

## VOLUNTEER AND INTERN HANDBOOK

### **About Museums & Galleries of NSW**

Museums & Galleries of NSW (M&G NSW) is the support agency for the museum and gallery sector in NSW. A non-profit company established in 1999, M&G NSW plays a pivotal role in nurturing sustainable museums, galleries and Aboriginal keeping places within their communities, through the provision of services, development programs and resources.

M&G NSW receives core funding from the NSW Government through Arts NSW, and additional funding from project grants. M&G NSW is also assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory board.

### **History**

In October 1997 a consultant's report, commissioned by the then NSW Ministry for the Arts, recommended the establishment of a new, single organisation as a more effective means of servicing both museums and galleries in NSW.

In April 1998, on the advice of the Arts Advisory Council, the State Government approved the formation of the new body. Museums Australia (NSW) and the Regional Galleries Association of NSW were invited to be involved in the development of suitable model.

In December 1998 Museums and Galleries Foundation of NSW was established. The trading name Museums & Galleries NSW was launched in 2006. In 2013 a review of the company's constitution included a rebrand and name change to Museums & Galleries of NSW (M&G NSW).

### **The Arts Exchange**

From its inception in 1998, M&G NSW was housed in The Gunnery in Woolloomooloo. In May 2015, the company moved to The Arts Exchange in The Rocks, a refurbished office hub operated by Arts NSW.

A number of other arts organisations reside in the building, including The Biennale of Sydney, Sydney Festival, Accessible Arts and The Sydney Writers Festival. M&G NSW shares the first floor accommodation with Regional Arts NSW.

# Volunteer rights and responsibilities

## Principles of volunteering

Museums & Galleries of NSW endorses Volunteering Australia's Principles of Volunteering, which state that volunteering:

- benefits the community and the volunteer;
- work is unpaid;
- is always a matter of choice;
- is not compulsorily undertaken to receive pensions or government allowances;
- is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community;
- is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs;
- is not a substitute for paid work;
- is an activity performed in the not for profit sector only;
- does not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers;
- respects the rights, dignity and culture of others;
- promotes human rights and equality.

## Volunteer rights

A volunteer has the right to be:

- treated with respect;
- properly interviewed in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation;
- provided with opportunities for learning and growth;
- provided with timely communication, support and advice;
- given meaningful and enjoyable tasks that match the needs of the museum with the knowledge, interests and skills of the volunteer;
- provided with safe working conditions;
- provided with recreational, knowledge-building and social activities including visits, tours and talks;
- involved in gaining deeper insights regarding the sector operations;
- supported and supervised in their volunteer role;
- protected by appropriate insurance;
- recognised for service provided.

## Volunteer responsibilities

A volunteer has the responsibility to:

- abide by the M&G NSW Code of Conduct;
- treat others with respect;
- support M&G NSW goals and objectives;
- work as a team with staff and other volunteers;
- ask for support when needed;

- maintain the confidentiality of privileged information gained while engaged in M&G NSW tasks;
- follow volunteer guidelines and other organisational policy and procedures;
- consult with the volunteer's coordinator if unclear on any policy or action;
- accept a probationary period during which a volunteers performance will be assessed;
- notify your supervisor of change of address, telephone or volunteer assignment;
- advise the supervisor if unable to attend a volunteer shift or a meeting.

### **Volunteer benefits**

While many volunteer benefits are intangible such as gaining new knowledge and meeting people with similar interests, other benefits are more direct. Volunteers play an essential role in the mission of M&G NSW.

In appreciation of this contribution volunteers will receive:

- written reference where required;
- recognition of participation in training;
- free admission to specified events from the M&G NSW Events calendar whilst a volunteer;
- invitations to social outings, tours, talks and parties where applicable.

## **Volunteering with M&G NSW**

M&G NSW accepts volunteer applications at any time. Completing an application form does not guarantee placement as volunteers are selected on the basis of their skills, interest and suitability to fulfill the available position/s. Applicants may be placed on a waiting list.

Although there may be applicants waiting for placement, additional volunteers may be recruited when assignments require skills or abilities not possessed by persons on the waiting list.

### **Volunteer interviews/offers**

The applicant's placement will be confirmed in writing. Notification will include any terms and conditions of the placement along with a requirement to accept and abide by the M&G NSW Code of Conduct.

Reference checks may take place before an offer for a placement is made.

### **Supervision**

All volunteers have a designated supervisor who is responsible for the volunteer.

### **Induction and training**

Office-based volunteers will receive induction and on-the-job training as part of their placement.

Volunteers working regionally or remotely should use this handbook as their induction and discuss any concerns with their supervisor.

### **Working hours**

Hours and days vary according to the volunteer role. Days and times can be negotiated with your supervisor. A volunteer shall not work more than nine hours on any given day and shall not work more than five days consecutively.

Where necessary volunteer hours should be recorded and countersigned by the supervisor, such as where the placement is part of a tertiary course.

## **Volunteer Programs**

### **1. Roving Reporters**

M&G NSW operates a Roving Reporter program where regional and metro-based volunteers can apply to write for the monthly enews M&Gazine.

Publication in the enews is dependent on a number of factors including timeliness, quality of writing, and suitability for particular issues of the newsletter. Publication is not guaranteed and is coordinated by the Communications team under guidance from the Social Media and Online Content Coordinator.

### **2. Panel of Peers**

M&G NSW relies on a *Panel of Peers* to provide cultural heritage advice, interdisciplinary museum and gallery experience, and specific art form expertise, in order to fairly assess funding applications. Call outs for peers is annual and service on one of the committees or panels extends for a period of two years.

