



# Volunteering Policy

## 1. Purpose of this Policy

The Horniman acknowledges the contribution of volunteers in supporting the organisation achieve its aim to connect people with global cultures and the natural world and encourage everyone to shape a positive future for the world we all share.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To outline the benefits of volunteering to the Horniman
- To ensure the distinctiveness of volunteering
- To provide a framework for the development of opportunities and management of volunteers
- To ensure that staff at all levels understand their role in supporting volunteers

## 2. Scope

This policy covers all volunteers, including student placements, work experience and unpaid traineeships as listed under definitions. This policy does not cover paid roles such as internships<sup>1</sup> or trainees<sup>2</sup>.

## 3. Defining Volunteering

Volunteering is the commitment of time, experience, skills and enthusiasm for the mutual benefit of the community, the environment or individuals outside one's immediate family, and the volunteer. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without expectation of financial reward.

Volunteers, like staff, are viewed as a human resource and the Horniman does not refer to volunteering as a 'programme'.

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<sup>1</sup> An Internship is where an individual works so as to gain relevant professional experience before embarking on a career. Internships can be paid positions or voluntary. The Horniman does not support unpaid internships.

<sup>2</sup> Trainees are defined as taking part in a formal training programme where the Horniman is acting as the training provider with an emphasis on practical training. This includes apprentices and youth work placement schemes. In some cases these are employed directly by the Horniman, in others a third party funds the trainee.

## Volunteering roles take a variety of forms

Ongoing volunteers attend on a regular basis, e.g. weekly, fortnightly or monthly, or to an agreed pattern, e.g. school holidays. Ongoing roles include Engage, Garden, Community and Family Learning volunteers and some roles behind-the-scenes.

Occasional volunteers may be recruited for a one-off event, e.g. festivals or tree-planting events.

Student placements<sup>3</sup> involve work undertaken by someone in education as a useful or required part of their course. These placements are restricted to three months, volunteering 1-3 days a week, to avoid becoming long-term unpaid internships. Roles include working for curators, SCC and other departments.

## Work experience

Whilst work experience is not classed as volunteering (as it is unlikely to be mutually beneficial), participants are unpaid and, therefore, covered by this policy.

The Horniman offers up to six placements of one to two weeks per year for young people in school, years 10 and 11 (aged 15 -16), or for young people aged 18 – 25 who are seeking employment.

## 4. The Horniman's Relationship with Volunteers

The importance of maintaining a balanced, effective and mutually beneficial staff/volunteer relationship is essential. The Horniman distinguishes volunteering from employment and seeks to involve volunteers to complement and enhance the work of paid staff, not to replace them.

Staff provide the structure, organisation, direction and day-to-day management of activities, whilst volunteers add to the value of the Horniman's work in a variety of roles by donating their time, skills, experience and enthusiasm.

Volunteering is a relationship binding in honour, mutual trust and understanding. There is no contract or obligation, e.g. in time commitment. However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability, and expectations from both parties are discussed from the start of the relationship and laid out in the volunteers' Welcome Pack and as detailed in the role description.

## 5. Strategic Objectives

The objectives of the Horniman relating to volunteer involvement are:

- **Access** - to support volunteering as a way to maintain and develop relationships which help promote access to the Horniman and enrich the visitor experience
- **Collections** – to involve volunteers in supporting the management and care of our collections and provide opportunities for developing skills for the future
- **Shaping the future** – to diversify and develop volunteering to improve organisational capacity, to better represent the local community and to create a learning environment where volunteers and staff are supported to work effectively together

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<sup>3</sup> Based on definitions used in Internships in the Arts – Arts Council England 2011

## **6. The Volunteer Journey**

The Horniman is committed to applying best practice throughout the volunteer journey, from the creation of a new role, to when a volunteer chooses to leave. We aim to deliver a meaningful experience with mutual benefit whilst maintaining the distinctiveness of volunteering, e.g. through the informal nature of interviews, ensuring that the volunteers' Welcome pack does not replicate a staff manual and avoidance of employee-related language.

### **Advertising and enquiries**

- All new ongoing or one-off roles, or vacancies for existing roles, are advertised on the Horniman website; other media include national volunteering websites, local volunteer centres and community partners, as appropriate, to attract a diverse range of people.
- Student placements are made available to placement organisers at London universities, to be advertised internally.
- Enquiries about a specific role: contact details are kept and the individual is contacted when a vacancy occurs.
- Enquiries about volunteering generally: the enquirer is informed of current vacancies or asked to check our website, if there are none.

