

# **Volunteer Survey Report**

## **August 2008**

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## Overview

From May 1 to July 7 of 2008, volunteers had the opportunity to provide feedback on their volunteer experience and offer suggestions for improvement. The survey was a follow up to the May 2007 volunteer survey. The 2008 survey was initially only available as a web-based survey. Volunteers with email accounts were sent a link to the survey. A kiosk was also available in the volunteer check-in area for volunteers to complete the survey while at the museum. After the first month, the survey was made available in paper format in the volunteer break room to help increase the response rate. Paper surveys were also mailed to volunteers who did not have email and had not volunteered between May – July so that they could be sure to have an opportunity to offer feedback. Volunteers received an hour of volunteer time for completing the survey. Of the 480 active volunteers, a total of 221 filled out the survey, for a 46% response rate. This was a higher response rate than the 2007 survey (41%). In the report, the “n” value for each table reflects how many volunteers answered that question.

Some of the survey questions are similar to the survey administered in 2007, allowing for a comparison of responses. Each comparison is shared and discussed below. In addition, responses from volunteers to many questions were lengthy and detailed; separate appendices are attached containing all of the commentary provided by volunteer respondents to the open-ended questions on the survey. In this report, selections of sample responses were included after open-ended questions.

## Results and Discussion

### Volunteer Experience

Volunteers were asked to rate their past year of volunteer experience at SMM. Nearly all (95%) of the respondents had a good or exceptional experience volunteering. Few volunteers rated their experiences lower, with only 5% of volunteers rating their experience as fair and less than 1% as poor. In comparison to 2007, the ratings were a bit lower but not significantly (See Table 1).

**Table 1: Overall Rating of Experience at SMM**

	2008 Percent (n=221)	2007 Percent (n=221)
<b>Exceptional</b>	45%	52%
<b>Good</b>	50%	45%
<b>Fair</b>	5%	3%
<b>Poor</b>	<1%	0%

Volunteers were asked to explain the reason for their rating. A list of all responses to this question is included in Appendix A. Responses are coded into themes beneath each rating. Four major themes arose from the data: “support and communication,” “paid staff,” “training sessions,” “experience with visitors,” “volunteering experience,” and “volunteer spaces.” “Support and communication” relates to the interactions between the volunteers and supervisors; “paid staff” refers to all staff in the museum not including volunteer supervisors; “volunteer spaces” refer to all those areas within the museum that volunteers work or spend time in, and “training sessions” are those statements made by volunteers that comment on the training sessions they have participated in. “Experience with visitors” are statements that relate to the volunteers’ interactions with visitors and “volunteering experience” is a theme of general museum-based experiences the volunteers share. Volunteers shared both positive and negative

responses. Responses were coded by theme only and not by whether they were positive or negative. Examples of each theme are shared below.

### ***Explanations for Overall SMM Experience Rating (n=198)***

#### *Support and Communication*

- I'm not sure how well Linda P. & Heather C. are communicating with each other. (Come to think of it, I'm not sure what Heather really does.)
- Would like to have more info as to how the Volunteer operation fits into the whole SMM organization. Who's responsible for what? This would help in relating to visitors better.
- Volunteers are friendly and the people in the volunteer office know who you are and they are friendly.

#### *Paid Staff*

- I feel like support from staff members can be very uneven--many seem to actively dislike volunteers at times, and they can sometimes be unwilling or uninterested in answering questions or showing volunteers around. I often feel as though I am a burden to the staff members I'm working with.
- There is an attitude from many, many of the paid employees -- and especially a few supervisors -- that volunteers are the bottom of the totem and treat us as such. It makes you not want to help out. I've heard reasons for this because volunteers take away a paid position but it seems to be more of a perceived hierarchical or educational misnomer.
- I loved the training and the subjects, but I never felt useful in the exhibits. Also, many of the staff seemed like they didn't care about their jobs, which made it hard to be enthusiastic about volunteering.

#### *Volunteer Spaces*

- For Deadly Medicine, the close quarters of the exhibit made it a bit difficult to approach people and ask them questions. At the same time, as much as I thought I knew about the subject, it is quite complex and even though I knew more than most visitors, I found myself hesitating to engage them more often. I did have a few good exchanges with children in explaining what was happening in Germany.
- Couple of the exhibits were removed from the gallery for maintenance some time ago and haven't been returned.
- I work in Collections and the area keeps getting smaller and taken by special exhibits.

