

FAQs for Local Network Volunteers.

This document aims to answer the frequently asked questions by Local Networks whilst also highlighting some important processes, guidance, policies and position statements. If you find a common question is missing or you need clarity about anything listed below please contact the Volunteering Team (networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk).

Further support can be found on the [Volunteer Resources](#) section of our website.

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Branded merchandise

Q – Where do we get branded resources?

Reviewed February 2025

- Awareness leaflets and posters can be sent out to you. Please contact networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk to request the latest ones
- Information sheets for events can be downloaded and printed from [here](#). We can also send you a publication list to display at events. Please contact networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk to request the latest one.
- We are able to provide Networks with printed copies of our patient pack, these are the packs issued to patients by health care professionals. This pack also includes the “[All About Crohn’s and Colitis](#)” booklet as an insert. Networks can email us to request packs, providing the relevant contact details for delivery. Requests should be on an as needed basis in advance of any planned awareness raising activity. The packs will take around 7-9 days to arrive.
- For pens, badges, balloons, wristbands, flags, collection tins, buckets, flyers, vinyl banners – please contact networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk stating the quantities required. Depending on the quantities required networks may be charged.
- Local Network pull up banners – each network was provided with one, but some have purchased more using their own funds to be used at multiple events and/or left with hospitals to display in clinics. Please contact networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk to discuss this and obtain the poster design.

Q - Can we create branded materials for Local Network use?

The current provided branded resources are aimed at covering the general needs of Local Network actives however we understand that some networks wish to create their own branded materials to further support their events and awareness activities. Recent examples of this have been:

- Crohn’s & Colitis UK hoodies with the individual network’s name on.
- Branded gazebo to use at multiple outside awareness stands and events

Before producing these materials networks are required to get the design approved by both the Volunteering and Communication Teams to make sure the design adheres to our brand guidelines but also that it is the most effective use of Local Network funds over the medium to long term. If you are considering producing branded material, please contact networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk to discuss.

Q - Can we sell branded merchandise?

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Local Networks can ask for suggested donations when selling our charity pens, pins and wristbands however they are not able to sell their own created merchandise. This is because the impact of doing so does not outweigh the time, cost and effort it would take to create, promote and administer such an activity both by volunteers and staff. The Fundraising Team do sell extra items during the registration process for some fundraising events and are looking at ways to further expand this with a dedicated online shop.

Q – How do we create business cards?

The template for business cards can be found [here](#) and please let us know if you need any help editing the template with your network's name, email, website and social media details. If you wish to further localise the business card please contact your Volunteer Development Officer for advice and guidance before going to print.

Data Protection

Q – How do we deal with GDPR – Data Protection?

Issued June 2018

In light of the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) we thought we'd take this opportunity to remind you not to collect or hold data on supporters, attendees, general public etc. Please destroy/delete any locally-held distribution lists or other such documents – do contact the Volunteering Team if you have any questions about this. It is acceptable to record numbers of attendees, but please do not collect any personal data at local network events. In all instances, please put people in touch directly with Crohn's & Colitis UK.

If members or others have queries about current/inactive/lapsed membership, please direct them to the Charity's Membership Team. For enquiries about how individuals can be kept up-to-date about local events, please signpost them to networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk or 01727 734 475.

Q – Are we able to put personal contact details on our communications?

To protect both the volunteer and enquirer personal contact details must never be added to any communications or given out at events.

If you wish for supporters to contact your Local Network please ask them to use the following methods

Postal address

Crohn's & Colitis UK xxxxx Network
1 Bishops Square, Hatfield, AL10 9NE

Email

Those networks who manage their own Local Network Crohn's & Colitis UK email please use that otherwise use networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

Telephone

0300 222 5700

Q - What does Data Protection mean for using social media and email accounts?

Details about the implications of Data Protection relating to using social media and email accounts can be found in the guidance for both of these [here](#).

Event planning and promotion

Q – Can Local Networks host online events?

Reviewed February 2025

Online events are managed centrally, either via our Education team with online webinars or resources, and we centrally manage a [Virtual Social Event](#) service with trained volunteers involved in hosting the events. If any volunteer in the Network would like to get involved in these, the application form is [here](#) to apply and you can learn more about the volunteer role [here](#).

The reason for managing online events centrally is to create economies of scale by allowing increased numbers of people to attend any event but also specialisation and standardisation of service. When we ran an initial pilot project for our Virtual Social Events in 2020 we did first do it as Local Network level with a few Local Networks, but we found having specific online events for each Network was not an efficient use of both staff and volunteer team and reduced attendance. This is why we now run events targeted at regions of England and the devolved nations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Our Patient Education colleagues are working on the development of a brand-new online learning system that will provide patients with the tools to improve self-management of their Crohn's or Colitis. With plans to launch in 2025. Once launched they will be looking at how we compliment this digital offer to reach a wider range of audiences through a bigger variety of learning opportunities.

Q - What key things do I need to consider from a risk and insurance perspective?

