

CHISWICK HOUSE & GARDENS TRUST

Volunteering at Chiswick House & Gardens – Visitor Welcome

Chiswick House was built in 1729 and is one of Georgian Britain's keynote architectural statements. Designed by its owner Richard Boyle (Lord Burlington) in collaboration with the multi-talented designer William Kent, the house was conceived as an aesthetic manifesto, gallery and place for entertaining. The collection includes superb examples of painting, furniture and sculpture.

The Chiswick House and Gardens Trust is a registered charity established in April 2005, created jointly by English Heritage and the London Borough of Hounslow to integrate the management of Chiswick House and its gardens. Our objective is to advance education by the preservation, restoration and enhancement of this Grade I listed villa and registered Grade I gardens, for the benefit of the public and of the historical and architectural heritage of England.

Why does Chiswick House need your support?

We need friendly and enthusiastic people to help give an inviting and warm welcome to visitors of all ages and backgrounds, giving them an overview of what's happening and where on site that day, sharing information about Chiswick House & Gardens history and helping them orientate themselves around the site during their visit.

What will you be doing?

The Visitor Welcome Volunteer role is all about people; engaging with visitors to help them get the most from their visit whilst helping with security and safety of the house and the collection. Visitor Experience Volunteers at Chiswick House & Gardens form the team that provide the welcome by engaging and inspiring our visitors. Whether it's needing directions, information or just asking a question, this role is all about delivering wonderful days out and giving visitors the opportunity to come away from their visit having discovered something new.

You will need to:

- Be approachable and have a warm and friendly demeanour.
- Have internet access so that you can sign up to shifts and stay in contact with our team.
- Engage with visitors of all ages and backgrounds, providing information about the House & Gardens.
- Warmly welcome visitors when they arrive; distribute our new audioguide, and promote the wide range of activities and facilities available to ensure they are aware of all areas of the visitors experience and can make the most of their visit.
- Based on the first floor you will share the story of Chiswick House, talking about highlights of the collection and being a watchful presence monitoring the collection. You will also be trained in the handling and movement of contemporary art as part of our exciting exhibition for 2021.

What qualities, skills and experience do you need?

- A friendly, enthusiastic and approachable manner.
- Confidence to engage and communicate with people of all ages, backgrounds and nationalities.
- A willingness to learn more about art, architecture, landscape and social history.
- Experience in roles that have involved dealing with the public would be advantageous.

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How much time will you be expected to give and when?

Ideally you will be able to volunteer for one day per week, either for a full shift (11.00 to 15.00) or a half-shift (11.00 to 13.30 or 13.30 to 15.00). Chiswick House is open to the public 4 days a week from April to October. We are at present especially looking to recruit volunteers for the weekend:

- Saturday 11.00 to 16.00
- Sunday 11.00 to 16.00

NOTE: Chiswick House is closed to the public for the winter from November to March, but we are still very much looking for volunteers! You can still join our team, and there are opportunities to train to become a volunteer tour guide, and work on an exciting array of winter events.

What can you expect from us?

- To be treated fairly and with respect.
- To be recognised and appreciated for your contributions.
- To have an enjoyable experience in a fascinating environment.
- To be provided with training including familiarisation with the site and staff, Health and Safety, social and historical context and some art handling and movement training.
- To be provided with a comfortable space in which to take breaks, with tea and coffee available all day.
- Free entry to Chiswick House & the Kitchen Garden for yourself.
- Discounts in Shop, Café and some partner events held on the estate.
- Access to ValueYou discounts on completion of 100 hours of volunteering.
- Opportunities to meet and socialise with other Chiswick House & Gardens volunteers, including twice annual volunteer parties.
- Reimbursement of travel costs up to £5 per shift.

What will we expect from you?

- To be the friendly face of Chiswick House.
- To enhance the visitor experience.
- To attend induction and training sessions.
- To understand and follow our security, safety and evacuation procedures.
- To maintain positive working relationships with staff, other volunteers and members of the public.
- To be reliable in attendance, wear provided uniform where applicable and be appropriately dressed.

If you are interested in volunteering at Chiswick House or have any further queries regarding this role, please contact Vanessa by email at volunteering@chgt.org.uk quoting 'Visitor Welcome Volunteer 2021'. There is no need to send us a CV or cover letter – as long as you are interested and meet these requirements, we are excited to hear from you.

9 August 2021

This document is intended as a guide to volunteering at Chiswick House and is not legally binding.

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