



General Information Guide For Volunteers

Austin Creative Reuse

6406 N IH 35 #1801

Austin, TX 78752

512-375-3041

austincreativereuse.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[ABOUT AUSTIN CREATIVE REUSE](#)

[Mission Statement](#)

[Core Values](#)

[Goals](#)

[What We Do](#)

[Why We Do It](#)

[History of the Organization](#)

[Organizational Chart](#)

[CENTER INFORMATION](#)

[Center Location and Contact Info](#)

[Hours of Operation](#)

[Emergency Procedures](#)

[CENTER POLICIES](#)

[We Support Diversity, Equality And Justice](#)

[Grievance Policy](#)

[Human Rights/Sexual Harassment Policy](#)

[Fair Labor Standards Act](#)

[Pets Are Not Allowed, But Service Animals Are](#)

[No Guns In The Center](#)

[We Practice Sustainability In All Things](#)

[VOLUNTEER POLICIES](#)

[Volunteer Code of Conduct](#)

[Standard of Appearance](#)

[Parking](#)

[Time and Attendance](#)

[Tardiness and Absenteeism](#)

[Tardiness/Absence Reporting Procedure](#)

[Breaks and Meal Periods](#)

[Reimbursement of Expenses](#)

[Communications](#)

[Weekly Email](#)

[Communication Log](#)

[Website](#)

[Speaking with Media](#)

[VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT](#)

[Organization Standards for Volunteer Involvement](#)

[Open Door Policy](#)

[Attending A Board Meeting](#)

[Volunteer Recognition and Benefits](#)

ABOUT AUSTIN CREATIVE REUSE

Mission Statement

Austin Creative Reuse fosters conservation and reuse through creativity, education and community-building.

Core Values

Every object has impact : All material items have a social, economic, and environmental impact that influences our relationship with stuff; nothing is free.

Reuse creates awareness : Reusing items sparks creativity, awareness, and exploration, fostering inspiration and engaged learning.

Communities are powerful : We connect people to share resources, creativity and experiences.

Action is advancement : We believe in experimenting with new ideas and taking incremental steps to work towards goals.

Goals

- Operate with transparency, evidence-based practices, and collaborative processes to be an efficient and effective non-profit organization that balances the needs of all stakeholders. Stakeholders: Customers, Suppliers, Financial Donors, Community, Employees, Environment
- Be a self-sustaining and scalable non-profit organization
- Be a resource for the Austin and Reuse communities that provides programs that utilize or support the creative use of repurposed and discarded materials.

What We Do

- We collect, distribute, and sell reusable materials donated from industry and individuals.
- We educate the community about how to reduce, reuse, and create in responsible and fun ways. We have a library of design and art ideas, and share these online and in-store. We plan to offer instructional kits in the future, pending human capital, for those who would like the opportunity to learn more outside our center.

- We unite and educate the community by hosting a range of events, activities, and workshops that bring people together to build awareness around conscious consumption, sustainability, and art.
- We promote awareness of like-minded organizations to reduce overlap and increase awareness of city resources.
- We support reuse in education through our Educator network and in-school reuse programs.

Why We Do It

- Reuse is more efficient than recycling, because it requires no industrial processing.
- Reuse diverts materials that would otherwise end up in the landfill and turns them into valuable creative resources.
- Reuse gives us a tangible and inventive way to engage in a sustainable lifestyle, and to think about how our consumption impacts the earth.
- Reuse creates an affordable resource for artists, educators and others to help keep our city a place where creative minds can thrive. Through tinkering and creative exploration, reuse inspires the engineers, designers, architects, and artists of tomorrow.

