

# Corporate and Social Responsibility

- Introduction ..... 2**
  - Our Commitment ..... 2
  - CSR Team ..... 2
- Sharing Professional Skills ..... 3**
  - Professional Engagement ..... 3
  - Placements and Apprenticeships ..... 3
  - TEP Grant ..... 4
- Supporting Our Communities ..... 5**
  - Pro Bono ..... 5
  - Volunteering ..... 5
  - Local Benefits ..... 7
- Fundraising for Charitable Causes ..... 7**
  - TEP’s Charities of the Year ..... 7
  - Supporting Good Causes ..... 7
  - Promoting CSR Work ..... 8

## Introduction

The CSR year corresponds with our financial year and runs from August 1<sup>st</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>.

Our company is focussed on four priorities:

- Community projects local to our offices
- Raising awareness of environmental issues
- Tackling disease and illness
- Tackling poverty and inequality in our communities

## Our Commitment

As a national environmental consultancy, we are in a privileged situation as our daily work helps us to further sustainability by creating special places for people, businesses, and wildlife. We strive to be the best in our field and to lead by example.

Our corporate social responsibility commitment considers people and the environment and is supported by TEP's policies on equality and respect, sustainability, including carbon neutrality accreditation and our sustainable supplier charter.

We aim to support our clients to meet their obligations for corporate and social responsibility through the way we operate our business and the way we provide advice. TEP has an ethos of continual learning, raising the understanding of sustainability and corporate responsibility both within the company and outside it when undertaking commissions.

Equality and respect are core to the way we run our business. Our Investors in People Gold standard reflects the fact that all staff played a part in shaping our Business Plan in a democratic and transparent process. ACAS commended our Equality and Respect policy. Our confidential workplace survey showed that 99% of staff felt equality was highly valued and promoted in the organisation.

## CSR Team

We have a CSR team comprised of employees who monitor and report on the implementation of our CSR policy outlined below and our charitable donations.

Our CSR team works with the Directors to set targets for volunteering and donations and report on our performance against these figures.

The CSR team representatives can be viewed on the CSR SharePoint page and contacted by emailing [csr@tep.uk.com](mailto:csr@tep.uk.com).

## Sharing Professional Skills

### Professional Engagement

Staff may participate in professional engagement activities as part of wider business objectives, these activities may also help to meet the requirements of membership of professional institutes.

#### Eligibility Criteria

Examples of professional engagement activities include attending graduate open days, lecturing and liaising with professional and educational institutes. Please refer to your team's business plan for any professional engagement activities, which have already been identified as goals.

#### Application Process

Professional engagement work requires Director or Associate Director approval and must be in line with the team's business plan. Director approval will be required if the project is not already identified in the team's business plan.

Please complete a [Professional Engagement Form](#) before committing to any activities (available on the CSR SharePoint page). The completed form should be sent to the appropriate Director / Associate Director and copied to the [CSR team inbox](#) when approved.

#### Monitoring and Reporting

Our performance on professional engagement activities is based on our business plan. Our targets are to hold, attend or present at six career events every year, deliver ten engagement sessions every year across at least three educational institutes, and encourage at least four staff members to contribute to the work of professional institutes every year. The CSR team will report on our performance against these figures at the monthly management meeting.

When staff are recording approved activities such as those described above, they should book their time to the CSR Professional Engagement job number **048.02** on their timesheet and enter the details of the event in the dialogue box.

### Placements and Apprenticeships

TEP is committed to providing training and learning opportunities to those in education or the early stages of their career. This includes school work experience, study placements, paid work experience, sandwich-year studentships and apprenticeships.

By building close working arrangements with local high schools, colleges for further and higher education, and universities, TEP can offer continuing year on year support to these institutions, dependent on workload and managerial capacity within the business.

Our performance on providing opportunities has a target of providing seven work experience opportunities, study placements or apprenticeships every year for people in education or the early stages of their career.

## TEP Grant

Our corporate social responsibility commitment considers people and the environment and TEP are keen to support activities that can further the environmental profession and raise awareness of environmental issues. The TEP Grant has been set up to support this commitment and offer funding from £250 up to £2,000 annually and will be allocated based on:

- Alignment to TEP's values (Forward-Looking, Responsible, Enterprising, Supportive, Honest and Passionate.)
- Connection to the environmental profession

Projects that will be considered for funding will have a very clear relevance to the environmental profession and sustainable development, which include, but are not limited to:

- Expeditions for environmental learnings
- Study tours to learn more about the environmental profession or sustainable development
- Conference attendance & participation
- Research projects
- Environmental projects
- Voluntary work placements study- a course relevant to an environmental career

The TEP Grant is promoted externally from March each year. The application process and requirements are outlined in the 'TEP Grant Guidelines' document. Completed application forms with accompanying forms should be emailed to the CSR team inbox before the closing date stated in the 'TEP Grant Guidelines' document. TEP staff are not eligible to apply for the TEP Grant.

