



AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

VOLUNTEER POLICY

Version 2.0
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1. TITLE

Australian National Maritime Museum Volunteer Policy

2. INTRODUCTION

The Australian National Maritime Museum (the museum) is the keeper of Australia's narrative as an island nation shaped by the sea. Its purpose is to develop, preserve and showcase its collections to expand knowledge of our maritime heritage and to share these stories, nationally and internationally. Volunteers play a vital role in achieving this objective, working across the museum in roles ranging from tour guides, speakers and modelmakers to assisting with administration.

3. PURPOSE

The museum aims to provide an environment where volunteering is rewarding, engaging and enjoyable.

It recognises the importance of having volunteers who are:

- involved in activities that enhance and assist the programs of the museum
- treated in a professional manner and, where possible, receiving the benefits and privileges enjoyed by paid staff
- provided with appropriate protections against risks to health and wellbeing
- aware of their rights and responsibilities
- operating in an inclusive, respectful and safe environment
- responsive to the changing priorities and needs of the museum
- provided with sufficient support, training and supervision to effectively carry out their duties, and
- given appropriate recognition for their commitment and contribution.

4. SCOPE

The Policy applies to all volunteers working for the museum in whatever capacity, on and off site or acting as crew on a museum fleet vessel wherever it may be.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

Volunteers are important to the museum, and they enhance its programs beyond the skills and resources of staff. The museum recognises that volunteers are a legitimate and complementary resource to paid employees and is committed to providing appropriate support, training and resources. Through their dedication and hard work, volunteers expand our capacity to meet our goals and to deliver greater benefits to visitors, staff and the broader community.

For the individuals, volunteering provides an opportunity to be involved in activities aligned with their interests and using their skills. Meaningful activity in turn promotes a sense of belonging and general wellbeing. All volunteers are respected and valued at the museum and must in turn respect and abide by the Australian Public Sector *Code of Conduct*, the Australian National Maritime Museum's policies and procedures and the *Volunteer Agreement*.

6. PRINCIPLES

The museum's *Volunteering Policy* has been developed in line with the *Volunteering Australia Principles*. As a result, it recognises that:

- volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer
- volunteer work is unpaid and is always a matter of choice
- volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community
- volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs
- volunteering is not a substitute for paid work
- volunteers do not replace paid workers nor do they constitute a threat to their job security
- volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others
- volunteering promotes human rights and equality, and
- volunteering builds the capacity of individuals and organisations

7. GUIDELINES

Volunteers are an integral part of the museum and will:

- be treated as equally and as fairly as paid staff
- be valued for their input and called upon for their opinions
- be consulted on matters that substantially affect the performance of their work and well-being
- have the opportunity to effect change in the organisation through their suggestions and involvement in planning and management, and
- be expected to provide feedback to their supervisor regarding their work with visitors

7.1 Management

The museum's volunteer program is overseen by the Head of members and Volunteers within the Storytelling and Engagement Division.

7.2 Volunteer recruitment and selection

The procedure is similar to that followed when engaging paid staff and all Australian citizens, including First Nations people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds, are encouraged to apply. Applications can also be received from non-citizens.

A written position description, including an outline of duties, responsibilities and accountabilities, is provided to all applicants who must submit an application. This will be followed by an interview and assessment process. Successful applicants will be chosen based on their interests, knowledge, skills or attributes relevant to the role and consistent with anti-discrimination legislation.

Before being engaged as a volunteer, applicants must complete an Australian Federal Police consent form for a background security check and receive a number from Service NSW following a Working with Children Check.

Museum staff as volunteers

In certain circumstances, museum staff may volunteer providing this is in an area distinct from their paid position and has the approval of the Director or Deputy Director. The application of former employees to become volunteers requires the same level of approval and ideally is in an area distinct from their former paid position.

7.3 Volunteer responsibilities

Volunteers have obligations which include acting responsibly, being accountable for their actions and respecting the organisations values and practices. They are expected to behave in a way that upholds the Australian Public Service's *Code of Conduct*. In brief, this requires all volunteers to:

- behave honestly and with integrity
- act with care and diligence
- treat everyone with respect and courtesy and without harassment
- meet the standards outlined in the Volunteer Dress Code
- comply with all Australian laws
- comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by a supervisor, and
- use the museum's resources in a proper manner and for a proper purpose.

Volunteers must also be aware of, and abide by, museum policies and procedures, particularly the *Acceptable Use of Information and Communications Technology, Child Safety and Wellbeing, Prevention of Workplace Bullying and Harassment, Privacy, Use of Social Media and Work Health and Safety Policies*.

Volunteers do not make public statements or speak on behalf of the museum without the prior approval of the Volunteer Team Leader.

Volunteers are encouraged to regularly discuss their performance with their supervisor. In the case of issues or complaints, volunteer office staff are the first point of contact. If a resolution cannot be reached, the relevant museum procedures or its *Complaints Handling Procedure* should be followed.

Grievances from volunteers will be managed consistently, transparently, equitably and in line with principles of natural justice.

7.4 Volunteer support and development

The museum provides core training and educational opportunities for volunteers. All new volunteers are required to participate in an orientation program which will ensure that they understand the museum's vision, mission and values and the contribution they can make to achieving them.

The museum actively encourages volunteers to develop their skills and knowledge wherever possible and provides opportunities for learning and development through a regular program of lectures and workshops.

7.5 Volunteer supervision

All volunteers report to a supervisor who may be a member of staff or a fellow volunteer. They are encouraged to discuss their work routine with their supervisor and can expect:

- periodic assessment of performance based on their job description, including providing feedback and addressing performance issues
- development of individual goals linked to current strategic priorities and business planning
- identification of training needs and opportunities for personal development
- encouragement of free and confidential expression of their thoughts and suggestions in order to improve the volunteer program.