We Believe All Objects Have Value

- Nothing is free: every object has a social, economic, and environmental impact that influences our relationship with stuff.
- Success is more than financial - the goal is not to maximize price, but to maximize value.
- Opportunities for creative exploration need to be accessible to everyone, and our pricing structure takes this into consideration.
- While the materials are donated to us for free, our pricing is based on a value to cover the cost of the organization that includes collecting, sorting, storing, and merchandising the materials in order to be a financially sustainable organization.
- The prices that we set are evaluated against market prices (first hand retail as well as thrift store pricing on a national, regional and local level.) The intent is to be in line with the economic climate at our local market.
- We constantly evaluate the price of items and the time they have been on the shelves. We come up with creative ways to showcase items that have been in the center for a while, and offer suggestions for how to use them.
- We do donate items and will occasionally give away items for free. However, we would like to continue to create awareness of the inherent value of materials in the center by assigning them a monetary value, no matter how small, most of the time. Another concern is that offering materials for free encourages hoarding, which is not in line with the values of ACR.
- We want to balance the accessibility of materials with the financial sustainability of the organization and charge appropriately for materials.

History of the Organization

Austin Creative Reuse was founded in 2011 by Rebecca Stuch. For the first 5 years, the organization focused on building awareness about reuse by attending community events such as Earth Day and Art Festivals as well as holding bi-annual material drives for teachers and other educators. In July of 2015, Austin's first Creative Reuse Center opened, located in the Linc Shopping Center. At the center, we accept donations of materials from both business and individuals. Initially staffed by volunteers, ACR hired employees to help expand business hours as well as facilitate additional programs such as group volunteering, workshops, and school reuse centers. In the summer of 2017, ACR reached another milestone by hiring its first Executive Director, Isadora McKeon. We now have 9 part-time staff and an interim executive director. We are currently working to secure a larger space for our Creative Reuse Center

Organizational Chart

Depending on their role, employees may receive direction during their shift from one or all of the following:

- Interim Executive Director: Cory Skuldt
- Operations Manager & Events Coordinator: Jen Mack
- Shift Leads: Carolyn Green, Barbara Paris, Christi Salazar
- Center Clerks: Valerie Ruiz, Emily Gilardi, Holli Hartman, Kat Moulton
- Social Media and Marketing Specialist: Valerie Ruiz
- Center Lead Volunteers: Jan Bland, Karen Miller, Carol Noble

Austin Creative Reuse is also represented by an active and diverse [Board of Directors:](#)

- Carole LeClair, President
- Karen Miller, Vice President
- Lindsay Ferguson, Treasurer
- Nancy Lyon, Board Member
- Sharon Yarborough, Secretary
- Jenn Evans, Board Member
- Jessica Martinez, Board Member
- April Kling Meyer, Board Member

CENTER INFORMATION

Center Location and Contact Info

6406 N. IH-35 #1801
Austin, TX 78752

(512) 375-3041
Austincreativereuse.org

Hours of Operation

Austin Creative Reuse is open to the public for shopping:

- Wednesdays and Thursdays: 10am to 8pm
- Fridays and Saturdays: 10am to 6pm
- Sundays: 12pm - 5pm

We are open to the public for drop-in volunteering hours, during which staff oversee a planned volunteer activity:

- Mondays: 9:30 am to noon
- Tuesdays: 6 pm to 8:30 pm
- Thursdays: 2 pm to 5 pm (fabric rolling)

Emergency Procedures

In the event of a weather emergency, it is Austin Creative Reuse's standard practice to follow what Austin Independent School District determines for their operations in that instance. Should the schools be closed, we will be closed for shopping as well. In the event of any other emergency that causes Austin Creative Reuse to suspend operations, volunteers who are listed on the schedule will be notified by the Shift Lead or Center Manager by phone and/or email.

CENTER POLICIES

We Support Diversity, Equality And Justice

Austin Creative Reuse is committed to creating an equitable and safe working and shopping environment for all people. We recognize and honor diversity in all its forms and we work diligently to make our center a place of inclusion.

For brevity, our policies pertaining to Background Checks, Conflict of Interest, Workplace Safety, Diversity and Whistleblowers are linked below, and full paper copies are available in the volunteer manual kept on site at the center.

[Background Checks](#)

[Conflict of interest](#)

[Workplace Safety](#)

[Diversity](#)

Anti-harassment and Complaint Procedure

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

[Whistleblower policy](#)

Grievance Policy

Any conflict between employees, volunteers or an employee or volunteer and a member of the public should be brought to the attention of the Center Manager or Executive Director, and should not be discussed with any other individual. For more details, please refer to our Diversity, Conflict of Interest and Whistleblower policies.

