

Mechanical Tempest

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO MT! “Haere Mai”	1
WHAT WE DO	1
WHO WE ARE	2
VOLUNTEERING WITH US	2
VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES AND PATHWAYS	3
WHAT TO EXPECT FROM VOLUNTEERING	4
Mechanical Tempest CODE OF CONDUCT	5
HEALTH & SAFETY	6
Photography	6
WORKSHOP PROCEDURES	7
Shifts and rosters:	7
Tools and workstands:	7
Workshop etiquette:	8
Workshop facilities and accessibility:	8
At the end of your workshop session please:	8
THANKS FOR READING!	9

WELCOME TO MT! “Haere Mai”

Thanks for your interest in volunteering with Mechanical Tempest. Volunteers are the heart of all things MT. Please read this handbook and complete the volunteering form on our website. Completing the form confirms you agree with everything in this handbook and provides us with useful information to help support you on your Mechanical Tempest journey.

If you have any questions about this handbook, our services or anything else about Mechanical Tempest, please ask one of our Workshop Co-ordinators on site or email us at themechanicaltempest@gmail.com.

WHAT WE DO

Mechanical Tempest operates a not-for-profit community bike workshop in Pōneke. We provide workshop spaces where everyone is welcome to help recycle and learn how to fix bikes for themselves and/or others. Bikes, tools, parts and technical guidance are all provided onsite.

Mechanical Tempest's core purpose is to facilitate our community's access to and agency over their own low-cost, low-carbon transport, while making use of the huge excess of resources (bicycles and parts) that are available to us thanks to over-consumption. We want everyone in Pōneke to be able to own, ride and maintain their own bicycle, and to reduce the stream of discarded bikes going to landfill. We prioritise empowerment over charity, which means that we don't fix bikes 'for' anyone - rather, we provide the necessary space, assistance and resources for anyone to learn to do it themselves. We value inclusion and aim to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all sorts of people to connect and learn together.

WHO WE ARE

Mechanical Tempest is run by a group of dedicated volunteers, many of whom have been involved for more than 10 years. Mechanical Tempest began as a workshop in the 128 Abel Smith Street radical social centre in 2003 ("128"), operated by an informal collective. We have been operating for more than 20 years, with some breaks here and there! From 2018 to 2022 we operated out of the old Caltex station in Newtown. As of October 2024 we have a new home thanks to Te Toi Mahana within the Central Park Flats at 21 Brooklyn Road.

Since 2020, Mechanical Tempest has been a registered charity and incorporated society. This status enables us to apply for a wide range of grants and gives us a clearer structure compared to the previous informal collective. The incorporated society is composed of regular members who have no particular responsibilities, and an executive committee of nine people, including the Treasurer, Secretary and Chairperson. Currently these roles are held by Stephanie Cairns, Nicole Gaston and Arthur Price, respectively. The executive committee hold an annual AGM, have responsibility for the society's finances, and submit an annual report to the Charities Commission to maintain our charitable status.

VOLUNTEERING WITH US

There are lots of ways to get involved with Mechanical Tempest - you don't need to be a hot-shot mechanic! You can get involved with **processing** donations of bikes and parts (stripping, cleaning, recycling and storing), **supporting** keeping the space clean and tidy, as well as **helping** workshop users with their mechanical tasks and sharing your knowledge.

There are three different levels of responsibility (these roles are defined more below):

- **Casual Volunteer**
- **Regular Volunteer**
- **Workshop Co-ordinator**

We encourage you to commit to volunteering regularly. This might be every month, week or whatever your life allows. Find a sustainable rhythm for you, and don't over-commit! A regular

commitment really helps us to provide a consistent service and allows you to get the most out of being part of our Mechanical Tempest community.

We also welcome people to help with other activities such as communications, finance, fundraising, marketing, facility maintenance and business development. If you have a particular skill you would like to share please let us know.**VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES AND PATHWAYS**

Casual volunteer:

- Turn up when you can (minimum once a month please)
- Focus on learning mechanical skills, teaching what you know, and processing donations (bikes and parts - recycling, stripping, categorising)
- Help keep the workshop tidy
- Help uphold our values of inclusion, community, and empowerment by making sure the workshop is physically safe and any problematic behaviour is dealt with
- Don't work on your own bike during your volunteer shift
- Make sure the workshop is open and shut on time
- May choose to get further involved by buddying with a regular volunteer for three sessions, talking to a Workshop Co-ordinator, and getting approval to sign up as a.....

