'Volunteering at Gladstone's Library' Information Pack

(form 14.2 in Library Manual)

Thank-you for expressing an interest in volunteering at Gladstone's Library. Here at the Library, we have a thriving volunteer programme. Volunteers work to conserve our collections, help with archive projects, and tend to the gardens. Volunteers help us extend our team and broaden our skills.

We really do want volunteering at Gladstone's Library to be fun, useful and productive, and to that end we do have some requirements. These are outlined here and should be considered carefully before committing to volunteer.

What do volunteers do at Gladstone's Library?

Except for our gardens, our volunteer programme is project-based. Gladstone's Library is committed to the Living Wage and so we only use paid staff for core roles. Volunteers are recruited when we have projects to complete: current volunteers are helping to transcribe and digitise archives, to conserve and preserve books, and to keep our outdoor spaces looking good.

Is there an age limit?

Gladstone's Library's safeguarding and insurance policies mean that we do require all volunteers to be over eighteen.

Do I have to have experience?

All levels of experience are welcome! If you want to volunteer with the library or archive teams, however, we do really need you to be computer-literate. This doesn't have to be advanced: the ability to use a simple Excel spreadsheet or work on a Word document is enough. We will train you in all you need to know.

Is there a minimum time that I should expect to volunteer?

Due to the commitment of training, we cannot take on volunteers for a period of less than six months. We want volunteering to be enjoyable, and that comes with regular engagement with the work that we do here. It also helps us if you can agree a set day. This means we can have a computer and/or desk ready for you, and some other volunteers to work with. Space is limited in the staff areas and we can't guarantee space outside set days.

I can't commit for six months. Do you offer shorter work experience periods?

Gladstone's Library has previously offered a week's full-time work experience to students in compulsory, further and higher education, as well as longer placements via the Universities of Chester and Glyndwr. From June 2018 staff commitments to significant library projects mean that all placements are on hold. Anyone looking to gain experience should consider applying to either the volunteer or graduate work experience programmes. Information on the GWE is available via our website. We're sorry, but keep checking back to see if things change!

Do I have to give up a full day?

No. We have set volunteering shifts of three hours, which 10-1pm and 2-5pm. Unfortunately, we cannot accept volunteers outside these hours.

Do I have to make up time if I miss a day?

If you can't make a day, it's simpler to miss that week and return on your set day the following week. Gladstone's Library staff don't always work in the same place every week and we want you to have a team to work with!

What can I expect when I volunteer?

So that we can offer the best experience to our volunteers, we set start dates when staff are available to offer full training. These dates are variable and depend on number of applications, etc.

Who should I contact about volunteering?

Download a volunteering application form, then complete it and send to the following people:

If you would like to volunteer in the Reading Rooms, please send a description of yourself and what you would like to do to library@gladlib.org;

If you would like to volunteer at Gladfest, please email louisa.yates@gladlib.org;

If you would like to volunteer on 'Digital Gladstone', please email elizabeth.fife-faulkner@gladlib.org

If you would like to help maintain our gardens (April-September only), please email paul.hopper@gladlib.org.

PLEASE NOTE: as of January 2017, the Reading Rooms and Tour Guide volunteering teams are full and we can only hold expressions of interest on file. Spaces are available on the gardening and Digital Gladstone teams.