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MUSEUMS
VICTORIA

Museums Victoria Volunteer Program

Onboarding process and volunteering opportunities for Engineering Australia volunteers at
Scienceworks

September 2025

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ABOUT MUSEUMS VICTORIA

Museums Victoria (MV) is responsible for the State's scientific and cultural heritage collections, providing access through three museums. MV also oversees a wide range of research programs, the continued development of the State's collections, and runs major education and research based websites. MV is the largest public museums organisation in Australia.

As the State's museum, we are responsible for more than 15 million individual items. These objects are organised within five priceless collections – Arts, First Peoples, Sciences, Society & Technology and Strategic Collection Management. You can view a selection from the collection on the Museums Victoria website.

Museums Victoria operates Melbourne Museum, including Bunjilaka and IMAX at the Carlton Gardens site; Scienceworks, including the Melbourne Planetarium at Spotswood and the Immigration Museum in Melbourne's Old Customs House at Flinders Street.

Museums Victoria engages with the wider Victorian community through our Outreach programs, Museum at Home and Digital Life offerings. Museums Victoria Acts as custodian for the Royal Exhibition Building, the oldest and most complete surviving example of a 19th century international exhibition hall.

The National Museum of Victoria, the State's first museum, was established in 1854. In 1870, the Industrial and Technological Museum of Victoria, later known as the Science Museum, was built. These museums were amalgamated and Museum Victoria was established by and operates under the Museums Act (1983). Formerly called the Museum of Victoria, the organisation changed its name in 1998 to Museum Victoria. In 2016 the organisation evolved into Museums Victoria to reflect its development as a multi-campus educational and cultural institution for the people of Victoria and visitors from interstate and overseas.

ABOUT SCIENCEWORKS

Scienceworks (SW) is an interactive science museum that combines collection objects with hands-on exhibits, live demonstrations, stage shows and events. There are fantastic opportunities for visitors of all ages to engage in both indoor and outdoor activities that highlight the fun and usefulness of science and technology.

In addition to many temporary exhibitions and events, current exhibitions include Ground Up (for babies to 5 year-olds), Sportworks, Think Ahead and Beyond Perception: Seeing the Unseen. Scienceworks also features Melbourne's original sewerage pumping station and is home to the Great Melbourne Telescope restoration.

Officially launched at Scienceworks in 2004, the Lightning Theatre offers 30-minute live shows that are informative, entertaining and electrifying! Highlighting each show is the giant Tesla Coil, capable of generating more than 2 million volts of electricity to produce three metre lightning bolts.

Melbourne Planetarium is also located at Scienceworks. It uses the latest digital technology to turn the dome into a showcase of stars, planets and occasionally full dome movies.

Scienceworks is located at 2 Booker St, Spotswood and is open 7 days, 10:00am - 4:30pm (Closed Christmas Day and Good Friday).

ABOUT THE MUSEUMS VICTORIA VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

MV has approximately 350 volunteers, in both front of house (public programs) and back of house roles, across all venues. Our volunteers are a diverse cohort, who bring a range of skills and knowledge to their roles. Volunteers record their service hours so that we can recognise their contribution to MV.

This document will focus on volunteering roles at Scienceworks only.

Frequently asked questions about volunteering at Museums Victoria

Who can volunteer?

Anyone who is over 18 and under 100 years.

What are the basic requirements of joining the program?

All MV volunteers must pass a Victorian Working With Children Check and complete a National Police Check (which is paid for by MV).

What is the expected volunteering commitment?

The minimum volunteering commitment is one shift per month. A volunteer must not do more than three shifts per week.

Is there a dresscode?

Volunteers wear a black Volunteer Program vest during their front of house shift. The vests are the shared and they are washed regularly.

Can I volunteer on any day or time?

It depends upon the voluntary role you take up. Most 'public programs' roles are available every day that the museum is open - seven days a week, all year except Christmas Day and Good Friday. While not frequent, on occasion there may be voluntary positions available in the evenings for special events.

Do I have to stick to one volunteer role only?

While we encourage new volunteers to start with one voluntary role only, we hope that once established, volunteers will expand or contract their voluntary commitments to suit their interests and lifestyle.