Human Rights/Sexual Harassment Policy

Harassment of any sort will not be tolerated. For more details, please refer to our Diversity and Whistleblower policies.

Fair Labor Standards Act

It is the intent of Austin Creative Reuse to comply with all state and federal laws relating to the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#).

Pets Are Not Allowed, But Service Animals Are

We do not allow pets in the center; however, service animals are allowed by law based on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- If staff or volunteer encounter a customer with a pet, please inform them of our “only service animals” pet policy
- When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed by law. If the customer indicates that the pet is a service animal, staff may ask two questions: (1) is the animal a service animal required because of a disability, and (2) what work or task has the animal been trained to perform.

The ADA requires State and local government agencies, businesses, and non-profit organizations (covered entities) that provide goods or services to the public to make "reasonable modifications" in their policies, practices, or procedures when necessary to accommodate people with disabilities. The service animal rules fall under this general principle. Additional information about Service Animals and ADA can be found on the [ADA website](#).

No Guns In The Center

As of January 1, 2016, it is legal for people in Texas to carry openly displayed handguns in public. As the manager of private property, we have decided to keep guns out of the Creative Reuse Center and provide our customers with a comfortable, safe environment. You can read the text of the open carry law, 2015 HB 910, [here](#).

The required signage is posted in the Center's windows. If someone ignores our sign and carries an openly displayed gun into the center, you can tell them that ACR does not allow guns in the Center, at which point they will be legally obligated to leave. If you do not feel comfortable with this, please notify the Center Manager or Center Lead on duty.

We Practice Sustainability In All Things

Sustainability is the ability to utilize the earth's natural resources without depleting them for future generations: it involves protecting the environment while being economically efficient and benefiting society. At Austin Creative Reuse we strive to operate sustainably even beyond our reuse work by implementing environmentally safe organizational practices and policies to ensure a better future.

VOLUNTEER POLICIES

As a volunteer, many of Austin Creative Reuse's personnel policies apply to you as well. The following personnel policies apply to all volunteers with Austin Creative Reuse.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

- Take your commitment to our organization to heart, performing your duties to the best of your ability.
- Honor confidentiality.
- Respect the mission and goals of Austin Creative Reuse at all times.
- Deal with conflicts or difficulties in an appropriate manner, seeking assistance as necessary.
- Respect the property of Austin Creative Reuse and its associates.
- Do not accept personal gifts from Austin Creative Reuse's donors.
- Be courteous, friendly and cooperative.
- Offer constructive feedback about our organization in an appropriate manner.
- Be willing to learn and take part in orientation and training sessions.
- Follow through on commitments and communicate if you are unable to work as scheduled.
- Demonstrate respect for the direction and decisions of your supervisor(s).
- Treat others fairly and without discrimination.

Standard of Appearance

At Austin Creative Reuse, we believe that the appearance of our staff and volunteers reflects on the organization as a whole. Depending on the activity to which you are assigned, different modes of dress may be appropriate. If unsure about the appropriate dress for a particular activity, it is best to ask your supervisor prior to arrival.

Some general guidelines are as follows:

- Name tags are required whenever you are present in your volunteer capacity.
- Aprons are required when working in the retail or workshop sections (any activity that includes involvement with our customers).

- Dress appropriately for your duties. For example, physical work requires clothing that is comfortable and durable. If working with tools or in sorting area, closed-toed shoes are required.
- Please do not wear anything that would be viewed as offensive, crude or polarizing.
- Please use good judgement and do not wear clothes which reveal ample amounts of cleavage, midriff or buttocks.

Parking

Please be considerate of our shopping customers when parking at Austin Creative Reuse during your shift. If possible, please allow our customers to have the parking spots closest to the front door.

Time and Attendance

Tardiness and Absenteeism

We count on each other to get the job done. As a volunteer, you are expected to report to your shift on time, to observe the limits for break and meal periods, and to let the shift lead know if you need to leave early.

