**Who Are Crew?**

Crew is an award-winning national charity, based in Edinburgh, at the forefront of tackling new and emerging drug trends.

**Our Position:** We neither condemn nor condone drug use, we provide people with the

support and information they need to reduce harm.

**Mission:** To reduce drug and sexual health related harms and stigma, improving mental and physical health without judgement.

**Our Values:**

* Accepting: “non-judgemental, unconditional positive regard”
* Genuine: “being genuine and real with each other”
* Empathic: “walking in someone else’s shoes as if they were your own”
* Justice-focussed: “acting to change the balance of power towards justice, equality and human dignity”
* Accountable: “we trust in our courage to own mistakes and learn from them; we are realistic about what we commit to do, and we do it”

**History:**

Crew emerged in the early 1990’s when a group of community educators, drug workers and volunteers involved in the dance scene got together and set about providing advice and

information around safer dancing to their fellow ravers. This group of ‘loved up club bunnies’

wanted to make it a safer and more enjoyable experience for the large amounts of young people

attending unlicensed and club-based events every week. Adopting a harm reduction and risk

minimisation approach, they carried out action research, trained themselves and volunteers as ‘peer educators’ and engaged with young people who were already using drugs around the dance scene.

Funding was secured to continue the work and the organisation has grown over the years, gaining a paid staff team and Drop-in shop premises on a busy central Edinburgh street. Crew has retained the peer education ethos which characterised our early years and most of our face-to-face services still involve trained volunteers, often connected to dance and other party scenes themselves.

Volunteers are also represented on the Board of Directors and are closely involved in steering the work of the organisation, harm reduction information production, organising events, and DJ workshops.

**Management:**

Crew is a registered charity SC021500, and a company limited by guarantee SC176635 and has a voluntary Board of Directors, made up of up to 10 people at any one time, who are accountable for the organisation and performance.

Most day-to-day decisions are made by Crew staff and volunteers, but strategic direction, financial management and other key management issues are dealt with at Board level. The Board is made up of people who support our non-judgemental harm reduction approach and who possess the right skills and experience to help us with our work.

**Where Volunteers Enhance Our Work:**

**The Drop-in**

Located on Cockburn Street in Edinburgh’s Old Town, the Drop-in, led by team of staff and volunteers, opens 6 afternoons a week. We offer a free text call-back service and Digital Drop-in via email or Instagram Direct Messages and support, on average, 4,000 people each year, the majority aged 12-25. We provide free, non-judgemental information, advice, Brief Interventions and support around drugs and sexual health.

**Nightlife Harm Reduction**

Whenever possible, Crew works in the club and festival scene to reduce harm. Our work ranges from short 'pub runs' (handing out basic drug harm reduction information to people in local pubs) to providing information, welfare and chill out spaces at large dance events and festivals. This can involve giving out water to clubbers, ‘roaming’ (looking out for people who may be experiencing negative effects from drugs and assisting them to access the right kind of help on site), providing advice or support to those who need it, looking after people in our chill out area and monitoring and people in our welfare/crisis area, liaising with paramedics and other services as necessary.

This can be a difficult area to work in, especially if a volunteer is experiencing health or wellbeing issues related to their own drug taking. This can be discussed and reviewed throughout a volunteer’s time at Crew – we encourage volunteers to set realistic boundaries to protect their own well-being, and additional support from staff is available when required.

**Training**

Crew provides volunteers with compulsory induction training as well as optional continuing

professional development training throughout the year, with Crew and with other agencies. We encourage every volunteer to take advantage of as many training opportunities as possible: it helps to enhance your CV and, more importantly, your knowledge and experience to the benefit of everyone you work with at Crew.

Staff also deliver training and workshops to youth groups and professionals across Scotland.

Volunteers can become involved in delivering training and workshops if this is a skill they wish to

develop. Staff will work closely with volunteers to help them develop the skills needed to plan and

deliver such events.

**Volunteer Involvement**

Crew is committed to involving volunteers in improving and developing services and to seeking

and acting on feedback from volunteers on their experiences with Crew. We organise volunteer forums, debriefs after outreach events and seek feedback on a one-to-one basis. Volunteers are encouraged to come up with new ideas, to identify training needs and to share their views and opinions on what Crew is doing well and what could help it to develop and improve.

**Drug Counselling and Recovery Support**

Crew offers one-to-one counselling sessions for anyone affected by their own, or someone else’s,

problematic drug taking where stimulant drugs are the main drug that is causing concern and harm. We are not an abstinence-focused service, instead we encourage clients to identify and work towards their own goals, which may be to reduce, stabilise or stop their drug taking.

