



SUMM Volunteer Handbook

SUMM BACKGROUND

Last updated 2/27/2023

Welcome

Welcome to volunteering for the Seattle Universal Math Museum (SUMM)!

SUMM is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that sparks each and every person to love math. SUMM will build a dynamic museum to house engaging math exhibits, hands-on experiences, programs, and play areas to stimulate inquiry, ignite creativity and curiosity, and reveal the wonders of mathematics through play and exploration.

SUMM inspires marvel and instills joy in math learning for children at the critical juncture of 3rd to 8th grade, which will impact their opportunities and fulfillment for the rest of their personal and professional lives.

By volunteering at SUMM, you will help make a difference in the lives of children and families in our community. Our volunteers are a vital resource for our organization and help us to fulfill our mission. Whether you volunteer behind the scenes or with the community, your time is very valuable and greatly appreciated!

We feel confident that volunteering at SUMM will be a fun and rewarding experience for you. We have created this handbook to help you learn more about SUMM and our policies and procedures. We appreciate you joining our team!

Tracy Drinkwater
Founder + Board President + Acting Executive Director

SUMM – bringing math to life!

www.SeattleMathMuseum.org



About the Museum

Mission

Seattle Universal Math Museum (SUMM) sparks each and every person to love math.

Vision

SUMM takes you on a math journey. We create opportunities for exploration, discovery, and growth.

Our Values

SUMM strives to incorporate these values in everything we do:

- Bring math to life
- Inspire creativity
- Engage all learners
- Embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Collaborate with community
- Spark fun and joy

Purpose

At SUMM we believe in the wonder and beauty of math. Math achievement impacts the trajectory of young lives. We seek to inspire each and every learner and collaborate with existing community partners to help drive equity-based, culturally relevant math education opportunities.



WHY A MATH MUSEUM?

SUMM is creating the future. By making math accessible for all, SUMM will create new opportunities for learners in their formative years, when the introduction of the universal applications of math can make a lifetime impact on their personal and professional lives, leading to exponential impact on their communities and the world.

Imagine experiencing math in a 3D and hands-on way that feels like play. Active and visual learning increase engagement, make strong connections, and create positive emotional experiences. A museum dedicated to math shows how math is connected to everything — it's universal — the foundation of STEM. And math is part of nature, art, music, and almost every aspect of the world around us.

Too many learners are discouraged from math for multiple reasons. They think speed is important, or they make many calculation errors. Testing shows that they may not score high, but they know they have worked hard to understand the concepts. Lack of confidence and achievement in algebra is too often a gatekeeper to graduation, college admission and career options. But research shows that anyone can learn math to high levels.

SUMM will also illuminate the diversity of mathematical contributions from around the globe, showing how math is used in varying, as well as similar, ways throughout the world. When visitors learn that the same mathematical ideas were discovered by various civilizations on multiple continents over centuries, they will feel a connection to the creativity in math from a multicultural and historical perspective.

SUMM will be an exciting new destination where visitors young and old can develop their understanding of math's key principles and practical application in a fun and participatory way.



WHERE? WHEN?

While there are several math museums around the world, the National Museum of Mathematics (MoMath) in New York City is currently the United States' only public museum dedicated to mathematics, and serves as a proof-of-concept for SUMM. Since its opening in 2012, MoMath has garnered dozens of awards for its innovative exhibits and programs, and welcomes 170,000 visitors each year. The popularity of MoMath's exhibits and programs shows that there is a demand for such a destination. Glen Whitney, the founder of MoMath, told SUMM Founder Tracy Drinkwater when they met in 2015: "Of course Seattle should have the second Math Museum in the country!"

We are planning to establish the museum over the next 3–5 years in the Seattle region. An ideal location would be in the South Seattle area, between the airport and the city, expanding museum outreach beyond the downtown core to increase accessibility. Our goal is a site with easy access to public transportation and parking.

WHO?

SUMM's Founder, Tracy Drinkwater, is an educator and leader in inclusive math education, with an extensive background in teaching children as well as future educators. Tracy's advocacy for expanding hands-on learning to each and every learner inspired her to create a Math Museum in Seattle. SUMM is led by a talented Board of Directors, Advisory Board, and team of expert consultants.

Meet the team at www.seattlemathmuseum.org/team.



