
LTM Guide to Volunteering



Contents

Volunteering At London Transport Museum	03
What is London Transport Museum?	04
Why do people volunteer?	05
Why does the Museum involve volunteers?	05
Our Volunteer Charter	06
What do volunteers do at the Museum?	07
Volunteer role descriptions	08
I'm interested! How can I become a volunteer?	09
I'm not sure how much time I can give...	10
Can everybody volunteer?	11
What happens when I start volunteering?	12
Will you give me any other training?	13
Will I get any other support?	14
Can I be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses?	15
What if I can't attend a session?	15
Recognising your contribution	16
Keeping in touch	16
Where might volunteering take me next?	17

Volunteering at London Transport Museum

Volunteers are a recognised and highly valued part of London Transport Museum (LTM). Working alongside other volunteers and staff, our aim is to create a professional and friendly environment for our many visitors.

Volunteers give their time freely to support LTM and are not paid. We recognise that we benefit enormously from this and, in return for your time, abilities and enthusiasm, we hope to give you an opportunity to develop your skills and interests and to make new friends.

The purpose of this guide is to give you a broad outline of the work of LTM and the role of the volunteer within it. It should help answer most of your questions and give you an insight to what volunteering entails and the support provided by the Museum. Should you have any further questions you can contact us at Opportunities@ltmuseum.co.uk.



What is London Transport Museum?

London Transport Museum explores the story of London and its transport system over the last 200 years, highlighting the powerful link between transport and the growth of modern London, culture and society since 1800. We care for over 450,000 items - preserving, researching and acquiring objects to use in our galleries, exhibitions and other activities. We started collecting rare road and rail vehicles, rolling stock, posters, signs, uniforms, photos, maps and drawings about London's transport history in the 1920's and these are displayed and preserved in two locations; the Museum in the historic Flower Market building in Covent Garden in Central London, and in our Depot at Acton in West London.

LTM is a registered charity and welcomes over 350,000 visitors every year. We have approximately 120 staff and 250 volunteers, who look after the Museum and Depot, its collection and its visitors.

Our main departments are:

Visitor Services which works to make the Museum a great experience for all of the visitors from all over the world, looking after their needs and their access to the Museum, its shop and facilities.

Learning which encourages children, adults, families, schools and communities to enjoy and learn about transport from the past and future through our tours, publications, events, lectures, resources and activities.

Curatorial and Collections which looks after all the objects in the Museum, restoring and preserving them, researching them, collecting new objects and exploring ways to share our knowledge about the collections with the public.

Business and Performance which manages the finances of the Museum, our business activities and supports all of our staff.

Marketing and Development

which looks at ways to raise money for the Museum so we can continue our work. We want to increase the number of people who know about the Museum and who want to be involved with it, including other businesses.

Support Services which makes sure everything at the Museum is working well and safely, including the building and its facilities, our computers and systems.



What exactly is a “volunteer”?

Our definition of a volunteer is anyone who supports the Museum's charitable objectives by offering their time, commitment, skills and energy for free.

LTM involves volunteers from aged 14 upwards with no upper age limit. This includes:

- Museum Trustees
- Individuals engaged in long term or short term roles and projects
- Work placements –time defined placements for individuals via an employability scheme such as TfL's Step into Work Scheme
- HE and graduate students on structured time limited placements of up to 3 months, relevant to their degree/career– Internships
- School students on work experience placements

We hope that you will enjoy your time with us, add to your experience, learn new skills and share the ones you have. It's an equal relationship – and we are very grateful for your contribution.

Why do people volunteer?

People volunteer for us for a huge number of different reasons, and often for more than one;

- Many volunteers want to gain work experience, update or learn new skills. This could come from a general interest in working in arts and heritage, or from wanting to get your confidence back in an office or customer service role.

It could also be because you want to get back into a routine again, to meet people, to get references, or to feel ready for paid work in the future. Some volunteers may have been focusing on bringing up a family, are thinking about changing career, or haven't got any experience working in the UK.

Or you might not have any work experience yet because you are just starting out.

- Some people have a passionate interest in the areas the Museum focuses on, whether a lifelong affection for a specific type of vehicle, an interest in design or an appreciation of technology. You may have worked in the transport field, or want to, or just love finding out more about transport and London's history as a hobby.

- Some volunteers have an academic interest, wanting to work in a museum as part of a course, aiming to work as a curator, in education, research or in tourism in the future.

