental sustainability, social equity, cultural diversity and community participation.

NSCF aims to create opportunities for community members to participate, voluntarily, in activities that develop their skills, promote environmental sustainability and enhance the local community.

Volunteers bring a range of skills, experience and enthusiasm for the values and activities that NSCF promotes. Volunteering at NSCF involves working together to fulfill these common goals.

NSCF values its volunteers and is committed to ensuring an enriching and enjoyable experience for them.

Promoting Volunteer Opportunities

Opportunities to volunteer at NSCF are promoted through:

- Weekly farm tours
- Visits by community and other groups
- General NSCF leaflets, brochures
- Farm notice boards and signage
- Sunday Markets information stall
- NSCF website: www.nscf.org.au
- Newsletters (online and emailed to members)
- Education classes
- Volunteer Handbook outlining volunteers' potential roles and pathways
- Informal talks with drop-in visitors
- Events and functions at NSCF and elsewhere (e.g. winter solstice & garden shows)
- Support/reward opportunities

Initial Inquiry about Volunteering

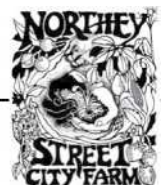
The volunteer coordinator or the office administration team should handle these inquiries.

Procedure

Give or send the potential volunteer an information leaflet/email which outlines the various volunteering options.

Answer any questions the potential volunteer may have or refer them to the relevant volunteer coordinator.

Suggest that they go on the free weekly tour of City Farm to become familiar with the various aspects of NSCF.



Orientation Program

All new volunteers should initially fill in a confidential Volunteer Registration Form (see Appendix 1), available in the Volunteer Sign On/Off folder or from the office

The data on the Registration Form should be entered into the NSCF database by the membership secretary, volunteer coordinator or office staff. All information about volunteers should be treated as strictly confidential and only authorised volunteer coordinators/office staff should have access to it.

All new volunteers should be invited to take part in an orientation session. These sessions are to be integrated with the free weekly tour, but additional sessions can be arranged at other times based on need and availability of staff.

The Orientation Program should include:

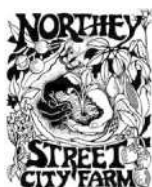
- Free tour of the City Farm
- Completion of the Volunteer Registration Form
- Free copy of the Volunteer Handbook
- Information session about the aims, structure & functions of NSCF. This session draws on the content outlined in the Volunteer Handbook
- Morning tea and introductions to staff and volunteer coordinators
- Workplace Health and Safety training
- Questions and answers
- Completion of the Volunteer Confirmation Form (see Appendix 2)
- Lunch

If possible, an informal meeting should take place with each new volunteer to match the volunteer with appropriate work areas and supervisors so as to ensure a positive and fulfilling experience for all involved.

Roles and Pathways

Appropriate role descriptions should be formulated for key roles/responsibilities at the farm, plus an outline of the relevant pathways for volunteers leading to these. Examples may include:

Gardening (organic)	Signage & banners
Tree care & harvesting	Artworks, earth art
Compost making	Graphic design/editing
Worm farming	Promotions/marketing
Nursery	IT support (computers)
Kitchen/food preparation	Office/administration
Cleaning	Event organising
Bush revegetation	Community networking
Chook care	Grant-writing/projects
Construction/handyperson	Tour guide
Recycling	Tutor (workshops, school groups)
Coffee/Chai café	Educator (Permaculture)
Sunday market stall(s)	Library & notice boards



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These role descriptions should be used to:

- help potential volunteers decide the positions most suitable and interesting to them
- help match people with appropriate volunteer positions
- reduce any misunderstandings that may occur around what tasks the volunteer will and will not undertake
- provide guidance to supervisors re filling a position
- help the organisation identify and acknowledge the contribution of volunteers to the farm

The role description should include:

- Job title
- Job tasks
- Special skills or competencies required or desirable (if applicable)
- Special requirements (e.g. police check, driver's license) (if applicable)
- Exclusions (e.g. "not suitable for people with asthma") (if applicable)
- Supervision of the position
- Time frame / attendance requirements/expectations
- What benefits the volunteer might gain from this role

Police Checks

Blue Cards

Volunteers who have direct supervision or responsibility for children under the age of 16, or who take tours or activities with school groups must be holders of a current blue card.

