

Volunteer Policy

Issued January 2014



Royal Engineers Museum, Library & Archive (RE MLA) Volunteer Policy

Introduction

The Royal Engineers Museum, Library & Archive's mission is to administer and use the Designated Collection to tell the story of the Corps of Royal Engineers, from its origins and in its widest context of military and civil endeavour, in peace and war, in order to promote esprit de corps, education and military efficiency within the Royal Engineers and the positive reputation, experience and opportunities of the Corps and the Army to schools and the general public.

Volunteers are an important and integral part of fulfilling this mission, helping to preserve the Collection and make it widely accessible. Volunteers' commitment and enthusiasm reaches across all departments of the Museum, from customer facing roles to behind the scenes tasks.

In line with the REMLA Volunteer Strategy this policy demonstrates the value that the Museum attaches to volunteering, and sets out clear, workable principles to which volunteers and their supervisors can work.

Principles:

Volunteers are defined as those who are under no obligation to perform duties and who have no expectation of, nor receive any kind of remuneration for the time that they commit to volunteering at the Museum.

The Museum aims to provide assignments within projects that are enjoyable and present scope to develop new skills and provide valuable experience to the volunteer, as well as aiding the Museum to achieve its mission of conserving, exhibiting and making the designated collection available for the public and future generations.

Volunteers are expected to promote the aims, values and reputation of the Museum, adhering to policies and procedures, and to carry out tasks responsibly. This includes maintaining confidentiality, and acting within the set boundaries and authority of the role.

Unless otherwise agreed, it is assumed that copyright on creative work undertaken by volunteers belongs to the organization.

Volunteers enhance and add value to the work of staff. They are not a substitute for paid employees and are not recruited to displace them.

The volunteering arrangement can be brought to an end at any time, either by the volunteer or the Museum.

There is no legally binding contract between the Museum and the volunteer.

Recruitment & Selection

It is the Museum's aim to recruit volunteers from all sections of the local community, with a range of skills, life experience and knowledge. There is an equal opportunities policy and all eligible persons have equal access to volunteering on the basis of their ability and experience.

Volunteer opportunities will be advertised on the Museum website, Leicester University jobdesk, local Universities and Colleges, as well as local Volunteer Centre's.

Volunteers will be selected from applications received and invited to an informal interview at the Museum for a two-way discussion to determine suitability for available volunteering opportunities.

Depending on the voluntary role applied for references and official checks will be carried out, in accordance with the Museums Child Protection Policy as well as appropriate REMLA and MOD policy.

Volunteers from outside the European Union are responsible for checking that their visa permits them to volunteer in the UK, before applying for the role.

There is an introductory period, which allows both the volunteer and the Museum to decide whether the volunteering arrangement is suiting both parties.

Induction and training:

Volunteers will be provided with an induction to the Museum and on the job training that is appropriate to their role. Whenever possible Volunteers will be able to attend training sessions that will allow them to develop their role and enhance their skills.

There is an annual review, offering the opportunity to discuss achievements, learning and development, expectations, any issues and plans for the future.

Supervision and support

Whilst overall responsibility for volunteer support lies with the Volunteer Coordinator (Deputy Curator Collections Management) volunteers will be assigned a member of staff who will act as their supervisor and main point of contact during their time volunteering at the museum. This will normally be the member of staff responsible for the department within which they are volunteering.

Situations may arise where the volunteer has an issue about their volunteering, or where the organization has a concern about the volunteer's contribution. These issues are usually resolved informally between the volunteer and their supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator. On the rare occasion where this is not possible, there is a formal problem-solving procedure.

Health and Safety and indemnity

The museum is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for volunteers and they will be provided with initial and on-going Health & Safety training relevant to their role.

All volunteers are expected to attend any support, training or supervision sessions which are necessary to meet H&S requirements.

In their designated roles volunteers are covered by the Museum's employer's liability insurance and public liability insurance.

Expenses

For normal Voluntary Duties the Museum will contribute towards mileage and receipted out-of-pocket travel expenses up to a maximum of £5 per day.

Travels incurred at the museums request and in addition to usual voluntary duties will be reimbursed at the rate agreed in the most recent RHQRE staff handbook.

Recognition

Efforts of the volunteers will be acknowledged and recognised by their supervisors on an ongoing basis. In addition, the work of volunteers is recognised through training, learning, career development opportunities, invitations to exhibitions and events, certificate and reference letter upon leaving, membership of the Friends of the Royal Engineers Museum if desired and an annual organised event specifically for the Volunteers of the Museum.

Policy review date: January 2016