Tardiness/Absence Reporting Procedure

An absence is any time you are scheduled to volunteer and do not report for your shift or complete your scheduled shift. If you are running more than 5 minutes late or are unable to make a scheduled shift due to illness or other unforeseen circumstance, please follow these steps:

- If you are scheduled and cannot make your shift, you must contact the Center Manager by emailing info@austincreativereuse.org or calling the center at 512-375-3041 as early as possible.
- It is your responsibility to personally make the contact unless you are physically unable to do so.
- Failure to notify will be considered a 'no show/no call' or unreported absence. 2 unreported absences will result in loss of eligibility to volunteer.

Breaks and Meal Periods

In order for all of us to remain productive employees and volunteers, we all need time to rejuvenate. Austin Creative Reuse's break policy is as follows:

- Less than 4 hours: no scheduled breaks
- 4 to 6 hours: 1 15-minute break
- 6 to 8 hours: 2 15-minute breaks
- 8+ hours: 1 15-minute break plus 1 30-minute meal break

In an effort to maintain an efficient and professional work environment, employees must limit all texting and cell phone usage to urgent matters only while working their shift.

Reimbursement of Expenses

Prior approval by Center Manager or Executive Director is required for any expense that an employee or volunteer expects to be reimbursed for. Approved expenses incurred by employees or volunteers will be reimbursed. Please review our [process](#) for reimbursement before requesting. Mileage reimbursement for the use of a personal automobile will be at the rate currently in effect for the U.S. government as documented by the Internal Revenue Service. Employees and Volunteers are reimbursed for mileage upon completion of a signed travel form, which should be submitted to the Executive Director along with documentation of mileage (e.g., google directions).

Communications

Weekly Email

Upon completion of volunteer training, you will be added to a weekly email that provides updates on operations and provides a link to our [Volunteer/Staff Schedule Spreadsheet](#) and [Communications Log](#) each week.

Volunteer/Staff Schedule

- All volunteers are given access to this spreadsheet. We ask that volunteers use this spreadsheet to let us know when they will be working in the center by placing a "X" in the appropriate space. We track our volunteer hours in order to accurately measure "in-kind" donations.
- If a volunteer does significant work outside the center (i.e. rolling fabric or processing buttons at home), they can track their hours at the bottom of the spreadsheet under "At Home" hours.
- If you are not able to log your hours through the spreadsheet, please let the Shift Lead know that they need to add your hours to the spreadsheet. This can be easily accomplished while you are at the center.

Communication Log

- The Communication Log is an old school notebook with paper pages. We believe this is the current best form of communication as we continue to develop our processes and due to the fact that not everyone wants to receive email from ACR when not at the center.
- Please check the Communication Log at the beginning of each shift. The communications log will contain important information about the center. This may include new materials available, new hours, new pricing procedures etc.
- Please update the Communication Log to share customer comments or questions. This will enable all employees and volunteers to see the comments and to read the answers to the questions.

- Please ask questions. If it is unclear to you, it is probably unclear to others.

Website

Please become accustomed to checking our website frequently for new updates and communications with the community. In addition, we send out newsletters to keep our supporters informed of what is going on with Austin Creative Reuse. You may be asked questions pertaining to these events and current policies of the organization. If you are not certain of the correct response to an inquiry, you can add question to communication log and Center Manager or other employee/volunteer will respond.

Speaking with Media

Should any media approach you during your shift at the center or at a community event, please direct the person(s) to the Center Lead in charge. Please do not answer questions or offer your opinions to press if asked. If needed, please refer the press to the Executive Director by providing their email address.

VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT

We strive to make sure you are successful during your time with Austin Creative Reuse.