What happens if I am sick or go on holiday?

It is expected that volunteers will have other things going on in their life alongside their voluntary commitments, and our program is flexible enough to accommodate those needs. Please let us know as soon as possible if your plans or availability changes and you cannot meet your commitment to volunteer.

Does Museums Victoria provide travel assistance to its volunteers?

No, it does not. We ask you to carefully consider the financial impact that regular attendance at the museum will have on your personal budget.

Can I work ‘behind the scenes’?

Behind the scenes roles are very rare and highly sought after by people wishing to volunteer within the Museum to gain professional work experience. Specialist volunteers are placed and scheduled to regularly assist in their area of research or expertise within the Museum. Occasionally, some opportunities to work on specific projects do become available. We normally advertise these through our newsletter. We invite expressions of interest from all volunteers who may then need to fulfil specific selection and availability criteria. It is then up to the Curator or Collection Manager to choose who they think is the best person for the role as they will be supervising that person.

Is becoming a volunteer a good first step to getting a job at Museums Victoria?

Any voluntary experience is a great boost to a resume. However, please note that MV volunteers are not eligible to apply for positions that are only advertised internally but are welcome to apply for externally advertised MV positions.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM ONBOARDING PROCESS

Information Session

The information session, which runs for approximately 90 minutes, is designed to inform prospective volunteers about:

- What MV is and does
- What is expected of MV volunteers
- Information about the specific role/s we are recruiting for
- How the onboarding process works

The information session is best conducted onsite at Scienceworks, so that the prospective volunteers can decide if the Scienceworks environment and location are suitable.

At the end of the information session, prospective volunteers should be able to make an informed decision as to whether the MV Volunteer Program is a good fit for them.

Formal Application

Prospective volunteers who, based on the information session, are satisfied that the volunteer program is a good fit for them, may formally apply to join the volunteer program. Volunteer Program staff will decide if the person is suitable based on their skills and availability.

Successful applicants will be asked to attend a group induction day onsite at Scienceworks.

Before induction day, successful applicants must:

- Complete an online application form
- Read the MV Volunteer Induction Manual (electronic copy provided via email) and sign an electronic Volunteer Agreement form, a copy of which is included in the Manual (see Appendix 1.)
- Read the MV Volunteer Program Code of Conduct and Policy Information document (electronic copy provided via email) and sign an agreement form to say that they have read and understood the policies and code of conduct

Induction Day

Induction day is held onsite at Scienceworks, usually 11am – 4pm, and involves the following:

- Issuing of volunteer ID card and lanyard
- Summary of MV policies and code of conduct
- General volunteer program information
- General information about Scienceworks
- Emergency evacuation instruction
- Orientation tour of Scienceworks
- Introduction of VicNet, the portal volunteers use to access the volunteer shift schedule and keep their personal information up to date
- Recording volunteering hours
- Instructions specific to the role/s they have been recruited for

VOLUNTEER ROLES AT SCIENCEWORKS MOST SUITABLE FOR ENGINEERING AUSTRALIA VOLUNTEERS

Tinkertown Host

Tinkertown is a hands-on, interactive exhibition aimed at families with 6 to 10 year-old children. It includes activities such as cubby house building, tinkering with loose parts, puzzles and design challenges. It also includes a display of nine unusual and innovative engineering 'relics' from the State Collection. The volunteer Tinkertown Host role involves:

- Encouraging creative play and demonstrating activities when required
- Tidying loose-parts areas
- Assisting with general queries

The Tinkertown exhibition will close early 2026. See Appendix 2. for the Tinkertown Host Volunteer Position Description.



Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Trial and Error Pop-up Science Station

Pop-up science stations are themed trollies that are wheeled out into the public space and activated by volunteers.

This pop-up science station complements the Tinkertown exhibition and focusses on 6 simple machines - what they are, how they work, and how we use them! Visitors are encouraged to tinker, play and learn.

See Appendix 3. for the Trial and Error Pop-Up Science Station Position Description.



