



Orkney Natural History Society Museum

Volunteer Policy

1. Purpose: This Volunteer Policy aims to provide clear guidance and structure for the engagement and management of volunteers at the Orkney Natural History Society Museum (Stromness Museum). The policy ensures that volunteering opportunities are productive, rewarding, and beneficial to both the volunteers and the museum.

2. Principles:

- Volunteers complement and enhance the work of paid staff, providing a unique contribution to the museum's mission and community.
- The museum is committed to promoting inclusive practices and values diversity in its volunteer program.
- Volunteers are engaged in roles that meet the needs of the museum and provide meaningful experiences for the volunteer.
- Some opportunities may be for a set-time period if opportunities are project-specific and other opportunities may be ongoing.

3. Recruitment:

- Volunteer opportunities will be advertised broadly to ensure a diverse range of applicants.
- Potential volunteers must complete an application process, which may include an interview, reference checks, and necessary background checks. PVG checks on individuals where the volunteer is working directly with children and/or protected adults may be necessary.
- Selection will be based on the applicant's suitability for the role, taking into account their skills, interests, and availability.

4. Induction and Training:

- All volunteers will receive an induction to the museum, including its history, mission, and health & safety procedures.
- Specific training will be provided for the volunteer's chosen role, ensuring they have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their duties effectively.

5. Supervision and Support:

- Volunteers will have a designated supervisor to provide guidance, support, and feedback.

- Meetings will be scheduled to discuss any concerns, progress, and experiences, ensuring ongoing communication between volunteers and staff.

6. Health and Safety:

- The museum commits to providing a safe working environment for all volunteers.
- Volunteers must comply with all health and safety policies and procedures and report any incidents or hazards.
- The museum will insure you against any injury you suffer or caused due to negligence.

7. Equal Opportunities:

- The museum is committed to equal opportunities and will not discriminate against volunteers based on age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or belief.
- The museum strives to create an inclusive environment where diversity is respected and valued.

8. Data Protection:

- Personal information collected from volunteers will be kept confidential and used only for purposes related to their volunteer work, in compliance with data protection laws.

9. Reasonable Expenses:

- **Policy Objective:** The museum is committed to ensuring that volunteers are not out of pocket due to volunteering. The museum will reimburse volunteers for all reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred directly as a result of their volunteer work, subject to the provisions of this policy.
- **Eligible Expenses:** Reasonable expenses may include, but are not limited to, travel to and from the place of volunteering. Specific limits or guidelines for common expense types will be provided to ensure clarity and consistency.
- **Travel Expenses:** Volunteers will be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred while traveling to and from the museum or any other pre-approved volunteer location. This reimbursement will be at a rate consistent with local guidelines or standards for mileage or public transport costs.
- **Submission Process:** Volunteers must submit an expenses claim form, accompanied by relevant receipts or proof of expenditure, within a specified time frame after the expense has been incurred. The form should be completed clearly and accurately and submitted to the designated staff member.
- **Approval and Reimbursement:** Expense claims will be reviewed for approval by a designated staff member. Reimbursements will be processed in a timely manner, and volunteers will be informed of any issues or discrepancies in their claim.
- **Limits and Restrictions:** The museum reserves the right to set reasonable limits on the amount that can be claimed for particular types of expenses.

Volunteers are expected to seek approval in advance for any unusual or potentially high expenses.

- **Transparency and Accountability:** The museum is committed to maintaining a transparent and accountable process for expense reimbursement. Volunteers are expected to adhere to this policy and exercise honesty and integrity in claiming expenses.
- **Policy Review:** This expenses policy will be reviewed regularly in conjunction with the volunteer policy to ensure that it remains fair, relevant, and in line with the museum's financial capabilities and funding.

10. Recognition:

- The museum recognises the valuable contribution of volunteers and will acknowledge their efforts through various forms of appreciation and recognition.

11. Resolving Concerns:

- A procedure will be in place for volunteers to raise concerns and provide feedback about their volunteering experience.
- The museum is committed to resolving concerns promptly and fairly.

12. Resignation

- Volunteers can discontinue volunteering at any time. This information should be passed on to their staff mentor.

12. Policy Review:

- This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

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