

Volunteer Policy

1. Mission and Vision

Our building, together with our engineering and technology collections, makes us unique, not only in Cambridge, but also in the world.

Our mission is to preserve and display the industrial heritage of Cambridge.

We sustain, conserve and develop our museum by

- promoting education and research
- inspiring enjoyment for our visitors and members
- fostering engagement of our community with all our activities

We will achieve our mission through our core of experienced and knowledgeable volunteer support, working to the highest possible standards in everything we do.

Our vision is

- to be a focal point for education, enjoyment and engagement in our local area
- to be firmly established and recognised in the community of Cambridge museums
- to become a national and international cultural contributor in our exploitation of our unique building, site and collection.

2. Purpose

The Museum is run almost entirely by volunteers, who are therefore crucial for the Museum to achieve its mission. The Museum seeks to involve volunteers with a wide range of skills, knowledge, and life experience, and offer a range of opportunities according to their needs and interests. Our regular activities are to care for the original buildings and equipment of the pumping station; to collect and care for objects which illustrate the diverse industrial heritage of Cambridge; to bring the site to life through running the machinery; and provide a range of interpretation techniques and educational programmes.

“Inspiring Volunteers” is a joint project between the Cambridge Museum of Technology and the Cambridge & County Folk Museum. Through the project, volunteers will be encouraged to learn about Cambridge’s fascinating social and industrial history. Volunteers also increase contact with the museums’ communities. Thus, the project aims to widen engagement with potential new public audiences at both museums, particularly those who may never have experienced either museum before.

3. Role and Scope of Volunteers

Each volunteer will be assigned a particular role or roles. Roles may form part of short term or long term projects, be part of a general volunteering opportunity, or be specific to a particular volunteer. Roles may change over time depending on the volunteers' skills and interests and the needs of the Museum. Roles currently include visitor services such as selling tickets and souvenirs in the shop, collections management, interpretation, administration and building/site maintenance. A more complete list of role descriptions can be found in the Volunteer Handbook.

4. Volunteer Expectations and Rights

The Museum believes that all volunteers have expectations of their role or roles and that every attempt must be made by the Trustees, Board of Management, Curatorial Advisor, and Volunteer Co-ordinator to uphold those expectations. Therefore, all volunteers can expect:

- To be treated with dignity and respect.
- A safe, supportive and positive environment.
- To receive proper information, training and assistance to be able to meet their volunteering responsibilities.
- That voluntary roles will address the mission of the Museum and involve volunteers in meaningful ways, reflecting their various abilities, needs and backgrounds.
- That the Museum follows its current policies and procedures on Equal Opportunities, Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, Health and Safety, Problem-Solving, Data Protection, Copyright and Sustainable Development, and that copies of these and all future policies will be made available to all volunteers.
- To be recognized for their valuable contribution to the Museum.

5. Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers are essential to the running of the Museum. Therefore, the Museum expects volunteers to:

- Perform their role or roles to the best of their ability.
- Support our aims and objectives and act as a responsible representative of the Museum.
- Be willing to learn.
- Accept supervision from other volunteers or from staff.
- Work co-operatively with others and treat them with respect.
- Follow our current policies and standards on Equal Opportunities, Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, Health and Safety, Problem-Solving, Data Protection, Copyright and Sustainable Development, and other policies that may be made in the future, and which will be made available to them.
- Aim to meet the time commitments and standards which have been mutually agreed to and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible

- Promptly contact the Volunteer Co-ordinator if they have any new ideas, proposals, difficulties or concerns with their role or roles.

6. Recruitment

A genuine effort will be made to recruit and select volunteers from a broad range of backgrounds and experiences to represent the Museum's communities. We will use appropriate means to advertise for volunteers that take into account the principles of our Equal Opportunities Policy.

Selection of volunteers will be based on actual requirements and pre-determined screening measures. If the role requires substantial training, the Museum will encourage long-term commitment from the volunteer where possible, which helps to ensure that the placement is mutually beneficial.

Volunteers will be asked to sign up to our Volunteer Agreement. The Agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between the Museum and the Volunteer, and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither party intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

7. Application and Screening Process

Each potential volunteer will be asked to complete a short application form. Help can be provided with this if necessary. Applicants under the age of 18 years must provide a signed letter from a parent or guardian to give consent for the applicant to volunteer at the museum.

The Museum requires that every potential volunteer must provide two references. Suitable referees include: a Member of Parliament, Justice of the Peace, Minister of Religion, a professionally qualified person (e.g. doctor, engineer, lawyer, teacher), local councillor, bank officer, established civil servant or person of similar standing; and who has known the potential volunteer for at least 2 years; and who is not a relative ('relative' includes partners, in-laws and step-parents).