Due to the private nature of the counselling environment, volunteers are not involved in this area of Crew's work. Those interested in support work and developing professional therapeutic relationships may be interested in training in motivational interviewing, helping deliver Nightlife Harm Reduction services or contributing to developing our online harm reduction resources.

We also offer other therapies including ear acupuncture and guided meditation, and connect

clients to peer support groups where they can share experiences and coping strategies helpful in

continuing recovery.

Our ear acupuncture sessions, delivered by trained and qualified practitioners, can help people

deal with cravings, anxiety and/or sleeplessness as a result of drug taking or withdrawal. These

sessions can occasionally be open to volunteers during their time at Crew, depending on the level of demand for the service.

**What Would We Like from You?**

* We are looking for volunteers to:
* share their enthusiasm and energy
* maintain an open minded, non-judgemental and empathetic approach
* demonstrate good communication skills, both face-to-face and online
* participate in all core induction training sessions
* Drop-in Volunteers: work at least one four-hour Drop-in session a month, preferably two or more OR
* Nightlife Harm Reduction (NLHR) Volunteers: take part in January/February induction training and at least two NLHR events in the next six months
* Take part in ongoing support and development, attending one support and supervision

session every three months and volunteer forums whenever possible

* helping with recording visits and activities to keep statistics up to date

**What’s In It for You?**

In return, we provide:

* travel and lunch expenses
* good quality training
* support and supervision to help you to reach your goals
* regular social events
* the opportunity to develop skills, learn new things and build your CV
* opportunities to meet new people
* opportunities to help and support people and give back to communities

**Your Commitment**

We ask everyone volunteering in the **Drop-in** to work a minimum of one activity **or** four-hour session per month, not including illness or holidays. We ask everyone volunteering for Nightlife Harm Reduction to take part in January/February induction training and at least two NLHR events in the next six months.

When induction training is complete there is a two-month settling in period where new volunteers

shadow staff and existing volunteers. A minimum of two ‘shadow shifts’ should be completed

during the settling in period. At this stage you always have someone else working with you,

allowing you learn from others and build up experience and confidence. This also gives time for

Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG: a criminal records and background check) membership and references to be returned.

We also expect volunteers to attend regular support and supervision sessions. All volunteers are

assigned a staff member as supervisor. They will contact you to arrange a first session during

your settling in period. This allows you time and space to speak about your volunteering at Crew,

including about any issues you are having and any training or additional support you would like. It

is also an opportunity for you to receive feedback on how you are doing and to discuss any goals

you want to work towards in the future.

We also ask you to attend quarterly volunteer forums whenever possible. These are a chance to

discuss, plan and review work, and often involve short training input. We encourage volunteers

to identify relevant topics and to share their views and opinions about whatever they think is

important.

Volunteers can keep up to date with what’s going on at Crew through reading our brief weekly ‘Crew Volunteer Bulletin’ or CVB email bulletins.

**What We Expect:**

* Avoid ever turning up to work at Crew under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
* Read Crew’s Volunteer Policy and other relevant policies and procedures, and always ask if anything is unclear. We can talk through these with you if that’s helpful - please let us know!
* Claim back any reasonable expenses, including for travel and lunch costs. We ask

you to keep receipts and give them to us as soon as possible. We will generally reimburse the value of the cheapest travel option.

* Never speak to any media outlets about the work you do at Crew. We have people in the team who are trained to work with the press.
* Always raise any concerns you have as soon as you can. We will always respond to any feedback as soon as possible, work with you to address any problems and help you to have as positive an experience at Crew as possible.
* Let us know as soon as possible if you can’t make it in or need to rearrange a volunteering session.
* Let us know how you’d like us to communicate with you, eg text, our private ‘Volunteers of Crew’ Facebook Group, or email; and let us know if your contact details change.

**How to Get Started**

If you’re interested in volunteering for Crew, and know you have the time to commit, then the next steps are to:

* complete the form on the website, submit it or send a word version to [admin@crew2000.org.uk](mailto:admin@crew2000.org.uk) OR
* pick up an application form (available from the Drop-in Shop on Cockburn Street EH1 1PB)
* complete and return the form by hand, email or post.

Once received, we’ll let you know when the next volunteer intake is. These happen twice a year,

usually January/February and Autumn. We will then invite you to Crew for an interview with a member of the team. If successful, you will be expected to attend all induction training dates. This is really important because we need to make sure volunteers have the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake the work safely and confidently and can't always run catch up sessions.

As our work can involve working with vulnerable young people and adults, all volunteers must

complete a PVG application (a criminal records and background check). If you have a criminal record, this does not necessarily mean you cannot volunteer for Crew: any current or spent convictions are considered on a case-by-case basis as long as they do not involve causing harm to children or vulnerable people and you will be invited in for a chat to discuss this further.