



Volunteer Appreciation Event Guidelines

1. Purpose

The Western Development Museum informally recognizes and appreciates volunteer contributions throughout the year. To ensure consistent and meaningful recognition across the organization, each location will host an annual Volunteer Appreciation Event. The purpose of the Volunteer Appreciation Event is to recognize and celebrate the contributions of volunteers over the past year. The event provides a meaningful opportunity to express gratitude, strengthen relationships, and reinforce the value of volunteer service within the Western Development Museum.

2. Event

- A volunteer appreciation event must occur at least once annually. It's preferable the event corresponds with National Volunteer Week (usually the third week in April).
- The type of event is at the discretion of the Museum Manager and in consideration of resources available.
- The event should take place on a weekday (Monday–Friday), during the workday or after-hours depending on staff availability. Overtime and minimum call-in situations should be avoided where possible.
- Volunteers must register and pay for guests in advance.
- The WDM CEO, local Museum Manager and local Volunteer Coordinator will be invited to attend and/or participate.

3. Budget

- The budget for the annual volunteer appreciation event for all locations will be established and incorporated into the year-end volunteer program budget by the Director of Community Engagement as a corporate initiative.
- The budget will not exceed \$10 per active volunteer (an active volunteer is anyone who volunteers 4 or more hours per fiscal year as per WDM Volunteer Policies).
- Volunteers considered active at multiple locations are eligible to attend the event at each of their active locations.
- The budget items include:
 - Food and beverages
 - Applicable taxes and gratuities
 - Materials and consumables (decorations/plates/cups/cutlery etc.)
 - Party favors, small tokens of appreciation, raffle or door prizes (Optional)

- Cost for unpaid staff attendance.
- Expense accounts are as follows:
 - 6510-20-2401 Volunteers – Expenses CCSC
 - 6510-30-3401 Volunteers – Expenses MJ
 - 6510-40-4401 Volunteers – Expenses NB
 - 6510-50-5401 Volunteers – Expenses S
 - 6510-60-6401 Volunteers – Expenses Y
- The event is not intended to generate revenue, therefore money received from paying guests should be coded to the expense account to offset the cost.
- Sponsors can be sourced to supply door prizes, supplies and sundries.
- Sponsors should not be used for food or refreshments so as not to create inequities in the scope or scale of the event between locations.

4. Attendance Guidelines

Volunteers are invited as honored guests and do not pay to attend. Volunteer guests can attend at their own cost. Guests are limited to one per volunteer.

Staff Attendance

- All staff attending must register and pay (if required) in advance like other guests.
- Staff who have a role in the delivery of the event do not pay to attend the event. This includes event staff.
- Staff who are scheduled to work but do not have a role in the delivery of the event may attend at their own cost with the approval of the Museum Manager to mitigate impact of operations.
- Staff who are off duty and or from other locations who would like to join in celebrating our volunteers may attend on their own time and at their own expense provided they have registered and paid in advance.
- Staff attending from other locations as part of their role must have their supervisor's approval. Costs incurred, including the event ticket, should be coded to their departmental budget and approved by their supervisor.

5. Event Components

Refreshments and Hospitality

Food and/or refreshments should be provided. The format may vary based on local circumstances and volunteer preferences.

- Examples of format options:
 - Catered buffet
 - Casual barbecue or luncheon

- Afternoon coffee, tea and desserts

Recognition & Appreciation

The event should include a small program lead by the local Museum Manager or Volunteer Coordinator to formally acknowledge volunteer contributions, such as:

- Welcome remarks from the CEO or member of the WDM leadership team
- Acknowledgement of collective volunteer impact
- Highlighting specific achievements or milestones
- Presentations – verbal recognitions, tokens and/or awards.
- Raffle/door prizes (optional)

6. Planning & Logistics

Registration

Advance registration is recommended.

Attendance must be tracked as follows:

- Volunteers
- Paid guests
- Paid staff
- Unpaid staff

Communication

Invitations should be sent at least 3–4 weeks in advance and should include:

- Event purpose
- Date, time, and location
- Cost expectations for non-working staff/guests
- RSVP deadline
- Consider dietary restrictions and accessibility needs

Workload

WDM staff are responsible for event set up, delivery, food service, and clean up

7. Evaluation

Gather feedback from staff and volunteers after the event for insight to improve future appreciation efforts.