Regular volunteer:

All of the above, plus:

- Signs up for regular shifts on the Google Calendar, lets the group know if they can't make it
- Has door code, knows where to access toilet key and storage room key
- MT Inc Soc committee has their contact details, and they have joined the WhatsApp comms group for day-to-day updates
- May ask to sign up to be an Incorporated Society member but not compulsory
- May choose to get further involved by signing up as an Inc Soc member, joining the committee and becoming a.....

Workshop co-ordinator:

All of the above, plus:

- Has become an Inc Soc member and joined the committee
- May purchase supplies for the workshop and get reimbursed
- Point of contact for any issues that need to be communicated between Te Toi Mahana and workshop volunteers/users
- Point of contact for any incidents that occur at the workshop, and responsible for the response to these
- Communicates any decisions made at AGM or other committee meetings to all volunteers

Responsible for approving, through consensus with other Workshop Co-ordinators, the induction of new Regular Volunteers (may object to such approvals for reasons including, but not limited to, evidence of said volunteer failing to uphold our values, unsafe or irresponsible use of the workshop, discrimination or oppressive language etc)WHAT TO EXPECT FROM VOLUNTEERING

There are some cool benefits to becoming a Tempest volunteer, including:

- **Upskilling & Training:** volunteers are welcome to attend regular training sessions.
- **Industry Experience:** under the guidance of our Mechanical Tempest Coordinators, volunteers can develop mechanic skills with an eye to entering the bike industry.
- **Membership to 'Mechanical Tempest Club':** all volunteers are welcome to Mechanical Tempest Club Nights, hosted the first Monday of the month from 6 - 8pm. These sessions are the place to work on your own projects, build your mechanicing skills and connect with our Mechanical Tempest whānau.
- **Second-hand Parts & Bikes:** volunteers are allowed to find secondhand parts and bikes for their own personal use at Mechanical Tempest. Generally we say 1-2 parts for each volunteer session, or you can accumulate this koha to match the suggested koha of bikes. You just need to check with our Mechanical Tempest Coordinators before taking anything. Quantity and availability will be at their discretion.
- **Community Connection & Social Events:** nurturing relationships and building a thriving volunteer community is integral to Mechanical Tempest. We want everyone who loves bikes and helping others to be part of our whānau. We have regular Mechanical Tempest meetings for our volunteers where we seek feedback and catch up (often over beers and pizza). We welcome your thoughts and encourage volunteers to share responsibility for how things happen here at Mechanical Tempest.

To continue accessing these volunteer benefits, simply help out Mechanical Tempest at least every two months. We understand life and commitments can fluctuate, so just let us know if you plan to be away for a longer period, and we can get you back up to speed when you return.

Mechanical Tempest CODE OF CONDUCT

To ensure our workshops, events and activities are safe, fun and enjoyable spaces for everyone it is vital that all Mechanical Tempest people understand and commit to our Code of Conduct.

Mechanical Tempest wants all to feel welcome, happy and safe. Therefore, we expect everyone to:

- **Respect All People:** Mechanical Tempest works with a diverse range of people with differing outlooks, perspectives and abilities. We love our diverse community so bring along your kindness and respect to Mechanical Tempest. In return we will keep all personal information and circumstances confidential. Any such information will be held securely by our Workshop Coordinators and will only be shared with our volunteers.
- **Respect Our Space & Stuff:** Mechanical Tempest loves having a tidy workshop that is easily navigated. Work with us to make sure our spaces stay tidy, minimise hazards, and are well-loved. Mechanical Tempest also has many valuable items onsite so please look after our stuff responsibly and ensure you use all tools correctly - if you're unsure, please ask a Workshop Coordinator!
- **Be Responsible & Stay Safe:** Mechanical Tempest wants everyone to stay safe while at our events. Please take responsibility for yourself ensuring your actions or inactions don't harm yourself or others. Keep your eyes open for people doing silly things. Take responsibility for the roadworthiness of your bike. Bikes or possessions left on site are left at your own risk. Finally and importantly, please report any hazards or incidents to a Workshop Coordinator.
- **Be Honest:** Mechanical Tempest needs our volunteers to be upfront and honest when representing both Mechanical Tempest and themselves. This includes being open about your own abilities, circumstances and history. Mechanical Tempest often deals with young and/or vulnerable people plus has many valuable items on site.
- **Be Awesome & Bring Good Vibes:** Mechanical Tempest expects respectful and appropriate behaviour from everyone at all times. We don't tolerate intoxication or drug use at Mechanical Tempest. If you encounter any inappropriate behaviour or have any concerns, please let one of the Workshop Coordinators know! (We have procedures in place to deal with these situations.) You are also welcome to email any concerns / issues to themechanicaltempest@gmail.com

And if you are unsure of anything or don't know something, please ask one of our MT Coordinators!