So volunteers might be young or retired, already highly skilled or just starting to learn, nervous about coming back to work or excited to be back in a work environment. Everyone has different skills and experience to bring, and we very much hope to welcome you all!

Why does the Museum involve volunteers?

As you can see from the number of visitors and many, many items in our collection, we need lots of support! Volunteers support the staff to do their jobs. They also bring a huge range of different skills and experiences to LTM. Being a charity we have to make the most of everything we have, and your contribution of time and energy helps us to use our resources to the maximum.

Volunteer Expectations

We are proud of the contribution volunteers make to the Museum, and we strive to provide all volunteers with a positive experience. To allow us to do this effectively we set expectations as part of our volunteer agreement, outlining what you can expect from the Museum and what we expect from you as a volunteer.

- The chance to work in an historic building in central London, and/or our exciting Depot in Acton, in a lively, educational and creative environment with our unique collections.
- A rewarding volunteering opportunity that contributes to the museum's charitable aims and objectives.
- Access to many of the Museum's facilities, and reimbursement of agreed out of pocket expenses incurred whilst volunteering with us.
- Induction and relevant training so that you can do your tasks safely and confidently. We will make sure we have covered everything you need to know and we need to do for you.

- The chance to gain skills and experience, learning from museum professionals who are passionate about their work.
- Recognition and appreciation for your contribution.
- To work alongside people who share and support your interests

As a volunteer we hope you will:

- Enjoy your role and carry out your tasks to the best of your ability.
- Be committed, do your best to come in as arranged and let us know in good time if you can't come in as planned.
- Enjoy working in a professional environment and support our policies and procedures.
- Work in support of our staff and on your own initiative where necessary.
- Be flexible. Resources and staff time can sometimes be limited in such a busy environment, so you may need to adapt to different working areas.

- Respect everyone at the Museum whether staff, volunteers or visitors
- Keep us informed if you have any problems during your time with us. We encourage you to ask questions if you are unsure of any tasks, and to let us know if things are not what you expected.

We have many different kinds of people working in and visiting the museum. We expect all staff and volunteers to treat each other and all Museum visitors fairly and with respect.



What do volunteers do at London Transport Museum?

Volunteers undertake many different roles at LTM. You might like working with our visitors, explaining our exhibits, helping to run activities and events. Or you might prefer to work in our offices, or out in the community.

Some examples of the volunteer roles we have are:

Welcome Host Volunteer

Working alongside our Customer Services team at the Museum to assist visitors and supervise our collection.

Library Volunteer

Updating our databases, filing, stocktaking or research.

Young Volunteer

A project based role aimed at 18-25 year olds, developing ways to introduce visitors to our collection in new and exciting ways.

Ephemera Volunteer

Cataloguing and storing objects such as posters and/or helping to restore and maintain vehicles.

Open Weekend Volunteer

Supporting visitors to the Depot and making sure the exhibits and visitors are kept safe.

Learning Volunteer

Supporting our Learning team in delivering activities to families and schools groups.

Community Programme Volunteer

Supporting the community team to inspire learning, creativity and skills development with audiences who would not usually visit or work with the Museum.

Administration Volunteer

Helping behind the scenes in our offices to make sure the Museum runs smoothly.

Volunteer Guide

Providing guided tours to visitors and corporate members of our Museum and Depot sites or as part of Hidden London.

These are just some examples of the kind of roles we offer to volunteers. If you talk to us we can give you further information on the sort of roles we think would work well for you. When we are recruiting for a role we will provide a clear role description to explain what tasks are involved. An example of a typical role description follows on the next page:



Volunteer role descriptions

Here is an example of a role description which you will be provided with for any volunteer role you carry out:

Volunteer Welcome Host

Summary:

Do you enjoy being in a customer facing environment, engaging with children and adults, and being part of a team?

We are looking for volunteers with commitment, enthusiasm and a passion for museum collections to support our excellent Customer Services team during a busy holiday period. Our volunteers offer a warm welcome to visitors on arrival, assisting with the admissions process and providing visitors with any information they need for their visit. Supervising our collection provides an opportunity to engage with our visitors whilst learning about the history of London Transport.