Photographer: Davina Jenner

Other volunteer roles

Other volunteer roles that may be appropriate for Engineering Australia volunteers include:

- Weekend workshops. Facilitated by our Public Programs staff, these ticketed workshops are held on some Saturdays and run for approximately 90 minutes. Volunteers can assist with set up and pack down of the workshop and assist visitors with the workshop activities. Instruction for this role is given during the 30 minutes prior to the workshop start time.
- Guide. Volunteers lead tours of the onsite Collection Store and Pumping Station. These guided walks for our visitors run for approximately 30 – 45 minutes and are offered daily. Training for this role is held over 1 – 2 days and the role is suitable for volunteers who can commit to weekly shifts.

APPENDIX 1. VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

1. Nature of this Agreement

I understand:

- my position in the volunteer program at Museums Victoria (MV Volunteer Program) is a volunteer position. This means that in accepting the position, I will perform all duties on a voluntary basis, and I will not receive remuneration or payment for my work; and
- neither I or Museums Victoria intend any employment or contractual relationship to be created as a result of my participation in the MV Volunteer Program.

2. What I can expect as a volunteer at Museums Victoria

I understand that Museums Victoria through the MV Volunteer Program will:

- provide a volunteer program in accordance with policies and procedures of Museums Victoria;
- provide an induction and appropriate training for my voluntary position;
- provide a written position description so I understand my voluntary position and the tasks I am authorised to perform;
- provide appropriate supervision and a regular and constructive system of advice and support;
- provide a safe environment to the extent reasonably practicable for me to volunteer in;
- keep accurate records of the hours I volunteer for insurance and administrative purposes;
- recognise the time and effort I give to Museums Victoria; and
- provide and maintain Museum Victoria's personal accident insurance cover for any approved volunteer work I perform in Australia. If I perform my volunteer position remotely outside of Australia, I understand that I will not be covered by this insurance and it is recommended I have my own insurance in place.

3. What Museums Victoria asks of its volunteers

As a volunteer of Museums Victoria, I agree to:

- undertake required checks related to my position, such as a Working with Children's Check and/or National Police Check;
- act in accordance with Museums Victoria's values, comply with the public sector values outlined in the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees ("Code of Conduct") and the policies and procedures of Museums Victoria.

- attend and participate in volunteer induction and training sessions as required by my voluntary position;
- only undertake duties as directed and authorised by my supervisor and seek assistance and advice from museum staff as required;
- take responsibility for attending the times I have arranged to volunteer and inform an appropriate museum staff member as soon as is practicable if I am unexpectedly unavailable;
- take reasonable care for my own health and safety, and the health and safety of others and report any health and safety issues/incidents or potential hazards;
- use any property or equipment given to me in performing my duties safely and only for the purpose authorised by Museums Victoria and return it to Museums Victoria when concluding my volunteer position;
- carry out my voluntary commitment in accordance with the minimum and maximum voluntary hours guidelines of Museums Victoria;
- my first 30 hours of contribution to Museums Victoria being a mutual trial period;
- notify the MV Volunteer Program as soon as practicable if the nature of my voluntary position changes;
- notify the MV Volunteer Program as soon as practicable if I gain paid employment with Museums Victoria. I understand that this may affect my voluntary status. If I wish to undertake paid work with Museums Victoria, Museums Victoria will discuss this with me and document the arrangement in a formal employment agreement;
- be honest and open in my dealing with Museums Victoria and conduct myself in such a way as to enhance and promote the good name and reputation of Museums Victoria;
- comply with the law at all times, including but not limited to, ensuring I am lawfully entitled to volunteer in Australia, and where applicable, hold the necessary visas and meet all other immigration requirements necessary to volunteer in Australia;
- transfer to Museums Victoria all rights and interests (including copyright) in any ideas or materials (Intellectual Property) which I may discover, create or invent whilst I carry out my volunteer duties at Museums Victoria. I agree this Intellectual Property will be the sole and exclusive property of Museums Victoria and agree not to bring any claim for infringement of my moral rights in respect of its use; and
- fully disclose to Museums Victoria, to the extent of my knowledge, any pre-existing medical condition or other information that may affect Museums Victoria's personal accident insurance coverage.