#### *Training Sessions*

- I'm learning new things that I never knew before. I would like to see some training in Hmong arts etc. I love their work.
- I was somewhat disappointed by the practical training sessions, which I felt could have been better and maybe even hands-on. When we were trained for the Pompeii exhibit, about 20-30 people stood around a demonstration, making it hard to listen to the trainer and difficult to see.
- Could have used more preparation. At the beginning of each assignment feel I could have been better prepared.

#### *Experiences with Visitors*

- Good interactions with visitors.
- I enjoy coming here and seeing all the enthusiasm of the children.
- I worked mostly with preschoolers and their parents. I enjoyed the interaction and often it was rewarding.
- Some days there are very few visitor and I feel my time was not well spent.

### *Volunteering Experience*

- It was all right, fun to do, but a long drive.
- Not keeping busy enough.
- I think that flexibility options and opportunities to train and work in other areas or on different activities is too limited and restricted. One gets stale doing the same thing week in and week out.

### **Volunteer Recognition**

Volunteers were asked to rate the importance of different forms of recognition for the work they do in the museum (see Table 2). The “important” and “most important” acts of volunteer recognition were “informal acts from Volunteer Department staff” (75%), “communication of how volunteers fit into the Strategic Plan” (74%), and “lectures on topics of interest” (72%). The acts of recognition that were found to be somewhat or not at all important were the “Volunteer Gala” and “museum staff external to the volunteer department attending volunteer related events.”

***Table 2: Importance of Each for Recognition of Volunteers’ Work (n=212)***

	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not at all important</b>
<b>Lectures on topics of interest</b>	30%	42%	24%	4%
<b>Communication of how volunteers fit into the SMM's Strategic Plan and leadership's vision for the museum</b>	28%	46%	22%	4%
<b>Informal acts of recognition from other museum employees (outside the Volunteer Department)</b>	25%	41%	26%	8%
<b>Informal acts of recognition from Volunteer Department staff</b>	24%	51%	21%	3%
<b>Years of Service award</b>	19%	33%	36%	13%
<b>Attending the annual Volunteer Gala</b>	16%	31%	35%	18%
<b>Museum employees (outside the Volunteer Department) attending volunteer-related programming and events</b>	13%	35%	40%	12%

Volunteers were then asked to identify the two acts of recognition that were most important to them (see Table 3). Responses were similar to volunteer ratings in Table 2, with the top two means of recognition as “informal acts from Volunteer Department staff” (42%) and “lectures on topics of interest” (37%). The “years of service award” and “museum staff external to the volunteer department attending volunteer-related events” were the least important acts.

**Table 3: Top Ranked Recognition Types (n=224)**

	Percent of Volunteers
Informal acts of recognition from Volunteer Department staff	42%
Lectures on topics of interest	37%
Informal acts of recognition from other museum employees (outside the Volunteer Department)	33%
Communication of how volunteers fit into the SMM's Strategic Plan and leadership's vision for the museum	27%
Attending the annual Volunteer Gala	25%
Years of Service award	15%
Museum employees (outside the Volunteer Department) attending volunteer-related programming and events	7%

### **Volunteer Training**

Training is available for volunteers. Three quarters of volunteers attended training in the past year. A quarter of the volunteers did not attend trainings, either because they weren't available for their position or they simply chose not to attend (see Table 4). When broken down by the number of years the individuals had been volunteering at The Science Museum of Minnesota, the same percentage of newer volunteers (0-3 years) and seasoned volunteers did not attend trainings for their position. Just over one-tenth of each group had trainings available but they did not attend.

**Table 4: Percent of Volunteers Attending Training (n=221)**

	Percent of Volunteers
Attended at least one training	75%
Training was available but volunteer did not attend	13%
Training wasn't available for volunteer's position.	12%

Volunteers were asked to rate the quality of the trainings they had attended in the past year (see Table 5). Over four-fifths of the volunteers who attended training thought the trainings were good or exceptional (87%), although less than half (44%) thought they were exceptional (see Table 5).

**Table 5: Overall Rating of Attended Volunteer Training(s) (n=166)**

	Percent of Volunteers
Exceptional	44%
Good	43%
Fair	9%
Poor	4%

Volunteers were asked to explain their overall rating of volunteer training. Most people had good experiences, but improvements can still be made. As seen in volunteer responses, issues around the adequacy and preparation of the trainings were commonly cited as areas of concern.

