



## **Job description - Volunteer Object-Handling Facilitator** **Touching Heritage: Objects to Healthcare**

### **Introduction**

Researchers from UCL have established a 'Heritage in Healthcare' programme called 'Touching Heritage' to bring museum objects from UCL Museums out to people who by virtue of their health or age would otherwise be excluded from participating in cultural activities.

We are looking for dedicated, caring and interested people to join our 'Touching Heritage' volunteer programme. You will be part of a trained team who will facilitate object handling on a one-to-one and group basis. You will bring a variety of different artefacts from UCL Museums & Collections, including the Petrie and the Grant Museum, to healthcare settings and conduct sessions with clients from a broad and diverse variety of backgrounds. Ideally you have some experience of museum objects or have worked in care settings, but this is not essential as you will be fully trained.

The 'Touching Heritage' project has been developed following ground-breaking research surrounding the link between heritage object handling and health and wellbeing conducted by UCL and UCH researchers.

### **General description of post**

This will be an exciting opportunity to be involved in an important local study. You will be recruited as a volunteer and your job title will be Object-Handling Facilitator. You will form part of a team of volunteers who will work in partnership with a group of researchers and outreach co-ordinators, health care professionals and museums and collections staff.

After a 1 day training programme you will:

- Facilitate object handling sessions in community centres, day centres, sheltered housing and other sites over a 3-4 month period
- Visit a variety of clients in different stages of care on a weekly basis, engaging them in conversation, participation and object handling
- Keep a record of participant responses to the sessions through feedback forms, questionnaires, photography and audio recording
- Be provided with ongoing support and mentoring throughout the program
- Add your own creative style to the object handling sessions, and learn more about Heritage in Healthcare, and UCL museum collections.

All the volunteers will also be encouraged to provide support to each other throughout the project.

### **Job title**

Object Handling Facilitator – Touching Heritage

You will volunteer on behalf of the Outreach Co-ordinator of the 'Touching Objects' Heritage Lottery Funded project, based in Museums and Public Engagement at University College London.

### **Benefits of being a Volunteer**

Although you are a volunteer, you will get lots of incentives to ensure that you benefit from being involved:

- **Work Experience** – The post will enable you to gain experience in object handling, improve communication skills and knowledge of Heritage in Healthcare programmes. As well, you will gain experience working in a heritage focussed outreach programme.
- **Object-based** – you will gain skills in handling objects, basic conservation and knowledge about artefacts.
- **Training** – You will attend a training course for facilitating object handling sessions in healthcare environments, gaining interesting and important skills for communication, engaging patients and creative facilitation.
- **Support** – You will be provided with support from researchers and the outreach co-ordinator to gain further experience and training in the field.

#### **Selection criteria**

No specific experience or qualifications are required. Most important is having an interest in the work. You will receive training on all aspects of being a volunteer in this study.

The main criteria are:

- Have an interest in heritage and museum objects
- Sensitivity to people's needs and circumstances in the healthcare environments we work in
- Ability to speak and write English (whether as a first or second language)
- Ability to maintain confidence and trust
- Good communication skills Commitment – be able to commit 3-4 months to the project

#### **Duties and responsibilities**

- Attend a 1 day training course with UCL Museums and Public Engagement
- Conduct object-handling sessions with a variety of clients in a range of settings once a week
- Liaise with researchers, and project coordinators, and with museum staff
- Keep a record of sessions
- Participate in discussions regarding the difficulties and benefits of being involved as a volunteer.

#### **Hours**

The training course will be conducted for 1 day (9:30am to 3:30pm), time and date to be confirmed. Tea and coffee will be available for break-times. Lunch will also be provided. You will have to attend all the training session.

You will conduct one or two object handling sessions per week thereafter, and rostered hours for commitment will depend on the agreed time-slots for sessions in centres, and on your own availability.

#### **Applications**

Applications can be made via email. Please provide a short summary of why you are interested in this role (500 words max) and a current C.V. with referees by **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April**, to Betsy Lewis-Holmes, Outreach Coordinator, [b.lewis-holmes@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:b.lewis-holmes@ucl.ac.uk)

Once an application has been made, an interview date will be arranged and more information provided.