We will ask potential volunteers applying for any roles that involve working closely with children or vulnerable adults on a frequent, intensive or overnight basis to submit to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. Any administrative costs for the CRB check will be met by the Museum.

8. Informal Interview

All potential volunteers will be asked to an informal interview to determine their interests and suitability. The potential volunteer will be contacted within 2 weeks of the interview with a response.

A volunteer may not be accepted if:

- They do not have the skills necessary for the desired role or other available roles. If there are no suitable roles available at the time of interview, they may be placed on a waiting list.

- They refuse to acquire an enhanced CRB check for a role that involves working closely with children or vulnerable adults on a frequent, intensive or overnight basis, or their enhanced CRB Disclosure indicates a serious infraction.
- References are not an endorsement of the applicant.
- Parents/guardians do not provide a consent letter for applicants under 18 years old.

If accepted, volunteers will be placed within the Museum based on their skills, assignment preferences and the needs of the Museum.

9. Induction

To ensure that each volunteer understands their roles, the contribution they can make to the Museum's goals, and so that they can fulfil their roles safely and effectively, they will receive a full induction prepared and delivered by the Volunteer Co-ordinator. This will cover a range of issues, including:

- A brief history of the Museum, its work and the wider context.
- The role of the volunteer within the Museum.
- A tour of the site.
- Introduction to other volunteers, particularly project supervisors.
- Management structure and supervision.
- Expectations and requirements in relation to the Museum's policies including the Volunteer Policy, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Problem-Solving Procedures, Confidentiality and Copyright. In particular, this refers to first aid procedures, emergency procedures, and not to run any machines without full training.
- Practical arrangements such as parking, toilets, refreshments, mess room
- Signing in book.
- Key contact details.
- Dress code, including protective clothing.

The induction will include a written checklist to be signed off by the volunteer and the Volunteer Co-ordinator to ensure everything is covered.

10. Trial Period

For some short-term projects, which may only span a single day, there will be no trial period. For long-term projects, there will be a trial period to give the Museum and the volunteer time to discover if they are suited to each other. The trial period will normally be 8 weeks, but may vary depending on the nature of the task. At the end of the trial period the Volunteer Co-ordinator will discuss with the volunteer how they feel about their role or roles, whether any revisions are required, and if they would like to continue to volunteer for the Museum.

11. Training

Training will be provided that is specific to the volunteer's role. Where possible this will be provided by the Volunteer Co-ordinator, the Curatorial Advisor, and/or existing volunteers.

Where necessary and subject to funding, external training consultants may be used. If the training course is held at the location of an external training provider, the Museum may reimburse out of pocket expenses incurred by volunteers for travel to and from the training location.

12. Supervision and support

Volunteers will receive ongoing supervision and support appropriate to their role from a named supervisor and/or the Volunteer Co-ordinator. The Volunteer Co-ordinator will hold informal discussions with volunteers 6 months after the start of their volunteering, and every year thereafter, to chat about their progress and volunteering experience.

13. Expenses

The Museum cannot pay volunteers' expenses for travel to and from the Museum. However, it may reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred through the purchase of materials for use in specific voluntary projects agreed before-hand. All volunteers must check with the Volunteer Co-ordinator before purchasing items for their projects.

14. Equal Opportunities and Diversity

The Museum believes in the dignity of all people and their right to respect and equality of opportunity. We value the strength that comes from difference and the positive contribution that diversity brings to our Museum. As a service provider and charity, we aim to eliminate prejudice and discrimination, and to promote good relations between different groups. Volunteers are thus expected to abide by this Policy. The full Equal Opportunities Policy will be provided in the Volunteer Handbook.

15. Health and Safety

The Museum has a commitment and obligation to promote and safeguard the health, safety and welfare of its visitors, staff, volunteers, contractors and others who are, or may be, affected by our activities. The Museum will undertake risk assessments of agreed activities for volunteers. A copy of the Museum's full Health and Safety Policy will be provided in the Volunteer Handbook. All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner and not put themselves or others at risk of injury. Volunteers will report any accident/incident or dangerous activity in the Accident Log Book and report it to those in a supervisory role on site and/or the Board of Management, as soon as possible.

16. Insurance

Volunteers are covered by the Museum's Public Liability, Employer's Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. Their personal effects are not covered.

17. Sustainable Development

The Museum recognises that its activities can impact on the environment in a number of ways. We are committed to achieving improvement in reducing this impact. We also believe that the Museum's historic buildings and collections can provide stimulation for environmental education and we are committed to using them as such. The full Sustainable Development Policy will be provided in the Volunteer Handbook. Volunteers will be asked to:

- use materials which are as far as possible environmentally friendly
- adopt good housekeeping practices for recycling and disposing of materials used
- monitor energy use and adopt housekeeping practices which reduce waste
- monitor water use and adopt practices which reduce waste and contamination
- use our collections and historic buildings to stimulate discussion on environmental issues.