The volunteer trainings could be improved to accommodate different types of learners and increase the participants' knowledge on the topics presented. Volunteers shared wanting to learn more about different topics, more about each topic presented, and receiving more training on how to interact with visitors in each area. Examples of each theme are shared below. For a complete list of responses broken down by quality and theme, see Appendix B. Positive and negative responses are clumped beneath each theme without separation.

### ***Explanations of Quality Ratings (n=137)***

#### *Adequacy or Completeness*

- I don't believe that the preparation given was adequate in comparison to the realistic demands of the job
- Cell lab training early on was not very complete - perhaps better now.
- I was somewhat disappointed by the practical training sessions, which I felt could have been better and maybe even hands-on. When we were trained for the Pompeii exhibit, about 20-30 people stood around a demonstration, making it hard to listen to the trainer and difficult to see.
- The training I took wasn't very thorough. The materials didn't have the depth that I felt I would need to properly do a demonstration or talk to visitors.
- I especially enjoyed the Pompeii training. It was nicely in depth for answering all the visitors' questions. Also, the lecture series for the exhibit was a nice addition to the training (all except one).

#### *Wanting to learn more*

- I think that flexibility options and opportunities to train and work in other areas or on different activities is too limited and restricted. One gets stale doing the same thing week in and week out. Current volunteer staff should be allowed to do OJT [on the job training] for new or non trained people at the location/exhibit in the SMM rather than wait for specific nights or classes for training. This gives opportunity for faster moves to new or different opportunities for volunteers.
- For the Experiment Gallery--I would like training in more activities than the few that were offered last fall. Doing the same ones over and over gets boring.
- I would like to learn more than what I am already doing.

#### *Trainers not prepared or Training doesn't exist*

- The staff was not well prepared and at times did not appear to be serious about the materials or the time spent in their presentations.
- There is no one with expertise in Paleo. Some volunteers know more than the staff about running the volunteer side. How sad! I understand there is no money for staff but I hope they find some before the whole volunteer program collapses. Having a fixed length of time for training regardless of material to be covered is not very effective. Some areas need less, some need more.
- Although well prepared to present information on a new exhibit, the staff person seemed a bit reluctant to venture beyond that presentation when questions were asked or an effort made to verify collateral information.
- I did not get much training, but my position does not require too much technical knowledge.
- All experiments were explain with the help of models.

#### *More visitor-specifics*

- Training was too technical in some of the activities to be practical for use with the visitors. Please train on a more visitor or kids perspective.

- Part of the Deadly Medicine training was repetitive and redundant. More should have been done at the exhibit itself to help volunteers interact with visitors to make their visit more meaningful.
- I knew somewhat what I was supposed to do and what was expected of me, but when I actually volunteered for the first time, I still had a lot of questions.
- Lots of information to cover, but the training encouraged all of us to creatively help the visitors understand.
- The training gave a lot of information in the two nights. However, as a school group greeter, you have to learn on the job.

*Not enough time for training*

- I took Pompeii training and was disappointed. I expected more depth. There were some very good presenters but they were not given good introductions or enough time.
- Too much information presented in too short of time. I suggest that experienced volunteers be permitted to train other volunteers during normal volunteer shifts.
- Volunteer training was brief.
- Additionally, for the Star Wars training, it would have been helpful to have more time with at least one of the carts before my first volunteer shift.
- Nano training was interesting but we ran out of time on the second half.

*Alternative times needed*

- The training is usually at night. I do not drive; so I did not attend. I think the training information should be printed so we can read it at home.
- It would be nice to have more in the summer months in my case.
- Timing was good for me.

*Other*

- I was somewhat disappointed with the exhibit hall training. However, I was very impressed with the training for the Deadly Medicine exhibit.
- I would suggest training volunteers and staff separately for special exhibits like Star Wars. As a volunteer, I'm here because I'm interested in the material. There were several instances when staff members were talking or being disruptive during training or being disrespectful of volunteers who asked questions.
- It was an opportunity to discuss with others some of the problems we encounter.
- It was great to see the inner working of a Museum I hope to be able to get back to volunteering soon.

Volunteers shared how prepared they felt at fulfilling their duties as a result of participating in training(s) (see Table 6). Seven-tenths (70%) of the volunteers felt “prepared” about fulfilling their role as a volunteer after participating in trainings. Less than a tenth of the volunteers felt “somewhat unprepared” or “unprepared” after participating in training.