HOW TO BECOME A SUMM VOLUNTEER

Modes of Volunteering at SUMM

We currently do not have a building, so much of our work for volunteers is at the committee level to build the foundation for what will become the museum. We will occasionally have events, both private and public, where we will promote SUMM and all that we are trying to accomplish.

Committees

We have a Committee Descriptions document available upon request.

Events

We have educators who help facilitate a variety of stand alone events, fundraisers and recurring educational programs. Each event needs volunteer support. Event volunteers support the facilitator and bring math to life for the event participants. You can learn more about our upcoming events on our website <https://seattlemathmuseum.org/events>.

About Volunteering

How do I become a SUMM volunteer?

- Fill out the [Volunteer Application Form](#)
- Attend a [Lunch + Learn event](#).
- Undergo a background check*
- Sign up for committees or event shifts
- Attend any other necessary training for committees or events, as needed

**We ask volunteers to help support our nonprofit by contributing the cost of their background checks. We value all contributions and if you are in need of aid for this expense please let us know.*



What are SUMM expectations of me as a volunteer?

- Be positive. Be aware that math is hard for many people and causes them anxiety.
- Be dependable, prompt, and reliable. Be aware that as a volunteer you are a representative of the Museum.
- Be communicative. If you are unable to attend a meeting or event, let us know.
- Please keep all visitor information confidential.
- Adhere to all volunteer policies and procedures.
- Let us know if you have any concerns about your volunteer experience. We aim to be problem-solvers, both mathematically and socially.

What are SUMM benefits of volunteering?

- + Have fun with math and related subjects.
- + Help children and adults learn more about math through play.
- + Accrue volunteer hours for community service requirements.
- + Receive support and feedback from board and staff members, including potential recommendations.
- + *Your efforts help make SUMM a success and lead to our opening a physical museum someday soon!*



SUMM POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Policies and Procedures for Events

Customer Service

Everything that we do at SUMM is intended to provide a safe environment where all our visitors can have fun and expand their learning and enjoyment of math. We want to ignite their curiosity and provide positive experiences with math through play.

Delivering excellent customer service is one way that we can encourage our visitors to have fun and come back to visit again and again. The following guidelines should help you provide that level of excellent customer service.

Tips

Smile! When guests approach you, smile. This indicates that we are happy to see them, and helps adults and children feel welcome.

Greet both adults and children. This puts everyone at ease and helps them to feel comfortable.

Be empathetic. Remember that not everyone has had positive math experiences before. Help make this a fun and exciting experience. Your kindness, plus enthusiasm for math will make it a great event.

Interact/play with children. Talk to the children and ask them open-ended questions. Show them interesting parts of wherever you are volunteering. Let them show you what they find interesting.

Be available. Please pay close attention to our guests. Cell phone use, including texting, reading, or doing homework is not acceptable while you are volunteering.



Address questions. Smile and listen carefully to the request or question. Prioritize safety issues. If you are unable to answer a question, it is always okay to say, "I'm not sure, let me find out for you," or "I don't know, but what do you think?" After that, ask another staff member and make sure that you get back to the guest with an answer.

Set appropriate limits. Playing with children can be fun, but it's important to set boundaries for physical interactions. Children who hit, throw or otherwise get physically inappropriate should be redirected with positive suggestions for how to behave. For example, instead of saying "Don't do that!" try saying "We don't hit in the classroom, but if you have some excess energy, let's go for a quick walk outside and come back ready to interact appropriately."

Safety

The safety of our guests is a top priority. Exhibits, layout, policy, programs and classes will all be designed with this in mind. If it is an emergency, and/or if intervening would put you at risk, then call out immediately for assistance (point to someone and say "Dial 911!") Otherwise, do not hesitate to intervene when you see any risky behavior. Start with your words, but if absolutely necessary to save a child from injury you may need to put your hands on them. Do this with the least force necessary. You don't have to wait for a parent to notice and stop risky behavior. Address safety issues immediately and to the best of your ability. If there is a serious risk and you don't know what to do, report it to a floor staff member immediately.

Policies & Expectations

Adult Supervision Required. For safety reasons, children under 14 are not permitted at SUMM events without adults.

Open Doors Slowly. Children may be standing behind doors.

Choking Hazards. Please regularly check the area in which you are volunteering for small parts that could be a choking hazard. Items under 1.75" are considered a choking hazard. Any easy guideline to remember is that if an item will fit inside of a paper towel tube, it is a choking hazard.



