

volunteering – frequently asked questions

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at the Design Museum. We hope that the information in these 'Frequently Asked Questions' will give you a better insight into volunteering with us.

What roles are available for Volunteering?

Welcomer

The Welcomer role involves a weekly attendance (weekdays) or fortnightly attendance (weekends), on a 3-hour shift. This would suit people who enjoy creating a welcoming atmosphere and helping others, understand what good customer service looks like and speak fluent English.

You could be involved in:

- ❖ Providing a friendly greeting for all visitors on arrival
- ❖ Listening to visitors' needs and helping them plan their day
- ❖ Informing visitors about current exhibitions, events & facilities
- ❖ Assisting in queue management and greeting large groups e.g. schools

Dame Sylvia Crowe Garden Volunteer - Growing Together Project

Named in memory of the pioneering landscape architect who co-designed the landscaping for the Commonwealth Institute in 1962, the Dame Sylvia Crowe Garden is a green urban space adjacent to the Design Museum. Designed by West 8 in 2014, the garden was neglected from the start of the pandemic until the Growing Together project began on site in 2022. The Growing Together project seeks to reduce inequalities in access to green space and creative learning opportunities; facilitate design thinking, knowledge exchange, and innovation; enable intergenerational encounters; and benefit health and wellbeing.

Dame Sylvia Crowe Garden volunteers are an intergenerational group of local people with limited access to green space and creative learning opportunities.

Shift options

Dame Sylvia Crowe Garden Volunteers will attend regular volunteering sessions. We ask that applicants consider a commitment of a minimum of two sessions per month over a minimum of six months. Details of the sessions available will be published on the Website when there are opportunities for volunteering.

Volunteer tasks include helping with:

- ❖ Planting, watering, dead heading, weeding, litter picking and tidying the lower and upper levels of the garden
- ❖ Maintaining water butt and compost bins
- ❖ Maintaining pathways and wayfinding on upper level

- ❖ Maintaining tools, furniture, resources and information panels
- ❖ Saving and sowing seeds and propagating cuttings
- ❖ Harvesting crops to share with those facing hardship
- ❖ Other light gardening duties
- ❖ Discussions about next stages of garden development
- ❖ Coordinating Growing Together public events
- ❖ Engaging with visitors at Growing Together public events
- ❖ Being an advocate for the garden and museum

How can I find out what opportunities there are for volunteering at the moment?

When we have volunteering opportunities, we publish the details on our Design Museum Careers Website.

How will I be supported whilst volunteering?

All volunteers receive a full induction to the museum and to their role and any necessary training. They receive a Welcome Pack and have a named staff supervisor as their regular point of contact whilst volunteering. After the first 4-6 days volunteering, there is a review meeting where the volunteer and their supervisor share feedback.

What are the benefits to volunteering and do the Design Museum offer any other benefits?

Volunteering offers the opportunity to meet new people, develop skills and experience and learn more about the value of design. Volunteers may also take advantage of a 25% discount in the museum shops and café, free admission to all exhibitions and free tickets to events, when available. They are also invited to the museum team social events.

I'm on a visa in the UK - can I still volunteer?

If you do not have a British Passport and you are in the UK on a visa, you need to check whether this allows you to volunteer and for how many hours.

I love the museum, but don't know much about design - can I still apply?

Yes, the museum wants to involve a wide range of volunteers and the above opportunities suit people with different levels of knowledge, interest, and experience.

Does volunteering lead to a job at the museum?

Volunteer roles are different from staff jobs and designed to support the museum's work in different ways. They are not created with a view to leading to paid employment at the museum but of course you are welcome to apply for any suitable vacancies that are advertised.

I'm registered disabled and/or have additional support needs - can I volunteer?

Yes, the museum aims to ensure it is accessible as possible and will make reasonable adjustments to allow someone to volunteer where possible.

I am looking for school work experience – do you offer this?

Work experience is different from volunteering, and unfortunately we do not have the capacity to offer work experience.

How old do I have to be to volunteer?

The museum involves volunteers from the age of 18 upwards.

Can volunteers claim travel expenses?

Yes! Provided you are able to provide receipts, you will be able to claim up to £12 per day towards your travel expenses.

I receive welfare benefits - can I still volunteer?

You can volunteer if you receive no payment other than the reimbursement of out-of-pocket travel expenses and keep to the rules for getting your benefit(s). You should always inform Jobcentre Plus when starting to volunteer, especially if you are receiving unemployment support.