After the closing date has passed the applications will be considered by the CSR team who will also make the necessary checks/enquiries to ensure that the recipient/cause is genuine and that the money will be/has been used as intended. Recommendations will be made to the Board for approval. Successful applicants will be contacted as soon as possible.

We provide an annual budget of £2,000. There will be flexibility between the TEP Grant budget and the Volunteering budget. The TEP Grant budget can be increased by switching funds from the Volunteering budget if it is not likely that the full £2,000 will be needed. The CSR team will monitor this and make the necessary recommendations to the Directors.

## Supporting Our Communities

### Pro Bono

In addition to volunteering, TEP gives skills and expertise freely to some projects and activities which are being done for the public good.

#### Eligibility Criteria

Examples include providing professional advice to charities. We also work at discounted rates for small local charities.

#### Application Process

Please complete and submit a [Pro Bono Request form](#) before committing to any activities (available on the CSR SharePoint page). The completed form should be sent to the appropriate Director and copied to the [CSR Team inbox](#) when approved.

#### Monitoring and Reporting

Our performance on pro bono work is based on our target of providing 3 weeks (110 hrs) per annum.

Time worked on pro bono projects is to be booked to the pro-bono code (**048.03**) and the TEP job number and name must be written in the description field.

The CSR team will report on our performance against these figures at the monthly management meeting.

### Volunteering

Our volunteering policy enables members of staff to spend a day per year volunteering during company time, in a local project which benefits local charities and good causes.

The CSR Team is responsible for managing TEP's volunteering activities. Key tasks are to:

- Support the vision, values and strategic direction of our volunteering policy;
- Select Community Partner Projects and approve other projects nominated by employees;
- Manage and support employees and projects;
- Monitor expenditure on projects to best use time and cash budgets and avoid overspending; and
- Record outcomes of volunteering initiatives, produce a monthly update to the Directors as part of the management meetings and produce an annual report.

Our primary aim is to provide sustainable support through establishing long-lasting relationships with Community Partners. Community Partner Projects will be planned and programmed by the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Team. We envisage that each TEP office has at least one Community Partner. Employees will be consulted and given the opportunity to nominate potential partners such as local schools, charities, youth groups and community trusts.

## Eligibility Criteria

Employees may be granted one day of paid leave each year to participate in voluntary work, either with one of the firm's Community Partner Projects or on another approved project. The volunteer experience should bring a benefit in at least one of the following categories: Education, Environment, or Community.

Staff are encouraged to plan projects that match the volunteering criteria set out as follows:

- Involve two or more employees
- Be of benefit to the community and the volunteers
- Be of the volunteers' own free will
- Be for no financial gain to the employees
- Be within the community where the employee works or resides (within 50 miles of a TEP office/employees' residence)
- Be consistent with TEP's ethos and values.

Events local to TEP offices will be prioritised. Proposals for projects over 50 miles from a TEP office will be considered in exceptional circumstances and advice should be sought from the CSR team in advance of submitting a proposal.

## Application Process

Plans for projects should be submitted to the CSR Team as a fully formed and costed proposal for approval, using a [Volunteering Request Proforma and CSR Project Risk Assessment](#). Templates for both of these can be found on the [CSR SharePoint page](#).

## Budgets

We also provide an annual business wide budget of £2,000 for our volunteers to assist their chosen charities with expenses, materials and equipment used during the volunteering.

There is a cap on the expenses budget for each employee of up to £100.00 that can be invested in the volunteering project e.g. to pay for materials. The budget should not be used to pay for participation in volunteering days or entrance fees. Budgets can be pooled e.g. if a proposed project involves 4 employees, they could have a budget to a maximum of £400.00. The expenses budget can cover travel expenses, but these must be kept to a minimum by car-sharing, using the pool cars, and choosing the most cost-effective method of transport. The expenses budget will not be used to cover any food or drinks. Pre-approval of anticipated expenses is required from the CSR team.

If volunteering projects require a standard DBS, the cost will be covered by TEP.

## Monitoring and Reporting

Our performance on volunteering is based on our target for achieving 50% staff participation in projects each year. Therefore, one day of paid leave per employee must be recorded on timesheets using job code **048.01** and include a brief description of the project which was carried out. Any mileage or expenses must also be recorded against **048.01** on timesheets.