When: Holiday periods

Where: London Transport Museum
(Covent Garden)

Department: Visitor Services

Reporting to: Volunteer Resource
Coordinator

Minimum age for the role: 14 and over

What the role entails:

As a volunteer welcome host supporting the Customer Services team:

- Working directly with the public and Museum staff to deliver professional and friendly customer service
- Patrolling the galleries, providing assistance and information to visitors
- Handing out leaflets/promotional information related to Museum activities
- Welcoming visitors and being a point of information at the Museum entrance
- Supporting staff in the Museum cloakroom

What training and support we offer:

- Training in welcoming visitors, ticketing offers and collection supervision
- Buddying with an experience volunteer/staff member on your first day
- Opportunities to up-skill in the future

Who we are looking for:

- Good communication skills
- Friendly, enthusiastic and approachable
- Ability to interact with people from different ages and backgrounds
- An interest in London and its history

What you get in return:

- New skills and greater confidence
- Experience in engaging with different audience groups in a museum setting
- Help with your future career prospects
- Being part of a great volunteer team improving the experience for our visitors
- Reimbursed travel and meal expenses up to set daily amounts
- A monthly LTM volunteer newsletter
- There will be opportunities to continue volunteering in the future and to get involved with other aspects of Museum life

I'm interested! How can I become a volunteer?

If you are interested in joining us, we would like to hear from you.

All available volunteer roles are advertised on our website, on the Get Involved page. For any role you are interested in we will ask you to complete a short application form to provide us with information on your background and to help us understand what you wish to gain from the role. The next stage is an informal interview, where we will invite you in to talk through the role and make sure that the role is right for you and us. If you are unsuccessful at this stage, we will provide you with feedback at your request.

If you have other interests that aren't met by the roles we are advertising on our website, then let us know. We may be able to provide you with further information on volunteer roles we will be recruiting for in the future.

With your permission, we can keep your details on file and contact you if a suitable role comes up.

- Alternatively, we may be able to suggest other places that can help you, such as heritage organisations or your local Volunteer Centre, to find another charity that needs your skills.

In addition to this we host networking events each year, which offers you the opportunity to find out more about volunteering and roles you may be interested in, speak to other volunteers and staff and find out how you can get involved.



I'm not sure how much time I can give...

Every volunteer role has a minimum time commitment, which enables the Museum to effectively support you and make sure you get the most of your volunteering.

Some roles have a level of flexibility, and may be carried out on days and times that are suited to you. This would usually be discussed with you at an informal interview.

Some volunteers do a few hours each week, and some prefer to commit to one day at a time. We hope you will want to stay as long as you want to – some volunteers enjoy it so much they have stayed for years!



Can everybody volunteer?

We would love to involve everyone, but sometimes we might not have the right opportunity for you to apply your skills, or for the hours you have available.

- Some roles involve working with children or vulnerable people. This will require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. We organise all the paperwork, and keep all of your details private. But please do talk to us if you need to know more about this.
- If you are from the European Economic Area there are no limits on volunteering, and currently all asylum seekers and refugees can volunteer. If you are in the UK on a visa, from outside the EU or as a student we will need to check whether this allows you to volunteer and for how many hours. If you are on welfare benefits you can volunteer as many hours as you like.

- We have good access at the Museum in Covent Garden and at the Museum Depot in Acton, but some roles may have specific physical limitations, for example where there are tight steps in older vehicles. Please do talk to us if this might be an issue and we will try to find solutions together.

Important: If you do come to volunteer with us please note that all volunteers and staff are expected to treat each other and all visitors politely and with respect. Any unfair or bad treatment of others will not be accepted by the Museum. Volunteers are asked to agree to and sign a volunteer agreement which outlines expectations for the Museum and all volunteers.



What happens when I start volunteering?

When you start, we spend time with you in an induction explaining how things work at the LTM, to show you around the building, introduce you to other staff and volunteers and answer any questions you might have. We supply you with a badge and a uniform t-shirt/fleece. This helps our visitors and staff to identify you and is really important if you are working young children or vulnerable adults.

We also make sure we have all the important information we need to support you, such as your contact details, and a person to contact in an emergency. You can see your records, but they are private, so only your supervisor and their managers will have access to these. We talk through some of the things that anyone representing the Museum needs to know, including health and safety, safeguarding, confidentiality and how to provide a good customer service.

With many of our volunteer roles we offer a trial period, which means that we have a meeting with you after a few sessions to check how things are going and agree whether things are working out okay for both of us.



Will you give me any other training?

We hope that everyone volunteering with us will take the opportunity to learn new things, whether about new ways of working, transport or working with new people. But we won't expect you to do anything that is new to you without our support.