Training

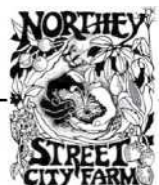
All volunteers should have access to training, including:

- orientation (within one month of first attending)
- on-the-job training in the particular area(s) in which they are working (initially, and on-going)
- general volunteer training programs
- access to volunteer coordinator and 'train-the-trainer' courses, as the farm is able to offer them
- access to other NSCF training courses, workshops and excursions at a discounted rate

Relationship between Paid and Unpaid Staff

There is often a blurred line between paid and unpaid workers at the farm. Paid workers themselves often take on large amounts of voluntary work, either as an extension of their paid work, or in different farm activities. Volunteers may supplement their roles with occasional paid work.

The work of volunteer staff should complement the work of paid staff. Volunteer role descriptions should reflect this distinction. If a volunteer does act in place of a staff member, e.g. during the staff member's leave, the volunteer should be paid for the time they work.



Responsibilities of NSCF in Providing for Volunteers

- Volunteers to be treated with dignity and respect
- Healthy and safe workplace
- Meaningful and constructive work
- Free copy of the 'Volunteer Handbook' to assist with orientation of new volunteers
- Workplace health & safety (WH&S) training for new volunteers
- Adequate liability insurance coverage for injury or illness related to volunteer work at NSCF
- Tools which are adequate for the job
- Access to toilets, washing facilities & rest areas
- Secure, individual storage area for personal belongings (day use only)
- Recognition of volunteers' contribution to NSCF
- Adequate supervision, support and feedback on tasks performed
- On-the-job training in the particular area(s) in which volunteers are working
- Protection from harassment
- Confidentiality of volunteers' personal information
- Reimbursement of approved out-of-pocket expenses
- Fair and prompt procedures for resolving grievances
- Access to 'train-the-trainer' courses for experienced volunteers
- Access to the varied roles and pathways available at NSCF as appropriate

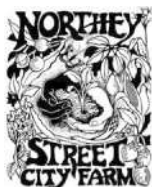
Responsibilities of volunteers at NSCF:

- Work safely and protect the safety of co-workers and others
- Support co-workers and treat them and others at NSCF with respect
- Respect the confidentiality of any personal information relating to other NSCF workers or members gained as a result of working at NSCF
- Ask for support when needed
- Treat NSCF tools and property with care
- Be honest and trustworthy in all financial dealings
- Do not cause harm to the interests of NSCF, its workers, volunteers and supporters within the wider community
- Be aware of NSCF's mission and to contribute towards achieving it.

Roles and Responsibilities of Volunteer Coordinators

Coordination of volunteers at NSCF is shared amongst a number of paid and voluntary workers. Their roles are jointly to:

- Oversee the NSCF volunteer program
- Welcome and support new volunteers
- Ensure volunteers' work activities are appropriate
- Provide or organise on-the-job training for volunteers as appropriate
- Liaise, where necessary, between volunteers and other people at the Farm
- Organise special events and activities for volunteers
- Be a contact point for volunteers experiencing problems in their work or relationships at NSCF
- Uphold and implement volunteer policy and procedures, as set out in this manual



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Reimbursement of expenses

If volunteers need to make purchases relating to their work at NSCF, they should discuss this with their volunteer coordinator and gain approval before making the purchase. Coordinators need to work within their designated budgets and volunteers need to be aware of these constraints.

When volunteers make a purchase relating to their work, they will need to present receipts to their coordinators before they can be reimbursed.

Insurance Cover

NSCF recognises that all volunteers and workers have the right to be covered by the farm's liability and accidental injury insurance policies.

Volunteers are covered by CGU Insurance, through Allsafe Insurance Brokers for public liability to a limit of \$10 million, and by Aon Risk Services Australia for accidental injury sustained at NSCF.

Volunteer Registration & Confirmation forms should be completed by each new volunteer before any work is performed

All volunteers should, upon arrival for work at the farm, write their name & arrival time in the Sign On/Off Book. Before leaving the farm, they should add their departure time & signature.

