

5.2 Volunteer Handbook (approved 28 January 2021)

5.2.1 INTRODUCTION

The intent of this policy is to provide guidelines for the volunteers of the Fort Sackville Foundation (FSF), with recognition that the FSF is a completely volunteer run historical society. Volunteers, as well as supporting the work of the Foundation, are the key to the operation of Scott Manor House and are essential in developing strong community relationships.

5.2.2 OVERVIEW

OUR MISSION: The Fort Sackville Foundation collects, protects, preserves and promotes the history and cultural heritage of Bedford.

OUR MANDATE:

1. Collect, preserve and interpret artifacts, archival material and intangible forms of heritage.
2. Undertake research related to the people, places, organizations and events, and the built and natural environment of Bedford.
3. Cultivate and promote greater understanding of the heritage of Bedford, by production of monographs, exhibits, public programs and other activities.
4. Advocate for heritage preservation.
5. Maintain and promote Scott Manor House and the Fort Sackville site.

OUR VALUES:

1. *Participation:* We encourage and recognize contributions of members of the community.
2. *Stewardship:* We are stewards of the Foundation's collections, the Scott Manor House and the Fort Sackville historic site.
3. *Best Practices:* We strive to follow best museum practices to preserve the artifacts and records of places and people of Bedford.
4. *Engagement:* We educate and engage the community through our programs and resources.

5.2.3 GOALS OF THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

- To enrich and expand the programs and services of the FSF through the use of trained volunteers.
- To provide opportunities for public participation in the FSF and at Scott Manor House.
- To encourage volunteers to acquire new skills and further knowledge through attendance at workshops, webinars or in-person training. (e.g. such as those offered by the Association of Nova Scotia Museums, Council of Nova Scotia Archives, or other qualified instructors or relevant organizations).

5.2.4 THE VOLUNTEER: DEFINITION AND ROLE

A volunteer is an individual who freely chooses to provide assistance to the FSF on a part-time basis without financial remuneration. Volunteers may be voting members of the FSF, or community members who are not members of the FSF. All volunteers are encouraged to become members of the FSF. Membership is a requirement for some volunteer positions. A volunteer is reflective of their community and is vital to the FSF for their diverse points of view. The FSF relies on volunteers to support its activities and help ensure strong ties and relationships with its community. The FSF seeks to involve volunteers with a wide range of skills, knowledge, and life experiences and offer a range of opportunities according to their needs and interests. The FSF work is varied and can include such functions as delivering education programs, exhibit design, research, grounds maintenance, collections management and care, summer program planning and implementation, event planning, serving on the Board and committees, administrative and clerical work, stewardship of the house, communications, promotion and marketing, fundraising and other tasks.

Every effort will be made to maximize the different strengths and interests of the FSF's volunteers. The FSF seeks to match people to a task and makes every effort to clearly describe the job to be done, the skills required, the time commitment, etc. so that prospective volunteers are well informed before making a commitment. The FSF will attempt to assign volunteers to particular roles within the organization, although these may change over time depending on skills, interests, and needs.

5.2.5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FORT SACKVILLE FOUNDATION (FSF)

- Provide a general orientation of the FSF and Scott Manor House, its volunteers, and a description of possible volunteer opportunities.
- Treat volunteers with dignity and respect.
- Make volunteers aware of the FSF's Ethics Guidelines.
- When necessary request/require a criminal record check and/or vulnerable sector check.
- Place volunteers in a position suitable to their skills, abilities, and interests.
- Ensure volunteers receive appropriate and ongoing training, supervision, and assistance from a named supervisor.
- Ensure that all Occupational Health & Safety standards are followed.
- Ensure that all Public Health Measures, including pandemic protocols, are followed.
- Ensure that Policies and Procedures are followed and that copies of these are made available to all volunteers.
- Provide liability insurance for the volunteer Directors.

- Conduct regular goal reviews with the volunteer to ensure the volunteer is receiving adequate support and the arrangements are mutually beneficial.
- Respond promptly to any concerns or grievances expressed by volunteers.
- Acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments of volunteers.
- Ensure that written references are provided for volunteers as requested.

5.2.6 RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS

- Understand and support the mission, mandate and values of the FSF.
- Serves as a goodwill ambassador of the FSF in the community.
- Obtain a criminal record check and/or vulnerable sector check, if necessary.
- Maintain a professional atmosphere in the work place; consistently show respect and thoughtfulness toward other volunteers and paid staff (paid seasonal staff, HRM personnel and contractors).
- Notify the Foundation of any potential conflicts of interest (real or perceived).
- Notify the FSF well in advance if they are unable to meet scheduled work commitments.
- Maintain confidentiality in areas of sensitive or proprietary information.
- Express concerns or grievances to the supervisor in accordance with the museum's Human Resources policy.
- Report to their named supervisor/mentor.
- Follow health and safety procedures for their work areas: become familiar with the Facility Manual and the Fire Safety Plan.
- Ensure that all Public Health Measures, including pandemic protocols, are followed.
- Properly store any materials the volunteer works with and leave work space clean and tidy
- Participate in training opportunities.
- Provide feedback on accomplishments and the volunteer experience.

