



Natural History Museum of Utah Volunteer Program Animal Handler Position

NHMU Mission: The Natural History Museum of Utah illuminates the natural world and the place of humans within it. Animal Handler volunteers play a critical role in sparking excitement, curiosity, and an appreciation for the natural world in Museum guests.

Position Summary: Animal Handlers are a hugely important factor in providing Museum visitors with exceptional and memorable customer experience. Highly trained in handling and interpreting NHMU's live animals, they bring the natural world into the Museum walls, helping guests make connections between what they experience outdoors and Museum exhibits and content. Through this volunteer engagement, an individual has the unique opportunity to get their foot in the door at NHMU, and to engage curious minds with the joy of live animals.

Specifically, Animal Handlers handle and interpret the NHMU animals for Museum guests. They work to create an engaging atmosphere for guests and in doing so, spark excitement, curiosity, and appreciation for the natural world. Animal Handlers effectively communicate information about the animals, galleries, and the Museum, while ensuring the safety of animals and guests. Using the interpretation of live animals, volunteers will inspire learning, support Museum and outdoor exploration, and foster in-depth engagement with Museum exhibits and content.

Other Benefits: Volunteers at the Natural History Museum of Utah expand their knowledge of the natural world through specialized trainings, enjoy behind-the-scenes access, and interact with the Museum's research staff. They broaden their social circle by making connections with fellow volunteers, Museum staff, and Museum guests; they contribute to scientific research, and make an impact in increasing scientific literacy and awareness in the local community, and beyond. This is a particularly great role for anyone pursuing a career in science, education, or nonprofit work. This role ensures a front-row seat to the innerworkings of a world-class Museum, and a great opportunity for career connections and mentoring!

In addition, the Museum offers the following benefits:

- Volunteer t-shirt and nametag
- Free admission into the museum
- Two free guest passes for every 25 hours of service
- Museum membership discount
- Discount at Museum Store
- Use of the volunteer lounge
- Continuing Education programs, including lectures and tours
- Professional development opportunities
- Invitation to social and recognition events

Department: Public Programs, Education and Community Engagement

Supervisor: Jamie Mesrobian, Public Programs Coordinator (she/her/hers)

Skills/Abilities:

- Professionalism and presence
- Excellent communication skills; good listener and confident speaker
- Enjoys speaking with the general public
- Interest in science
- Ability to be courteous, respectful, and patient with visitors
- Punctual, reliable, responsible, and dependable
- Adaptable and creative
- Cooperative nature; ability to accept instruction and correction
- Desire to learn as well as teach
- Willingness to participate in ongoing education to develop skills and knowledge
- Ability to do independent training and research online
- Must be comfortable handling animals (including live insects)
- Must be able to maintain records on animal care and observations

Training Required: All volunteers are required to complete an Online Volunteer Orientation, which should take about 1 hour to complete from home, and a 75-minute On-Site Museum Orientation. Animal Handlers are required to complete a secondary set of training:

Step 1) Complete the University of Utah's online Occupational Health and Safety Training Course/IACUC, which is approximately 4 hours total (can be completed in multiple sessions) within two months of receiving your background check confirmation (the sooner the better!).

Step 2) Required to attend an Animal Handling Training Orientation which will last approx. 2 hours.

Step 3) Finally, new Animal Handlers will shadow current Animal Handlers, a minimum of three times for each aspect of the program for on-the-job training.

Training Schedule:

Online Volunteer Orientation, to be completed at home

On-Site Museum Orientation, 75 minutes, RSVP required:

- Offered weekly, to be scheduled after completion of Online Volunteer Orientation

University of Utah's online Occupational Health and Safety Training Course/IACUC, 4 hours total (can complete in multiple sessions).

- These courses are offered on Saturdays
- Must be completed within two months of receiving your background check confirmation.

Animal Handling Training Orientation, approx. 2 hours.

- Must be available on the 1st or 2nd Saturday of the month to complete this portion of training
- Must be completed within 1 month of the Occupational Health and Safety Training Course/IACUC certification

Animal Handler Shadowing:

- Must be available on the 1st and 2nd Saturdays of the month to shadow
- Shadowing occurs 3 times for the two different program components.

- Must be completed within 3 months of the first shadow.

Shifts Available: Animal Handler Volunteer MUST be able to work both of the following:

- Utah's Animals – 3rd Saturday of every month from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- Bug Brigade – 4th Saturday of every month from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Time Commitment: Animal Handler Volunteer MUST be able to work 2 shifts per month for a one-year term.

Age Requirement: 18 years or older

Background checks are required for all volunteers 18 years and older.

Participants 18 and older, [click here to apply!](#)

Thank you for your interest in the Natural History Museum of Utah!