



VANCOUVER  
HERITAGE  
FOUNDATION

# Volunteer Handbook

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Updated: July 2024

Volunteer Handbook

# CONTENTS

1. Land Acknowledgment
2. Introduction
3. Staff and Board of Directors
4. Policies
5. Accessibility Statement
6. Volunteer Guidelines and Code of Conduct
7. Role Descriptions
8. Orientation and Training
9. Recording Volunteer Hours
10. Feedback and Evaluations
11. Recognition



Vancouver Heritage Foundation recognizes the diverse history and cultural heritage of Vancouver and that the city is located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>ə́yəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) and səlílwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples.

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# WELCOME

Thank you for volunteering with Vancouver Heritage Foundation (VHF). We rely on the generosity of volunteers to help us at many of the programs and events we deliver every year. By sharing your time, you are helping us spread the message of heritage conservation and its contributions to Vancouver's communities, culture and sustainable future. Whether you're contributing by photographing in your spare time or spending the day at a major event, you are supporting heritage conservation in your community.





# About **VANCOUVER HERITAGE FOUNDATION**

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Vancouver Heritage Foundation was created as a not-for-profit society in 1992 and became a registered charity in 1996. The City of Vancouver Mayor and Councilors were VHF's first Directors and remain Honorary Directors today. Since 1998, VHF has been governed by a citizen board. The day-to-day operations are run by a small team of dedicated employees.

By offering educational events such as house and walking tours, talks, workshops and courses along with special events throughout the year, VHF promotes historic buildings and places as a vital element in our communities. VHF events attract a range of participants from interested homeowners and heritage enthusiasts, to students and professionals such as architects, interior designers, contractors, and planners. VHF also undertakes special projects in line with our mission, as well as fundraising events and activities. Many of these require help from volunteers.

## MISSION

VHF advances the appreciation and conservation of our city's diverse heritage places and their stories. We raise awareness of the vital contribution that heritage makes to a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable community.

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**OUR OFFICE**

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

There are up to 15 voting Directors of Vancouver Heritage Foundation. All Directors are appointed by the City of Vancouver Mayor and Council for a two-year term but may be re-appointed. The Board meets monthly throughout the year. The Board of Directors is responsible for increasing private and public sector involvement and investment in the conservation of heritage resources; distributing funds according to developed allocation processes; developing policies for the programs undertaken by VHF; and prudently managing VHF assets.

As this is an active fundraising organization, the Board engages in fundraising activities and promotes VHF to the public, sponsors, donors, and planned giving professionals. The Board of Directors aims to include individuals with expertise in architecture, real estate development, heritage conservation, tourism, financial management, estate planning, fundraising and communications.

Mayor and Council are Honorary Directors of VHF retaining limited voting rights regarding appointment of Directors, changes to the constitution, and the expulsion of Directors.

Interested in being on Vancouver Heritage Foundation's Board of Directors? Please contact our Executive Director for details.





# POLICIES

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## 1. Screening Policy

### 1.1 Applying for a Volunteer Position

Prospective volunteers can apply to volunteer with VHF through our general inquiry form, a specific role/event application, or by contacting VHF directly. Regardless of the application avenue, all volunteers will go through an interview and registration process. Application for a volunteer position does not guarantee acceptance and is at the discretion of the volunteer manager or project manager. Volunteers will be contacted for all available opportunities unless the volunteer specifically indicates that they are only interested in one particular role.

### 1.2 Interview and Registration Process

All prospective volunteers are required to participate in a brief (30 minutes) interview by phone, in-person, or virtually for any volunteer position. This is an opportunity to determine the suitability of the prospective volunteer and to ensure VHF fits the needs of the volunteer. Prospective volunteers for larger events (eg. House Tours) may be required to have an in-person or virtual interview in-place of a phone interview.

Those accepted to volunteer with VHF are required to review the Volunteer Handbook and complete a Volunteer Registration Form. All volunteers will be provided with a VHF branded volunteer t-shirt and name tag. Volunteers cannot participate in volunteer roles or events without a completed Volunteer Registration Form, including providing VHF with an emergency contact. Prospective volunteers can withdraw their application at any time.

