



## **ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND EXPECTATIONS (RRE)**

### **LEADERSHIP MEMO**

A Roles, Responsibilities, and Expectations document is a tool to help SFL Leaders and Staffers to identify ways in which they can both contribute to SFL and gain value for themselves in a mutually beneficial way. All Leaders and Staff should have an active and regularly updated RRE. Rather than receiving top-down instructions about what you should be focusing on, an RRE empowers you to decide what you want to focus on and gives you the autonomy to chart your own professional development pathway.

### **ROLES**

Your title may be a Coordinator, but your roles are the 'hats' you wear as part of your activities. For example, *tabling organiser*, *blog editor*, *outreach coordinator*, *debate moderator*, *conference presenter*, *article writer*, *fundraiser*, *social organiser/host*, etc. In other words, any role which explains your capacities and focus as a volunteer.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsibilities identify your main areas of focus and describe the **processes, assets, services and products** of each of the roles you undertake. For example, if your role is *social organiser*, you might be responsible for arranging a venue, communicating with attendees, and so on. Or, if you have a role of *fundraiser*, you are responsible for seeking out potential donors in your region, meeting them, pitching SFL and asking them to donate to the organization.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

Expectations are the outcomes that you set for yourself. These are the desirable outcomes you hope to achieve as a result of your activities.



Expectations should be measurable (i.e. in terms of quantity or quality). Ultimately, expectations relate to the goals and outcomes you agree to focus on, and to be held accountable for.

Expectations should be challenging yet realistic. It's recommended to set higher expectations so that you will challenge yourself to push for greater results so that you gain increasingly valuable experience for yourself while developing your skill set. Like all things with the RRE, the expectations can be amended and updated according to needs, change in circumstance, or in light of new information. Leaders are encouraged to use the **MAAD** filter and make their goals and expectations **Measurable, Achievable, Ambitious and tied to a Deadline**.

### **RRES ARE AN ONGOING CONVERSATION**

Leadership and Staff should review aspects of their RRE at certain interludes throughout the year. RREs are meant to be live documents, meaning that the discussion is ongoing and requires awareness of changes in team dynamics, local needs, and individual ambitions. We all want to be adding value to SFL, and this is dynamic and subject to change.

### **UNDERSTAND TEAM PRIORITIES, GOALS, AND CAPABILITIES**

Discussions about how to add value should be both bottom-up and top-down. Leaders should be open to suggestions about their development, but should also feel comfortable and empowered to guide their development according to their needs and ambitions. Leadership and Staff should anticipate suggestions and new ideas which open them to new opportunities. Strategic Planning of each team will also identify areas which require prioritisation locally. This will, in turn, create new opportunities for Leaders to improve their capabilities. Senior Leaders will need to become aware of the capabilities of the Leaders in their region to gain an understanding of their comparative advantage and ambitions.



## RR&E PROCESS



### **CREATE THE MOST VALUE FOR YOURSELF, YOUR TEAM, AND SFL?**

Senior Leadership and Staff should remain vigilant to the shifting of competence and needs within a team or region over time. The RRE serves as a vital metric for measuring this shift. Where volunteers skills are similar and potential is matched, Senior Leaders and Staff should explore which leaders should be given a role based on enthusiasm, experience, character, overall ambition, and passion for the role. If the potential exists to share tasks, this should be explored too.

### **DIALOGUE WITH LEADERS**

After identifying Leaders who have an aptitude for adding new value, Senior Leaders and Staff should adopt an attitude of excitement, motivation, and encouragement to trust him or her. You also need to be open to discovering the ways a volunteer is most eager to contribute and why.

This process should take the form of a dialogue where both parties are seeking to learn from and not simply convince one another. In the end, you want to arrive at a set of responsibilities that leverage the volunteer's knowledge and skills, where they understand the value of their work and is ultimately proud of their contribution.

### **DRAFT, ADJUST, AND AGREE ON RREs TOGETHER**

When all parties are broadly on the same page, it's time to begin drawing up the RRE document. As you work through the specifics, remember the goal is to connect volunteers to value creation, establish some accountability and communicate what is prioritised.

The worry shouldn't be on the grammar or spelling or creating perfection but rather to come to a shared understanding. This will help you to give some feedback to your leaders about what is on the document. When



considering changing language, try approaching it by asking yourself if the language reflects the way in which you want the volunteer to be thinking about his or her contributions.

### **USE, IMPROVE & UPDATE**

All Senior Leaders should be having conversations with relevant Staff and relevant other Senior Leadership to reinforce and cultivate the primary goals of RREs, that is connection to vision, establishing accountability, and communicating priorities.

