

Maude Abbott Medical Museum



Musée médicale Maude-Abbott



McGill University – Strathcona Anatomy and Dentistry Building – Room 2/38E – 3640 University Street –
Montreal – Quebec – H3A 0C7

Maude Abbott Medical Museum Volunteer Policy

1. Preamble

The Maude Abbott Medical Museum is supported in its mission by a team of dedicated volunteers. The intent of this volunteer policy is to provide staff and volunteers guidelines for the implementation of the Museum volunteer program. Defining the roles and responsibilities of volunteers cultivates a lasting relationship to serve both parties in a positive manner.

2. Definitions

Museum: the Maude Abbott Medical Museum.

Volunteer: an individual who contributes service to the benefit of the Museum willingly and without financial remuneration. The volunteer is to conduct themselves according to the same standards of professionalism as the members of the paid staff.

3. Purpose of the Volunteer Program

The purpose of the Volunteer Program at the Museum is:

- I. to foster a network of volunteers who are familiar with the history, context, and management of the Museum's collections;
- II. to encourage an environment where volunteers can acquire new skills and knowledge through their work at the Museum;
- III. to support visitor engagement with the Museum and its collections.

4. Volunteer Selection and Placement

4.1 Volunteer Selection Criteria

The Museum restricts its volunteer base to currently enrolled McGill University students. Due to limited workspace, volunteers are accepted based on availability that aligns with the schedule of current Museum staff and volunteers. While no specific academic background is required to volunteer, a knowledge of anatomy is helpful.

4.2. Volunteer Placement

The Museum strives to maximize the different strengths and interests of its volunteers. While volunteers may be assigned to specific roles within the Museum, these may change over time depending on the skills, interests, and needs of the volunteer, as well as the demands of museum operations.

4.3. Volunteer Roles

Volunteers are trained for at least one of the following roles and may be trained for additional roles as the Museum sees fit.

- **Museum Tours:** guiding groups through the Museum and animating collections by providing expertise on exhibits and specimens.
- **Collection Maintenance:** light cleaning such as dusting and wiping display cases, shelves, and storage room.
- **Data Transcription:** transcribing data such as specimen information, details, and history into the MedIT database.
- **Collection Inventory:** accessioning and inventorying newly acquired specimens into existing collections.
- **Special Projects:** creating a special project, which may include research, a small exhibit, or other initiative under the direction of the Museum.

5. Training

All volunteers are given a general orientation by Museum staff. Once their placement is determined, they are trained by both Museum staff and volunteers experienced in that role.

6. Responsibilities of the Volunteer

Volunteers are expected to:

- maintain a respectful environment for all staff, volunteers, and visitors of the Museum;
- handle human remains respectfully and with sensitivity. No photographs other than those commissioned for official Museum purposes are to be taken and disseminated, and all information regarding identity of remains is to be kept confidential;
- follow health and safety protocols;
- notify the Museum in advance if they are unable to make it in for a shift.

7. Relationship between Staff and Volunteers

Volunteers and paid staff are partners in implementing the Museum mission, with each having an equal but complementary role to play. Each partner understands and respects the needs and abilities of the other.

8. Volunteer Time Commitment

Volunteers are expected to commit to a minimum of 3 hours of volunteer work each week, for at least one semester.

9. Health and Safety

Volunteers are trained in the safety protocols for proper handling of materials and are made aware of building safety procedures and safety features. All safety equipment is provided by the Museum. According to the McGill Internal Responsibility System for Health & Safety, a volunteer is required to immediately notify the Museum of any health or safety issues. For the McGill University Liability Policy, see McGill Health and Safety Policies, <https://www.mcgill.ca/ehs/>.

10. Harassment and Discrimination

According to the McGill Policy on Harassment and Discrimination, any incident involving harassment or discrimination can be reported to the McGill Office for Mediation and Reporting, omr@mcgill.ca.

11. Volunteer Policy Review

This policy is to be reviewed by the Museum Director at least every 2 years.