

Great Lakes Children's Museum
Volunteer Job Description

Program Assistant

Revised January 2021

Location: Great Lakes Children's Museum **Reports to:** Impact Manager & Lead Educator

Purpose

The Great Lakes Children's Museum provides a foundation for lifelong learning through play-based exploration. A program is essentially guided play and could look like a craft session, a story reading, a STEM event, or an educational game. Well facilitated programs are safe, fun, and spark curiosity and learning. The Program Assistant helps facilitate these programs and must be able to have fun while keeping an eye to safety and following the program goals.

Position Summary

Programs at GLCM vary widely, and so does the position of program assistant. This position may work on their own or with a group of facilitators. The program assistant will almost always work directly with children to carry out a pre-planned program. Some preparation work is usually available for upcoming programs. This position is not responsible for creating programming, but instead facilitates existing programs. Those interested in creating new programming should inquire about joining the Education Committee.

Duties

- Maintain a safe environment and call out unsafe situations if they arise.
- Track program attendance and record it directly or deliver it to a supervisor.
- Carry out the program or assist in the program while encouraging play-based exploration.
- Assist with set-up and tear down (including cleanup) of programs.
- Create a welcoming environment for a wide variety of learning styles.
- Track volunteer hours either online or using a tracking sheet in the logbook.

Requirements

Background Check: Yes

Experience: A wide range of experiences qualify for this position. While no previous experience is necessary, time spent in educational settings or working with children is helpful. Teachers, parents, outdoor educators, STEM educators, and those passionate about learning can draw on their experiences to facilitate programming.

Time & Commitment: There is no minimum or required amount of time for this position. GLCM maintains several weekly programs that require program assistants which present regular opportunities. Special events at the museum and in the community present opportunities for more

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periodical work. Program assistants may maintain a regular schedule or choose to jump on opportunities as they arise. The Impact Manager will be able to work with you to find a schedule and commitment level that fits your needs and that of the organization.

Restrictions:

- Maintain two-deep supervision. Avoid 1 on 1 situations with a child where their guardian cannot see or hear them.
- Maintain a positive image of the Children's Museum. Rudeness and negativity towards guests and the public prevents play-based exploration and learning from occurring. Those who cannot maintain a welcoming, positive attitude - especially towards people of different races, beliefs, sexual orientations, etc. - should not apply as program assistants.

Application

1. Fill out a volunteer application found online or in the GLCM Office.
2. Review the Volunteer Handbook and Code of Conduct; return a signed copy of the Code of Conduct to the Impact Manager.
3. Conduct a brief interview with the Impact Manager to determine your schedule, your 'will do's and won't do's, and any changes you would like to make to this job description.

Compensation

This is an unpaid position, but if you incur pre-approved materials costs please save and turn in your receipts to be reimbursed. If you choose to donate those materials, please still turn those receipts in so that we can track the in-kind donation. It is important that we track all costs, even donated materials, so that we can make accurate determinations about operational costs.

Drop In Volunteers

Drop-in program assistants are needed for events both in the museum and out in the community. Background checks are not required for these events. Program shifts are typically one to four hours long and feature easy-to-follow instructions for an activity or game. No prior knowledge or educational background is necessary for drop-in program assistants – all you need is a friendly personality and a willingness to play and learn. Instructions on your assigned activity and a quick training session take place on site – and program staff from the museum are always nearby to assist and answer questions. Students over the age of 13 may enjoy being drop-in program assistants.

Groups Welcome! A group of people such as a social group, work group, or volunteer organization that wishes to volunteer as program assistants may be accommodated. GLCM's ability to accommodate those groups is dependent on event dates and the number of volunteers.

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