

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AT THE PALOUSE DISCOVERY SCIENCE CENTER



Thank you for your interest in volunteering at the PDSC!

The Palouse Discovery Science Center brings hands-on science and learning experiences to people of all ages. We are a non-profit organization whose purpose is to further the public's understanding of science and technology through the use of educational programs, exhibits, teaching collections, and activities which emphasize the physical participation of individuals.

With the help of volunteers, we are able to continue to grow as a science resource for the community of the Palouse region. As a volunteer, you would help our science center members with exhibits and our weekly activities that promote enthusiasm for science in the community. Volunteer opportunities range from exhibit maintenance to teaching assistance.

Enclosed in this packet is a list of volunteer opportunities at the PDSC and a Volunteer Application with Policies and Procedures. If you have any questions about volunteering at the Palouse Discovery Science Center, please contact us, we love to hear from potential volunteers!

Call the PDSC at (509) 332-6869 or email volunteer@palousescience.org.

Thank you and we look forward to meeting with you!

Volunteer Positions Available at the Palouse Discovery Science Center:

Birthday Parties

Decorate for Birthday parties, assist in private Birthday party science demonstration, and help with clean-up.

When: Birthday parties are scheduled on Saturdays between 10a-3p. Parties last for 1.5hrs.

Animal Care

Feed animals daily, feed snakes on Thursdays, clean animal cages, and shop for animal needs. One volunteer doesn't need to take on all tasks, training in one area (feeding, cleaning, etc.) and a commitment of at least 6 months would be ideal.

When: Animals typically are fed during operation hours, taking about 30-45 min. Cage cleaning and shopping can be done when volunteers are available or when needed.

Maintenance

Assist staff with keeping exhibits and exhibit floor presentable for visitors. Duties will be on a situational basis, but could include tasks such as: tidying/sanitizing toys, dusting, and organizing books shelves.

When: Open hours Tues. 10a-5p; Wed.-Sat. 10a-3p.

Education

Assist Educators in daily science lessons, facilitate an independent lesson or activity on the museum floor, or create a new lesson. The daily activity is usually geared towards Kindergarten or Pre-Kindergarten ages. Activities vary in number of attending children and in content. Independent lessons can be done any time that the PDSC is open when not conflicting with ongoing lessons, and can include pre-planned lessons (see an educator), Nano Kits, Story Kits, or a lesson of your own design. You also may design a lesson on your own after meeting with an educator to learn more about this process.

When: Open hours Tues. 10a-5p; Wed.-Sat. 10a-3p.

Outreach Assistant

Travel to off-site locations with staff to help with science demonstrations and promote the science center. Demonstrations are usually an hour or less and in the local area, followed by interactions with the attendees.

Typical outreach includes a specific science lesson developed and taught by staff for a specific age group.

When: Outreach demonstrations usually last 1-2 hours in addition to travel time and will be scheduled as the opportunity arises.

Special Events

Help out at special events that occur throughout the year. Tasks may include ticket sales, set-up/tear-down, running science demonstrations, or visitor greeting. All active volunteers will be contacted about upcoming events ahead of time.

When: Events are scheduled throughout the year.

Field Trips

Assist with lessons for schools and groups that visit the science center. Help educators with hands-on activities, assist with demonstrations, or set-up/tear-down. Most field trips are for groups between grades K – 5, although middle and high school opportunities do occasionally arise. Your level of participation depends on your comfort level in the classroom and the educators' needs.

When: Tuesdays – Fridays, 10am – 12pm or 1pm – 3pm.

PDSC Volunteer Policies & Procedures

Please read through the following policies and keep them as a reference. When understood sign at the bottom of the volunteer application. (This is a condensed version of the PDSC's Policies and Procedures. For a complete, detailed version ask a PDSC Staff Member.)