### 1.3. Criminal Record Checks

At this time, VHF does not require a Criminal Record Check to be completed for any volunteer position. VHF reserves the right to change this policy at any time and request checks from new and existing volunteers.

## 2. Privacy and Personal Information Policy

### 2.1. Collection of Personal Information

Personal information collected by Vancouver Heritage Foundation (VHF) may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Name
- Phone number
- Email address
- Work or home address
- Emergency contact information
- Health related concerns (ie. allergies)

### 2.2. Use of Personal Information

VHF collects personal information in order to:

- Manage communication, volunteer hours and event coordination.
- Disseminate information regarding VHF volunteer opportunities, programs and events.
- In the event of an emergency, provide best care to the volunteer.

### 2.3. Disclosure of Personal Information

VHF employees working with volunteers may access the information as is necessary to provide the services and opportunities as outlined in this policy. Personal information will not be disclosed for purposes other than those for which it was collected, except with the consent of the individual or as required by law.

### 2.4. Security of Personal Information

VHF stores personal information in a manner that ensures security against unauthorized access, alteration or deletion, at a level commensurate with its sensitivity.

Credit card information is not retained by VHF. Credit card information collected by staff is retained only so as long as it is required for processing payment.

Please note that any unprotected email communication via the Internet is subject to possible loss, interception, or alteration. Consequently, we cannot and are not responsible for any damages you may suffer if you transmit personal information to us via the Internet.

VHF provides links to other web sites. As VHF does not control these sites, we would encourage you to review their individual privacy policies.

### **3. Workplace Violence, Bullying and Harassments Policy**

3.1 Vancouver Heritage Foundation is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and supportive work environment by treating our staff, volunteers, and event participants with respect, fairness, and sensitivity.

3.2 Vancouver Heritage Foundation will not tolerate any type of violence or harassment within the workplace or during related events or activities, including:

- Physical assault
- Sexual assault
- Threat (verbal or written)
- Verbal/Emotional/Psychological abuse
- Workplace Bullying

3.3 Volunteers are encouraged to report any instances of violence or harassment to management.

3.4 Management will respond promptly, assess the situation, and ensure that any necessary interventions are followed, including facilitation of medical attention, referrals to community agencies or treating practitioner, completion of incident report, reporting to police (as required), and team debriefing.

### **4. Dismissal Policy**

#### **4.1. Warning**

A warning will be issued in the event of volunteers exhibiting poor behaviour or attitude, not following guidelines, responsibilities, or direction of staff/lead volunteers, being absent from a scheduled shift without notification, multiple cancellations of scheduled shifts, or carelessly disclosing private information. Volunteers will be given a clear explanation of their indiscretion and its impact and if required, the Volunteer Manager will outline a plan on how the indiscretion can be avoided in the future.

#### **4.2. Consequences**

Failure to meaningfully adjust behaviour following the first warning will result in dismissal.

#### **4.3. Immediate Dismissal**

Harassment or bullying of fellow volunteers or staff, deliberately disclosing private information of VHF, staff, volunteers or members of the public, or other egregious purposeful indiscretions will result in immediate dismissal.



## ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

VHF strives to host inclusive and accessible events that enable individuals of all abilities to fully participate in our programming. Event facilities are screened for accessibility and disclosed to participants in advance.

For virtual events, live captioning will be provided, and a recording will be sent out within two weeks of the virtual event. We will endeavor to accommodate additional requests where possible; on-site requests cannot be guaranteed.

When registering for an event, please let us know of any accessibility requirements that we should be aware of so we can best help you enjoy the virtual or in-person event. Requirements may include live captioning, ASL interpreters, captioned media or accessible documents from recorded events, requests for the speaker to use a voice amplifying device, accommodations for mobility impairments, and/or dietary restrictions or allergies (including those to strong fragrance and scents).

No volunteer will be declined strictly based on their ability and VHF will strive to find meaningful roles to suit all abilities. It is important to note that due to the nature of some historic buildings, VHF is not able to guarantee that every site will be fully accessible. However, VHF will endeavor to make all possible accommodations.