Personal Information and Privacy

Volunteers' personal information is to be treated in a confidential manner and kept in a computer database. Access to the database is limited to authorised volunteer coordinators and office staff. Access is restricted with a password.

All volunteers have the right to access any information recorded by NSCF which relates to themselves.

Use of Motor Vehicles and Insurance

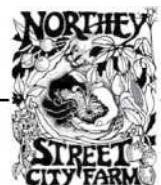
NSCF vehicles are to be driven only by volunteers who are over 25 years of age, and only with the approval of their volunteer coordinator. The vehicle booking diary in the office must be filled in with the driver's name and destination for the trip before the vehicle is driven. The log book inside the vehicle must also be filled in for every trip.

Volunteer coordinators must approve the use of private motor vehicles for NSCF business prior to their use. Volunteers who use private motor vehicles for NSCF business must have their cars covered, at least, by Third Party Property and Compulsory Third Party insurance... and preferably by comprehensive insurance.

Dispute Resolution Procedures

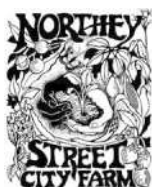
General principles

- It is recognised that conflicts will inevitably arise
- It is also recognised that most conflicts should be able to be resolved to the reasonable satisfaction of all concerned
- The process of resolving conflict can lead to creative growth in the organisation
- It is acknowledged that disputes may arise due to simple misunderstandings or communication not being as effective as it could be, and that problems may evaporate by simply communicating the problem directly to the person concerned
- Conflict should be dealt with at an early stage and not left to smolder
- Conflict should be dealt with consciously and actively rather than be swept under the carpet
- Complaints and grievances of people involved in NSCF should be raised and dealt with internally within the organisation as far as possible
- Efforts should be made to ensure that members of the public are protected at all times from the effects of the dispute
- Openness, honesty, confidentiality and equal respect for views of all parties are crucial for the successful resolution of conflicts



The Management Committee will appoint a Dispute Contact Person who is acceptable and accessible to all parties. The role of the Dispute Contact Person will be to act as a point of contact for persons with a grievance or dispute.

1. The dispute resolution process
 - A person with a grievance or dispute is encouraged to discuss the issue with the other person directly involved if they feel comfortable with this. They are encouraged to seek support from their supervisor, volunteer coordinator or the Dispute Contact Person with regard to this.
 2. If the person with a grievance or dispute does not feel comfortable in approaching the other person directly or if (s)he has spoken to the person directly and the complaint / difficulty continues, then the complainant should report the issue to their supervisor, volunteer coordinator or the Dispute Contact Person.
 3. The supervisor, volunteer coordinator or Dispute Contact Person should endeavor to mediate the dispute by listening to the concerns of both parties and seeing whether an agreed resolution can be found.
 4. If the supervisor, volunteer coordinator or Dispute Contact Person believes that the issue is of a sufficiently serious nature, (s)he can issue a verbal warning to one or both of the persons involved. The warning should include:
 - A clear statement of the specific concerns
 - The expectations regarding the resolution of the concerns
 - The timeframe within which the changes should be made
 5. If the grievance or conflict continues, the supervisor, volunteer coordinator, Dispute Contact Person or the person or persons in dispute should take it to the member of the management committee designated by that committee as Dispute Reference Person. The Dispute Reference Person can provide advice and support to the supervisor, volunteer coordinator or Dispute Contact Person to continue their efforts to mediate the conflict. Alternatively, (s)he can attempt to mediate the conflict directly herself or arrange for an external mediator.
 6. If the grievance or conflict still continues, the Dispute Reference Person should, at this stage, inform the Management Committee about the dispute and the measures taken to attempt resolution. The Management Committee should initiate further procedures to resolve the conflict, which can include:
 - Issuing a written warning to one or both parties. The warning would include:
 - A clear statement of the specific concerns
 - The expectations regarding the resolution of the concerns
 - The timeframe within which the changes should be made
 - Arranging further mediation efforts with either internal or external mediators
 - Reviewing policies or organisational matters that may be contributing to the continuation of the conflict
 - Terminating the employment, placement or attachment of the person or persons involved.
 - Reference to possible legal consequences



Anti Discrimination

It is NSCF's duty and commitment to ensure that there is no discrimination or harassment in the NSCF community and to provide equal opportunities for all people. Discrimination or harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances and disciplinary action will be taken against any volunteer or staff member who breaches this policy.