### **Recruitment and selection**

- All new roles are authorised by the Volunteering Manager to ensure meaningful activity, accessibility and consistency with best practice.
- A role description is a prerequisite for every volunteer opportunity to ensure expectations are clear for both parties.
- We are committed to provide a broad range of volunteer opportunities to accommodate people at all levels of experience and from diverse backgrounds with the aim of reflecting the profile of the local community.
- Applicants will be invited to an informal interview to explore suitability for the role and motivation. Access and reasonable adjustments to tasks will be made for those with disabilities or particular needs.
- References will apply to most roles and additional screening such as DBS checks may be applied where the volunteer will be in contact with valuable objects. DBS screening is not required for family, schools and community volunteers as their roles do not require lone working and/or repeated contact with children or vulnerable adults.

### **Induction**

- All volunteers will receive a two-part induction led by their Supervisor: 1) a general induction to volunteering at the Horniman and 2) a role-specific induction. The general induction follows a standard format.
- A Welcome Pack for new volunteers provides essential information, including: mutual expectations, how to claim out-of-pocket expenses, arrangements for solving problems.
- Training will be provided where appropriate for the role.

## **Support and recognition**

- Staff are encouraged to acknowledge the support of volunteers by treating them as integral members of the Horniman team.
- One-to-one review meetings are held to provide mutual feedback and are important for providing support, aiding development, and ensuring expectations are clear to help prevent future problems. Supervisors are encouraged to hold review meetings every few months and also an exit meeting when the volunteer leaves.
- Volunteers are made aware that they can reclaim travel expenses and other agreed out-of-pocket expenses subject to the production of receipts.
- Volunteers are entitled to a 20% discount in the shop and café.
- An annual survey seeks volunteer feedback on their experiences.
- A testimonial confirming a volunteer's contribution to the Horniman is available to any volunteer on request, following three month's service.

## **Health & safety**

The Horniman is committed to providing a safe environment in which to work. All volunteers receive fire evacuation procedures, while additional training is provided in other areas relevant to the role.

All volunteers are made aware of their responsibilities in the case of finding or reporting a lost child.

## **Problem solving**

The Horniman aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. Procedures are in place to deal with complains by or about volunteers. These are made aware in the Welcome Pack.

## **Insurance**

All volunteers and their activities are covered by the Horniman's Liability Insurance.

## **Personal Information**

Volunteers' personal information and contact details are stored on Cascade (for the purposes of reporting) and on the Volunteering database (Excel), following GDPR guidelines, and restricted to the Volunteering team and HR. In addition, restricted access is provided for named supervisors for volunteer applications and main contact details.

## **Agreements**

In accordance with best practice, volunteers do not sign a contract. However, in certain circumstances a volunteer may be asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement or an Intellectual Property Waiver, e.g. research or preparation for a new exhibition.

## **7. Benefits of Volunteering**

The Horniman is committed to ensuring the benefits of volunteering are mutual - for both the individual volunteer and the Museum:

### **Individual volunteers**

- Supporting the improvement of general well-being by providing meaningful activity and assisting the growth of confidence in individuals
- Developing experience and work skills to improve chances of securing employment

### **Visitors**

- Providing a richer visitor experience by offering opportunities for the public to engage with the collections and activities and enabling visitors to receive a more personal experience.
- Supporting our staff to deliver an enhanced experience for our visitors

### **The organisation**

- Enabling the Horniman to deliver beyond capacity
- Increasing diversity in our working environment through diverse volunteer representation
- Supporting staff to develop their own skills through supervising volunteers
- Bringing new expertise into the organisation

### **The wider community**

- Strengthening community links and partnerships with the Horniman.

## **8. Responsibility for Volunteers**

All members of staff share a degree of responsibility towards their volunteer colleagues.

- The Volunteering Team, led by the Volunteering Manager, is responsible for the co-ordination of recruitment, the storage of personal records, recognition and benefits, monitoring and evaluation, the training of Volunteer Supervisors, the reimbursement of expenses and promoting best practice
- Staff who supervise volunteers ('Supervisors') are responsible for the induction, day-to-day management and communication with their volunteers, following guidance and supported by their Head of Section. Supervisors will receive support from the Volunteering team at all times, notably in developing roles, in the interview process, and in solving any problems that may arise
- Heads of Section are responsible for ensuring volunteering procedures are followed within their department and for supplying appropriate information for the monitoring and evaluation of volunteering
- Directors have a responsibility to make reference to the work and value of volunteers in communications to staff and reports, as and when appropriate

- All staff have a responsibility to acknowledge and support volunteers and to ensure they feel an integral part of the Horniman team

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**Guidelines on volunteering and procedures can be found here:**

04\_Resources/People/Volunteering/\_Supervisors