If you have any feedback, questions or would like to have a conversation about your access needs, please contact us at [mail@vancouverheritagefoundation.org](mailto:mail@vancouverheritagefoundation.org)

## Code of Conduct

# VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

## The Role of Volunteers & Relationship with VHF Staff

Volunteers are an integral part of our team and are essential to providing an excellent experience for our event participants. Volunteers enhance the work of staff and it is essential that all volunteers and staff understand and respect each other's responsibilities, abilities, and needs.

It is essential that both volunteers and VHF staff be reliably reachable via email or phone, communicate with promptness, and adhere to commitments. A volunteer's staff contact may vary by project or event. A VHF staff member will always be available on site or working during an event time.

Volunteers are expected to follow all protocols and direction as established by VHF staff and staff-appointed volunteer leads. Volunteers who assist with running successful events are the face of the organization. As such, volunteers are expected to understand VHF's mission, and behave and present themselves professionally, with a friendly and approachable demeanor. Volunteers are also responsible for upholding all rules and/or guidelines associated with the event at all times.

VHF provides a branded volunteer t-shirt and name badge for event volunteers. These items should be kept in good condition and worn at all times while volunteering at public events. We encourage volunteers to direct questions about VHF, its goals and mission to staff and board members. Please direct all media inquiries to VHF staff.



## **VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Fulfill your role to the best of your ability:
  - Be prompt and reliable.
  - Be considerate and give as much notice as possible if you must cancel.
  - Be willing to learn, open to change, participate in any offered training, make every effort to attend briefing sessions, and read materials provided by VHF.
- Ask questions and proactively express any concerns or issues to VHF staff.
- Prioritize your safety and the safety of others; identify any potential hazards and notify volunteer leads or VHF staff in a timely manner.
- Keep confidentiality of any sensitive information you may become aware of or be responsible for.
- Protect and safeguard the assets of VHF and any members of the public or organizations VHF collaborates with.
- Be loyal to the VHF mission statement, branding, and messaging to offer consistency and integrity to the public.
- Follow the guidance and decisions of staff and staff-appointed volunteer leaders.
- Be respectful, thoughtful, cooperative, and fair.

## **VOLUNTEERS HAVE THE RIGHT:**

1. To be treated with respect and dignity at all times.
2. To be given a clear understanding of each role and how it meaningfully supports VHF's mission.
3. To receive adequate training, guidance, support and direction to enable them to meet the volunteer role's needs.
4. To have the freedom to provide feedback and/or address concerns to VHF.
5. To be recognized for their contributions.
6. To work in a healthy, safe, equitable, and respectful environment.



# Volunteer Role Descriptions

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## PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS DISTRIBUTOR

**Purpose:** The promotional materials distributor assists in advertising VHF's programs, events, and grants to the public by distributing promotional materials. They represent VHF to community centers and businesses to amplify our reach through the connections they make. Promotional materials include, but are not limited to, posters, rack cards, postcards, map guides, and pamphlets.

### Responsibilities:

- Collect materials from the VHF office and return unused materials
- Take guidance from VHF staff to determine the appropriate distribution spaces/locations
- Deliver materials throughout the City of Vancouver (as determined)
- If applicable, inquire about and receive permissions to post materials in public/private spaces in person or by phone. \*Note - Volunteers are not to reach out via their personal email or provide their personal information as a VHF contact

### Time Commitment:

The volunteer can expect to commit 4 hours per distribution job, several times per year. The distribution can be self-paced on the volunteer's own schedule. Deadlines for when materials are expected to be distributed will be communicated in advance.

### Qualifications:

- Reliable, handle materials with care, and efficient
- Ability to approach and communicate with businesses and the public with a friendly manner
- Lift moderately heavy boxes of materials
- Provide their own transportation (and incur the costs of such transportation)
- Ability to navigate around Vancouver

### Support:

The volunteer reports to the Administration and Volunteer Manager.

## PROGRAMMING, SPECIAL EVENT, OR FUNDRAISING EVENT VOLUNTEER

Purpose: Programming, special event, and fundraising event volunteers help deliver VHF's diverse programming and make a positive experience for the public or donors.