The CSR team will report on our performance against these figures at the monthly management meeting. In addition, after each year the CSR team will review the success of

the programme against the key 50% participation target and will share successes, lessons learnt and areas of improvement.

### **Additional Volunteer Days**

We understand some volunteering opportunities require an input greater than the one day allowance granted to staff. Any such opportunities will be considered by the CSR team and Directors on an individual basis, as has been implemented with Green Flag Judging Scheme.

To support the Green Flag Judging we supplement the allowance of those staff who are engaged, with an additional day, giving them a total of two volunteering days per year.

### **Donating Volunteer Days**

Staff who do not want to take advantage of their allocated volunteering day, may wish to donate it to others. Requests to donate days should be sent to the CSR team.

### **Local Benefits**

Where feasible, we try to place contracts with local businesses and social enterprises. Our offices in Warrington, Gateshead, Market Harborough and London are rented from the local authorities, a SME and a local individual respectively.

## **Fundraising for Charitable Causes**

### **TEP's Charities of the Year**

In addition to any individual fundraising that staff wish to take part in, our colleagues have the opportunity to suggest and vote on charities for TEP to support for the CSR year. We support a single nominated charity at a national level and we enable each of our offices to nominate a more local charity for support. Charities should be initially suggested to the CSR Team who will then decide if an office-wide vote is required, or if the charity can be confirmed for that particular year.

TEP will match staff's own fundraising efforts for the TEP charities up to the value of £1,500 for the national charity and £1,000 for local office charities (£200per local charity). We encourage and support members of staff who wish to fund-raise for our charities and TEP will support the organisation of at least three company-wide fundraising events each year.

Future fundraising targets and match-funding will be confirmed at the start of each CSR year. The CSR Team must be informed of any money raised on behalf of the TEP charities.

### **Supporting Good Causes**

From time to time our colleagues, our clients and associates approach us for donations and sponsorships in relation to other good causes, so we keep a budget for such ad-hoc donations.

TEP's donations are, where possible, made to UK registered charities. In some cases, donations can be made to unregistered charities or other good cause organisations, where there is clear evidence that the good cause organisation is meeting the charitable priorities identified above. All donation requests should be passed on to the CSR team for approval and processing. The CSR team will consider donation requests that:

- Are consistent with TEP's values;
- Have a personal or professional connection to a TEP member of staff; and
- Are not purely political.

We encourage and support members of staff who wish to fund-raise for good causes personal to them by donating up to £30 per event for individual staff fundraising. We also donate up to £100 per client fundraising event. Please note this budget cannot be used for fees to enter sponsored races or events.

### Promoting CSR Work

We will almost always want to publicise our CSR work via the TEP website and social media accounts. Staff can support this goal by writing a short news article and providing a selection of high-quality photographs of the activity. When multiple staff attend, we expect this to be the responsibility of the organiser. Ideally, we would like photographs of yourselves working with others in the community but remember to ask the permission of any adults you wish to photograph, and if you are working with children or vulnerable adults, ensure you have the written permission of their supervisor before taking and publishing photos.

TEP will issue communications at least bi-annually and hold at least one internal event to raise awareness of CSR opportunities to all TEP staff, to increase their participation and understanding.

Date of Next Review: February 2026



Person with overall responsibility	Elizabeth Seal, Director
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Rev	Date	Description of Amendment	Authorised by
00	January 2015	Original Issue.	Francis Hesketh
01	June 2015	Update header & footer.	Graeme Atherton
02	December 2015	Revised following introduction of volunteering policy and CSR team.	Francis Hesketh
03	March 2017	Inclusion of targets and the reporting of performance.	Phil Moseley
04	May 2017	Updated schedule for review to align with TEP wide policy review.	Phil Moseley
05	June 2019	Updated target for volunteering to 50% staff involvement. Removing TEP20 details. Updates to clarify job codes, monitoring, inclusion of professional engagement work, sponsorship, and revisions to budgets.	Emma Parker
06	February 2020	Updated budgets for CSR2020 year added. Arrangements for TEP Grant set out clearly.	Francis Hesketh

07	October 2021	Updated to combine CSR and Employee Volunteering policies and introduce elements of new business plan. Also updated to reflect new TEP branding	Elizabeth Seal
08	February 2024	Scheduled review, minor formatting changes and contact for Landscape Institute Ambassador scheme updated. Limit to green flag judges per scheme removed.	Elizabeth Seal