18. Problem-Solving Procedure

It is important for volunteers to enjoy making their contribution to the Museum, and for the Museum to maintain a high standard of service. The Museum aims to resolve any problems that arise during volunteering in a fair, transparent, and timely manner through its Problem-Solving Procedure.

It is hoped that, with an effective induction, training and support system for volunteers in place, most problems that arise will be minor and can be resolved quickly and informally. In order to facilitate this, volunteers are encouraged to discuss any problems they experience in their roles with the Volunteer Co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity.

18.1 If a complaint has been made about a volunteer

The following guidelines will be followed:

Stage 1. Verbal Discussion. If conduct falls below the required standard, the Volunteer Co-ordinator will discuss this with the volunteer. The main aim of the discussion is to identify the causes of the problem and to find a solution. For example, if a volunteer is struggling in their current role, the Museum may be able to provide additional support and training, or review their role if necessary.

Stage 2. Written Warning. If the problem is serious, or could not be resolved through Stage 1, the Volunteer Co-ordinator may issue the volunteer with a written warning. The warning will outline the improvement in conduct required and the expected timescale, and any further action

that might be taken if the standards are not met. The volunteer has the right to state their case in a meeting with the Volunteer Co-ordinator, and may bring a nominated person of their choice for support.

Stage 3. Cessation of Volunteering. If the problem has not been resolved through stages 1 and 2 above, the volunteer may be asked to leave the Museum and cease voluntary activities. For some serious problems (examples listed below), the volunteer may be asked to leave immediately.

Stage 4. Right to appeal. If a volunteer has been asked to leave they can appeal in writing to the Chair of the Trustees, within 14 days of dismissal. An investigation will then be carried out by the Chair or an appropriate person on their behalf. If a meeting is held, the volunteer may bring a nominated person of their choice for support. The volunteer will be advised of the outcome of appeal in writing, within 4 weeks. The Chair's decision will be final.

Serious problems include:

- Theft or fraud.
- Physical violence or bullying.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while undertaking volunteer duties.
- Committing a criminal offence while undertaking volunteer duties.
- Violations of Museum's policies on Health and Safety, Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, or Equal Opportunities.

18.2 If a volunteer wishes to make a complaint

Volunteers have a right to complain if they have been treated unfairly. If a volunteer has a complaint to make, they are encouraged to do so at the earliest opportunity.

Stage 1. Verbal discussion. Initial complaints should be discussed with the Volunteer Co-ordinator. If the complaint is about the Volunteer Co-ordinator, the complaint should be discussed with the Curatorial Advisor.

Stage 2. Written complaint. If the matter remains unresolved through discussion, the volunteer should make a formal complaint in writing to the Volunteer Co-ordinator or the Curatorial Advisor (if the complaint is about the Volunteer Co-ordinator), who must respond within 14 days.

Stage 3. Right to appeal. If the volunteer is not satisfied with the outcome of their first written complaint, they should appeal in writing to the Chair of the Trustees. A meeting may be requested, which will normally take place within 21 days. The Chair will endeavour to reach a satisfactory solution. The Chair's decision will be deemed final. The Chair will give a report of all complaints raised via this procedure at each Trustees meeting.

19. Confidentiality

All volunteers are expected to ensure the security of the Museum's business, personnel and other volunteers. If there is a suspected breach of confidentiality, a volunteer may be asked to cease volunteer activity pending an investigation.

Any informed volunteer may supply information on hours of operation, admission rates, galleries and activities to anyone who enquires. Volunteers who will have contact with the public will be provided with this basic information by the Volunteer Co-ordinator.

20. Copyright

Volunteers are expected to abide by the Museum's Copyright Policy, provided in the Volunteer Handbook.

21. Data Protection

Personal data about volunteers will be stored securely and all processing and access to this data will be in accordance with Data Protection Legislation. A full copy of the Data Protection Policy will be provided in the Volunteer Handbook.

22. Voluntary ending of service

When a volunteer leaves, we will thank them for their voluntary efforts. The Volunteer Co-ordinator will arrange an informal exit interview with the volunteer to understand why they are leaving the Museum.

23. Consultation and Review

The Museum will regularly review and update this Volunteer Policy throughout the VIVA project and beyond for the benefit of all its staff and volunteers through consultation with them.

After 6 months of volunteering the Volunteer Co-ordinator will hold informal discussions with volunteers to chat about their progress and evaluate their experience of the "Inspiring Volunteers" project. Discussions will be held on an annual basis thereafter.

This policy will be reviewed in 6 months time and on an annual basis thereafter.

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