

Museum of Cambridge

Volunteering Policy

Museum of Cambridge

Date approved: December 2020

Policy to be reviewed one year from this date

Introduction

The Museum of Cambridge is dedicated to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture across all the different teams. We are committed to promoting diversity and eliminating discrimination. We recognise that a diverse volunteer team brings a range of voices to the Museum, and that this helps us to be more relevant and accessible to the communities we serve.

This policy reinforces our commitment to providing equality and fairness to all. Our aim is to ensure that our organisation is representative of all sections of society. Each member of the team will be respected and valued and will be able to give their best as a result. All volunteers will be given help and encouragement to develop their full potential and utilise their unique talents.

Volunteers and staff must work in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy and will work to prevent discrimination on any grounds. Please refer to our Equality and Diversity policy for further information.

Scope

This policy and the principles contained within it apply to all Museum of Cambridge employees and volunteers, including anyone working and undertaking duties on behalf of the charity.

Principles, Museum of Cambridge:

- recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to our visitors and to paid staff.
- will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to recognise their contribution to the organisation's work.
- expects that all staff shall work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, must actively seek to involve them in their work.
- recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and must help volunteers meet these needs and provide training for them to do their work effectively.
- recognises that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.
- shall endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees has responsibility for ensuring that a policy for volunteering is in place.

The Trustee Lead for Volunteers, through delegation, is responsible for the implementation and compliance with this policy.

The Board of Trustees and Museum of Cambridge employees shall regularly monitor the effectiveness of this policy to ensure that it is working in practice and shall review and update this policy as and when necessary.

They shall ensure that all volunteers can expect from Museum of Cambridge

- to know what is expected of them
- to receive adequate support
- to feel appreciated
- a safe environment in which to perform their tasks/duties
- to be insured
- to know their rights and responsibilities
- to receive appropriate induction and training
- to be free from discrimination
- to be offered the opportunity for personal development

Museum of Cambridge employees

- shall be familiar with the Museum's Volunteer Policy
- shall raise any concerns in relation to the execution of this policy, with their line manager/Volunteer-link Trustee, to enable appropriate investigation.

Museum of Cambridge expects volunteers:

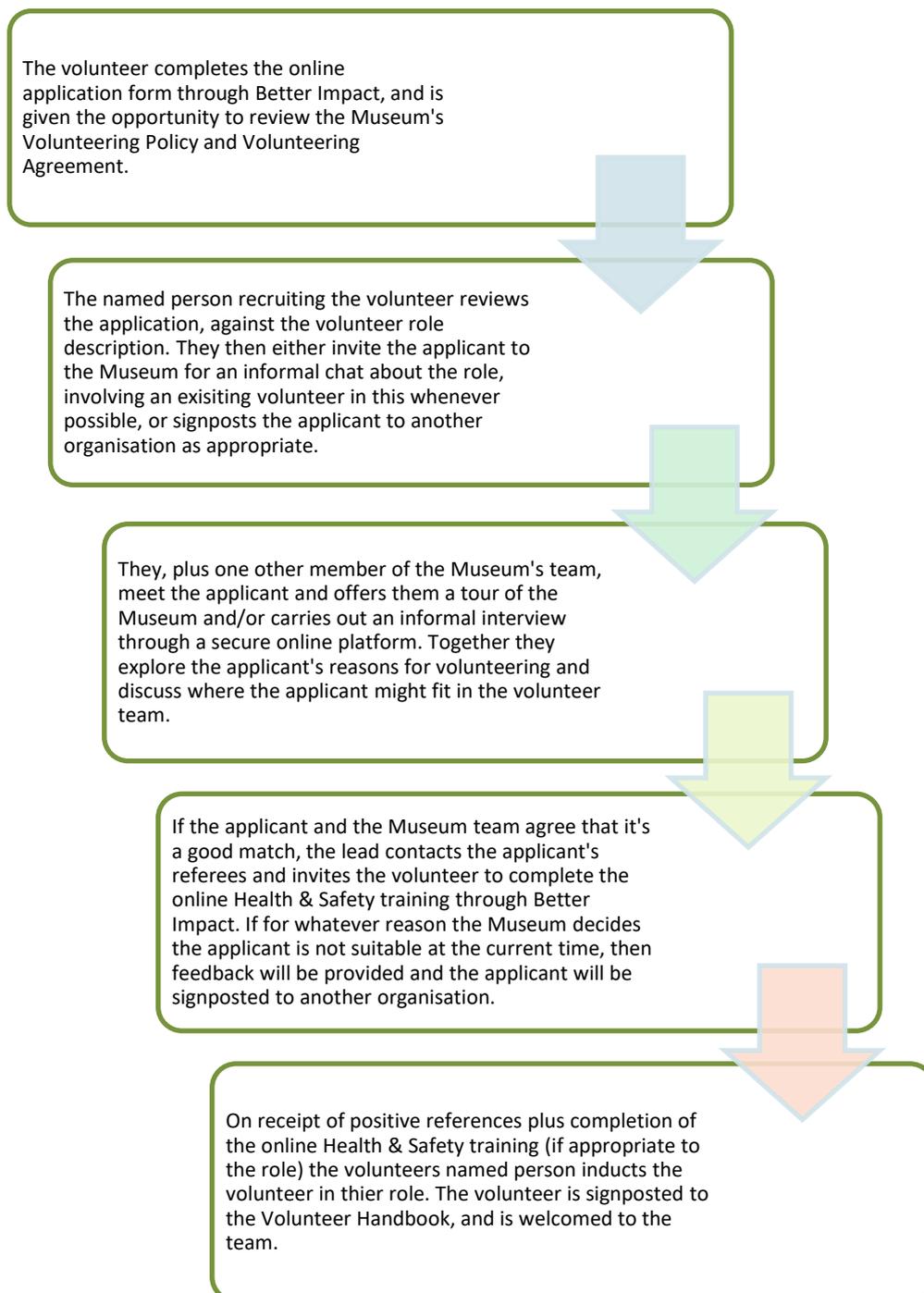
- be reliable and honest
- to treat others with respect and without discrimination
- respect confidentiality and adhere to Museum of Cambridge Data Protection Policy
- make the most of training and support opportunities
- carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the organisation
- carry out tasks within agreed guidelines
- respect the work of the organisation and not bring it into disrepute
- comply with the organisation's policies and procedures

