

Engage Volunteer

Role description

The Horniman Museum and Gardens has been open since 1901 when the tea trader and philanthropist, Frederick Horniman, first opened his house and extraordinary collection of objects to the local community. Since then, the Horniman has grown significantly and includes internationally important collections of Anthropology and musical instruments, as well as an Aquarium, a Butterfly House and Natural History Gallery – all surrounded by 16 acres of beautiful Gardens.

**Main purpose of the role**

The Horniman welcomes a wide range of people to the museum each year including many young families. Engage volunteers bring our collections and displays to life and help visitors to have a richer, more hands-on experience at the Museum. We provide all necessary training – you don’t need to have any previous experience.

**Tasks include**:

* Providing a warm and welcoming presence in our galleries and public spaces
* Supporting visitors to learn through handling real museum objects on the touch tables within the galleries, e.g. bones, shells, and objects from different countries such as masks, puppets, and toys
* Providing live interpretation in the Butterfly House and Aquarium helping visitors understand the life and behaviours of our living collections
* Helping visitors to have a positive experience by answering general questions about the museum and gardens and giving directions

## **Commitment:**

Volunteers choose one shift from options below and attend on a regular, weekly basis for a minimum commitment of 4 months. Our morning shifts are often busier, with lots of school groups and children, while afternoon shifts are quieter and more relaxed. You may want to choose a time that you prefer.

**Timings:**

* Morning shift: 10:15am –12.45 pm
* Afternoon shift: 1.15pm – 3.45 pm

## **Days:**

* Monday mornings
* Tuesday mornings or afternoons
* Wednesday mornings or afternoons
* Thursday morning or afternoons
* Friday mornings or afternoons

**The role would suit someone who:**

* Is friendly, welcoming, and a confident communicator
* Is a good listener and can change conversations to suit the needs and interests of a diverse range of visitors to help them learn
* Is interested in informal learning and engaging, particularly, with children and families
* Has a broad interest for natural history, caring for our natural world and has an interest and respect for different world cultures
* Ideally is comfortable being around live butterflies in a hot tropical environment
* Understands our values. We are inclusive and welcoming to everyone. We are caring and respectful towards each other.

**Minimum age requirement:**

This role is open to all applicants aged 15 and over.

## **What we can offer volunteers**

* Opportunities for personal development in a supportive learning environment
* Training live interpretation skills
* Reimbursement of travel expenses within Greater London
* Special events for volunteers inc. behind-the-scenes talks and socials
* A 20% discount at the café and the shop
* Free entry to paid areas of the museum
* Free reciprocal entry to National Museum Directors’ Council members’ sites, after 4 months volunteering

**Selection and induction:**

To join us as an Engage volunteer, you **must** be able to attend the group selection session and two induction dates at the following times:

* Interview: Wednesday 2 July 3.00pm - 4.00pm
* Induction day 1: Wednesday 9 July 1.30pm - 4.30pm
* Induction day 2: Wednesday 16 July 9.15am – 12.30pm

We welcome applications from people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. A diverse group of volunteers makes for a more enjoyable experience for everyone!

Please complete our [online form](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.office.com%2FPages%2FResponsePage.aspx%3Fid%3DFFimgZcoukmo6OaUeUjjv_S5dDpIPgFGn_UX4ifdme9UNjdFQUtFOFE1UEtWTlc0UFdGQjk4NUJHTS4u&data=05%7C02%7Cweb%40horniman.ac.uk%7C9527d5d8b2e0445f0b2108dd9a0c2209%7C81a65814289749baa8e8e6947948e3bf%7C0%7C0%7C638836099081850157%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Qq1udzrDY0E0gi7l%2BYCZOtfOpo%2BZJ7JOUwIe%2BW9Alcw%3D&reserved=0), or email [volunteering@horniman.ac.uk](mailto:volunteering@horniman.ac.uk) for an application form or if you have any questions.

Role description approved by Volunteering Manager May 2025