Commonwealth and State laws also require all employers, managers and supervisors to treat fairly all their employees, volunteers and anyone who applies for a job with them.

NSCF's Objects of Association also specifically support the involvement of people with disability in the activities of the Farm.

Discrimination and harassment occur when a person is discriminated against or harassed because of their **race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin**, as defined under the **Racial Discrimination Act 1975**, or because of their **sex, marital status or pregnancy** as defined under the **Sex Discrimination Act 1984**, or because of a **disability** as defined under the **Disability Discrimination Act 1992**. Unfair discrimination based on **age, industrial activity, sexual orientation, career status, physical features, political beliefs or activity or religious activity** is unlawful as covered in **Queensland's Anti-Discrimination Act 1991**.

NSCF notes that discrimination or harassment on of the grounds listed in the legislation listed above is against the law.

Any case of discrimination or harassment should be handled in accordance with the Dispute Resolution Procedures, as detailed above.

Sexual Harassment

All NSCF staff and volunteers have the right to work in a safe environment, free from any form of sexual harassment.

'Sexual harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated, or offended. Sexual harassment can take many different forms and may include physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, the display of offensive material or other behaviour which creates a sexually hostile working environment.' (ref. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission)

'Sexual harassment is not behaviour which is based on mutual attraction, friendship and respect. If the interaction is consensual, welcome and reciprocated, it is not sexual harassment.' (ref. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.)

A person can be harassed by a supervisor, manager, staff member, fellow volunteer or visitor. Harassment is not just unlawful during working hours or in the workplace itself. The behaviour is unlawful in any work-related context, including work functions, Christmas parties and field trips.

Harassment is against the law. Legal action can be taken against any employee or volunteer for harassment. NSCF can also be legally liable for harassment that occurs within its area or operations.

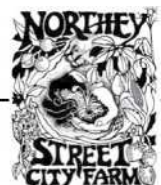
Addressing Harassment:

If the person who feels they are being or have been harassed is able to confront the harasser directly, NSCF supports this informal action. This would be the first option.

If confronting the harasser directly is not an option, the person can involve a third person they feel comfortable with (preferably their supervisor or volunteer coordinator) to address the complaint to the harasser in person.

If the situation is still not adequately addressed, the next step is to file a complaint under the NSCF Dispute Resolution Procedures (as listed above).

Depending on the severity of the case, consequences for the harasser can include an apology, transfer, dismissal or other forms of disciplinary action.



Workplace Health and Safety

Health and Safety is the responsibility of everyone at NSCF, whether they are a paid worker, employment program participant or volunteer.

The **Queensland Workplace Health and Safety Act (1985)** places an obligation on every person to ensure his or her own workplace health and safety and the workplace health and safety of others.

NSCF's duties and responsibilities in relation to Workplace Health and Safety are:

- To provide a safe working environment
- To arrange safe systems of work
- To provide and maintain safe equipment, including personal protective equipment
- To provide adequate information on hazards
- To provide training for all workers and volunteers in Workplace Health and Safety
- To appoint a Health and Safety Officer, who is responsible for coordinating workplace health and safety at NSCF.
- To have a first aid kit present on site.
- To provide a means for notifying hazards and to act promptly to remove or control hazards that are notified by workers and volunteers.
- To keep records of workplace injuries and illnesses.

Workers and volunteers responsibilities in relation to Workplace Health and Safety are:

- To work in a safe manner and use all equipment safely
- To not put at risk the safety of other workers, volunteers or visitors
- To not use equipment unless trained in its safe use
- To use personal protective equipment when necessary
- To report any hazardous situations to the volunteer supervisor or Health and Safety Officer
- To notify any injuries or illnesses sustained in the workplace to the volunteer supervisor or the Health and Safety Officer
- To provide first aid to an injured co-worker***

Health and Safety and First Aid Officers

The names of the current health & safety officer and first aid officer are listed in the NSCF contact list displayed on the notice board outside the office.

