Volunteer tour guide

Volunteer tour guides conduct tours of the Library’s building and exhibitions, and assist visitors at a range of community events, such as White Night and Open House Melbourne.

Position details

Volunteer location: State Library Victoria, 328 Swanston Street, Melbourne

Further information: Please read this two-page Volunteer role description and contact Lynda McArdle, Volunteer Project Manager, at volunteer@slv.vic.gov.au or 03 8664 7401 if further information is required.

About the Library

State Library Victoria is one of Victoria’s pre-eminent cultural institutions and a leading library of the world. Through our unique collections and wide-ranging services, we are central to the cultural life and economy of Victoria.

We are the major reference and research library in Victoria, and aim to provide Victorians and all users with ready access to a comprehensive collection of Victorian documentary material and to worldwide information resources, to enrich their cultural, educational, social and economic lives.

Organisational values

Innovation: We recognise and embrace new technologies, ideas and opportunities to improve, grow and develop as individuals and as industry leaders in a challenging environment.

Collaboration: We work together and with partners, sharing knowledge and resources to advance universal access to information.

Engagement: We work to understand, connect and meet the needs and expectations of our communities in the most appropriate ways.

Excellence: We provide an outstanding service at all times in a professional and ethical manner.

Respect: We strive to create an open and caring community by valuing and supporting individuals, and acknowledging the strength of diversity.
The team

Volunteers make an invaluable contribution to the Library. Our vibrant and growing volunteer community includes participants from all age groups and from all walks of life.

What you’ll do

1. Proactively greet and guide visitors on our group tours, including welcome tours, architectural tours, World of the book, Changing face of Victoria, Ned Kelly and temporary exhibitions.

2. Answer questions about the Library and the collections, point out features of interest and otherwise engage visitors to help make a visit to the Library a memorable experience.

3. Become familiar with the history of the Library, the Library building and the Vision 2020 redevelopment project, and collection items in our permanent and temporary exhibitions.

4. Confidently communicate with, and relate to, people of all ages and backgrounds.

5. Maintain a satisfactory level of competence as a tour guide, including active participation in ongoing training and development, independent research and broadening of your own knowledge base.

6. Be aware of, and behave in accordance with, all relevant Library policies and procedures.

7. Participate in a regular roster of tours (a minimum of two tours per month), take ad hoc booked tours and help cover vacant shifts where possible.

8. Have the opportunity to assist visitors at Library events such as White Night, Open House Melbourne, exhibition events, curator talks and other community programs.

9. Promote Library services, including membership of the Friends of the Library program.

What we’re looking for

1. Experience in leading tours, presenting to groups, teaching, theatre, performing, or other background that would support your ability to deliver tours.

2. High-level communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to communicate and connect with diverse Library visitors.

3. Availability and commitment to conduct tours twice a month, attend regular training, learn material for new exhibitions and undertake independent study to support the delivery of tours.

4. Collaboration, enthusiasm and a positive attitude as an active team member.

5. Ability to speak a language other than English will be well regarded.

6. State Library Victoria is a Child Safe Organisation. A valid Working with Children Check will be required before commencing as a volunteer. Working with Children Checks are free for volunteers.
What we’ll provide

- a structured induction and ongoing training program
- support from an experienced tour guide buddy
- access to a program of guest speakers and specialist Library staff at regular volunteer events
- access to the Billabong, our spacious staff and volunteer tearoom, with lockers and free tea and coffee
- a State Library Victoria security pass
- discounts at Mr Tulk Café and Readings book shop at the Library
- discount on Friends of the Library membership
- the opportunity to become part of a strong community of volunteers and staff at one of Australia’s leading cultural institutions.

Physical requirements

- Predominant physical requirements of this role:
  - walking/moving around the Library for periods of at least one hour while delivering tours
  - standing/remaining stationary at events for 2-3 hour shifts
  - reading/studying
  - some general computer use.

How to apply


If you are unable to apply online or have difficulties accessing the information or lodging your application, please contact volunteer@slv.vic.gov.au or 03 8664 7401. Your enquiry will be handled by a member of the People and Culture team.