**Table 6: Preparedness due to Trainings (n=160)**

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Prepared</b>	70%
<b>Somewhat prepared</b>	23%
<b>Somewhat unprepared</b>	6%
<b>Unprepared</b>	1%

An analysis of the volunteers' sense of preparation based on the number of years they had been at The Science Museum of Minnesota showed some disparity among volunteers (see Table 7). One in ten of the newer volunteers felt unprepared while only half of seasoned volunteers felt that way.

**Table 7: Preparedness and Length of Volunteering**

	<b>0-3 years Volunteering (n=62)</b>	<b>4 or more years (n=77)</b>
<b>Prepared</b>	61%	74%
<b>Somewhat prepared</b>	29%	21%
<b>Somewhat unprepared</b>	6%	5%
<b>Unprepared</b>	4%	0%

In order to understand why volunteers did not feel prepared after training, anyone who felt “unprepared or “somewhat unprepared” was asked what would have made them feel more prepared. Some volunteers who did not respond as feeling “somewhat unprepared” or “unprepared” gave responses to this question. For a complete list of responses, see Appendix C. For those individuals who felt “somewhat unprepared” or “unprepared” in their position, the responses are listed below. In addition, the number of years each individual has volunteered at The Science Museum of Minnesota is listed after their statement. These volunteers shared suggestions ranging from improving or providing more trainings to needing to read about the topic on their own or shadowing other volunteers.

***Ideas to Improve Preparedness (n=12)***

*More/Improved Training*

- More training. (0-3 years)
- No training was offered. (0-3 years)
- Didn't receive any real specific training until I started. (0-3 years)

*More visitor training*

- More information on what exactly to do when interacting with visitors instead of just raw information. (0-3 years)
- Training with emphasis on specifically what to do with visitor groups. (0-3 years)

*More detailed training*

- More detail on visitor interactive displays. (0-3 years)
- More depth to the training. Study material. More flexibility with the carts. (4 or more years)

*Study the topic more on your own.*

- I study the topic before hand. (4 or more years)
- I believe a handbook containing descriptions of the various items in the gallery, background information and identification and description of hands on materials would have been very useful. (0-3 years)

*Information Booth Specifics*

- As the first point of contact with many of the visitors, the Info Booth should have immediate updates and be notified of changes in schedules or procedures. This often doesn't happen and we volunteers are caught unawares, giving out mis-information to people, who occasionally return to mercifully update us, or castigate us for our lapses. (4 or more years)



### *More time shadowing others*

- I think if someone else was helping me in the booth for my first time volunteering, I wouldn't have felt so alone. (0-3 years)
- More help the first time or two doing the activities that I was trained for. More accessibility to someone to answer questions when first starting out with the activities. I didn't like the sink or swim feeling the first few times I was there. (0-3 years)

### **Volunteer Supervision**

Volunteers were asked about the supervision and support they have received in the past year (see Table 8). The volunteers feel that they receive the best supervision and support from the volunteer department (78%) and the least from the curators (9%).

**Table 8: Ratings of Supervision and Support Received**

	<b>Exceptional</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
<b>Volunteer Department staff (Heather, Linda, Christine) (n=193)</b>	78%	16%	6%	0%
<b>Gallery Program Supervisors (Ana, Shari, Kate) (n=130)</b>	53%	34%	12%	1%
<b>General Gallery/Exhibit Staff (n=131)</b>	53%	33%	10%	4%
<b>Curators (Gretchen, Ed, Bruce, Dick, Tilly) (n=73)</b>	55%	25%	11%	9%

The volunteers were given space to share suggestions about how to improve the supervision and support given by these different areas. Less than half of the volunteers shared comments, and many of those that were shared were supportive. A complete list of suggestions can be found in Appendix D; the themes that were present in the responses are listed here and representative comments are included.

### ***Suggestions to Improve Supervision and Support (n=96)***

#### *18% (17) Be more interactive, communicative, engaging*

- How about a get-to-know session?
- An occasional meeting of all volunteers within a particular gallery with the supervisor and curator could be helpful.
- There possibly could be more hands on but I generally like only a little suggestion and then like to take it and run so not one who is looking for much.
- Ongoing keeping volunteers up-to-date on what is new and what is under consideration in the gallery.

#### *17% (16) Be more present*

- ALWAYS have a floor supervisor on duty and available.
- Be around more and at various times.
- Due to my schedule, I rarely see Bruce or Kristi.
- I do not know most of these individuals.
- I do not see the curators around much and would like to interact with them more.

