

Volunteering in German Museums

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Topics

- German cultural sector
- Interest in museum volunteering
- Figures
- Volunteer activities
- Why (and why not) have volunteers
- Who volunteers and why
- Volunteer Management
- Museum politics

The German cultural sector

Public sector

Professionalism

Larger museums

Volunteers offer
additional services

recent

Private sector

Voluntarism

Small museums

Volunteers perform
all tasks

traditional

Interest in museum volunteering

- 1) Receding public funds
 - 2) New interest in civic engagement and volunteering in politics and sciences
- > Interest in museum volunteering even in large, public museums

Some figures

- Over 6000 museums
- 50% supported by volunteers
- Over 30.000 volunteers
- Every 3rd museum with volunteer director
- 40-50 larger museums with volunteer programs
- Ca. 10 museums with over 100 volunteers

Volunteer activities

Accepted: Visitor services
Shops
Crafts demonstrations

Seldom: Curatorial departments

Debated: Education
Guards

Arguments against volunteers

- No need
- No volunteers to be found
- Danger to paid jobs
- Devalorising profession
- Problems between paid and unpaid staff

Reasons for having volunteers

- New services
- Support for staff
- Ties to community

The typical museum volunteer is ...

... female

... older

... retired

... highly educated

Volunteers expect to ...

- ... have fun
- ... meet nice people
- ... do something good or useful
- ... find new challenges
- ... get recognition
- ... gain personal advantage

Volunteer Management

- Museums don't realize importance
- Different models
 - Friends groups
 - Volunteer agency
 - Some staff person
 - No central organization
 - Volunteer organizer
 - 1 full-time volunteer coordinator
- USA: Volunteer management is profession

Museum Politics

- In favour of museum volunteering
- Surveys
- Conferences and trainings

Working paper (German Museum Association)

- **Statistics**

- Stages of volunteer management
- Volunteer activities
- Legal and insurance issues

- **Problems of non-professional work**
- **Where to find support**

To be published in february

Network

Civic Engagement in Museums

- For professionals, volunteers, researchers
- German-speaking
- Regular Newsletter
- Free of charge

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