5.2.7 FORT SACKVILLE FOUNDATION (FSF) VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES

5.2.7.1 Recruitment

The FSF hopes to attract volunteers with diverse cultural and educational backgrounds that are both reflective of its community and who offer skills specific to the FSF requirements. The Foundation will actively recruit new volunteers, advertising opportunities within the community through notices on the Scott Manor House reader board, social media, Scott Manor House website and the Scott Manor newsletter.

Potential volunteers must complete the *Volunteer Application* form and participate in an informal orientation to the work of the FSF and how it is incorporated with the Scott Manor House. Attempts will be made to align a volunteer's skills and interests with available opportunities within the Foundation.

5.2.7.2 Training and Development

Volunteers will be provided with an orientation package including the volunteer policies and procedures. They will be acquainted with health and safety as well as emergency procedures.

Volunteers will receive appropriate orientation prior to the start of their designated tasks. Ongoing assistance will be provided to the volunteer when requested. Volunteers will have the opportunity to participate in professional development when appropriate, such as ANSM workshops, ANSM webinars, Central Regional Heritage Group meetings and Nova Scotia Archives conferences or online tutorials. Any reimbursement is at the discretion of the Executive Committee and must be authorized before attending.

5.2.7.3 Recognition

Volunteers will be celebrated for their contributions and achievements on an ongoing basis. This will include informal praise as well as volunteer appreciation events. The FSF Corporate Secretary will ensure that thank you cards are sent to all volunteers. Particular donations of time, materials or services may be noted on the highway reader board or in the Scott Manor newsletter.

5.2.7.4 Goal Review

Volunteer supervisors/mentors will hold a discussion at least once a year, individually or with small groups, to learn about tasks completed, next steps to be taken, any difficulties with completing the task, the number of volunteer hours and any experiences, either positive or negative, of the past year the volunteer wishes to mention. The supervisors will summarize these findings and attach them to their reports for presentation to be given at the AGM.

5.2.8 VOLUNTEER POLICIES

5.2.8.1 Confidentiality Policy

Volunteers who have access to collections, research, staff activities, and sensitive or proprietary information (such as donor, member, research patron and visitor information, etc.) must respect the confidentiality of their positions, as well as the significance and integrity of the collections.

FSF is a registered charity. Financial documents are filed annually with the Canada Revenue Agency's Charities Directorate. **Volunteers must keep confidential** any information regarding the details of financial documentation or information he/she may have knowledge of, other than that which is part of financial statements provided to the public by the Treasurer.

5.2.8.2 Conflict of Interest Policy

A conflict of interest can include collecting, or benefitting financially from the museum's operations and must be avoided. Potential conflicts of interest, both real and perceived, must be disclosed by a volunteer at the time of their application, and at any point in time when a potential conflict of interest has developed.

5.2.8.3 Grievance Policy

Volunteers are encouraged to bring forward complaints about any part of their volunteering experience in accordance with the museum's Human Resources policy. Any concerns or grievances expressed by volunteers will be addressed promptly and thoroughly. Every effort will be made to find a solution. A volunteer can express grievances without prejudice.

5.2.8.4 Volunteer Information and Emergency Contacts Policy

The FSF asks that you give one name, including a telephone number where an emergency contact may be reached during the day. It is the volunteer's responsibility to ensure the information is correct and updated as required by informing the Corporate Secretary of any changes.

The FSF recognizes its responsibility for safeguarding addresses, telephone numbers and other personal information about its volunteers, including information contained in personnel files. Therefore, all such information is handled in confidence and in accordance with applicable privacy legislation.

5.2.8.5 Health and Safety Policy

The FSF will limit, as much as possible, any health and safety hazards within Scott Manor House, recognizing that the Manor is a 250+ year structure that has three sets of stairs and uneven floors in both the cellar and the attic.

The FSF will maintain an up-to-date facilities manual which contains health and safety information relating to Scott Manor House.

The FSF will ensure there is a First Aid Kit at the Scott Manor House and emergency numbers are posted by the phones.

Smoking and the use of open flames is prohibited inside Scott Manor House and on the grounds.

Volunteers assisting with grounds keeping are required by Halifax Regional Municipality to sign a waiver on each occasion.

5.2.8.6 Parking Policy

Volunteers will not park on the lawn.

Volunteers will leave the parking spaces closest to Scott Manor House for guests during July and August or anytime a special public event is being held. There is street parking available on the Fort Sackville Road and surrounding neighbourhood streets.

5.2.8.7 Social Media Policy

The FSF Communications Coordinator is responsible for social media posts, and volunteers require authorization from the Communications Coordinator or President or Vice-President to post on behalf of the FSF.

Any suggestions for posts should be referred to the Communications Coordinator.

5.2.8.8 Volunteer Dismissal

Should a volunteer be unable to fulfil their designated role, every effort will be made to find tasks better suited to their interests, abilities, and/or schedule. If, for any reason, a volunteer is unable to fulfill their commitment, the museum reserves the right to release the volunteer from their obligation(s). An end to the volunteer-museum relationship may also occur if the volunteer acts in contravention of the FSF's Ethics Guidelines or against its better interests.

DOCUMENT SOURCES:

Planning for Staff and Volunteer Training in Museums – M. Christine Castle (2003)