Anyone organising an event on behalf of Crohn's & Colitis UK has a legal duty to ensure the safety of everyone attending, including visitors, volunteers, and health professionals. In the event of an insurance claim the event organiser may be required to produce a completed risk assessment to prove that they had taken necessary precautions against risk. This is why it's essential that, as part of the planning process for all events, a risk assessment is carried out to identify any risks and put in place necessary precautions.

The Network has a duty of care to provide a safe environment but is not responsible for the actions of individuals if they do not comply with reasonable requests or guidance provided in relation to the risk assessment.

Risk assessment form and related guidance on insurance can be found [here](#)

Q - What is a suitable gift for speakers at Local Network events?

Most speakers wish to donate their time for free and don't expect anything in return. However if you feel a small gift is appropriate we would suggest nothing worth over £10 and that it's not to be in monetary form i.e. cash, gift voucher or an honorarium

Q - What can and can't be promoted via our website, emails out to supporters and on Local Network social media?

Website

Type of events added to the website

- Events hosted by your Local Network
- Events where your Local Network will have a physical presence at with an awareness stand, bucket collection etc. For these types of events the event needs to clearly say who is running the event and who to contact for more information.

Type of events not added to the website

- Events not hosted by your Local Network or they don't have a physical presence at.
- Events that are in aid of your Local Network but the network will be not be attending.

Emails out

- Only events able to be listed on the website can be emailed out
- Events hosted by your Local Network – education, social, fundraising
- Awareness stands will only be emailed out in a multiple event email. We can look to add local events run by Head Office i.e. WALK IT, Family Days , Patient Education Programme to create a multiple event email but this does depend when these sorts of events were last promoted.

Local Network Social Media

- Any event the network is hosting or attending
- Where you wish to promote a local event that you are either not organising or involved in please be sure to make this clear on the post or event description and signpost to who they should contact for further information.

Q – How much notice do the Volunteering Team need to send out an email on behalf of a Local Network?

Reviewed February 2025

The Charity as a whole is increasing the number of communications going out to members and supporters in general. This means we may not be able to send out Local Network emails at short notice as we have done in the past where they clash with other charity emails already planned in. To help combat this we have previously asked networks to give us at least 7 days' notice before they wish any communication to go out. Going forward this required notice period will increase to 14 days to help the Charity plan its communications better. This is not to say that we're unable to send

out communications if these notice periods are not met but we are unable to guarantee it. Our advice is to plan in advance, aim to send an email out two weeks before an event (not later) and let us know as soon as events are confirmed to allow us to schedule the emails in.

Q – How do we manage ticketed events?

Reviewed February 2025

To protect supporter data for ticketed events we are asking that Local Networks don't set up their own Eventbrite pages (or similar) and instead contact the Volunteering Team to create an Eventbrite page under our networks account. This will allow us to safely manage the data stored, allow us to run safer events and make sure there is a consistency in message. It will also allow us the potential to get more feedback on local events so we can shout even louder about the great impact our fantastic volunteers have on those affected by Crohn's and Colitis. Eventbrite pages should be requested to be set up when running events that have a capacity and require a ticket to attend. We aim to get the Eventbrite pages set-up within 5 working days of request.

Q – Can we charge attendees to attend our events?

Issued September 2019

Due to the VAT implications of selling a ticket, payment can only be taken for events where the sole purpose is to fundraise i.e. a charity ball, quiz night. Payment cannot be taken for commercial activity (ie. education events, socials). Where you wish to cover the cost of these events through donations you can ask for a suggested donation, but the donation should not be compulsory to attend and should be received in person or via JustGiving. Donations cannot be taken via your ticketing platform.

Events for young people and families

Q – Can Local Networks host events aimed at or including under 18 years old and their families?

Reviewed February 2025

Yes, and we would absolutely encourage you to. Before progressing with your plans please contact the Volunteering Team (networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk). This will then allow us to support you in making the most of this opportunity by taking advantage of any resources we have internally whilst also making the event as safe as possible. We can also help with some of the work involved to make sure that the event is a success, beneficial to both you and the attendees and as safe as possible for everyone.

Q – Do you have a Safeguarding and Child protection policy

Yes, these can be found [here](#).

Expenses

Q – How do Local Network volunteers claim for reasonable expenses incurred doing their role?

Our Staff and Volunteer Travel and Subsistence Policy as well as claim forms can be found [here](#).

Chaired Local Network expense claims should be sent to the Network's Treasurer

Coordinated Local Network expense claims should be sent to the Network's Link Volunteer

For expenses related to nationally run volunteer events i.e. Cheerpoints, training events, speaking opportunities, claims should be sent to volunteering@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

Fundraising

Q – How can we make sure JustGiving or similar money comes to your Local Network?

Issued October 2018

When a Local Network sets up a JustGiving or similar fundraising page it needs to clearly say in the blurb that the money is going to the network. The Fundraising Team (fundraising@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk) also need to be made aware of this so they can allocate the money to the network once the page has closed.

