Volunteer – Visitor Observer

Why the Fitzwilliam Museum needs this role

The Fitzwilliam Museum has a responsibility to protect and preserve the collections under its care for as long as possible. In order to this, we need to understand how best to protect collections on display, while still making them accessible to visitors and without hindering visitors’ enjoyment. To understand how effective the methods we use to deter touching (e.g. barriers, ‘Do Not Touch’ signs), we would like to undertake a research project. This project will involve collating opinions from visitors and staff, as well as observing visitor behaviour in the galleries.

Volunteer tasks

- Observe the behaviour of visitors around objects, and record the amount of times they touch objects.

What you will gain from this role

- Gain a better understanding of collections care within the Museum
- Gain valuable experience that will enhance your CV and set you apart in the job market
- Satisfaction of giving back
- Gain cultural sector contacts within a supportive environment

Skills required

Volunteers from all backgrounds and experience are welcome, especially those who have an interest in working within visitor engagement and/or collections care. We are looking for someone who is punctual and reliable. Training will be provided for this role.

Potential involvement: The shifts are any day Tuesday-Sunday for 2.5 hours.

Location: Fitzwilliam Museum, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RB

Responsible to: Assistant Conservator (Collections Care), Fitzwilliam Museum

Training and support

Full training and support will be given for this role within the department. There will be a briefing session for this role on 20 January 2018 at the Fitzwilliam Museum

Legal check requirements for this role

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that you have the right to volunteer in the UK before you can start volunteering for us. If you do not have the right to volunteer in the UK already we will not be able to progress your interest any further.
All volunteers working within the Fitzwilliam Museum are required to undertake a Disclosure Scotland security check prior to commencing the role. The fee for this check will be reimbursed on your first day within the department.

Health and safety responsibilities

You will be responsible for your own health and safety and that of others with whom you volunteer, by reporting all potential and actual health and safety matters including accidents using the correct procedures.

To express interest in this role

Please fill out an Expression of Interest form and send it to opendoor@hermes.cam.ac.uk or Opening Doors Project Coordinator, University of Cambridge Museums, c/o The Fitzwilliam Museum, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RB.

Closing date: 12 noon on Sunday 14 January 2018.

About the Fitzwilliam Museum

Founded in 1816 the Fitzwilliam is the principal museum of the University of Cambridge and leads the University of Cambridge Museums (UCM) Major Partner Museum consortium. The Fitzwilliam’s collections explore world history and art from antiquity to the present day. It houses over half a million objects from ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman artefacts, to medieval illuminated manuscripts, masterpiece paintings from the Renaissance to the 21st century, world class prints and drawings, and outstanding collections of applied arts, ceramics, coins, and Asian arts.

Welcoming over 470,000 visitors a year, the Fitzwilliam presents a wide ranging public programme of major exhibitions, events and education activities, and is an internationally recognised institute of learning, research and conservation.