Front of House Volunteer

Why the Polar Museum needs this role

For many visitors to the Polar Museum the first thing they see is a smile and a welcome from one of our brilliantly enthusiastic front of house volunteers. Our volunteers come from all sorts of backgrounds, often with a pre-existing interest in the polar regions, although those that had little or no prior knowledge soon built up a surprising stock of facts about history at the poles as well as the work that the Scott Polar Research Institute is doing today.

Volunteers are vital to the life of the Polar Museum. Their dedication and generosity make it possible for us to open our doors and share the wonderful collections we hold with thousands of visitors every year.

Volunteer tasks

Our front of house volunteers typically spend one three-hour shift with us every two weeks. Some volunteers fill gaps in the rota, which is shared regularly, others fill a regular shift either one every two weeks or, in some cases, once every four weeks.

Our volunteers meet and greet our visitors, share information about any special events that are taking place in the museum, and take payments when our visitors buy items in the shop.

What you will gain from this role

- Practical experience of interacting with members of the public and sharing your enthusiasm for the Polar Museum
- Satisfaction of giving back
- Gain cultural sector contacts within a supportive environment
- Volunteers at the Polar Museum are invited to regular social events and have the opportunity to attend special training events with museum staff.

Skills required

Volunteers from all backgrounds and experience are welcome, especially those who have an interest in working with people. We are looking for someone who enjoys learning new things and who enjoys sharing them with others.

Potential involvement: Tuesdays to Saturdays (and bank holidays), three hours shifts on a rota.

Location: The Polar Museum, Scott Polar Research Institute, Lensfield Road, Cambridge

Responsible to: The Museum Curator
Training and support

Full training and support will be given for this role within the department. There will also be opportunities to learn more about the work of the 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.

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 contact Niki Hughes via 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: Open

About the Polar Museum

The Polar Museum is part of the Scott Polar Research Institute, which was established in 1920 to encourage polar science and exploration. The Institute was founded within the University of Cambridge and is the national memorial to Captain Scott and his men who perished on their return from the South Pole in 1912.

In 2020 the Institute will be marking its centenary, we are proud of our status as the oldest polar research institute in the world. Interdisciplinarity is a key feature of the Institute, which bridges the human and natural sciences in its research and the collections it holds, some of which are on display in its museum. The Institute, which is within the Faculty of Earth Science and Department of Geography, is located on Lensfield Road, Cambridge.

The Polar Museum displays material from Arctic communities, from Victorian era Arctic exploration, from the expeditions led by Scott and Shackleton and relating to the science and humanities research being undertaken today in the polar regions by researchers at the Scott Polar Research Institute. We welcome around 50,000 visitors a year, and around a quarter of those are children.