*14% (13) Paid Staff Respect of and Interaction with Volunteers*

- I often feel that the volunteers are viewed as unnecessary and even an annoyance by the exhibit staff.
- If everyone on staff treated volunteers as Kate does, SMM would be a wonderful place to volunteer our precious time.
- Just saying thanks for coming goes a long way as does a smile and how are you. The volunteer who feels appreciated on the day they are there will keep coming back. I don't feel we need to get awards for years served (other than 5 year milestones) or even birthday cards or holiday greetings. My reward comes when supervisors and support personnel acknowledge me being there and also what my experience and knowledge brings to SMM.
- Most staff is wonderful - feel like it is a partnership to work with them.

*10% (10) Training Changes*

- Exhibit training.
- For the Experiment Gallery, have people start out in pairs or have a supervisor there to get things started on the right foot. Maybe a new person with an experienced person doing an activity.
- Additional training is always welcome, and update training about existing demo areas would be good as well.

*7% (7) Improving Volunteer Area/Objects*

- Our area wishes the machines to buy things were gone OR someone was there to make change for the students.
- The dry erase markers for the white board behind the Experiment Gallery bench are almost always in bad shape.
- Make sure computer programs work.

*5% (5) Paid Staff Work Ethic*

- Inspire the museum staff to take their responsibilities seriously. Help the staff to engage in interpersonal training.
- Sometimes cannot find the General Gallery Staff.
- Decrease the responsibility that gallery staff have in special exhibits.

*3% (3) Incorporating Volunteers more into Museum*

- I work in Dinos/fossils and it would be really fun to have someone occasionally take us back into the lab to see what is being worked on.
- Carts for demonstrations need to be redesigned! Please ask those of us who use them for suggestions.
- Volunteers could be asked how to improve/enhance exhibits and arrangement of exhibit spaces; changing exhibit spaces (e.g. Dinosaurs & Fossils Gallery) without volunteer input, it is very inconsiderate in view of volunteers' contributions to the experience of visitors to the Museum.

*5% (5) Other*

- From question 13, Shari - poor; Ana - Fair; Kate - excellent.
- Hard to say. Heather has to be a cheerleader and that can be tough sometimes. I think Kate Hintz consistently does an outstanding job. Joan in collections also very good.
- Has improved in last couple of years.
- I don't know how much staff goes down to the school entrance. There was a problem with an employee spending a lot of time on the computer, but she has left the SMM due to a problem somewhere else in the building that she was working.

- Letter of recommendation.

When comparing the ratings of different supervisors by how long volunteers have been working at SMM, the general gallery staff and curators are more negatively rated by seasoned volunteers than by volunteers who have been here for three years or less (see Table 9).

**Table 9: Supervision Ratings and Length of Volunteering**

	Volunteer Department Staff		Gallery Program Supervisors		General Gallery/ Exhibit Staff		Curators	
	0-3 Years (n= 82)	4 or More Year (n= 111)	0-3 Years (n=53)	4 or More Year (n=50)	0-3 Years (n=54)	4 or More Year (n=77)	0-3 Years (n=33)	4 or More Years (n=40)
<b>Excellent</b>	79%	78%	61%	48%	56%	51%	55%	54%
<b>Good</b>	16%	16%	26%	39%	33%	32%	27%	23%
<b>Fair</b>	5%	6%	13%	10%	7%	12%	12%	10%
<b>Poor</b>	0%	0%	0%	3%	4%	5%	6%	13%

Volunteers were asked about the likelihood that they would recommend volunteering at SMM to others (see Table 10). Most of the volunteers (84%) said they were “likely” or “very likely” to recommend SMM as a place to volunteer while only 6% said they were “unlikely”. These ratings are similar to the 2007 volunteer survey.

**Table 10: Likelihood of Recommending SMM to Volunteer**

	2008 Percent (n=197)	2007 Percent (n=213)
<b>Very likely</b>	54%	56%
<b>Likely</b>	30%	30%
<b>Somewhat likely</b>	10%	8%
<b>Somewhat unlikely</b>	2%	1%
<b>Unlikely</b>	0%	1%
<b>Very unlikely</b>	4%	6%

### Final Comments

At the end of the survey, volunteers were given the space to provide final comments. Half of the volunteers shared comments. All statements are listed and categorized by theme in Appendix D. Volunteers provide praise for their volunteer experience as well as suggestions for improvement. The major themes that came up through volunteers’ comments were about paid staff, the need for more “trainings,” some “museum-wide changes, comments about the “volunteer staff” and “volunteering specifics,” wishing to be incorporated into the museum more, and general and location-specific positives.

