



National Galleries of Scotland

Volunteer Programme Policy

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Linked Documents:

Title:	Location/Link:
Volunteer Handbook	Intranet / People / Volunteer Programme
Code of Conduct	Intranet / Documents / Policies
Equality and Diversity Policy	Intranet / Documents / Policies
Health and Safety Policies (and risk assessments)	Intranet / Documents / Policies Intranet / People / Volunteer Programme
Protection of Children, Young people, and Vulnerable Adults Policy	Intranet / Documents / Policies
Confidentiality and Use of Information Policy	Intranet / Documents / Policies
Data Protection Policy	Intranet / Documents / Policies
Appearance Policy	Intranet / Documents / Policies
Social Media Policy	Intranet / Documents / Policies

Notes: This policy will be made available on nationalgalleries.org at <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/support/volunteer>

1. Introduction

The National Galleries of Scotland (NGS) cares for, develops, researches and displays the national collection of Scottish and international art and, with a lively and innovative programme of activities, exhibitions, education and publications, aims to engage, inform and inspire the broadest possible public.

The NGS volunteer programme is managed by a dedicated Volunteer Programme Coordinator. NGS recognises that volunteers make a valuable contribution to the success of NGS and is grateful to all volunteers for their time and commitment to supporting the work of NGS. The definition of volunteering, which NGS adheres to is: 'the giving of time and energy through a third party, which can bring measurable benefits to the volunteer, individual beneficiaries, groups and organisations, communities, environment and society at large. It is a choice undertaken of one's own free will, and is not motivated primarily for financial gain or for a wage or salary'.

2. Aims

NGS aims to encourage and promote opportunities for meaningful public participation in its activities. To support this goal, NGS is committed to involving volunteers directly within the organisation to:

- 2.1 Form our Board of Trustees, the Governors of the Patrons, and the Friends Advisory Committee.
- 2.2 Contribute to the delivery of our Public Programme.
- 2.3 Develop the skills and knowledge of our volunteers and our audience.
- 2.4 Offer opportunities for participation by people who might otherwise be excluded.

While engaging volunteers NGS will:

- 2.5 Work to maximise the effectiveness of our volunteer programme.
- 2.6 Ensure that all our volunteers are treated in a coherent, consistent and transparent manner.
- 2.7 Provide staff members with clear guidance and resources for working with volunteers.

3. Principles

NGS will champion and encourage volunteering within the organisation with volunteer opportunities featuring prominently on the NGS website as well as being a key principle in the corporate plan and strand in the external affairs strategy. NGS recognises that:

- 3.1 Volunteering brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to paid staff, to the organisation as a whole, and to our audiences.
- 3.2 The involvement of volunteers helps NGS staff focus on their priorities and role responsibilities.

- 3.3 Volunteers do not replace the need for professional employees but offer different skills and perspectives to help us achieve our aims and objectives.
- 3.4 Volunteers are not paid and give of their time and energy of their own free will for a variety of reasons for which NGS endeavours to provide meaningful experiences.
- 3.5 Volunteers require satisfying work and personal or professional development as well as training for them to do their work effectively.
- 3.6 Staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- 3.7 Volunteers should not be out-of-pocket and NGS will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of volunteering.
- 3.8 Volunteers are integrated into the organisational structure and mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the work of NGS.
- 3.9 Volunteers are under no obligation to perform a volunteer role and NGS has no obligation to provide a volunteer role.
- 3.10 The volunteering relationship does not create a formal legally binding contract or a relationship of employment between NGS and the volunteer.

4. Types of placements

The word 'volunteer' is used throughout this document to include work experience and work placements even though there will be some variation in practices based on the types of placement. This policy does not cover traineeships or apprenticeships.

4.1 Volunteers

Regular or ad-hoc roles which may be time-limited or open-ended supporting the work of the Galleries.

4.2 Work experience students

Week-long placements for secondary school students to learn about different areas of the Galleries to help inform future career choices.

4.3 Work placements

A time-limited work experience opportunity organised with charity partners helping people gain professional experience to access employment.

