



Joining York Archaeological Trust as a Volunteer or Placement Frequently Asked Questions

How do I know if I want to join as a volunteer or undertake a placement?

There are a range of volunteer roles which offer people the opportunity to get involved with the York Archaeological Trust. We have a number of different options within our volunteering and placement programmes which will suit different people depending on your interests, desired level of involvement, and how much time you have to contribute.

Joining as an Attractions volunteer

Our largest volunteer teams are based within our five JORVIK Group attractions. Volunteering suits anyone aged 18 or over who wants to gain new experiences, share their current skills, meet new people and get involved with the work of the York Archaeological Trust on a regular basis as part of an on-going volunteer team. Many of our volunteer roles are based front of house in our attractions but we also have occasional department based opportunities that get involved in other aspects of our work.

Volunteers undertake anything from a day a week at one of our attractions to assisting during peak periods at events. There are also sometimes temporary volunteer roles available, for example during the summer or at the annual JORVIK Viking Festival in February.

Attractions volunteers join us at set intakes each year, which are advertised on our attractions websites or through our mailing list (see below).

Volunteering with our Archaeology Teams

York Archaeological Trust also has some opportunities to volunteer in our archaeology arm, York Archaeology. Most of these are post-excavation roles in our Collections and Archives team.

Volunteering suits anyone aged 18 or over who wants to gain hands-on experience in archaeology or working with archaeological collections and archives, share their skills, meet new people and get involved with the work of the York Archaeological Trust on a regular basis as part of an on-going volunteer team.

These roles are offered when there is a need in one of our teams. You can see any roles currently available on our York Archaeology website at www.yorkarchaeology.co.uk under the 'Take Part' section of the site.

Undertake a Placement with Us

If you have a short, block period of time to undertake your experience in (usually anytime from 2 weeks up to three months), are under 18 or have specific study or work related needs to meet then you would be best to consider our placement offers.

Placements usually join us during our attractions volunteer intakes, unless they are under 18 (see below) or the Placement is offered through a partner organisation such as a University.

Who can join as a volunteer?

Most of our volunteer roles and placement opportunities are designed so you don't need a background in history or archaeology or any required level of education or experience. All you need is an enthusiasm for the past and a wish to contribute to the work of York Archaeological Trust.

To volunteer in our attractions it is also helpful if you enjoy talking to a wide variety of people, as our attractions welcome visitors of all ages and backgrounds..

York Archaeological Trust is committed to reflecting the diversity of our audiences and reducing barriers to volunteering. If you are interested in volunteering but have questions about support or access needs, please contact our friendly team using the details below.

How old do I need to be to undertake a placement or to volunteer?

All our placements and volunteer opportunities are open to anyone aged 18 or above. For anyone under 18 years of age we offer work experience placements in our attractions via the NYBEP (North Yorkshire Business & Education Partnership) scheme. NYBEP has participating schools in York as well as across Yorkshire and the North-East, and is also able to assist students from non-participating schools for an administrative fee. For more information, please ask your school or college, or contact NYBEP at workexperience@nybep.org.uk

How much time do I need to have to volunteer or undertake a placement?

The amount of time can vary for each role and the role descriptions will give details on the amounts that each role may involve. For volunteering we usually advise involvement for six months or more (other than for our temporary roles) to allow you to gain the most from your volunteering. However, these are not set minimums and are only suggested to help you get the most out of each role.

On average people tend to volunteer about once a week or fortnight for either a full day or a two-hour session. Opening times of our attractions vary between sites and seasonally but on average are between 10am–5.30 pm.

The amount of time for placements varies. Most placements are available for two- three weeks and are usually 5 full days a week' spread over a Monday – Sunday.

Where can I get more in-depth information on the roles that interest me?

We have full role descriptions for each of our volunteer roles and placements and these will be available to download from our websites as they are advertised. Please also see the 'Contact Us' section below.

Welcome and role training sessions are usually run for a morning or afternoon and we are looking to offer both in person and remote options for this training. All sessions will be listed under the 'Intake Period' section of our 'Volunteers' page. If you do find that none of the Welcome Days / Role Training Day dates are suitable please do talk to our Head of Volunteering so we can see how we can help.

Placements are invited to attend these training sessions but where they are not able to (for example if you currently live away from York) we can offer individual training for you on your first day.

Do you accept requests for bespoke placements?

We work with a number of Colleges and Universities to offer placements linked to their courses. Where possible we advise applications to consider our listed placement offers, as we work with teams across our organisation to provide a diverse placement programme offering a range of experience. However, for courses with specific requirements not met by these placements we may sometimes be able to accommodate new requests for bespoke placements. Please contact us using the 'Contact Us' details below.

Can I apply if I don't live in York or from abroad?

We welcome applications from outside of York. Overseas applicants will need to ensure they can arrange a suitable visa to allow them to undertake a placement or volunteer with us. We are happy to arrange virtual meetings for anyone from abroad or anyone unable to travel to York for their application meeting.

What happens if I would like to volunteer or undertake a placement?

To ensure we offer a high level of support to all our volunteers and placements we offer attractions-based volunteer and placement roles via set registration periods or intakes.

These intake periods allow potential volunteers and placements to register their interest in joining our teams. We can then meet with all applicants, discuss what options they are interested in and take-up references for them. We then try and match as many applications as we can with a role that will suit them while meeting the needs of the Trust.

Anyone we are able to offer a place to will then be given written and video training materials as well as invited to attend an in-person Welcome and Role Induction session for their role. Please note that we do not start anyone in a volunteer role until they have completed their welcome and role induction sessions to ensure we have offered them the best opportunity to get all the information they might need. As such it is best that you are available for the Welcome and Role Induction sessions for the intake period at which you are applying.

I would like to register an interest in volunteering

Wait for our next registration period to be advertised, look on our websites which roles are available to register for and then fill in a Volunteer / Placement Application Form using our online 'Better Impact' platform. You will need to sign up for an account with the Better Impact system, and you will have a chance to read our privacy statement before doing this.

If an application period is open and you would like a paper copy of the form posted to you, need help with the form or you have any questions about volunteering or undertaking a placement please do not hesitate to contact us; we will be happy to talk to you on the phone or meet with you in person or via video call to discuss the options on offer and help you decide if you would like to apply to volunteer or undertake a placement with us.

Once you have sent in your application form we will be in touch at the end of the intake period to let people know if we can take your application forward, if we can we will ask to arrange a date to meet with you to discuss the opportunities further. You are very happy for you to bring a friend or family member to meetings to support you if you would like to.

Where possible application meetings are done in a group setting alongside other volunteer and placement applicants. We are also happy to offer virtual application meetings through Google Meet or Zoom video conferencing software.

I am over 18 and would like to register an interest in a placement

Placement opportunities are offered to the public once or twice a year alongside our regular volunteering intakes. We will where possible meet with all placement applicants and attempt to match as many applicants as possible to placement opportunities.

As placement applicants may be travelling further, we are happy to offer in-person or remote application meetings, and while successful placement applicants are welcome to attend our in-person Welcome and Role Induction sessions, if you are only able to access remote training materials additional support will be given as you begin your placement.

Contacting Us

If you have any questions regarding our volunteer or placement offer the best way to contact us is by email at volunteer@yorkat.co.uk. You can also call us on 01904 952320, or write to us at Volunteering Team, JORVIK Viking Centre, 15-17 Coppergate Walk, York YO1 9WT.