Recruitment of volunteers

In order to recruit a diverse volunteer team, the Museum strives to offer a range of volunteer roles that will appeal to different people. In addition, volunteering opportunities are advertised as widely as possible and through a variety of different mediums. Images and descriptions of the Museum used in recruitment materials reflect the diversity of the local community.

Application and induction process

Volunteer role descriptions are drawn up for volunteering roles. All prospective volunteers are invited to complete the same application and induction process.



Supervision, support and training

All volunteers are allocated a named person who is responsible for introducing them to the rest of the team and for ensuring that volunteers have everything they need to carry out their roles. The named person would carry out face-to-face check ins with volunteers after an initial period of 3 months, and then every 6 months as a minimum or more frequently as required. These check-ins could also take place in group setting when appropriate. Together, their named person and volunteers identify development opportunities and organise training and progression as appropriate.

The 'named person' will be the staff lead of the team that the volunteer gives most of their time, in line with the Museum of Cambridge Organogram.

The Museum is committed to providing robust training opportunities (including online and face-to-face training) for volunteers and allocates appropriate resource to developing the team.

Volunteers receive a monthly newsletter and are invited to regular social events, either in-person or online. Volunteers are encouraged to attend group meetings to provide feedback on their experiences, put forward suggestions, and contribute to decision making. Volunteers are invited to complete the annual volunteer survey and will receive a summary of responses together with feedback from the Board of Trustees.

Volunteers are invited to a range of activities as part of Volunteer's Week and are put forward for volunteering awards as appropriate.

Expenses

The Museum recognises that offering to reimburse expenses will help remove financial obstacles to volunteering, and that this will help to promote a diverse volunteer team. Regrettably, the Museum is not in a financial position to offer to reimburse expenses at the current time, but we hope that this situation will change in the future.

Volunteers who are required to attend events or training off site are entitled to claim reasonable expenses in agreement with their named person. For details of how to submit an expense claim please see the Volunteer Handbook.

Time Credits (pending)

Volunteers that contribute over 1 hour of time to the Museum per week can earn up to 4 time credits per month. For further details on the processes for earning, collecting and spending time credits, please refer to the Volunteer Handbook.

Health & Safety

The Museum is committed to providing a safe environment for volunteers. Please see our Health & Safety policy for further information.

All volunteers are required to complete the online Health & Safety training via Better Impact before starting in a voluntary role, and to complete an annual refresher.

Volunteers are covered by the Museum's Commercial, Combined Insurance Policy.

Lone Working

Although Museum of Cambridge has a duty of care towards volunteers, volunteers are responsible for their own personal safety and should not allow themselves to be put in a vulnerable position.

Museum of Cambridge does not wish or expect volunteers to take unnecessary risks and should a volunteer feel that an activity or appointment would present an unacceptable risk, they must discuss the situation with their named contact or the Volunteer Lead Trustee.

All volunteers should discuss lone working and the processes around it as part of their induction with refreshers provided by their names person as required.