## Volunteer Information

After sharing information about the volunteer program, volunteers shared information about themselves. A majority of the volunteers worked in the core galleries and over a quarter worked with special and temporary exhibits (see Table 11).

***Table 11: Volunteer Positions Held in Past Year (n=224\*)***

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Core Galleries</b>	47%
<b>Special/Temporary Exhibits</b>	29%
<b>Special Events</b>	22%
<b>Other</b>	16%
<b>Behind the Scenes</b>	12%
<b>Information Booth</b>	11%
<b>School Group Greeter</b>	8%
<b>Clerical Support</b>	3%

\*Some volunteers checked more than one area.

Most of the volunteers have been here for less than seven years (see Table 12). Nearly half have been here for up to three years.

***Table 12: Length of Volunteering at SMM***

<b>Number of Years</b>	<b>2008 Percent (n=220)</b>	<b>2007 Percent (n=220)</b>
<b>Less than a year</b>	28%	20%
<b>1-3 years</b>	18%	13%
<b>4-7 years</b>	13%	30%
<b>8-10 years</b>	17%	10%
<b>11-15 years</b>	13%	12%
<b>16-20 years</b>	5%	5%
<b>21-30 years</b>	5%	8%
<b>More than 30 years</b>	2%	3%

The majority of volunteers responding to the survey are between 50 and 80 years of age (see Table 13).

**Table 13: Age of Volunteers (n=216)**

Categories	Percent
18-21	7%
22-29	10%
30-39	5%
40-49	4%
50-59	17%
60-69	22%
70-79	25%
80-89	7%

A greater number of males were represented in this year's survey than last year (see Table 14).

**Table 14: Gender**

	2008 Percent (n=196)	2007 Percent (n=204)
Male	46%	43%
Female	54%	57%

The education level of volunteers is similar between 2007 and 2008 (see Table 15). This year's volunteer respondents included individuals who had less than a high school degree (which means they could possibly still be in high school).

**Table 15: Education Level**

	2008 Percent (n=198)	2007 Percent (n=211)
Less than high school	3%	0%
Complete high school	6%	7%
Some college/Tech Ed	16%	19%
College degree	39%	40%
Graduate degree	28%	25%
Doctorate	8%	9%

The vast majority of volunteers identify as white, but slightly more ethnic diversity among volunteers is apparent among 2008 volunteer respondents than 2007 volunteers (see Table 16).

**Table 16: Ethnicity**

	<b>2008 Percent (n=201)</b>	<b>2007 Percent (n=174)</b>
<b>White</b>	89%	94%
<b>Asian</b>	6%	2%
<b>African American</b>	1%	0%
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	1%	0%
<b>Native American</b>	1%	0%
<b>Other</b>	2%	4%

**2008 Other:**

Jewish (2), Svenska Poika.

# Appendix A: Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2008



## Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2008

Hello SMM Volunteer!

Volunteers are a vital part of the Science Museum of Minnesota and we want to make sure the experience you have as a SMM volunteer is both meaningful and enjoyable. To ensure this, we are asking for your feedback to help us improve SMM's volunteer program. Last year you may have participated in a volunteer survey. That survey was quite long (44 questions) because of the need to gather a deep understanding of the SMM volunteer experience. The wealth of feedback was used to begin to improve SMM volunteer program.

This year's volunteer survey asks about some of the changes that have been implemented and will help to gauge the success of program improvements. Most survey questions will ask you to reflect on your volunteer experience **in the past year**. The survey is much shorter and gives you the option of two lengths. You can either complete the survey introduction of nine questions, or you can choose to complete the full survey, which means you will be asked a total of 19 questions.

The survey will take up to 15 minutes to complete. In appreciation for completing the entire 19-question survey, you will receive one volunteer hour. You'll need to write down your 4-digit Volunteer ID number at the end of the survey to receive the incentive.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. Your Volunteer ID number will not be reported with your responses to ensure that your comments remain anonymous and confidential. For this reason, we encourage you to be open and honest in your responses to ensure we make the necessary changes to SMM's volunteer program.