Some of the volunteer roles may require you to attend specific informal training or to learn on-the-job from our experts. This may include discovering new skills, or maybe re-visiting areas you have worked on in the past, to make sure that you have up-to-date knowledge and know how London Transport Museum delivers its work.



Will I get any other support?

When you start as a volunteer at the Museum a member of staff will be your supervisor and will help you settle in and find your way around. They will tell you where and when to arrive and meet you at the reception on your first day. We will go through a day one Induction with you to make sure we have covered all the important pieces of information you need to know. We will also schedule a group induction for you, which covers important information on LTM and policies and procedures relating to volunteers.

Your supervisor will guide you and check that your work is going well. They will be available to talk over your work on a regular basis and there will usually be other volunteers or staff around to ask questions during the day, especially in your first few days in a role.

The staff might be very busy at some times, and it isn't always possible to discuss all your interests immediately, but these meetings with you mean that you will have a regular opportunity to ask any questions and raise any concerns. And if something urgent is worrying you, you can talk to the Volunteer

Resource Coordinator or any other member of staff.

Most volunteers also work closely with other staff and volunteers at the Museum, and many work with our visitors too. This includes people from all over the world, and of all ages and abilities. Some of our volunteer roles provide mentoring or buddying from more experienced volunteers. This helps you to learn and understand your role better and become more familiar with LTM and the site you are volunteering at.

Everyone representing LTM aims to work together effectively and supportively – that is why we have outlined some of our expectations at the beginning of this booklet. We will cover this in full at your induction and hope everyone will read it and refer to it during their time with us.



Can I be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses?

The Museum does not pay volunteers, but it can reimburse your travel and meal costs up to set daily limits.

To re-claim your costs you need to:

- Let your supervisor know when you start how much your travel costs will be.
- Complete our simple volunteer expenses reimbursement claim form.
- Keep and attach your receipts, a printout of your Oystercard use or a photocopy of your travelcard for our records. Then we can give you the money back as soon as possible.



What if I can't attend a session?

We know that life and travel can be unpredictable! But we really need to know as early as possible if you think you won't be able to attend a session for which you have offered to volunteer. Other staff and

visitors might be affected if you are late, and we may have to find alternative cover or support. We hope you will try hard to come on time or let your supervisor know quickly if there is a problem.



Recognising your contribution

During your time volunteering with us we may ask you to keep a record of the hours you contribute. We value all the time donated to us and report this to the Museum's Executive Board every month so that everyone throughout the Museum understands the contribution made to us by people like you.

As part of our appreciation, the Museum hosts an annual Thank You Event for volunteers, where we talk about your achievements, award certificates and update volunteers on the year ahead. It's a fun and informal social event so you can chat to other volunteers and find out about the work they do for the Museum or simply take the opportunity to make new friends.

Additionally, we host volunteer networking events and organise reciprocal visits to other museum and heritage sites of interest to our volunteers. Each year we also nominate those who have excelled in a role or made a lasting impression for the London Volunteers in Museums Awards.

Keeping in touch

Every month, we will send you our Volunteer Newsletter. Written by our Volunteer Resource Coordinator with contributions from staff and volunteers across LTM, the newsletter contains an update on what's happening, new opportunities available and advance notification of upcoming events.

As well as having regular contact and updates from staff who manage your role, you will also have an opportunity to sign up for the volunteer mailing list. This is managed by the Volunteer Resource Coordinator and will provide you with important updates relating to the Museum and your volunteering.



Where might volunteering take me next?

We hope that you will have a great time volunteering at LTM, and we are so grateful for all volunteers' help. If you do have to move on elsewhere, we wish you all the best and hope that you will stay in touch with us and continue visiting and sharing the experience with friends and colleagues!

- You might want to change your role for a different one at the Museum
- We can help you to describe your experience with us in your CV
- We can usually provide personal references for volunteers moving on
- You might want to join the_ltmuseumfriends.co.uk

Whatever your reason, when you decide to move on, please let your supervisor and the Volunteer Resource Coordinator know. They may ask you why you are leaving which you do not have to tell us if you do not wish to.

We will ask you to complete a short evaluation survey about your time volunteering with us, which will help us to find out what you enjoyed and if there is anything we could have changed to make your volunteering experience more satisfying for you and will support others in the future.

Once again, welcome and thank you for sharing your time with us.

