

Volunteer Policy

Introduction

The Ballast Trust relies on the specialist skills of its volunteers to help catalogue business and technical archive collections and as such they are crucial to the running of the Ballast Trust. By involving volunteers the Ballast Trust benefits from gaining the support of enthusiastic and knowledgeable individuals who donate their time to help understand archive collections and bring to them a depth of technical knowledge that enhances these collections.

This document outlines the relationship between the Ballast Trust and its volunteers. It will set out how volunteers can contribute to the work of the Ballast Trust and how the Ballast Trust is committed to supporting its volunteers and to adopting best practice in volunteer management.

Volunteering

Definition: At the Ballast Trust, a volunteer is anyone who, without compensation, or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of volunteer duties, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the Ballast Trust. The minimum age of a volunteer is 16 and there is no upper age limit.

Anyone can become a volunteer if they have the time and an interest in supporting the Ballast Trust. Useful skills include:

- Interest in history, particularly transport and manufacturing history.
- Knowledge of industries like shipbuilding, engineering and railways.
- Computer literacy and/or neat handwriting.
- The ability to work alone on a task or in teams.
- Close attention to detail.
- We ask that you can commit to a period not shorter than 3 months (this can be for as little as 1 afternoon a week) or for the duration of a specific project.
- We expect that volunteers will act under the direction of the Archivist.

Wherever possible, the individual skills and interests of the volunteer will be matched to the requirements of a particular task. Examples of volunteer projects include:

- Listing or cataloguing of documents or photographs within a collection.
- Organisation of large collections of records in preparation for listing.
- Document sorting or re-boxing in appropriate archival boxes.
- Photographic image scanning.

Benefits of being a volunteer include:

- The opportunity to contribute to the preservation of the documentary heritage of traditional heavy industries and other related businesses.
- The chance to utilise existing expertise or specialist knowledge to make a valued contribution to a collection.

- To gain new skills.
- To have access to documents of personal interest.
- The opportunity to socialise and extend one's network of contacts.

What can volunteers expect from the Ballast Trust?

The Ballast Trust will:

- Formally acknowledge the contribution of its volunteers in any reports, publications or presentations of its work.
- Assist volunteers with appropriate training, management and support, including a specific induction to agreed roles and duties.
- Consider volunteering as mutually beneficial. Understanding and facilitating the volunteer's own objectives and making known any further opportunities.
- Provide specific work related training and guidelines on what information to record, how to use database systems, document handling and packaging.
- Prepare a specific project brief with guidelines for each project undertaken.
- Arrange regular discussions to ensure good communication and feedback.
- Reimburse reasonable agreed travelling expenses.
- Recruit volunteers through personal recommendation or by referral from established volunteering agencies and educational institutions.
- Respect the confidentiality of the volunteer's personal information.

How to volunteer

To volunteer with the Ballast Trust, please get in touch with us using the contact details below. Alternatively an application form can be provided or downloaded from our website.

Contact details:

The Ballast Trust

18-20 Walkinshaw Street, Johnstone, PA5 8AB

01505 328488

e: ballasttrust@gmail.com

w: <http://www.ballasttrust.org.uk/>

Prospective volunteers will discuss with the Archivist their skills, experience, interests, and availability for a particular project. The Archivist will outline the kinds of opportunities available and determine if these match in a way that is satisfactory to both parties. If desirable a trial period can be agreed. The Ballast Trust has no obligation to accept all volunteers and reserves the right to decline any applicant if a suitable project cannot be identified.