



National Science and Media Museum - Volunteer Bloggers

The National Science and Media Museum has a very active schedule of exhibitions and public events.

To promote our public programmes, we've previously asked staff to write blogs and, while insightful, these have tended to have a very uniform, corporate voice.

We were therefore very excited to pilot a new flexible opportunity for volunteers to write blogs that promote our public programmes. By recruiting volunteers who had a passion for our museum and collections, we could make sure a wider variety of voices and viewpoints could be heard.

The only rules for our bloggers are to stick to the word limit and not write anything rude! They otherwise have the freedom to write about whatever they want in the exhibitions or events they cover.

This approach has created some fantastic content. Our volunteers are writing about what interests them and what they have an emotional connection with, and that passion is obvious in their writing. They make our blogs more engaging as they have a more natural and personal tone. They also tend to look at a wider variety of subjects, rather than the 'star items' that collections staff might otherwise highlight.

A key benefit of the role is that it provides greater flexibility for the volunteers. The structure of the public programme means you don't need to commit to a regular weekly time slot, and most events are in the evening, so volunteering can fit around work and education commitments. We regularly email volunteers the details of previews and launches, and our volunteers let us know if they want to attend. We also reassured everyone when we first met them that they could come to as many or as few events as they wanted and would fit in their schedule.

Since the volunteer bloggers have started, we've seen an increase in traffic to our blog and this reflects the success the programme is having. We are now hoping to extend this type of role to other sites in the Science Museum Group.

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