

Glasgow Museums Policy for Volunteers

1.1 Introduction

'GM' refers to Glasgow Museums, comprising:

- Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Burrell Collection, Gallery of Modern Art, Museum of Transport, People's Palace, Provand's Lordship, St Mungo's Museum of Religious Life and Art, Fossil Grove, Scotland Street School Museum, McLellan Galleries, Martyrs' School, GMRC.
- Glasgow Museums holds the biggest collection under local authority management in the United Kingdom, and its collection is recognized to have national importance. GM has a very important job to do in respect of the preservation and study of objects, and has an important part to play in the leisure and tourism businesses. Our vision is to develop and sustain a vibrant artistic, creative, sporting and play culture, with learning opportunities, open access to information, and an attractive range of facilities - all aimed at enriching the quality of life, addressing social inclusion, encouraging self development and life-long learning and improving the health and well-being of the people of Glasgow. Volunteers are vital to achieving this vision and the objectives of Glasgow Museums.
- A volunteer is anyone who without recompense performs an activity at the direction and on behalf of Glasgow Museums. Volunteers may be involved in a range of activities.
- In this organization, volunteers are a major resource and make a vital contribution to our vision. We intend to encourage, develop and support volunteer involvement in our service within all appropriate departments, programmes and activities. Volunteers bring new skills and perspectives to the organization and can undertake activities that would not otherwise be carried out. Volunteers will supplement the service provided rather than supplant the work of employees. They will not be asked to carry out activities of such a nature as to deprive employees of any component of their work that would compromise their career development or job satisfaction.
- GM believes our relationship with our volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment, within which GM and volunteers both have rights and responsibilities. We hope that volunteers will enjoy their time with us and gain from it in terms of their own personal development.

1.2 Purpose of the volunteer policy

The purpose of this policy document is to:

- Confirm GM commitment to involving volunteers;
- Recognise the contribution volunteers make to GM;
- Provide a basis for the expansion of volunteer involvement;
- Provide overall support, guidance and direction to staff and volunteers;
- Establish the values and standards of GM in its involvement with volunteers;
- Ensure decisions are made fairly;
- Clarify volunteer rights and status;
- Clarify the boundaries between staff and volunteers;
- Help to ensure the ongoing quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the activities carried out by volunteers.

This policy is not:

Either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personal agreement. Glasgow Museums reserves the right to change any aspect of the policy at any time after consultation with the relevant parties. This policy applies to all volunteer placements in Glasgow Museums regardless of activity. Certain items may be altered if a volunteer is being placed by a sponsoring agency.

1.3 Role of the Volunteer Co-ordinator

The productive use of volunteers requires a planned and organised effort. The function of the Volunteer & Placement Co-ordinator is to provide a central co-ordinating point for effective volunteer management within GM, and to direct and assist staff and volunteer efforts jointly to provide more productive opportunities. They will also bear responsibility for maintaining liaison with other volunteer programmes in the community. The Volunteer Co-ordinator shall bear primary responsibility for effective volunteer deployment, for assisting staff in identifying productive and creative volunteer roles, for recruiting suitable volunteers, and for tracking and evaluating the contribution of volunteers to the organization.

1.4 Volunteer benefits

Our Volunteers volunteer for many different reasons: some enjoy the social side of working with people who share a similar interest, or have the satisfaction of knowing they have helped make the collections more accessible to the public whilst making GM a better place for visitors. Others, to develop their skills or gain new skills while serving with GM. We cannot guarantee paid employment to

volunteers as all recruitment is carried out in accordance with Glasgow Life's Equal Opportunity Policy.

2. Practice guidelines

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of the involvement of volunteers. More detailed information, including copies of the various documents, can be obtained from the Volunteer & Placement Co-ordinator.