This evaluation of SMM's Volunteer Department is being carried out by the Science Museum of Minnesota's Department of Evaluation & Research in Learning. Our role is to listen to volunteers' voices and share the final survey results with the Volunteer Department staff. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Amy Grack Nelson, SMM Evaluation and Research Associate, at (651) 221-4575 or [agnelson@smm.org](mailto:agnelson@smm.org).

Thank you in advance for your time. As a SMM Volunteer, your feedback is extremely important!

**1. Thinking only about the past year, how would you rate your overall volunteer experience at SMM?**

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Exceptional

**2. Please explain the reason for your rating in Question 1.**

**3. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the volunteer training(s) you have attended in the past year?**

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent
- Training wasn't available for my position.
- Training was available, but I did not attend.

**4. Please explain the reason for your rating in Question 3 and if desired, offer any suggestions to improving trainings.**

**5. How would you rate the importance of each of the following in terms of recognition for your work as a volunteer?**

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
Attending the annual Volunteer Gala	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informal acts of recognition from Volunteer Department staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informal acts of recognition from other museum employees (outside the Volunteer Dept)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Years of Service award	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Museum employees (outside the Volunteer Dept) attending volunteer-related programming and events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lectures on topics of interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication of how volunteers fit into the SMM's Strategic Plan and leadership's vision for the museum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**6. Of the types of recognition listed in Question 5, which two are the most important to you?**

- Attending the annual Volunteer Gala
- Informal acts of recognition from Volunteer Department staff
- Informal acts of recognition from other museum employees (outside the Volunteer Dept)
- Years of Service award
- Museum employees (outside the Volunteer Dept) attending volunteer events
- Lectures on topics of interest
- Communication of how volunteers fit into the SMM's Strategic Plan and leadership's vision for the museum

**7. Which of the following volunteer position(s) have you held in the past year? (Check all that apply)**

- Special/Temporary Exhibits (Wild Music, Race, Pompeii, Animation, Deadly Medicine)
- Behind the Scenes
- Core Galleries (Mississippi River Gallery, Human Body Gallery, Collections Gallery, Dinos & Fossils, Experiment Gallery, Big Back Yard)
- Information Booth
- Special Events
- School Group Greeter
- Clerical Support
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**8. How long have you volunteered at SMM?**

- Less than a year
- 1-3 years
- 4-7 years
- 8-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-30 years
- More than 30 years

**9. What is your age range?**

- 18-21
- 22-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80-89
- 90+

**Thank you for completing the first part of this survey!**

**If you would be willing, we would love just a little more feedback from you. There are nine questions left. If you complete the final questions you will receive a volunteer hour.**

**11. Overall, how prepared did you feel for your volunteer position(s) as a result of the training(s) you've attended in the past year?**

- Unprepared
- Somewhat Unprepared
- Somewhat Prepared
- Prepared
- Not applicable, did not receive training for my position

**12. If you felt “unprepared” or “somewhat unprepared”, what would have helped you feel more prepared for your volunteer position?**

**13. How would you rate the supervision and support you've received from the following groups in the past year? If a certain group does not apply to your volunteer position, check “Not Applicable”**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Not Applicable
Volunteer Department staff (Heather, Linda, Christine)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gallery Program Supervisors (Ana, Shari, Kate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General Gallery/Exhibit Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curators (Gretchen, Ed, Bruce, Dick, Tilly)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**14. Please provide suggestions on how we could improve your supervision and support experience at SMM.**

**15. What is the likelihood that you would recommend volunteering at SMM to a friend or family member?**

- Very Unlikely
- Unlikely
- Somewhat Unlikely
- Somewhat Likely
- Likely
- Very Likely

**16. Rant and rave. Last chance to provide any additional comments (both positive and negative) about your volunteer experience and suggestions for improvement. (Use the back of this sheet if needed).**

**Tell us a little bit about yourself to help us understand your responses.**

**17. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female

**18. What is the highest level of education you have completed thus far?**

- Less than High School
- Completed High School
- Some College or Technical Education
- College Degree
- Graduate Degree
- Doctorate

**19. What is your ethnicity? (Check all that apply)**

- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black/African American
- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your time and feedback!**

**To receive one volunteer hour, please write down your 4-digit Volunteer ID Number. If you don't know your Volunteer ID number, please write down your first and last name. To ensure your responses remain anonymous, your name will be reported separately from your survey.**

ID # \_\_\_\_\_ Name (If you don't know your #) \_\_\_\_\_