



## THE MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS / SINGAPORE ART MUSEUM VOLUNTEER GUIDE TRAINING 2008 - FAQs

### **Frequently Asked Questions on MV Weekend Volunteer Guide Training**

#### **Who is conducting the training? What is the training for?**

This training is organised by The Museum Volunteers (MV) group with the support of the Singapore Art Museum (SAM) and the National Heritage Board (NHB). Lecturers for this training programme are predominantly SAM's curators. This programme is for training volunteer guides to conduct tours in English on weekends for SAM visitors.

#### **Who is SAM?**

Kindly refer to <http://www.singart.com/>. As introduced in the website –

“The Singapore Art Museum (SAM) is one of the first art museums with international standard museum facilities and programmes in Southeast Asia. Dedicated to the collection and display of 20th century Singapore and Southeast Asian modern and contemporary art, SAM joins a league of new generation museums around the world with well-executed exhibitions and community outreach programmes. The Museum houses the national art collection of Singapore and has the largest collection in 20th-century Southeast Asian art by a public institution internationally.”

#### **Who is MV?**

MV is a non-profit informal group of trained volunteer guides sharing with visitors at our National Museums the rich cultural heritage of Singapore and the region. There are currently more than 100 MVs from different nationalities, races, age groups and professions. As almost all MVs work fulltime, we conduct volunteer tours in English on weekends and public holidays (on special request) for visitors at the National Museums under NHB: Asian Civilisations Museum, National Museum of Singapore, Singapore Art Museum, and from end April 2008, the new Peranakan Museum. MV also conducts volunteer guide training and assists in various NHB programmes.

#### **Important Dates**

- Public Information Session: 19 April 2008
- Closing Date of Application: 11pm, 2 May 08
- Interviews for short-listed candidates: 26 & 27 April, and 3 & 10 May 08
- You will be informed of interview outcome by 13 May 08
- You would need to confirm your participation by 17 May 08
- Pay course fee (cash) by 24 May 08. No refunds upon payment.
- Training is from 24 May 08 – end August 08. Training will be mostly held from 1:45 – 5:30 pm on Saturdays.
- Break on 7 June 08.
- If you graduate from the course, you'll guide your first group from October 2008; you must guide for one year after training.

#### **How to apply and how will information be disseminated before and during training?**

- We will only accept paper application forms during the Public Information Session on 19 April 08. Thereafter, application form can be downloaded from <http://www.geocities.com/samguide2008/> and must be submitted by email to [samguide2008@yahoo.com](mailto:samguide2008@yahoo.com).
- During the course, a lot of information will be provided via email, so participants must be contactable by email and be comfortable with using email.

#### **How much will training cost?**

All training fees will go towards training as MV is a non-profit group. It will cost \$120, which will be used to defray costs of course materials, reference books, simple refreshments, field trips, etc. There will be no refund after 24 May 08.

#### **Where will training be held?**

Training will be held at SAM as far as possible. Some sessions will be held at MICA Building, Hill Street.

**What will be covered during the training?**

The course prepares volunteers to guide at SAM and will cover major topics on Western Art, Chinese Art, South-east Asian Art, art history and various art forms. There will be focus on SAM's permanent collection. The training will not be exhaustive and you are expected to read and research outside the lectures.

**What is the time commitment expected?**

You will have to be present for all the training sessions on Saturday afternoons from mid May to end-Aug. If you miss more than two lectures, the training committee will review if you will be allowed to continue in the programme. Occasionally, lectures may be held on weekday evenings or Sundays to accommodate lecturers' schedule. Also, you will have to do additional reading and research to prepare for your gallery talks and tour paper.

**I know that I'll have to miss a few lectures. Can I still apply?**

The course runs at quite a brisk pace, and our concern is that you may not be able to catch up, nor be able to meet deadlines for gallery talks. If you know you'll miss more than 2 lectures, please reconsider your application and think about joining the next round of training. Kindly keep in mind that the training fee of S\$120 is not refundable after 24 May 08.

**How much work will I have to hand in?**

You have to submit 2 short "papers / scripts" and present them to your fellow trainees in the form of gallery talks. In addition, you will have to prepare a tour paper, which will form the basis of your hour-long tour of SAM. Gallery talks and tour paper will be assessed by current MV guides.

**Will the lectures be enough for me?**

The lectures would not cover everything you'll need to guide. For example, you will have to attend curator walkthroughs and may need to do your own research when there are new exhibitions at SAM.

**What kind of people are you looking for?**

You must first and foremost be interested in the Arts and sharing your knowledge with the public. You must be able to commit the time and effort to the training as well as provide volunteer tours at SAM at least once a month for at least 1 year upon graduation from the course. You would not be paid for conducting such volunteer tours as the museums do not charge visitors for these tours. Enthusiasm and passion for SAM will also motivate you to research on the changing exhibitions. You must be able to speak coherently in English before groups of visitors to the museum.

**How many volunteers are you recruiting?**

We're looking at a training group of about 40 volunteers. This is a good number to ensure that all volunteer guides get a chance to guide after they graduate, to keep interest up. Also it's manageable when we go into the galleries for exhibition walkthroughs and gallery talks.

**Will I have to pay a fee to join MV?**

No membership fee for MV.

**What's the difference between MV and the Friends of the Museums (S) (FOM)?**

MV is specifically targeted at guiding at NHB museums and provides weekend tours whereas FOM is a registered non-profit volunteer society which supports NHB museums by providing weekday tours. MV and FOM are distinct and independent of each other. FOM has its own membership scheme and members' activities (kindly refer to FOM's website: [www.fom.sg](http://www.fom.sg)). Besides regular tours, both MV and FOM also help out with the museums' special tours / programmes upon requests.

**What if after the MV training, I can only guide on weekdays? Can I switch after training?**

MV will not restrict you from switching but you will have to check with FOM to see if it could take you as FOM has its own requirements. On MV's side, you have to commit to a year's guiding after graduation.

**Who do I contact for more information?**

Kindly email [samguide2008@yahoo.com](mailto:samguide2008@yahoo.com) or refer to <http://www.geocities.com/samguide2008/>