



MUSEUM DOCENT

Things get solved if you get involved! Apply to become a docent at the National Museum of African American History and Culture! Docents are education facilitators who provide group learning experiences in the form of museum tours, demonstrations, or instruction in special activity areas. They are an essential link between the public and the Museum.

DOCENT VOLUNTEER DUTIES

Docents engage visitors to the museum by:

- Interpreting the Museum's collections
- Communicating directly with visitors, including the general public, special-interest groups, VIPs, and people with diverse learning style and abilities

Docents must also work in concert with staff and volunteers of the Museum to:

- Present interpretive programs as designed by the Education Department's Office of Audience Engagement in a manner consistent with the tour program goals and objectives
- Implement and practice effective teaching strategies in a museum setting, that includes discussion, storytelling, verbal description, and working with teaching objects
- Attend additional in-service and volunteer enrichment training sessions offered throughout the year
- Accept periodic evaluation of tours in a spirit of cooperation
- Maintain an attitude of flexibility and respect in relationships with peers and staff
- Function, always, within the guidelines and procedures of the Smithsonian Institution and the National Museum of African American History and Culture

DESIRED SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Volunteers should have an interest in American history and culture and a thirst for knowledge and lifelong learning
- Volunteers must have excellent speaking and communication skills and be active listeners
- Volunteers must enjoy speaking to a variety of visitors and groups of all sizes
- Volunteers must remain calm when faced with the unanticipated and think quickly on their feet
- Retired educators, public and community historians welcome
- Fluency in American Sign Language and other second languages are helpful but not required
- Interpretation and/or experience conducting tours is a bonus

REQUIREMENTS

- A background check for prospective volunteers is required
- Volunteer must be 18 years of age or older
- Complete of volunteer training



TRAINING

- Docents are highly trained on the content of each exhibition. The Museum's new docent orientation and training is comprised of weekly classroom/workshop sessions, readings, self & group-exploration activities, and a certification examination and video that occur over the course of 9 months to a year.
- Accepted applicants must be available for and attend orientation and training classes that are specific to this volunteer position
- Trainees are expected to shadow tours outside of class
- Accepted applicants must successfully complete the required training course(s), homework assignments, and tour evaluation

SCHEDULING

- Upon successful completion of the training course, a minimum commitment of 2 years of service is expected
- Docents volunteer 2 shifts (averaging 8 -10 hours) per month. Morning (9am – 1:30pm) and afternoon (1:00pm – 5:30pm) volunteer shifts are available seven days a week. Filling afternoon shifts is a high priority for the museum

LOCATION

National Museum of African American History and Culture
1400 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20560
Email: NMAAHCVolunteers@si.edu

HOW DO I APPLY?

Apply [here](#) and submit your application to become a docent. **The application deadline is November 1, 2019.** New docent orientation begins spring 2020. Due to the large number of applications we receive, only those selected to participate in the program will be contacted.