Volunteers are representatives of the PDSC and must agree to the following:

Availability

When interested in coming in for a shift **volunteers must call or email to schedule their shift ahead of time**. This prevents having shifts with an excess or shortage of volunteers and respects the contributions of other volunteers. **Once a volunteer is scheduled for a shift they are expected to carry out that shift** unless cancelled within the acceptable notification period. **If you cannot make it to your shift at PDSC, please notify us preferably 24 hours prior but no less than 1 hour prior to your shift (509.332.6869). If no one answers the phone, please leave a message.**

Appearance

We expect volunteers to maintain a casual, clean, and appropriate appearance when at the PDSC or when representing the PDSC to the public.

Dress

During your shifts you will wear a PDSC nametag that lets others know who you are. The nametag should be left at PDSC upon completion of your shift and is only to be worn when conducting PDSC related business. If these items should happen to leave PDSC, they should be returned to the Science Center as soon as possible in person or via the US Post Office:

Palouse Discovery Science Center
950 NE Nelson Court
Pullman WA 99163.

Conduct

You will be around children!

We expect volunteers to behave in an appropriately professional manner. If inappropriate conduct does arise from students or visitors, the problem should be handed over to their teacher, adult chaperone, parent, and/or the PDSC Staff.

Punctuality

All volunteers must arrive 15 minutes prior to their shift unless otherwise specified. It is unacceptable to keep visitors waiting or to have them show up for a program while we are still setting things up. If you cannot make it to your shift at the PDSC, please notify us, preferably 24 hours prior, but no less than 1 hour prior to your shift (509.332.6869). If no one answers the phone, please leave a message.

Alcohol and Drugs

Volunteers will not arrive at the PDSC or any PDSC event in possession of or under the influence of any drugs or alcohol.

Vacation

Please notify the Volunteer Coordinator if you are leaving for an extended period of time so schedules can be adjusted accordingly.

Non-Discrimination

The PDSC is an open, inclusive, and safe organization. The PDSC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or beliefs.

Accessibility

The PDSC strives to be accessible to all people.

Children of Volunteers

Children of volunteers may not accompany their parents to a volunteer shift. When serving at the PSDC, volunteers are expected to devote their full attention to the task at hand. The PDSC policy states that for the safety of the child, all children visiting the center must be supervised at all times by an accompanying adult.

Privacy

The privacy of donors, staff, interns, volunteers, patrons, and people associated with the PDSC will be maintained.

Scientific Purpose

The PDSC will present science and technology, including scientific tools, models, theories, laws, methods, and techniques. Critical analysis and discourse are encouraged. Although opinions, values, political views, and ethics related to the science and technology presented are valued, they are outside the scope of the Science Center's mission and should be saved for personal interactions rather than volunteer interactions.

In the event a volunteer does not follow these policies, they will be issued a warning and asked to correct their behavior. If the misconduct continues, the volunteer will be dismissed from volunteering at the Palouse Discovery Science Center in the future. The PDSC reserves the right to remove a volunteer from their task and ask that they leave the Center anytime their behavior is deemed inappropriate by Staff.

Safe Environment Policy

The Palouse Discovery Science Center (PDSC) takes seriously its responsibility to provide a safe environment for all who come to it. We strive to ensure a facility free of violence and abuse of all kinds, including intimidation, coercion, sexual harassment, or verbal, emotional or physical abuse. Our volunteers will be expected to conduct themselves in such a way as to promote a safe environment.

In addition, the PDSC will

1. Require all volunteers working with children to sign a statement confirming that they have read and understand this Safe Environment Policy.
2. Strive to have a minimum of two people present with any children in the science center whenever possible, even if it is another child.
3. Conduct background checks on volunteers and staff as the PDSC determines necessary or when required by law.
4. Insure that all information obtained regarding abuse and background checks be kept in a confidential and secure manner.
5. Inform volunteers of their duty to report child abuse, abandonment or neglect under Washington law.

If a PDSC volunteer observes or suspects a violation of any of these policies, he/she is empowered to address the situation and required to immediately inform the Volunteer Coordinator or the Executive Director of PDSC in person or by contacting them via telephone numbers or email addresses.

As previously stated, to ensure the safety of all those who come to the Palouse Discovery Science Center, background checks may be conducted on all those who work with our young visitors, including volunteers. When you sign at the bottom of the volunteer application, you give your consent to a background check.