Hazard and Incident Notification

A folder marked 'Safety' in the office contains copies of hazard notification forms and incident notification forms, as well as instruction sheets about potential hazards at NSCF and how to minimise the risks from those hazards.

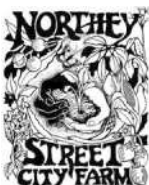
When a potentially dangerous situation arises, the volunteer coordinator and safety officer are to be advised immediately.

All work-related accidents, sickness or injury, no matter how minor, should be reported to the volunteer coordinator and the first aid officer as soon as possible.

An accident report is to be filled out in full for all incidents of injury or work related illness promptly.

First Aid Kit

A fully stocked First Aid Kit is located in the office. It is the responsibility of all to familiarise themselves with the location and contents of these kits. The first aid officer will be responsible for the restocking of the kit after it has been used.



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Communication System

To ensure all volunteers feel valued and informed, and to enhance networking between volunteers, the following means of communication will be used:

- Notices posted on the NSCF notice board
- Articles and notices relevant to volunteers included in NSCF newsletters
- Team and enterprise coordinators are responsible for informing their volunteers of upcoming events and training programs, if necessary by distributing memos to the volunteers
- The NSCF website: www.nscf.org.au contains information about forthcoming events
- The monthly eNews provides regular updates, and volunteers are encouraged to subscribe, or read the latest versions on display around the farm

Recognition of Volunteers' Contributions

NSCF will acknowledge and show appreciation for the work of volunteers in the following ways:

- Through arranging special social occasions for volunteers
- By dedicating a section of the quarterly NSCF newsletter to volunteers and their activities
- By actively saying 'thank you' and using appreciative language
- Through presentation of volunteer appreciation awards at the annual Volunteers/members breakfast.
- By providing written references when requested
- By offering extra training where possible

It is not policy to reward volunteers with monetary payments. However, active and experienced volunteers may be encouraged to apply for funded positions when these become available.

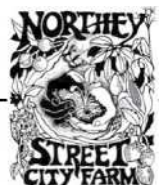
Program Evaluation and Review

NSCF believes that the volunteer program should be regularly evaluated and reviewed to ensure that the program remains useful and relevant to the overall needs and vision of the organisation, and to ensure that it adequately caters for the needs of volunteers.

This process of evaluation should be ongoing and should also occur on annual dates specifically set aside. The review needs to be an active, enjoyable and creative process, involving as many people as possible, particularly key people involved with volunteers and the volunteers themselves.

As part of this on-going program of review and evaluation, the volunteer coordinator(s) will:

- Keep in touch with volunteers and invite them to give feedback on the program.
- Conduct surveys to find out how the volunteers feel about the volunteer program and their experiences at NSCF
- Obtain feedback from the volunteer supervisors about the volunteer program and the views of the volunteers
- Attempt to obtain feedback from volunteers who leave NSCF regarding their reasons for leaving and their perceptions of their experience at NSCF (see Appendix 3).



Appendix 1 – Volunteer Registration Form

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5. WHAT INTERESTS YOU? (PLEASE TICK AS MANY AS YOU LIKE)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening (organic) | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction/handyperson | <input type="checkbox"/> Artworks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compost making | <input type="checkbox"/> Bush regeneration | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic design/editing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harvesting | <input type="checkbox"/> Recycling | <input type="checkbox"/> Promotions/marketing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worm farming | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday market stall(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> IT support (computers) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery | <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee/Chai café | <input type="checkbox"/> Office/administration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chook care | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour guide | <input type="checkbox"/> Event organising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen/food preparation | <input type="checkbox"/> Tutor (workshops, school groups) | <input type="checkbox"/> Grant-writing/projects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning | <input type="checkbox"/> Educator (Permaculture) | <input type="checkbox"/> Community networking |

What skills / knowledge could you contribute to NSCF as a volunteer?

Do you have any specific training / qualifications?

.....

.....

6. HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT NORTHEY STREET CITY FARM/OUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Course/Workshop | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour | <input type="checkbox"/> Caseworker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment agency | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Gardens Network | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Signed Date...../...../.....