5. Equal opportunities and Accessibility

NGS aims to make volunteering accessible to a diverse audience and to be as responsive as possible to the different needs of our volunteers. We strive to engage volunteers who are representative of the communities we serve, understanding that being inclusive strengthens our organisation. We value diversity and support a positive and welcoming environment where all of our volunteers can thrive. NGS does this by:

- 5.1 Offering varied volunteering opportunities to attract different people, experiences, skills and backgrounds which may be during the day, evenings or weekends to allow for flexibility.
- 5.2 Offering computer-based and non-computer based volunteering roles which may be regular or ad-hoc positions.
- 5.3 Offering dedicated voluntary work placements for clients of charity partners.
- 5.4 Offering accessible entry and movement throughout the Galleries.
- 5.5 Expecting all employees and volunteers, as part of their code of conduct, to treat each other with fairness, respect, courtesy and equality.

6. Recruitment

Recruitment of volunteers will be from all sections of the community and will be in line with the Equal Opportunities Policy of NGS. Anyone interested in volunteering with NGS can register via the NGS website to receive notifications of new volunteer opportunities and information on how to express their interest. This process ensures fair access to opportunities for everyone and a transparent and consistent recruitment process. All applicants will be asked to complete an expression of interest form and if selected be invited for an informal interview. Selection is based on applications that meet the requirements of the role and who we believe will benefit most from the opportunity.

7. Eligibility to volunteer

NGS is unable to provide visa sponsorship for the purposes of volunteering. Eligibility to volunteer will be confirmed through identity document verification.

8. Current staff volunteering

Current paid employees, contractors, and freelancers are permitted to volunteer outside of their paid position in their own time. Their volunteer role should not be in the same area as their paid position and their Department Volunteer Supervisor should not be the same person as their Line Manager or the person commissioning their services (freelancers). Any issues that may occur during volunteering should be dealt with in line with the Volunteer Policy for raising concerns, not the employee disciplinary policy.

9. Minimum age requirement

The majority of NGS volunteer opportunities are suitable for people age 18 or over with the exception of our Duke of Edinburgh Award volunteer partnership and our school work experience placements. Volunteer opportunities will be evaluated on a case by case basis to assess the suitability for people under age 18. All staff and volunteers working with children and young people, either as members of the public or as volunteers, will strictly adhere to the NGS Protection of Children, Young people, and Vulnerable Adults Policy. For volunteer roles

that have been assessed and found to be appropriate for a young person, the following guidelines apply:

9.1 Young volunteers should not be left unattended and should be supervised by two or more adults whenever possible.

9.2 Written communication with a young person should include a parent/guardian wherever possible.

9.3 Parental/guardian consent is required for volunteers under the age of 18.

10. Work placements

Work placements help us widen access to voluntary opportunities by working in partnership with charitable organisations that help people gain work experience in support of and preparation for accessing employment. NGS provides designated placements for these organisations' clients ranging from 4-12 weeks with a member of staff acting as a mentor to the individual during their placement. NGS is able to offer short-term work shadowing for individuals who may not be prepared to take part in a longer placement. All proposals for work placements will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

11. Induction

All volunteers are required to provide their contact details, next of kin/emergency contact, two referees (one of which must be work or voluntary-work related) and a signed volunteer agreement which includes confidentiality and intellectual property rights agreement and sets out the parameters and expectations of the role.

Volunteers will be given a full induction and training appropriate to their role and the specific tasks to be undertaken. A health and safety induction checklist is followed to ensure all important information is provided and discussed including an introduction to staff and surroundings.

12. Volunteer agreement and Role description

All volunteers will receive a role description and volunteer agreement containing information about their role as a volunteer and a clear outline of their responsibilities and the responsibilities of NGS to them.

13. Security

All individuals offered a volunteer placement with NGS are required to obtain a Basic Disclosure Scotland Certificate. This information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and any convictions will not necessarily bar the individual from being accepted for volunteering. If a volunteer has recently moved from another country they will be asked to obtain the equivalent to Basic Disclosure Scotland provided by their home country or primary country of residence. All volunteers are required to carry NGS identification while performing

their volunteering. Most volunteers will check out a Volunteer Pass from the control room at the start of their day and return the card at the end of each day.

