

# VOLUNTEERING FAQs

Answers to some of the frequently asked questions about volunteering at the museum in the following areas:

1. Fixed-term placements (voluntary internships)
2. On-going roles
3. General information about volunteering

## 1. FIXED - TERM PLACEMENTS

### How long are these placements?

For 3 months, working 1 – 3 days a week. Hours are usually 10.00 – 5.00.

### When do these placements occur?

There is no set timetable or programme for these internships. They are advertised when staff need additional support, or when a vacancy occurs. Please don't apply for a placement unless one has been advertised.

### Can I register my interest in future roles?

Yes, the museum has a mailing list. To add your name, go to the 'Get In Touch' box at the bottom of the web page.

### Typical fixed-term placements include:

- Curatorial Research Assistant – *see sample below*
- Editorial Assistant
- Public Programme Researcher
- Picture Researcher

NB. None of the placements involve designing.

### *Sample placement*

#### **Curatorial Research Assistant**

Suitable for: people studying arts, museum studies, design and seeking a career in curating and museums/galleries. This role is often required in the developmental stages of an exhibition.

#### Tasks involve:

- Researching material, e.g. literature, websites and other exhibitions, related to the chosen theme of the exhibition
- Reporting research findings to the Curator
- Compiling and maintaining a clear record of findings on Excel
- Researching potential partners, e.g. for the loan of objects and exhibits and maintaining records of this

### **I'm from outside the European Economic area (EEA), but and I'm on a visa in the UK - can I still volunteer?**

If you are from *outside* the EEA and in the UK on a visa, you need to check whether this allows you to volunteer and for how many hours.

If you are from *within* the EEA there are no limits on volunteering.

## 2. ON-GOING ROLES

These roles have no end date – they end when the volunteer chooses to leave.

### What type of on-going role are there?

- Welcomer – *see sample below*
- Gardener
- Family activity volunteer

### I love the museum, but don't know much about design - can I still apply?

Yes, the museum wants to involve a wide range of volunteers and has opportunities that suit people with different levels of knowledge, interest, experience and availability.

### How often would I be asked to volunteer?

The Welcomer role asks for a weekly attendance (Monday to Friday) or fortnightly (weekends) on a 3-hour shift. However, Family Activity volunteers offer their time during school holidays.

#### *Sample on-going role*

##### **Welcomer**

Suitable for: people who enjoy creating a welcoming atmosphere and helping others and understand what good customer service looks like

##### Tasks involve:

- Providing a friendly greeting for all visitors on arrival
- Listening to visitors' needs and helping them plan their day
- Informing visitors about current exhibitions, events & facilities
- Assisting in queue management and greeting large groups e.g. schools
- Becoming familiar with the local area and answering visitors' questions about places to visit and public transport
- Engaging with visitors at an activity table and encouraging visitors to try their hand at design
- Being an advocate for forthcoming exhibitions and the benefits of becoming a member of the museum

## 3. GENERAL INFORMATION

### Is there an age restriction to volunteering?

The museum generally involves volunteers aged 18 upwards. There is no upper age limit provided the volunteer is fit to carry out their tasks.

### Does volunteering lead to a job at the museum?

Volunteer roles are different from staff jobs and designed to support the museum's work in different ways. They are not created with a view to leading to paid employment at the museum.

### I'm registered disabled and/or have additional support needs - can I volunteer?

Yes, the museum aims to ensure it is accessible as possible, and will make reasonable adjustments to allow someone to volunteer where possible.

**I am looking for school work experience – do you offer this?**

Work experience is different from volunteering. The museum currently does not have the capacity to offer work experience.

**Can volunteers claim travel expenses?**

Yes, the museum reimburses *out-of-pocket* travel expenses up to a daily limit of £12. Volunteers are asked to use the cheapest form of travel, e.g. Oyster cards.

**How will I be supported whilst volunteering?**

All volunteers receive a full induction to the museum and to their role and any necessary training. They receive a Welcome Pack and have a named staff supervisor as their regular point of contact whilst volunteering. After the first 4-6 days volunteering, there is a review meeting where the volunteer and their supervisor share feedback.

**What would I get in return for volunteering?**

Volunteering offers the opportunity to meet new people, develop skills and experience and learn more about the value of design. Volunteers may also take advantage of a 20% discount in the museum shops, free admission to all exhibitions and free tickets to events when available.

**I receive welfare benefits - can I still volunteer?**

You can volunteer as long as you receive no payment other than the reimbursement of *out-of-pocket* travel expenses and keep to the rules for getting your benefit(s). You should always inform Jobcentre Plus when starting to volunteer, especially if you are receiving unemployment support.

**Can I talk to someone about volunteering at the museum?**

Yes, for further information, or queries which are not answered on this sheet or on the website, please use the online form or phone 020 3862 5875 (Mon-Fri).

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