These conversations don't always have to involve bringing out the RRE document or result in its being edited. However, when a volunteers roles, responsibilities, or expectations change significantly, this warrants taking time to revisit the RRE document.

Make sure to schedule regular times (eg. monthly) when you are going to check your RREs and your results against what you and your leaders have set out.

### **REWARD PROGRESS & CELEBRATE TEAM 'WINS'**

Throughout the period of leaders involvement in SFL, an eye should be kept tuned to the various wins, follow throughs and value produced by each leader and they should be rewarded for the progress they make through the various mechanisms available in SFL.

Local teams should also celebrate any significant team successes to help keep morale at a level where value creation and motivation to produce extra added value can be maximised.

When we work hard on a task that results in added value, recognition goes a long way. We should never take our work or the work of others for granted, rather we should develop a culture where efforts and inputs are



recognised, celebrated, and rewarded. SFL aims towards meritocracy, meaning that the best leaders should reap the best rewards, whether this involves recognition as logged success stories, access to grants and additional supports, or international travel to attend conferences and retreats. We want to make sure that our resources are being put to the best uses, and that means rewarding the best leaders for their work and efforts. This creates a sort of feedback loop where hard work is met with recognition and rewards.

---

## **THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND**

### **FULFILLING ACTIVITIES**

As part of the RRE process, you work with volunteers to define expectations, provide feedback on how they're doing and how they could improve, and identify new opportunities that take advantage of their skills. This helps them make the contribution that produces the most for SFL. You're also helping them understand what value they're creating, which is critical to them finding meaning in their activities. This shouldn't be confused with expecting each volunteer to love the details of their work. We all may do some things we don't find exciting but we should understand their value in order to find meaning in these tasks.

### **COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE**

Your team has three people on it and five critical tasks that it needs to accomplish. It might be true that one of you is best at all five, but given the limited amount of time, others of you also contribute to the to-do list. This idea is comparative advantage. It's one entity's (a person, in this case) ability to do something at the lowest opportunity cost. When working with a volunteer on RREs, you're helping them discover the themes in their skills and the contributions that you believe are key to their comparative



advantage. Don't confuse this with "skills" or "passions", it's aligning the contribution with the most leveraged opportunities.

### **BUILD AN UNDERSTANDING RATHER THAN A DOCUMENT**

The development of RREs should be a catalyst to productivity. When we understand what value we're creating and what we're accountable for, we're better able to focus our energy on the right things, leading to improved performance. As you're giving feedback, remember that you're working to build a shared understanding and that a shared understanding requires more than one conversation.

Think about your meetings to discuss the document as a way of learning where the volunteer is in his or her understanding of his or her contribution and then helping the two of you move toward a more similar perspective. Sharing line edits over email might not be as effective as asking questions like "what did you mean by that?" or "what gave you the hardest time as you were preparing this document?" The volunteer's answers will help you understand his or her thinking and direct the conversation in a really productive way.

### **PATIENT COACHING IS NECESSARY TO HELP LEADERS UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS**

Volunteers commonly share that they initially saw RREs as more of a "homework assignment" than a process and tool to help them appreciate what outcomes they should be striving for. Patient coaching from Senior Leaders is the primary means by which volunteers can come to see these ongoing conversations as critical to their success as opposed to a one-time document they need to generate so they can check a box. You, as a Senior Leader, are the best resource to help the Volunteers you work with come to engage RREs in a substantive way rather than as an exercise to dread and try to skip.





## **“PROCESSES, PRODUCTS, OR ASSETS” LANGUAGE HELPS US THINK LESS ABOUT ACTIVITIES**

People tend to default to the types of activities they do or use language similar to what they’d put in their CV or in a job description. For example, a receptionist might write “answer phones” as a responsibility. Focusing instead on processes, products, or assets helps people approach their RREs from the perspective not of their activities but rather of what resources they manage in pursuit of value creation. Using this mental model, that same receptionist might instead think of “creating a professional and friendly first impression of the organization” as a responsibility with specific expectations that orient him or her around the value that this responsibility creates for the organization. This enables the receptionist to think entrepreneurially about the best way to achieve that result. No doubt, this will include answering phones, but also furniture, literature, how he or she trains new people on the phones, and plenty more!