Organization Standards for Volunteer Involvement

- *Standard 1: Mission-based Approach:* The board of directors, leadership volunteers and staff of Austin Creative Reuse acknowledge and support the vital role of volunteers in achieving the organization's purpose and mission.
- *Standard 2: Human Resources:* Volunteers are welcomed and treated as valued and integral members of Austin Creative Reuse's team. The organization has a planned approach for volunteer involvement that includes linking volunteers to the achievement of the mission, providing the appropriate human and financial resources to support the volunteer program, and establishing policies for effective management.
- *Standard 3: Program Planning and Policies:* Policies and procedures are adopted by the organization to provide a framework that defines and supports the involvement of volunteers.
- *Standard 4: Program Administration:* The organization has a clearly designated individual with appropriate qualifications responsible for the volunteer program.
- *Standard 5: Volunteer Assignments:* Volunteer assignments address the mission or purpose of the organization and involve volunteers in meaningful ways that reflect the abilities, needs and backgrounds of the volunteer and the organization.
- *Standard 6: Recruitment:* Volunteer recruitment incorporates internal and external strategies to reach out and involve a diverse volunteer base.
- *Standard 7: Screening:* A clearly communicated screening process is adopted and consistently applied by the organization.
- *Standard 8: Orientation and Training:* Each volunteer is provided with an orientation to the organization, its policies and practices, including the rights and responsibilities of volunteers. Each volunteer receives training customized to the volunteer assignment and the individual needs of the volunteer.

- *Standard 9: Supervision:* Volunteers receive a level of supervision appropriate to the task and are provided with regular opportunities to give and receive feedback.
- *Standard 10: Recognition:* The contributions of volunteers are consistently acknowledged with formal and informal methods of recognition.
- *Standard 11: Record Management:* Standardized documentation and records management practices are followed and in line with relevant legislation.
- *Standard 12: Evaluation:* The impact and contribution of volunteers and the volunteer program are continually evaluated to ensure the needs of the organization are being met in fulfilling its mandate.

Open Door Policy

We encourage you to come forward if you have any questions or concerns about your position or the organization, or if you wish to take on a new or different role. Please use the following communication guidelines:

- First line of communication: Shift Lead on duty
- Second Line: Center Manager
- Third Line: Executive Director
- Fourth Line: Board President

Attending A Board Meeting

Staff or volunteers may request to attend a monthly board meeting. Please submit your request to attend a board meeting to the Board President.

Volunteer Recognition and Benefits

We love our volunteers! Austin Creative Reuse is working on its volunteer recognition and benefits program. We make an effort to recognize birthdays and other life events through our website, social media, cards and weekly emails. We also hold 2 to 4 volunteer appreciation events each year. If you have any suggestions on how to improve our Volunteer recognition, please let us know.

Resignation/Leaving the Volunteer Program

When your time volunteering with Austin Creative Reuse comes to a close, we appreciate the opportunity to hold an exit interview which allows you to state reasons for leaving and reflect on your experience during your time with us. We hope to ensure that your time with us ends on a positive note, and appreciate your feedback so that others can have the same experience. In the event that dismissal is required, as in the case of certain breaches of conduct, this interview holds value as a learning experience for both parties, as well as for recordkeeping purposes.

Welcome aboard and thank you for being an important part of our mission to support arts, education and the environment! We look forward to working with you at Austin Creative Reuse.

AUSTIN CREATIVE REUSE VOLUNTEER OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY

As a volunteer you acknowledge that you may have access to and become acquainted with various trade secrets, inventions, innovations, processes, information, records and specifications owned or licensed by Austin Creative Reuse in connection with the operation of its business including, without limitation, Austin Creative Reuse's business and product processes, methods, customer lists, accounts and procedures. You agree that you will not disclose any of the aforesaid, directly or indirectly, or use any of them in any manner, either during your work or at any time thereafter, except as necessary while working with Austin Creative Reuse. All files, records, documents, blueprints, specifications, information, letters, notes, media lists, original artwork/creative, notebooks, and similar items relating to the business of Austin Creative Reuse, whether prepared by you as an volunteer or otherwise coming into your possession, shall remain the exclusive property of Austin Creative Reuse. As a Volunteer, you shall not retain any copies of the foregoing without Austin Creative Reuse's prior written permission. Confidentiality is needed in regards to:

- ACR passwords lists
- Donor amounts
- Employee information
- Volunteer information
- Financial information
- Procedures
- Internal Communications

RECEIPT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I am in receipt of the Austin Creative Reuse General Information Guide For Volunteers, I have read the document and confirm that I will follow all policies and guidelines outlined herein.

Print name

Signature

Date