Injury. Be calm if an accident happens. Call or direct someone to call 911 if necessary. If possible, find the adult who came with the child so he or she knows the child is hurt. Help the child and parent or caregiver to the manager in charge, so we can further assist them with the injury, if needed. If you have any helpful information, such as how the injury happened, please share this with the manager in charge.

Handling Inappropriate Behavior

Altercations between Children. It is easier to try to prevent problems between children than it is to stop them.

- Encourage sharing and inclusive play.
- Discourage play fighting.
- Feel free to say "Keep your hands to yourself, please."
- Help children to change the game or come up with creative solutions to the problem.
- If an altercation is taking place and the above have not worked, involve the parents or other staff in the solution.

Altercations between Adults, or You and a Guest.

- Listen and try to understand the problem.
- Indicate that you are listening by saying, "I hear what you are saying."
- If you cannot handle the situation, or feel uncomfortable, please immediately get a member of the staff or a manager to help you.
- If you feel threatened and no one is immediately available to help, you are welcome to call the police at the non-emergency number dial 911 if you feel that the threat is immediate.

Attendance and Absenteeism

As a volunteer, we depend on you to complete your scheduled shifts. We understand that occasionally situations may prevent you from being able to do so. If you know that you will not be able to make a shift for an event more than 24 hours before the shift, please contact your direct supervisor, or the Volunteer Manager, to change your schedule. If you find that you are unable to attend on the day of your shift, please call



Tracy at (206) 579-5818 and let them know that you are unable to come in. If absenteeism becomes excessive, your volunteer relationship with SUMM will be reevaluated.

Volunteer Hours

It is very important to sign in and out each time you volunteer so that your hours are recorded. We track volunteer hours for our annual report, grant writing, and volunteer appreciation. All committee meetings and event hours are tracked for you. Other volunteer hours including meetings, fundraising, projects, etc should be reported at least once per month via this form: [SUMM Volunteer Hours](#). If you need verification of your donated time please contact: volunteer-coordinator@seattlemathmuseum.org.

Dress Code

Please follow a semi-casual guideline for clothing online and at events. T-shirts are great if they are in good condition and are free from controversial messages. Refrain from wearing any shirts with profanity on them. Jeans, khakis or chinos are great, as long as they are in good condition. Tattoos do not need to be covered unless they contain profanity, nudity, or an inappropriate subject matter. Volunteers who wear inappropriate clothing will be sent home to change. If a SUMM t-shirt is made available to you for an event, please wear that and follow instructions for care.

Representing the Organization

Volunteers are only authorized to act as a representative of SUMM if specifically tasked with this responsibility in their volunteer job description. Please consult with and receive permission from the Volunteer Manager or your direct supervisor before engaging in any actions that may affect or hold the organization liable. These include, but are not limited to, social media posts (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.), public statements to the press, signing contracts or entering into financial agreements, or lobbying or forming partnerships with other organizations. All public relations questions should be referred to the Executive Director.



Smoking/Drugs/Alcohol

Partly due to law, and partly because we are working with and for children, smoking, vaping and chewing tobacco are not permitted in or around our events. The possession, use, or sale of drugs and/or alcohol is never permitted at SUMM events.

Weapons

No weapons are allowed at SUMM events. Weapons are defined as guns, knives (larger than pocket knives), and other objects, blunt or sharp, that could do bodily harm. If you notice a guest in violation of this rule, please inform a staff member immediately.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of fire or other emergency, volunteers will be directed by staff members. Evacuation will be determined by the type of emergency. In case of fire, staff members will locate and direct all guests and volunteers to the nearest fire exit. In case of a severe weather emergency, staff members will locate and direct all guests and volunteers to designated shelter areas.

In the event of a potentially dangerous situation happening in the vicinity of a SUMM event (e.g. bank robbery, hostage situation, escaped fugitive), SUMM staff may receive a Reverse 911 phone call. In this situation, staff will make sure that all visitors and volunteers are inside the (nearest) building, doors are locked and pulled firmly closed. Staff will notify guests and volunteers, either personally or through the PA system that we are on a lockdown due to a disturbance in the neighborhood. All guests and volunteers must remain in the building for the duration of the lockdown. When Museum staff receives an "all clear" from local emergency responders, the lockdown will be lifted.