### **3. Project volunteers**

Periodically M&G NSW has special projects from which we need volunteers. These may include research and writing, and/or office administrative tasks, such as data entry and filing.

### **4. Tertiary placements**

As part of a course students may apply to M&G NSW to undertake a placement in their field of study. Previous placements have been students at UNSW Art and Design, Macquarie University, and UTS.

## **Volunteer policy and procedures**

### **Record management**

The volunteer program maintains records on each volunteer. Records may include applications, references and background checks, volunteer service including hours worked, positions held, duties performed, training attended, awards and recognition received. All personal details will be maintained for seven years, or as required by law.

## **Attendance**

Regular attendance is important to organisational operations. Volunteers should notify their supervisor at least 12 hours in advance if they are unable to attend.

## **Evaluation**

Volunteers may receive periodic evaluation to review their performance. The evaluation allows volunteers and the supervisor to suggest change and seek suggestions. Evaluation is intended to offer a positive and informative exchange for both parties.

## **Leave of absence**

In order to coordinate our projects successfully M&G NSW asks volunteers who require a leave of absence to discuss this with their supervisor in advance.

## **Code of Conduct**

Volunteers are expected to read, sign and adhere to the M&G NSW Code of Conduct.

## **Grievances**

In the first instance any dispute or problem should be discussed with the supervisor. In the event of a dispute arising between a volunteer and M&G NSW staff, the General Manager or CEO will be asked to mediate.

## **Safety and liability**

If a volunteer is injured during the course of volunteer service, the supervisor must be notified immediately and an incident report completed. M&G NSW insurance cover protects volunteer workers for injury or damage that result from work related activities.

## **Emergency**

As part of their induction, volunteers will be briefed on the building emergency procedures and the location of fire extinguishers.

## **Workplace health and safety**

In accordance with NSW legislation, smoking is prohibited in the workplace. Volunteers are expected to comply with all workplace health and safety regulations.

## **Reimbursement of expenses**

All expenses incurred are the responsibility of the volunteer except in cases where expenses are incurred at the request of the supervisor, or reimbursements of authorised expenses are agreed upon prior to a financial commitment being made. Upon approval of the supervisor, the volunteer must submit receipts for which they seek reimbursement.

## **Use of facilities and equipment**

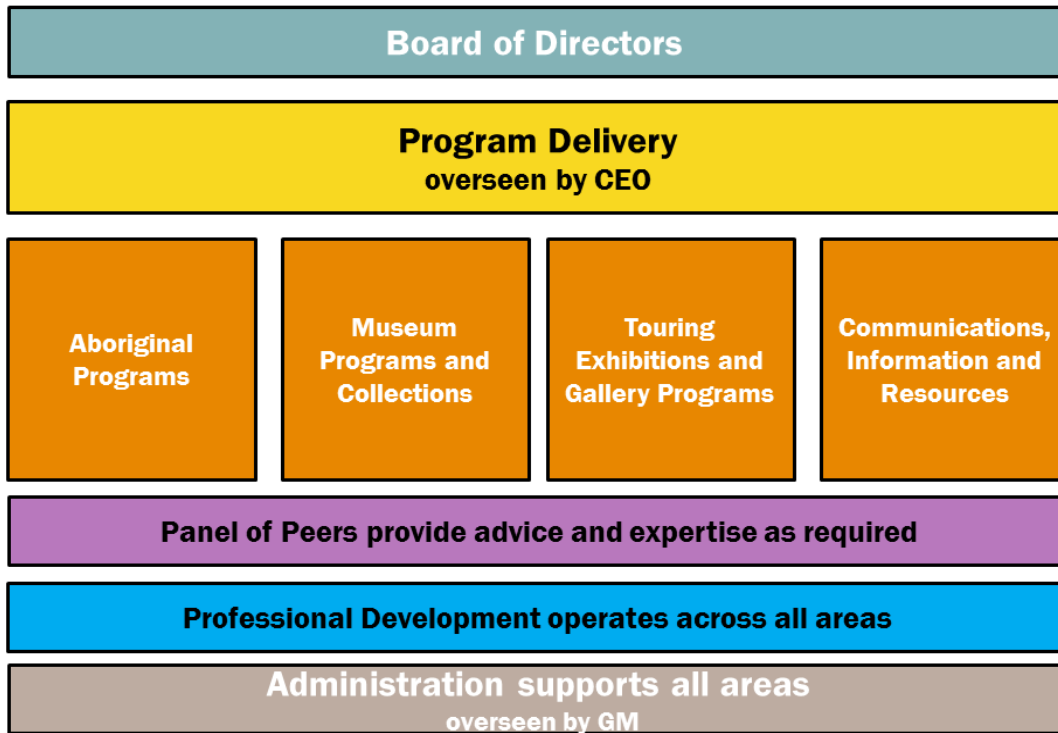
Volunteers are expected to be efficient and economical in their use and management of public resources. Such resources include financial, material and human resources. Care should be exercised when using equipment and service requirements must be followed. Telephones are for work related purposes; however M&G NSW accepts the occasional need for personal calls that should be kept to a minimum.

**Loss of personal property**

Volunteers should exercise all reasonable caution to protect their personal property and M&G NSW will seek to provide a secure working environment. Never leave your purse, wallet or other valuables on or under a desk. If an item is lost or stolen notify the supervisor immediately.

*The information in this handbook is correct at time of printing but may be subject to change. © M&G NSW 2015.*

## M&G NSW Operational Chart



## M&G NSW Organisational Structure