MEMBERSHIP (OPTIONAL)

Volunteers are encouraged to become members of the Northey Street City Farm Association Inc.

Yes, I would like to become a member of Northey Street City Farm (please complete membership application form & return with payment to the farm office)

	1 year	5 year
Concession *	\$15	\$60
Organisation	\$60	\$250
Life membership Single payment of \$500		

	1 year	5 year
Family	\$40	\$160
Single	\$30	\$120
Donation to the farm (tax-deductible)		

* full time students and health care card holders only

Membership benefits include:

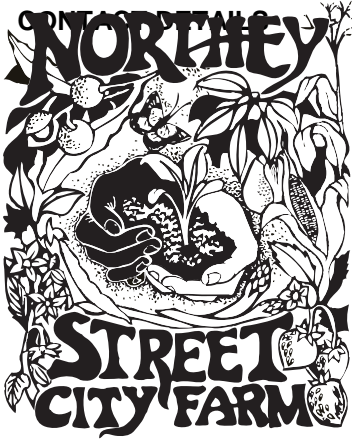
- Our gratitude for your contribution
- Discounts on all Northey Street City Farm courses
- 10% discount on plants purchased at the nursery
- Quarterly seasonal newsletter full of news, photos, stories and permaculture
- Voting rights at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), and the opportunity to get involved with a management committee or site group
- Most of all, the knowledge that you're contributing to the foundation upon which Northey Street City Farm continues as a place to gather, learn and celebrate 'Living Sustainably in the City'

Office use only
Volunteer details entered into database: Y / N
Date...../...../.....

Appendix 2 – Volunteer Confirmation Form

Northey Street City Farm

Volunteer Confirmation Form



Name.....

Date of Birth...../...../.....

If your contact details have changed since completing the NSCF Volunteer Registration Form, please fill in your new details below:

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Home Phone..... Work Phone.....

Mobile..... Email.....

I have received a free copy of the 'NSCF Handbook' and have attended an initial Workplace Health & Safety Training (WH&S) session. Further WH&S training will be provided as needed, on a task-by-task basis.

I understand and share the values expressed in the following sections of the 'NSCF Handbook':

- 'NSCF Philosophy of Volunteering'
- 'Responsibilities of NSCF in Providing for Volunteers'
- 'Responsibilities of Volunteers at NSCF'

Signed (Volunteer) Date/...../.....

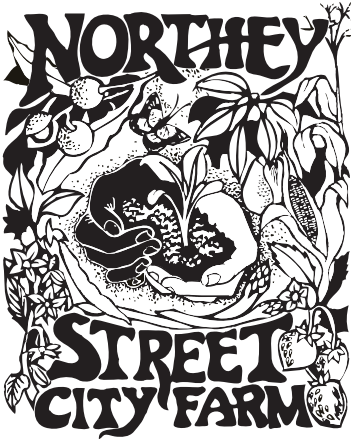
Signed (for NSCF)..... Date/...../.....

NSCF authorised person's role

Office use only			
Volunteer confirmation entered into database:	Y / N	Confirmation date/...../.....
Departure date entered into database (if applicable):	Y / N	Departure date/...../.....

Appendix 3 – Volunteer Feedback Form

Northey Street City Farm Volunteer Feedback Form



What activities are/were you mostly involved in at NSCF? (e.g. nursery, market garden, art/cultural activities, community networking, etc.)

.....
.....
.....

What skills have you gained from being involved in NSCF?

.....
.....
.....

What other experiences have you gained from being involved as a volunteer at NSCF?

.....
.....

How could NSCF improve the experience for volunteers? (e.g. better facilities, training, orientation/introduction, socially, etc.)

.....
.....
.....

Do you find the supervision and on-the-job training sufficient?

.....
.....

Were there aspects of the farm you would like to get involved in, but didn't know how?

.....
.....

Are there training opportunities you would like offered to volunteers?

.....
.....

Do you have any other feedback for the farm?

.....
.....
.....

Name (OPTIONAL)..... Date...../...../.....

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. Your feedback is valuable and will help us to improve the experience we offer to volunteers at Northey Street City Farm

Please hand completed form in at the office or post to: Northey Street City Farm, 16 Victoria St, Windsor QLD 4030