

This resource will give you guidance and tips for writing or reviewing your museum's volunteer policy.

What is a Volunteer Policy?

A volunteer policy will give an overall framework for volunteer involvement in your museum. Volunteer policies are often recorded as part of the complete volunteer handbook. The volunteer agreement may be included within the volunteer policy.

The volunteer policy will be the key document that sets the tone for volunteer involvement with an organisation. This is not a contractual relationship.

Why does my organisation need one?

Having a policy demonstrates commitment, consistency and clarity and should be consulted on widely to ensure that it is understandable by a diverse group of volunteers.

What do we need to cover?

Each area can be summarised with reference to other policies such as Health and Safety or all policies can be included under subheadings on the one volunteer policy.

- Statement about the nature of volunteering
- Introduction to museum vision, aims, objectives and future plans
- Recruitment - from advertising to final selection process
- Induction and training – be clear that volunteers do not provide a service in return for training
- Expenses procedure – only out-of-pocket expenses are appropriate
- Support and supervision
- Insurance
- Equality and diversity
- Health and safety
- Safeguarding
- Copyright, Data Protection and Confidentiality
- Problem solving for both the museum and for volunteers

[Optional]

Your volunteer agreement (sometimes known as a volunteer charter) can be included in the policy or produced separately.

Top tips:

- Make it clear that the **roles of volunteers are voluntary**, i.e. unpaid
- **Do not use employment jargon** like 'work', 'contract' or 'job description'
- Each museum's volunteer policy will be different - write your policy to be understandable to **your volunteers**