### Responsibilities:

- Be familiar with the event location and schedule
- Set up and clean up tables, chairs, tents, banners, etc.
- Greet and sign-in participants, answer general questions
- Handout materials or documents
- Direct participants to seating, washrooms, activities etc.
- Assist with managing and delivering event activities to people of all ages
- Accept cash donations
- Assist with preparing food trays and managing refreshment tables
- Some events may require a specific dress code

### Time Commitment:

Volunteers can expect at least 2-4 hours per event. Longer events may be up to 6 hours (or be split into shifts). Events typically take place on weekday evenings or weekends.

### Qualifications:

- Positive attitude and friendly demeanor
- Great inter-personal skills and ability to connect with diverse audiences and ages
- Able to take direction and manage tasks independently
- Able to assist in lifting heavy items such as tables (not required and alternative roles can be assigned based on ability)
- Fundraising event volunteers are expected to have knowledge of VHF's mission and programs
- Knowledgeable about heritage, architecture, or history is not necessary, but those skills will be very welcome
- Food-safe or Serving it Right Certificates are an asset

### Support:

The volunteer reports to the Administration and Volunteer Manager and will be supported on-site by other VHF staff members.

## TOUR VOLUNTEER

Purpose: Tour volunteers assist participants to get the most enjoyment and information from attending VHF's tours.

Responsibilities:

### House tours

- Help with house setup, including posting signage and distributing materials
- Welcoming participants, checking tickets, and recording data
- Answering questions and proactively engaging with participants
- Following, explaining and enforcing the tour guidelines, such as the requirement to remove shoes, no cellphones or photography, easing the flow of participants to avoid congestion, not allowing those under the age of 6 to enter the houses or those without tickets
- Assisting with closing and cleanup – taking down signs, collecting tape, trash, clipboards, and assembling outside for pick-up
- Leaving the shift or house only once dismissed by lead volunteer
- Directing any onsite issues to VHF staff
- Dressing appropriately based on indoor or outdoor position and wearing VHF volunteer t-shirt (provided)

### Walking tours

- Ensuring participants are all meeting in the same location
- Greeting and signing in participants, answering general questions
- Ensuring unexpected or 'replacement' participants sign a liability waiver and record their information
- Keeping participants together during walking portions and ensure participants are not obstructing sidewalks or standing in areas that pose a safety risk (ie. On the street)
- Take photographs (if applicable)



## TOUR VOLUNTEER CONTINUED

**Time Commitment:** Walking tour commitments are 2.5 hours each. House tour commitments are 4.5 hour shifts plus at least one 1.5-hour training session. House Tour Lead volunteers will have additional time commitments.

**Qualifications:**

- Outgoing, friendly demeanor; proactive and comfortable interacting with a diverse range of people
- Eager to learn and share information
- Able to follow guidelines and enforce them to the participants effectively
- Willing to readily accept the leadership and direction of staff members, have the awareness to know when to ask questions about tasks or how to address situations

**Support:** The volunteer reports to the Administration and Volunteer Manager and will be supported on-site by other VHF staff members or lead volunteers. Staff members will be available by phone during the volunteer's shift.

Volunteer roles are not limited to those outlined in the Volunteer Handbook. Special, one-time, or new recurring roles may come up as needs appear. Volunteers are encouraged to express desire to learn certain skills or offer expertise and will be contacted if opportunities arise.

## PHOTOGRAPHER, VIDEOGRAPHER, CONTENT CREATOR, AND POST-PRODUCTION

These roles are offered based on project availability and require specialized skills. Volunteers who have expressed interest and have backgrounds in these areas are encouraged to submit examples of their work.

Support: These roles report to whomever is managing the related project.



## ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

VHF provides virtual and/or in-person orientation sessions depending on availability and volunteer positions.

### General Information

- This can take place in-part with your initial volunteer interview if you're keen to get going or can be scheduled independently. This will include an overview of the organization, staff, policies, and how to record volunteer hours, etc.

### Event Specific Information

- When a volunteer call comes out, it will include details of everything you need to know about the event. This can be announced 1 to 3 months before the event – depending on the size of the event.

