

Goldsmiths Careers Service – Guidelines for promoting and supporting student volunteering in the community

What is volunteering?

Volunteering is an unpaid activity with a charity or not-for-profit organisation that makes a difference to the wider community.

This guidance document outlines how Goldsmiths Careers Service supports and promotes volunteering opportunities for students in the community. For the purpose of this document we are focusing on only external volunteering opportunities provided by organisations outside of the oversight of Goldsmiths, University of London.

The Careers Service does not consider work placements (which are an accredited part of an academic course), or internships as volunteering activities.

Why do we support student volunteering?

Volunteering is a great way for students to give back and make a real difference to the lives of others. It's also a great way of enhancing their time at university, and an opportunity to gain experience in new sectors, and develop new and existing skills. It's an opportunity for them to meet new people, get involved in the local community and have some quality time away from work and study commitments.

Students can gain many new skills and abilities through volunteering which may include:

- Teamworking, teaching or mentoring
- Communicating with diverse groups of people
- Leadership, organisation and project management
- Knowledge and understanding of local community or global issues
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Commercial awareness and insight into how third sector organisations operate

These are essential skills that employers are looking for. Research by [Timebank and Reed Employment](#) (2009) amongst 200 leading businesses revealed that:

- 73% of employers would employ candidates with volunteering experience over those without
- 94% of employers believe that volunteering can add skills
- 94% of employees who volunteered to learn new skills had benefited either by getting their first job, improving their salary, or being promoted

How do we support student volunteering?

We support student volunteering through:

- The Careers Service annual Volunteering Fair in the Autumn
- Working with internal & external stakeholders to connect students to relevant voluntary opportunities
- Providing opportunities for community organisations to promote volunteering opportunities on campus throughout the year
- Advertising relevant opportunities on the Careers Service pages of the Goldsmiths website and on our social media channels
- Promoting opportunities to students undertaking the Gold Award
- Recognising activities on the Higher Education Achievement Report

Advertising Your Volunteering Opportunities – Guidelines for External Opportunity Providers

In order to promote a volunteering role we ask that the role fits the following guidelines where possible. Volunteering opportunities should:

- Be ideally local to Goldsmiths
- Provided by a charity or not-for-profit organisation
- Be clear on what tasks the volunteer is expected to undertake
- Offer a clear opportunity for our students to develop their skills
- Align with the aspirations, needs and academic studies of our students
- Not conflict with our policies and procedures
- Be a genuine volunteering position and does not replace the work of paid staff members
- Have been adequately risk assessed
- Not be described as an internship to avoid confusion with our paid opportunities

To advertise your role we need the following from you:

- A role description
- Your volunteering policy and/or agreement
- Your Health & Safety policy
- Your Equalities & Diversity/Equal Opportunities Policy
- Details of a named point of contact for the Careers Service

The role description that we advertise should include:

- A brief overview of the organisation advertising the opportunity
- Title of the volunteering role
- Tasks and responsibilities of the role
- How the volunteer will benefit from undertaking the role
- The location of the opportunity
- Frequency and time involved
- The skills and attributes a volunteer is expected to have, including any specific characteristics sought or restrictions in place on who can volunteer
- Details of a named point of contact for the volunteer
- How to apply for the opportunity

We can provide support to help ensure that we can promote your opportunities.

Contact careers@gold.ac.uk for more information.