

Volunteer Position Description

Docent

General Description:

Docents are trained to engage with, and facilitate opportunities for, guests to find meaning and personal connection with original works of art. Through various gallery experiences, such as tours, stations, hands-on activities, and casual conversations, Docents help guests with varying backgrounds to look at, think about, and talk about art.

Volunteer Role:

- Support guests in learning experiences that meet their school, group or individual goals.
- Promote learning and thinking through engaging conversations with school groups and adults.
- Present an attitude and environment that makes all guests feel welcome and confident to return.
- Deliver scheduled school and adult tours throughout the week and other forms of guest engagement in the galleries, such as Spotlight stations.

Qualifications:

- Willingness to work with students.
- Willingness to do public speaking.
- Have curiosity and strong belief in life-long learning.
- Have a strong interest in providing a positive guest experience throughout the collection.
- Willingness to work with audiences from across the Kansas City community and beyond.
- Willingness to embrace an audience-centered and interactive model. Docents do not lecture.
- Willingness to learn additional skills, content, and/or duties as needed by the museum.
- Willingness to self-reflect and receive constructive feedback.
- Willingness to participate in hands-on and interactive training, give presentations, and practice tours in front of peers.
- Willingness to engage in independent study outside of training.
- Willingness and flexibility to adapt to changing situations.
- Have an active personal email account and check it regularly.
- Willingness to learn and use the museum's web-based platforms for training and scheduling. These platforms require the creation of user accounts and the use of passwords and two-factor authentication.
- Opportunity available to volunteers 18 years or older.
- Willingness to take a free criminal background check provided by the museum.

Volunteer Conditions/Environmental Considerations:

- Navigate through a large, multi-floored museum complex for up to 90 minutes without breaks. This includes leading groups from gallery to gallery and stopping at various works of art for discussion.
- Communicate clearly. When speaking, be able to project to a group of up to 20 people in public galleries.
- Ability to comprehend lectures, questions, and discussion in a classroom setting and in public galleries that may have background noise and other distractions.
- The museum is committed to accessibility. Volunteers are welcome to use mobility devices, assistive listening technology, seating, or other accommodations as needed.

Docent Benefits:

- Connect with the museum on a deeper level while sharing your enthusiasm for education and art with museum guests from the Kansas City community and beyond.
- Inspire a love of learning and cultural understanding in guests of all ages and backgrounds.
- Support guests in interactive learning experiences.
- Enjoy personal growth and develop new abilities while applying personal skills, knowledge, and talents in a museum setting.
- Learn art history content and education methodology.
- Meet and build camaraderie with other volunteers.
- Assist the museum in its mission of attracting a larger and more diverse audience through offering varied experiences.

Time Commitment and Training & Continuing Education for Docents-in-Training:

- Attend a one-year training session on either Tuesdays or Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., January – December (breaks, federal holidays, and religious holidays are included). Training will include new volunteer orientation, core skill-building, and focus on teaching three core school tours and adult engagement.
- Flexibility to schedule additional time on weekdays or the occasional weekend for shadowing and touring school groups.
- Schedule additional time for approximately 2-3 hours of independent study and homework time each week.

Time Commitment and Training & Continuing Education for Docents:

- After completion of New Docent Training, attend additional ongoing tour training as interest and schedules allow.
- Complete twenty-four tour credits each year.
- Complete required Continuing Education training, either in person or pre-recorded.
- Commitment of five years of service requested.

Attendance:

- Arrive at museum at least 15 minutes before tour starts to coordinate with fellow Docents.
- Use computerized sign-in/out system when volunteering at museum.

- Use online system for recording hours volunteered off-site.
- Follow committee protocol when unable to conduct an assigned tour.

About Us

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art invites all people to explore the art in its care, and through its vast collections, the depths, and complexities of human experiences.

We strive to create a sense of belonging, where staff and volunteers can do meaningful work connecting people to art. We create an informed, invested group of staff and volunteers through shared values and open, direct, and respectful communication. We embrace IDEAS (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access, and Sustainability) in every aspect of our ideals and aspirations, as we believe these values to be paramount to success.

Each staff member and volunteer will embody the institution's commitments and agrees to exhibit behaviors that align with them. We hold one another to these expectations so that, together, we may know, own, energize and sustain our culture and the institution for generations to come.