



Volunteer Policy

Name of governing body: TWAM Strategic Board

Date of approval: 23 June 2023

Date for review: June 2026

Volunteer Policy

TWAM Mission

Our mission is to welcome and connect people to the past, present and future of the North East through stories, shared spaces and experiences.

We will help people understand and act on local and global challenges:

- **Equality** – we will provide a warm welcome to everyone, break down barriers caused by inequality and discrimination and share diverse stories.
- **Wellbeing** – we will use our spaces and services to support people's physical and mental health.
- **Social mobility** – we will deliver learning experiences, volunteering opportunities and pathways for personal development for people of all ages and backgrounds.
- **Climate** – we will raise awareness about the environment and encourage people to act for a sustainable future.
- **Place** – we will celebrate North East England, inspire local pride and use our resources to support research, innovation and economic regeneration.

Volunteers are essential to TWAM in delivering these goals and help to ensure that all of our museums and galleries are innovative, imaginative, creative, inclusive, safe and sustainable.

As well as creating new opportunities and pathways for personal development, volunteering can develop new skills and interests, generate new social connections, increase confidence and improve health and well-being.

We want all our volunteers to have an enjoyable and rewarding time and to feel part of the team that delivers a world class museums service to the communities of the North East and beyond.

Principles

Our volunteering policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- TWAM will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisation.
- TWAM does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- TWAM expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers.

We expect all staff and volunteers to:

- treat staff and volunteer colleagues fairly and equally;
- value differences in others and their contribution;
- treat all people politely and with respect;
- be aware of their own behaviour, especially if it is likely to cause offence to other people
- never commit, excuse, or remain silent about inappropriate behaviour
- challenge inappropriate behaviour constructively;
- be supportive of other staff and volunteers;
- carry out any training and development as needed.

Recruitment

All prospective volunteers will be asked to register their details, skills, and interests through our volunteering website. Volunteers without internet access can request a paper registration form from our Volunteering Office and an online account will be set up for them which can be accessed by the volunteer when able. When applying for new opportunities, we will pass these details along to the appropriate supervisor /staff placement lead.

As TWAM is part of Newcastle City Council it is the policy to ask all successful applicants to volunteer roles to disclose details of any unspent criminal convictions, cautions or reprimands.

For roles working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we may also need to contact the Disclosure and Barring Service to find out if volunteers have a criminal record. A criminal record will not automatically stop prospective volunteers from getting the volunteer role, but we will consider the nature of the offence on an individual basis when assessing how suitable the applicant is for the role.

Volunteer Agreements and Volunteer role description

Each volunteer will accept the expectations stated by TWAM in a Volunteer Agreement. In addition, volunteers will agree to a written outline of the specific task they will be undertaking.

Expenses

Reimbursement for reasonable travel expenses incurred during voluntary activity with TWAM can be arranged. Details of how to do this are included in this document. Exceptions apply, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator for guidance.

Induction and Training

All prospective volunteers will need to attend an informal induction session into TWAM, in addition each volunteer role will have a venue/role specific induction. During the TWAM induction we will cover awareness of Health and Safety, Safeguarding, and Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Additional training will be tailored to meet the individual's and TWAM needs. Certain volunteer roles require mandatory training which will need to be completed in a specified time frame to remain in the volunteer role.

Support

All volunteers will have a named person as their main contact. They will be provided with regular supervision, support, and feedback on their progress. Volunteers will be able to discuss future development and voice any problems with this contact.

Volunteer supervisors will be supported to work with volunteers by the Volunteering team. Additional training can be delivered to support wider teams working alongside volunteers.

Insurance

TWAM provides Employers Liability, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity cover for all volunteers whilst working on TWAM activities.

Equal Opportunities

TWAM operates an Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion policy in respect to both paid staff and volunteers which we require volunteers to abide by.

Problem Solving

TWAM aims to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A process has been drawn up for dealing with complaints either by or about volunteers and is included in the volunteer induction pack.

Confidentiality and Intellectual Property Rights

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff. Volunteers must keep confidential any information about TWAM they become aware of through their volunteering that is not in the public domain. Volunteers are required to assign copyright to TWAM of any work produced as part of their volunteering role or activity.

TWAM in complying with The General Data Protection Regulations 2018, will treat in confidence the information it holds about volunteers, including any monitoring data we are required to collect. The information will be held while there is a legitimate business purpose for doing so. Volunteers have the right to request to see all the information held about them by TWAM. Volunteer information, such as application information, and any reports regarding conduct concerns, will be stored in a safe and secure location.