### Role/Responsibility Specific Information

- When you've completed registration and/or are scheduled for an event, you will be assigned a role with associated responsibilities. You can expect to receive this information 1 month to 1 week before the event.

Larger events will have pre-event training sessions and smaller events will have brief training sessions before the event starts. Volunteers are expected to actively participate in any training or orientation offered. If a volunteer is continuously unable to participate, they may be dismissed.



## ORIENTATION CHECKLIST:

- Volunteer registration form completed ☐
- T-shirt and name tag received ☐
- Link to record volunteer hours ☐
- Organization overview – general need-to-knows ☐
- Introduction to relevant staff members ☐



Recording

# VOLUNTEER HOURS

Volunteers are responsible for recording their own hours. You will be provided with an online digital form (Volunteer Hours Reporting) to complete, detailing the role and/or event you committed time to. This form is to be completed after each event OR after a specified number of hours have been completed for a non-event related volunteer role (photography, research, etc.).

For example, in your position as a photography volunteer, if you commit one hour per day over 5 days you can fill out the form at the end of the week for the total 5 hours. Or if you commit two hours each week, you can fill out the form at the end of the month for 8 hours.

VHF staff are happy to write work confirmation letters within a reasonable request time. Please forward requests to [mail@vancouverheritagefoundation.org](mailto:mail@vancouverheritagefoundation.org). Personal and professional references can be requested and will be accommodated on a case-by-case basis. VHF staff must be contacted in advance to be listed as a reference and volunteer work must have been completed within the previous two years of the request.

VHF reserves the right to modify reported hours based on project manager's or supervisor's notification or lack of performance. Abuse of the self-reporting system may result in refusal of work confirmation letters, references, or future volunteering opportunities.

**RECORD YOUR HOURS HERE**



# FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION

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A formal feedback and evaluation meeting can be scheduled at the request of VHF or the volunteer after a new volunteer's first event. Formal or informal meetings can be requested by any volunteer at any time.

Formal meetings can cover:

- Evaluation of personal and interpersonal performance (if applicable)
- Evaluation on whether role expectations were met
- Opportunity to provide feedback to VHF or supervisor (ex. Whether orientation was sufficient, if support or supervision needs were met, any issues that arose during volunteering, etc.)

VHF welcomes feedback of any kind from volunteers. Do not hesitate to contact our volunteer manager or your project manager by email or phone. A feedback section is available to be filled out on the digital Volunteer Hours Reporting form after each event.





# EVALUATION FORM

	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
Personal: Positive attitude, punctual, timely communications, attentive to training, willing to take on new tasks, open to direction, asks questions			
Interpersonal: Engages with fellow volunteers, collaborates on tasks, respects authority of lead volunteers and staff			
Representation of VHF: Friendly demeanor, knowledgeable on the organization or direct to appropriate resources, respects confidentiality, keeps integrity of VHF branded materials, able to enforce policies			
Role Expectations: Completes tasks, manages time, stays within boundaries of the role			
<b>Notes:</b>			

## RECOGNITION

VHF recognizes the importance of volunteers to supporting our work and fulfilling our mission. Volunteers bring our events to life and our appreciation is shown through multiple avenues:

- Annual volunteer appreciation event: VHF plans an event for volunteers to gather, enjoy treats, and build community.
- Event attendance: Many events allow time for volunteers to listen in or directly participate during their volunteer hours. Larger events where there are shifts allow volunteers to independently attend before or after their shift is completed. On occasion, volunteers may be invited to attend special events outside their volunteer hours.
- Social media or e-newsletter highlights: We love to feature your hard work in action to our subscribers. Along with event photos, we may inquire about short quotes, interviews, or videos.

**Thank you!**





VANCOUVER  
**HERITAGE**  
FOUNDATION

This document was produced by Vancouver Heritage Foundation and approved by the Executive Director on January 31 2023.

Policies are subject to change without notice.

Photos courtesy of VHF and Martin Knowles.

Questions can be directed to [mail@vancouverheritagefoundation.org](mailto:mail@vancouverheritagefoundation.org)