HEALTH & SAFETY

To ensure our activities are safe for all, it is vital that everybody understands and commits to our Health and Safety procedures. A summary of the key points to be aware of while volunteering in the workshop are below and copies of risk assessments are available in our workshop or will be sent to you.

- The earthquake/fire assembly point is the carpark to the south of the workshop (up one flight of stairs)
- Drugs, alcohol and smoking are not permitted on Te Toi Mahana premises at any time.
- Walk - **don't ride** - your bicycle on shared te Toi Mahana footpaths.
- If you injure yourself whilst in the workshop, please inform the workshop coordinator who will direct you towards the first aid kit.
- In case of fire or serious injury, please call 111
- Gloves and aprons are available.
- Please ensure that all spilt liquids are cleaned up immediately
- Please wear appropriate footwear, open sandals and flip-flops are not recommended in the workshop.
- Please only lift items which are within your capability and always ask for help if you feel unsure whether you can lift something easily.

Photography

As a volunteer you may be photographed or videoed in our workshop or at events. These images/videos may appear on our website, social media accounts or used in press releases, talking about our achievements together or promoting future events. If you do not wish to appear in photos and or videos, please let us know.

WORKSHOP PROCEDURES

This information applies to everyone involved in mechanical Tempest. To ensure our activities are safe for all, it is vital that everybody understands and commits to our Health and Safety (H&S) policies and procedures. Please take some time to read through our policies and the summary of procedures below.

Shifts and rosters:

- [Roster is available here.](#)
- The workshop should have a minimum 2 volunteers on duty to open to the public - at least one of whom is a Regular Volunteer or Workshop Co-ordinator. Volunteers are expected to join the [MT-vols](#) email list and communicate with the rest of the group regularly.
- If you can't make your shift, email the list and try to find cover.
- If your shift-mate can't come in, it's up to you if you want to close rather than manage alone.
- Open and close on time

Tools and workstands:

- Please return tools to their correct tool board when they have finished, clear their workbench, remove their bike from the stand and put away any boxes of parts.
- Basic tools live on the side walls. More unusual tools are stored at the end of the workshop near the truing stand. Please ask if you can't find something.
- If you are unfamiliar with any equipment please ask for assistance, there will always be an experienced mechanic on duty. Misuse of tools can result in possible injury to someone and damage to the tools.
- The workstands and tools are for use in the MT workshop only. Do not allow tools to be taken off site and please do not bring your own tools unless they are very specialist – we don't want tools to get mixed up.
- It is vital that the workshop is kept tidy and clear of trip hazards at all times.

Workshop etiquette:

- Treat everyone you meet at our workshop with respect and kindness.
- Make sure you wear a MT apron so visitors can identify you as a workshop volunteer.
- Encourage workshop users to do their own work as much as possible. Try to teach and demonstrate rather than just fixing someone's bike for them. Never take a tool out of someone's hand.
- Please refrain from working on your own bicycle while you are rostered on as a volunteer for a shift. If you want to work on your own projects please come at a time when you are not rostered on to volunteer.
- No drugs/alcohol/smoking/vaping in the workshop spaces.
- We have a strict 'no cutting locks off bikes' policy to ensure we are not assisting in bike theft.

Workshop facilities and accessibility:

- Access to toilets and drinking water is in the main building next to the community room. There is a key in the hole in the wall. This will be shown to you during your induction.
- There is a sink in the storage room with degreasing handsoap.
- There is a rubbish bin, recycling bin, and scrap metal for recycling bin. Make sure you place all waste items appropriately.

At the end of your workshop session please:

- Return all tools to their correct place.
- Place all waste in the appropriate labelled bins.
- Remove any bikes from the workstand and return it to the correct place.
- Lights are automatic so you don't need to turn them on/off.
- Make sure the storage room door is locked at the end of a session.
- Make sure the roller door is closed at the end of a session.

THANKS FOR READING!

By following what's outlined in this handbook, we keep Mechanical Tempest safe and fun for all....and we'd love you to be part of it! Hopefully we'll hear from you or see you down at Mechanical Tempest soon :)