APPENDIX 2. TINKERTOWN HOST VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION



Volunteer Position Description Tinkertown Host

The position	Tinkertown Host
Reports to (during shift)	Volunteer Program Coordinator and/or Visitor Engagement Officers (VEOs)
Supervisor	Volunteer Program Coordinator
No. volunteers required	1 – 2 per shift
Shift times	7 days per week, 10.00am – 12.30pm and 12.30pm – 3.00pm
Volunteer commitment	Regular or ad hoc
Location	Tinkertown Exhibition, Special Exhibition Gallery

Primary Focus

Tinkertown is a hands-on, interactive exhibition aimed at families with 6 - 10-year-old children. It includes activities such as cubby house building, tinkering with loose parts, puzzles and design challenges. There will also be nine unusual and innovative engineering 'relics' on display from the State Collection. The primary focus for volunteers is to engage with visitors to the exhibition and support Visitor Engagement staff.

Main Duties

- Encourage creative play
- Demonstrate activities when required
- Refer visitors to exhibition character challenges
- Tidy activity zones as required
- Assist visitors with general enquiries
- Report damaged/missing exhibition items to VEOs
- Assist Visitor Engagement Officers as required

Required Skills, Knowledge and Qualities

- Good communication, interpersonal and organisational skills.
- A friendly and enthusiastic attitude
- Strong commitment to providing a high standard of visitor service
- Ability to interact with diverse audiences, including children
- Ability to work in a noisy and sometimes chaotic environment
- Proactive in engaging with visitors

Physical Environment

- May be busy and chaotic during peak periods, e.g. weekends and school holidays, school group bookings
- Soundscape on repetition

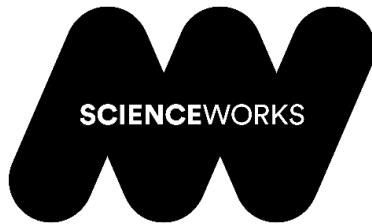
Physical Requirements

- Standing, walking, sitting, reaching above shoulders, bending below knees.

Training

- Instruction will be provided by Volunteer Program and/or Exhibitions staff, taking approximately 60 minutes.

APPENDIX 3. TRIAL AND ERROR POP-UP SCIENCE STATION



Volunteer Position Description

Trial and Error Pop-Up Science Station

The position	Trial and Error Pop-Up Science Station
Reports to (during shift)	Public Programs & Education (PPE) staff, Visitor Engagement (VE) staff, or Volunteer Engagement Coordinator
Supervisor	Volunteer Engagement Coordinator
No. volunteers required	1-2 per shift
Days and times required	10.30am – 1.00pm and 1.00pm – 3.30pm weekends, and 7 days per week during school holidays
Time commitment	Regular or ad hoc shifts
Location	Scienceworks galleries

Primary Focus and Background

Scienceworks has Pop-Up Science Stations (trolleys) that volunteers are encouraged to use to engage the public with different science topics. The primary focus of the Trial and Error pop-up science station is to introduce visitors to six simple machines (pulley, lever, inclined plane, wedge, screw, and wheel and axle) and demonstrate how they can be used to reduce the amount of work (or effort, or force) required to complete a simple task.

Main Duties

- Setting up pop-up trolley in a suitable location, depending on visitation that day.
- Proactively welcoming visitors to engage with the pop-up activities.
- Provide visitors with information about the six simple machines and demonstrate each as needed.
- Encourage visitors to operate the machines where appropriate.
- Welcome visitors to ask questions and share their ideas about how the machines work.
- Assist with general enquiries and wayfinding.
- Pack up pop-up station and return to storage location.
- Provide relevant feedback to PPE and/or Volunteer Program staff.

Required Skills, Knowledge and Qualities

- Good communication, interpersonal and organisational skills.
- A friendly and enthusiastic attitude.
- A general interest in science and technology.
- Strong commitment to providing a high standard of visitor service.
- Ability to interact with diverse audiences, including children.
- Ability to work in a noisy and sometimes chaotic environment.
- Proactive in engaging with visitors.

Physical Requirements

- Opening/closing doors, standing, walking, reaching across, above and below shoulders, bending below knees, lifting, pushing and maneuvering pop-up trolley.

Training

- Instruction will be provided by Volunteer Program and/or Public Programs & Education staff member/s before this assignment is added to your volunteer account. Instruction will take approximately 60 minutes.