Working with younger volunteers

The Museum's insurance does not currently cover volunteers under the age of 16. Young people aged 16-17 years are classed as a 'vulnerable group' and should be supervised by at least two adults at all times. At least one of these adults should be either a Trustee, a member of staff, or a volunteer who is well known to the team. The Museum should consider each application on an individual basis and review the capacity of the team to supervise the young person as stated.

Working with ex-offenders

Volunteers are required to disclose details of all criminal convictions, cautions or bind-over orders that are not spent. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 provides that certain convictions shall be regarded as 'spent' after specified periods of time have elapsed. Volunteers do not need to disclose convictions that are 'spent' at the date they sign the application form. Volunteers applying for roles that involve working closely with children or vulnerable adults on a frequent or intensive basis will be asked to apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

The Museum will consider a person's criminal conviction in the context of his/her overall application to do voluntary work, motivation, ability to carry out the role, and the responsibility of the organisation for the care of staff, volunteers and, if appropriate, service users. Assessment of the risk should be made using information on the nature of the offence and the sentence received against the activities of the volunteer role.

Once the risk assessment is complete and the volunteer is deemed suitable for the role, the supervisor for the individual should be informed of the nature of the offences. It is also important that the volunteer is informed that this information will be passed on. If the volunteer is not suitable, the Museum will explain that it is because the criminal conviction

was incompatible with the role in question, or that the reason for not being suitable for the role was other than a criminal conviction.

Benefits claimants

Benefits claimants are free to volunteer but are advised to check with their personal adviser before starting in a voluntary role. There are no limits on the amount of time benefits claimants can volunteer for, so long as they continue to meet the conditions of the benefit or tax credit they are receiving.

Volunteers from outside the UK

Generally there should be no problem with accepting someone from outside the UK as a volunteer. If someone is already in the UK and wants to volunteer they must check their own visa or entry clearance conditions to ensure they are allowed. However, someone who is in the UK on a visitor or student visitor visa is not allowed to volunteer. Someone on a student visa should be allowed to volunteer, although there may be restrictions so they should check the conditions. People who have refugee status or have exceptional leave to remain are free to volunteer, as are asylum seekers. If there is any doubt about someone's right to volunteer, the individual or the Museum should contact the UK Border Agency.

Confidentiality and data protection

The Museum will only ask volunteers for information that we actually need. Volunteers submit their details via Better Impact and these are kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Volunteer's details are held securely and confidentially and accessed only by authorised persons.

The Museum of Cambridge uses personal information to contact volunteers about their roles and other related activities. The information given may also be used for statistical purposes.

For further details please see our Data Protection policy.

Copyright

Volunteers grant The Museum of Cambridge the non-commercial non-exclusive right for Museum of Cambridge to use any materials created by the volunteer in the course of performing his/her volunteer activities. The volunteer will be credited whenever possible.

For further details please see our Copyright Policy.

Problem solving and complaint procedures for volunteers

The Museum will not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying or harassment. Volunteers who feel they have been subject to discrimination are encouraged to raise their concerns so that we can apply corrective measures.

We hope that most problems can be solved informally, but if this is not the case the volunteer should raise the matter formally with their named person. If the complaint is against their named person, then the volunteer should request a meeting with another staff member or the Trustee Lead for Volunteers. If the issue is not resolved then it should be put in writing to the Trustee Lead for Volunteers. The matter should be dealt with within 14 days.

The Museum recognises that when there is a problem with a volunteer's behaviour this is often due to training needs, a lack of support, inappropriate allocation of role, or similar. We hope that issues can be addressed informally. Where informal measures are not enough the volunteer's named person will raise the issue in a formal meeting with the volunteer. The volunteer will be entitled to put forward their case. If it is felt necessary an informal warning may be issued, with steps agreed to improve conduct. If the issue is still not resolved a meeting involving the volunteer, volunteer's named person and the Trustee Lead for Volunteers will be called. This may result in a formal warning, with the understanding that following another warning the volunteer will be asked to leave. If a volunteer is believed to have behaved in a manner that has or could have seriously affected the Museum – for example theft, bullying, or violence – they will be immediately suspended while the matter is investigated by the Trustee Lead for Volunteers. The volunteer will be able to put forward their case, and a decision will be made within 14 days. If the complaint against the volunteer is upheld they will be excluded from volunteering. In all cases volunteers have the right to be accompanied at meetings on these issues by another volunteer or friend. Volunteers have the right to appeal decisions. Appeals will be heard by Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Completion of Volunteer Period

When volunteers leave their role, they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They must also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully with their named contact. Based on their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference, although Museum of Cambridge may decline to provide a reference if the volunteer declines to adhere to the museums stated policies and procedures.

Related Policies and Guidance

Health and Safety Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Data Protection and IT Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Copyright Policy
Museum of Cambridge Organogram
Volunteer Strategy (in progress)
Volunteer Handbook (in progress)

Closing statement

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.