

Collections Care Volunteer: Role Description

Purpose

The Charles Dickens Museum is seeking collections care volunteers to support the curators and the collections care assistant. The role will involve conservation cleaning, historic housekeeping and monitoring environmental conditions and pest activity. On occasion there will be the opportunity to assist with discrete conservation and rehousing projects.

Reasons for getting involved

- Become part of small, friendly and dedicated team.
- Work behind the scenes of this fascinating independent historic house museum.
- Handle a variety of historic objects.
- Gain experience of Museum collections care procedures.
- Gain or deepen your knowledge of the world of Charles Dickens and of Victorian life, literature and material culture.
- Be invited to exclusive talks, events and social gatherings.

Tasks

- Conservation housekeeping.
- Conservation cleaning of displayed and stored objects.
- Taking environmental readings and recording findings.
- Monitoring pest traps and recording findings.
- Taking light readings and recording findings.
- Assisting with other related projects as required.

Skills needed

- Experience in (or willingness to learn) techniques of preventive conservation.
- An interest in conservation in the heritage sector.
- Excellent manual dexterity skills and good hand to eye co-ordination.
- Excellent observational skills.
- A patient and methodical approach to completing tasks.
- A willingness to work at height and to occasionally lift moderately heavy objects.
- Ability to keep accurate written records.

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Training

You will receive training in preventive conservation including: housekeeping; light monitoring; environmental monitoring and Integrated Pest Management.

Shifts

Mondays, a 4-5 hour shift during the hours of 9-5.

Location

You will be stationed at the Charles Dickens Museum, 48 Doughty Street, London WC1N 2LX.

Expenses

We are happy to reimburse any reasonable out of pocket travel expenses for up to £10 per shift, and if you are onsite for five hours or more, a further £3.50 a day.

Background Information

The Charles Dickens Museum is a fully accredited independent museum dedicated to promoting the life and work of Charles Dickens, writer, journalist and social reformer.

Our mission is to be the world's leading centre for the study, appreciation and enjoyment of Charles Dickens's life and works.

The Charles Dickens Museum was founded (as the Dickens House) in 1925 and is constituted as a charity (number 212172). The Museum holds the world's finest and most comprehensive collection of material (over 100,000 items) relating to Dickens's life and work. It was here at 48 Doughty Street (a Grade 1 listed building) that Dickens established himself as a writer in the 1830s and rose to international fame.

The Museum also houses an extensive archive and research library used continually by leading scholars, and it is the headquarters of the international Dickens Fellowship. 48 Doughty Street is a place of pilgrimage for people from all over the world – fans, scholars, researchers, writers – and it is a place of learning for thousands of children and young people. We receive 200-300 visitors daily, as well as 50+ school pupils each day during term time.

In addition to permanent displays, the Museum presents an ongoing series of temporary exhibitions exploring different aspects of Dickens's life, as well as special events.

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How to get involved

If you are interested in volunteering for this role, please email Adam Kalinowski, Volunteer Coordinator at adam.kalinowski@dickensmuseum.com for more information.

Please note: You must be at least 18 years old to volunteer at the Charles Dickens Museum.