2.1 Recruitment

GM should recruit volunteers professionally on a pro-active basis, with the intent on broadening and expanding community involvement. Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to gender, disability, age or race in conjunction with Glasgow Council's Equal Opportunities Policy. The sole qualification for recruiting shall be the individual's suitability to perform the designated assignment. The following principles apply:

- Volunteers will be recruited from various sources, including: word of mouth, recruitment events and agencies, newspaper ads, local community groups and institutions and Friends Groups;
- Role descriptions will be produced for each assignment;
- Each candidate will be asked to complete a standard application form and equal opportunity monitoring form (for statistical purposes only);
- Candidates matched to volunteer tasks will be given an informal interview conducted by the placement contact/mentor and if possible the volunteer co-ordinator;
- References will always be sought and in some cases police checks will be required e.g. working with children, handling cash. Applicants who refuse background checks may be refused the opportunity to volunteer;
- In placing a volunteer in a position, attention shall be paid to the interests and capabilities of the volunteer and to the requirements of the voluntary activity. No placement shall be made unless the requirements of both the volunteer and the supervising staff can be met;
- Trial periods will be undertaken if necessary, the length of which will be at the discretion of the contact/mentor and agreed with the volunteer at the recruitment stage.

2.2 Guidelines

All volunteers will be issued with guidelines, which outlines the arrangement between the volunteers and the Museum. **This is not a contract of employment.** They cover the responsibilities of Glasgow Museums towards volunteers and the role of volunteers towards Glasgow Museums. They include:

- Conduct;
- Location;
- Induction & training;
- Supervision;
- Health & Safety issues.

2.3 Induction & training

- **For volunteers**

All volunteers will receive a general induction covering housekeeping issues, health & safety, the nature and purpose of the organization, the nature, operation, purposes and requirements of the volunteer's role. Volunteers will receive specific on-the-job training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment. The training and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the assignment and the capabilities of the volunteer.

- **For members of staff**

An orientation on working with volunteers will be provided to all staff. In-service training on effective volunteer deployment will be provided to staff who are involved in volunteer management.

- **Reviews**

Placements will be reviewed constantly. An informal review of the placement will take place every six months. This will look at any problems or issues a volunteer or contact/mentor has, any other areas a volunteer is interested in, and ideas for improving the quality of placement. A written record may be kept of this review.

- **Health & Safety**

GM will ensure volunteers have the necessary skills and qualifications required to carry out their assignments. Any risks to health and safety will be identified by workplace assessments and any preventative or protective methods will be undertaken. Volunteers will be told the identity of a competent person taking charge during an emergency, and the name of the person responsible for health & safety and first aid.

2.4 Supervision

Each volunteer assigned to a task within the organization must have a clearly identified contact/mentor. This person will be responsible for ongoing guidance of the volunteer, and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance. If, for whatever reason, the contact/mentor will not be available, they must inform the volunteer and designate another person. A volunteer may be a contact/mentor of other volunteers, provided that the supervising volunteer has a member of staff as their contact/mentor. The volunteer will also have the support of the Volunteer & Placement Co-ordinator.

- **Records**

Records will be maintained on each volunteer, including recruitment documentation, dates of service, tasks performed, training records, and any complaints documentation. Staff should submit all relevant information to the Volunteer & Placement Co-ordinator. Volunteers' personal records shall be accorded the strictest confidentiality in accordance with data protection legislation. Individuals will be able to access their own records

- **Insurance**

All volunteers are covered by Glasgow Life's insurance policies whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on GM's behalf.

- **Complaints**

If a volunteer has a genuine complaint, they should discuss it with their mentor in the first instance. If they are unhappy or if the complaint is about their mentor, they should discuss it with the Volunteer & Placement Co-ordinator who will try to resolve the issue.

If a mentor/contact has concerns about a volunteer's behaviour or their ability to carry out their assignment, they should discuss their concerns with the volunteer in the first instance. If this does not resolve the situation, the Volunteer & Placement Co-ordinator should be brought in to mediate.

All discussions should be documented and the volunteer should be informed of any action taken in writing. Both staff and volunteers can get advice at any time from the Volunteer & Placement Co-ordinator.

- **Expenses**

All expenses incurred are the responsibility of the volunteer.

- **Resignation**



Volunteers can discontinue volunteering at any time. This information should be passed on to their contact/mentor who will pass on the information to the Volunteer & Placement Co-ordinator.



2.5 Evaluation

The Volunteer & Placement Co-ordinator, in consultation with volunteer representatives and the volunteer working group, will monitor and review the policy and the procedures associated with it on an annual basis and report back to the museum management team. An annual evaluation of the use of volunteers by the organization will be conducted and used to formulate an annual action plan for volunteer involvement.