## **RRE IS NOT TO CATALOGUE EVERY ACTION LEADERS TAKE**

RRE is not to be understood as the be all and end all document with all the details of every task leaders undertake. There will be tasks that you are doing that are not reflected in RREs. Leaders cannot be expected to and should not include every little detail of their work

---

### **Example of Good & Not So Good RREs**

#### **Good**

<p><u>Role</u>: Voice and Appearance of SFL (clearly a hat of an LC)</p>
--





**STUDENTS FOR LIBERTY**  
E U R O P E

Responsibility: Represent the organisation professionally, being an approachable, respected member of the student community. (clearly an asset)

Expectation: Aim to have 25 conversations per month about SFL with people who are not aware of the organisation on campus. (Clear, measurable and accountable outcome)

**Not So Good**

Role: Local Coordinator (title, not a hat)

Responsibility: Attend SFL events (what is the goal here?)

Expectation: Attend all events in my local area (what is the measurement?)

---

**Good**

Role: Mentoring next generation of LCs (actual hat within the role of RD)

Responsibility: Pick one LC in each country and aid their preferred track for self-improvement (process and product defined)

Expectation: LCs with potential to fill leadership roles where required in each country by the end of academic year 2018-19 (clear goal and measurement)

**Not So Good**

Role: Regional Director (a title, not a hat)

Responsibility: Mentor LCs (what process, product and asset is this?)

Expectation: LCs will be empowered (what measure?)

## **IDENTIFYING & APPROACHING LEADERS FOR NEW ROLES**

Tasking a Local Coordinator with creating new value that you identify as a potential is a process whereby Senior Leaders speak to and listen to the LCs' ideas and listen for their passion and enthusiasm for the proposed role. Passion and shared vision for the role is vital to sustain motivation and to realise ownership for a role.

## **HOSTING RRE CONVERSATIONS WITH LEADERS**

There is no strictly correct way to approach this and you should find whatever suits you and begin the conversations with your leaders as soon as possible. Some Leaders will take longer than others and some will be more keen than others. A tentative recommendation is that you should expect new leaders to draft their RRE after 2-3 months from completing their training.

Here are some things to keep in mind.

- 1) Do you understand the expectations for your own contributions? As a team leader, you're going to be much more effective at helping someone who's joining your team learn about expectations if you first understand expectations for yourself. This is because, even though your work is often delegated away to others, some accountability remains with you. Creating your own document with a good idea of what can be expected of you as a leader and the outcomes you have included can help them consider what would be relevant for them. This means that making sure your own RREs are in good shape can be an important first step.
- 2) Do you have a perspective on the contributions you're eager for the Leaders to make? In order to be helpful to a Leader who is learning about his or her contributions, you need to have a perspective to offer. Remember, though, that this should still be a discovery-oriented dialogue in which you and the volunteer are offering information to each other. For example, although a new volunteer might have a good



idea of his or her own knowledge and skills, you wouldn't expect this person to know as much as you, a Senior Leader, about opportunities in the organization, the strategies and projects the organization is working on and also the capabilities of other Leaders in this area and how they interact.

- 3) RREs are often a different way of approaching one's work than volunteers are used to, so it may require more than one explanation to get everyone on the same page.
- 4) There are many ways to go about initiating the first draft, and you should aim to choose a way that makes the most sense for the volunteer in question.

Here are a few ideas:

- After introducing the volunteer to the tool, ask him or her to write a first draft and share it with you according to a specific timeline. If you're worried the volunteer might over-invest in this early draft, give a short time limit. You can say something like the following: "Our goal here is to build toward a shared understanding, so I'm most eager for the conversation. The document isn't the end goal, but it will help focus that conversation, so get as far as you can in 30 minutes, then stop! Send me what you have, and we'll work together from there." Doing this gives you the chance to reinforce to the volunteer that it's about understanding more than the document itself and show how eager you are for a collaborative, conversational process.
  - Ask the volunteer questions about his or her responsibilities and expectations and take notes during that conversation. Give these notes to the volunteer to help him or her write a draft.
  - Give the volunteer a few options for how to get started, and let him or her make their own choice.
- 5) It can be helpful to show example documents, including your own, to help LCs understand how the theory can look in action. It's a good



idea for Leaders of the same team to have access to, and read each other's RREs. This allows them to get ideas about their work, make sure there is no overlap or blind spots in the work of the team.

- 6) Use trainings as a jumping off point. You may decide to include some part of your regional training to this process so that newer leaders know what it is about and what to expect going forward. You may want to be intentional about timing your requests for a draft RRE document to take advantage of any upcoming trainings in your region. Don't use this as an excuse to put off RRE conversations, though!
- 7) What worked for you? Reflecting on your own experience with RREs, what made you nervous, what made you comfortable, what explanations were helpful—may give you insight into how to treat this process with your Local Leaders.

To Summarise:

A good RRE process will connect Leaders to value creation; Establish accountability; and communicate priorities.

Enjoy those conversations!