14. Trial period

All volunteer positions have a trial period to allow the volunteer and supervisor to ensure that the role meets expectations and that the skills suit the needs of the role. It is the responsibility of the DVS to decide whether the trial period has been successful and if to continue the volunteer relationship.

15. Reward and Recognition

After a successful trial period, volunteers are entitled to a Volunteer Card which permits them free entry to paid exhibitions and discount in the gallery shops and cafes. This card is valid for the period of volunteering and will be issued at six-month intervals. Volunteers will also receive:

- 15.1 Invitation to the Annual Volunteer Reception
- 15.2 Invitation to participate in Volunteers' Week celebrations
- 15.3 Recognition award after five years of regular volunteering
- 15.4 Access to training opportunities relevant to the volunteer role
- 15.5 Access to staff exhibition tours and private views (when capacity allows)

16. Reimbursement of expenses

Volunteers are eligible to claim reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses for:

- 16.1 Basic Disclosure Scotland costs (or international equivalent)
- 16.2 Local travel expenses up to the current equivalent of a return local bus fare for each day of volunteering (travel by car, public transport and bicycle included)
- 16.2 Details of how to claim reimbursement will be provided during induction

17. Data Protection

Secure volunteer data includes the volunteer agreement, references, contact details, emergency contact details, correspondence and any other relevant information in accordance with NGS confidentiality policy. NGS will maintain a database of volunteers' details for the purpose of administering volunteer placements and quantifying "in kind" giving. Volunteer data will be treated in accordance with the law, the NGS data protection policy and good practice in data protection.

18. Confidentiality

NGS holds information in a written, oral, visual and electronic format which may be deemed to be of a confidential nature. All volunteers are expected to abide by the same confidentiality arrangements as those in place for employees. Details of the confidentiality agreement can be found in the volunteer agreement.

19. Insurance

NGS is subject to the Scottish Government's general policy of self-insurance. This means that NGS has neither employers nor public liability insurance as both areas are subject to the Government policy of self-insurance. While any person is participating in the volunteer programme at NGS they are covered on the basis of the self-insurance policy the same as staff are covered.

20. Support and Supervision

Each volunteer will have a Department Volunteer Supervisor (DVS), responsible for their induction, training, daily support and regular feedback. After the first month's trial period, the DVS will aim to have a quarterly check-in with the volunteer. All volunteers are also able to contact the Volunteer Programme Coordinator with any questions or concerns over policy, procedure, or support. As well as role-specific training, volunteers are invited to participate in internal staff training courses that are relevant to their volunteer role.

21. Monitoring and Evaluation

NGS will systematically monitor and evaluate its engagement with volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy. Volunteers are invited and encouraged to complete feedback surveys throughout their placement including but not limited to one when they commence their placement, one when they finish their placement, and if their placement lasts more than a year, once annually during their placement.

22. Raising concerns and Resolving Issues

Volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have with their DVS or the Volunteer Programme Coordinator at any time. If the DVS is unable to resolve the problem they will refer the matter to the Volunteer Programme Coordinator in the first instance and ultimately the Head of Development. Concerns are hopefully resolved informally, but these procedures are in place should additional assistance be required.

23. Conclusion of volunteer role

Some volunteer roles are for fixed periods of time to assist with specific projects which have a clearly defined beginning and end while others may be more open-ended and reviewed at regular intervals. Volunteers leaving their placement will be asked to give feedback in an exit survey. Due to the nature of volunteering, the volunteer role may be concluded at any time by either the volunteer or NGS.

24. References

On the basis of volunteering, after a minimum of three months or the completion of the placement, volunteers may request a reference which will include factual information only. Personal references are given at the sole discretion of the DVS and reflect their own experience and opinions from working with the volunteer, not those of the NGS. A minimum of six months of volunteering is recommended before a DVS will consider writing a personal reference.

25. Communication and review of volunteer policy

This policy should be read and considered alongside other relevant policies, procedures and guidance that is used to support volunteering across NGS. This volunteer policy will be available on the NGS intranet and the NGS website. It is the responsibility of the Volunteer Programme Coordinator and should be reviewed and updated at a minimum every three years. Revisions may be required in the interim to align with NGS policy and procedures as directed by legislation and national guidance.