7.6 Volunteer insurance

For the purposes of safety, rehabilitation and compensation, volunteers are considered employees. While providing assistance to the museum, they are covered by Comcare insurance. This does not include travel to and from home to the location of their volunteer work. For insurance purposes, all volunteers are required to maintain accurate records of their hours of work and to lodge their timesheets with the Volunteer Office in a timely manner.

7.7 Reimbursement of expenses

In general, it is not anticipated that volunteers will incur expenses in relation to their work at the museum. The exception is the Speakers Group whose members regularly incur costs travelling to and from engagements. All volunteers are required to have approval for any expenditure and must keep receipts and follow the museum's procedures for claiming reimbursement.

7.8 Workplace safety and wellbeing

Volunteers have rights, including the right to work in a safe and supportive environment with appropriate infrastructure and effective management practices. For the purposes of the museum's *Work Health and Safety Policy*, all volunteers are considered workers. As such, they:

- have a duty to take care of their health and wellbeing and that of others
- must comply with safety procedures and directions
- must follow reasonable instructions
- must not wilfully interfere with, or misuse, items or facilities provided in the interest of health and safety, and

- must inform their supervisor of hazards, accidents or near accidents in the workplace.

Fit for work

All volunteers must be physically and mentally fit for work when commencing their duties. If a fellow volunteer or employee has reason to doubt a volunteer's capability, they must notify their supervisor who will advise the Volunteer Team Leader. If the Volunteer Team Leader or Volunteer Supervisor deem the volunteer incapable of carrying out their duties, they will be sent home and will only be able to return as a volunteer after providing a certificate from a registered medical practitioner attesting to their capability.

The capability of volunteers for their specific duties will be reviewed on a regular basis. Volunteers can be assigned to other duties for which they are deemed capable. Where a volunteer is found to be no longer able to undertake a specific role, the Volunteer Leader will consult with them to identify possible alternatives. The final decision as to which roles are appropriate for a volunteer rests with the museum.

7.9 Volunteer recognition

The museum regularly acknowledges the valuable contribution of volunteers and their positive impact on the organisation, visitors, staff and the community. This recognition may include providing volunteers with:

- access to the Volunteers Room whilst volunteering
- recognition pins for specific periods of service
- an invitation to the annual Volunteers 'Thank You' lunch, and
- inclusion in the list of volunteers in the Annual Report.

7.10 Volunteer Reference Group

The Volunteer Reference Group acts as a liaison between management and volunteers. It is responsible for:

- providing leadership from within the volunteer body and be a point of contact for volunteers
- ensuring clear and effective communication between volunteers and management
- providing a forum for sharing concerns and suggestions
- sharing visitor feedback, and
- creating shared goals and determine actions that lead towards continuous improvement of the visitor experience.

The Group has a minimum of ten members representative of the main volunteer work areas and elected by secret ballot. Appointments are for 18 months and can be renewed twice. The maximum period of service on the Reference Group is therefore four and a half years. Meetings are held at least four times a year. Further details about membership, meetings and administration can be found in *The Volunteer Reference Group Terms of Reference* (September 2023).

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Director and Executive are responsible for promoting a positive culture towards volunteering and implementing effective management systems to support volunteer involvement.

Volunteer Team Leader champions the work of volunteers across the museum, monitors volunteers' capability and manages the implementation of the Volunteering Policy and Guidelines

Volunteer Supervisor ensures that volunteers understand their work and the standards expected, have the necessary tools and equipment to carry it out. They should also provide regular opportunities for feedback and discussion about the role and the volunteer's performance.

Volunteer is responsible for performing their assigned duties in a diligent, timely and professional manner and in accordance with the Australian Public Service's *Code of Conduct*. Volunteers must be aware of relevant museum policies and procedures, attend training and actively participate in discussions about their role. They must understand their work and the standards expected, and have the necessary tools and equipment to carry out their responsibilities.

9. DEFINITIONS

Volunteering -- activities taking place for the benefit of communities, and the volunteer, conducted of the volunteer's own free will for no financial payment in a designated volunteer position.

10. REFERENCES

10.1 Australian and international resources

Australian Human Rights Commission, *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*, 2018

Australian Public Service, *Code of Conduct*

Australian Public Service, *Values and Code of Conduct in Practice*

Australian Public Service, *Employment Principles*

Keeping Children and Young People Safe: A Shared Community Responsibility, ACT Community Services, 2011

NSW Health, *Principles for Volunteering*, 2022

NSW Volunteering Strategy, 2011

Volunteering Australia, *Universal Declaration on Volunteering*, 2001

Volunteering Australia, *The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement*, 2015

Volunteer Ireland, *A Framework for your Volunteer Policy*

10.2 Australian National Maritime Museum

Acceptable Use of Information and Communications Technology

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Prevention of Workplace Harassment and Bullying

Privacy Policy

Use of Social Media Policy

The Volunteer Reference Group Terms of Reference, September 2023

11. POLICY APPROVAL

This policy was approved by the Executive Review Group on 20 February 2025

12. POLICY REVIEW

This document will be reviewed every five years. Where there are changes to statutory or other compliance obligations that necessitate a review outside this cycle, it will occur as soon as possible after those changes take effect.

13. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Issue date	Author	Reason for change
1	30 Nov 2011		
2	February 2025	Governance & Planning	Update and reworked in accordance with <i>The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement</i> , 2015, and reviewed by Volunteer Reference Group