In the unlikely event of an active shooter, law enforcement recommends memorizing the following: "Run, Hide, Fight."

Run. Direct visitors to the nearest emergency exit (when indoors). Run as far away as possible.

Hide. Direct visitors into rooms without windows that can be locked.



Fight. Rushing at the shooter is considered an absolute last resort.

Theft

SUMM is not responsible for lost or stolen items at events. If a guest thinks that someone has stolen something from them at one of our events, please escort them to the manager or someone who can assist them in contacting the police.

Abandoned Property

Personal property left for more than 30 days will be considered a donation and given to a local charity.

Confidentiality

Our visitors, donors, and other parties with whom we do business entrust the organization with important information relating to their businesses. It is our policy that all information considered confidential will not be disclosed to external parties or other volunteers without a "need to know." If you question whether certain information is considered confidential, check with your immediate supervisor.

Liability

Volunteers will be covered under our organization's insurance. If you are injured during the course of your volunteer work for SUMM, please notify your manager or the Executive Director right away. With regard to volunteers injured either on the premises or off the premises, in each case as long as you were volunteering within the scope of our business operations, a claim will be filed with our insurance company and if accepted, medical payments will be covered by the organization's insurance policy.

All volunteers are covered by the [Volunteer Protection Act of 1997](#) when acting without negligence and within the scope of their responsibilities. Refer to the law for full legal information of protection.



COVID-19 Precautions

Due to the nature of our work with children, who may not be vaccinated, all volunteers are required to be vaccinated if working in the community and/or otherwise in person.

Masks will be optional, but encouraged.

Hand sanitizer and appropriate social distancing will be available and indicated at each in person event.

Anti-Harassment Policy

SUMM is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect, dignity, inclusion and lack of intimidation. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, SUMM expects that all interactions and behavior among persons in the workplace will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice, discrimination, and harassment.

To keep this commitment, SUMM maintains a strict policy of prohibiting unlawful harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment and harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, sex, age, physical or mental disability or any other characteristic protected by state, federal or local employment discrimination laws.

This policy applies to all employer agents, board members, contractors, employees, volunteers, including supervisors and non-supervisory employees, and to nonemployees who engage in unlawful harassment in the workplace (including but not limited to video conference or in transit to or from a SUMM activity).

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, making unwanted sexual advances and requests for sexual favors where either:

1. Submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment; or



2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis of employment decisions affecting such individual; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Employees and contractors who violate this policy are subject to discipline up to and including the possibility of immediate discharge. Examples of unlawful harassment include but are not limited to:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments.
- Visual conduct such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, e-mail and faxes or gestures.
- Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movement or interfering with work directed at an employee because of the employee's sex or other protected characteristic.
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests in order keep one's job or avoid some other loss and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favors.
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report unlawful harassment. Any employee or other person who believes they have been harassed by a coworker, supervisor, contractor or agent of SUMM, or by a nonemployee, should promptly report the facts of the incident or incidents and the names of the individual(s) involved to their supervisor, or if applicable, to the Director of Human Resources (or whoever is responsible for human resource activities in the nonprofit organization). Upon receipt of a complaint, the organization will undertake a prompt, thorough, objective and good faith Sample Harassment Prevention Policy investigation of the harassment allegations.

SUMM will provide a safe and open process for reporting incidents by those involved or those who have witnessed harassment.

If the organization determines that harassment has occurred, effective remedial action will be taken in accordance with the circumstances involved. Any employee determined by SUMM to be responsible for harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employees will not be retaliated against for filing a complaint and/or assisting in a complaint or investigation process. Further, SUMM will



not tolerate or permit retaliation by supervisors or co-workers against any complainant or anyone assisting in a harassment investigation.

Resigning from Your Volunteer Service

We value our volunteers' time, and understand that our volunteers have many obligations and that a change in those obligations may mean that you can no longer volunteer with us. You may resign from your volunteer service with us at any time. If you need to resign, we request that you notify the Volunteer Manager, ideally two weeks prior to your departure. We will offer an exit interview if you would like to provide feedback or information that you feel is important for us to have.

Terminating Your Volunteer Service

On rare occasions, volunteers may not be performing their duties appropriately. In this case, the Volunteer Manager will meet with the volunteer to determine what actions need to be taken to improve the volunteer's performance. It is possible that after several attempts to correct conflicts, a volunteer may be asked to leave.