Local supporters who wish to raise money for a Local Network via a fundraising page also need to do these and other steps [detailed here](#) under the 'Finance Role' section and 'Community Fundraising for Local Network' to make sure the money is transferred to the network in a timely manner. Failure to do this can mean the money is not able to be transferred as at point of donation fundraisers were not told where their money would go.

Q - Can we run distance raffles/lotteries?

Local Networks are not to host their own distance raffles (ones where you sell tickets remotely) and are asked to promote the Charity's yearly Raffle for Research (when it takes place) and the [Crohn's & Colitis UK Weekly Lottery](#). Local Networks are of course able to host raffles at their events where the draw and prizes are given out on the day to those attending.

Newsletters

Q – Do Local Networks need to produce and post a newsletter to members?

Reviewed February 2025

The newsletter is a key Network activity and the main form of contact with members, especially those whose email address we don't have.

- Networks can produce between one and four newsletters a year, to maintain regular contact with postal members, to promote big upcoming events like education meeting or

fundraisers whilst also giving members an update on the Network's and Charity's recent activities.

- The Volunteering Team will email out the newsletter on behalf of the Network to members who have provided the charity with their email addresses.
- To support Networks we print and post newsletters direct to members from our office in Hatfield and then cross charging Networks the cost of this. The majority of the costs is stamps.

Q – Is there a Newsletter template we need to use and content ideas?

Support around Newsletters, including templates and content ideas can be found [here](#).

Q – Do newsletters or other physical mailings need to be checked?

Q – How long does newsletter proofreading take by the Volunteering Team?

Reviewed February 2025

We are asking that networks send us a copy of any pending communications (newsletters/mail outs) to members/supporters so that it can be proofread by the Volunteering Team. We aim to get this done within 5 working days of receipt of communications.

Local Grants

Q – How do Local Networks spend their funds on non-Local Network activities or events?

This is covered by our Local Grants policy [here](#).

Any questions about this please contact the Volunteering Team.

Recruitment and Induction

Q - What does each Local Network volunteer role involve?

Role descriptions for each role can be found [here](#).

Please speak with the Volunteering Team or Lead Volunteer if you need any further clarity or support in your role.

Q - What references are required to be a Local Network volunteer?

Reviewed February 2025

Before becoming a Lead or Finance Volunteer we ask that volunteers provide us with two referees who are able to provide references. These referees should be current or previous employer. Family and friends will not be accepted as referees. Those taking on these two roles even in a temporary basis will still need to provide referees due to the responsibility and importance of the role.

Q – How old do you need to be volunteer in a Local Network?

Reviewed February 2025

Guidance on this can be found [here](#) under ‘Involving Young Volunteers’.

Q – What is the standard recruitment process for a Local Network volunteer?

Please check out the “How to recruit volunteers” in the [Your Role section](#).

Q – As a new volunteer what things do I need to read and do as part of my induction?

When joining the Local Network, you will have hopefully attended an online induction session with a member of the Volunteering Team. If not, please contact us at networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk for us to arrange one with you. After attending you will have received a welcome email which gives you links to other important [policies](#) for you to read and the [Volunteer Resources](#) section to help further induct you into the role.

You will have also received a charity t-shirt. If you don’t receive the welcome email or t-shirt within 14 days of starting as a volunteer please contact the Volunteering Team at networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

Research and patient involvement enquiries

Q – How do we deal with research requests from hospitals, research agencies and academics?

Reviewed February 2025

Occasionally researchers, hospitals and local companies contact Local Networks to request support with their studies or product/services development.

To make sure only appropriate and ethical opportunities get promoted by our Local Networks, and to increase the number of opportunities the Charity promotes, please pass these enquiries onto the relevant teams below and only promote opportunities that are listed on our website at [Research Involvement Opportunities](#) and [Patient Engagement](#).

If a researcher or academic contacts your network asking you to promote their take part in research opportunity please direct them to our [Information for Researchers](#) and forward their email onto researchinvolvement@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk, who will be happy to discuss this further with them. If the opportunity meets our criteria, we will list it on our website [here](#).

If a local hospital or Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) contacts you to promote opportunities they have in local services, and example of this could be a focus group to develop a new pathway, please forward them onto patientengagement@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk, who will be happy to discuss this further with them. If the opportunity meets our criteria, we will list it on our website [here](#).

Once the opportunity is on the website, the Research or Patient Engagement Team will contact the network, so they can promote it locally on social media, at events and in newsletters.

Response times from Volunteering Team (service-level agreements)

Reviewed February 2025

We understand that a volunteer's time is precious and to help you make the most of it we aim to reply to communications by a certain time with at least a response or a completed action. These are:

- Initial response to an email – 3 working days
- Newsletter checking – 5 working days
- Emails out on behalf of Local Network – 14 days
- Setting up Eventbrite events – 5 working days

Unfortunately, in certain circumstances delays may be unavoidable however we will always look to keep you updated if this happens. If you require a response or action quicker than the above time frames please make us aware on a case by case basis.

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