

BECOME A DOCENT

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA MUSEUM OF ART

What do docents do at UAMA?

Guided Tours

More than 350 group visits or field trips are scheduled at the museum each year with about half of these requesting a tour led by docent guides. Guided tours are customized by docents to fit the needs of the group, based on communication between UAMA Education staff, the group leader, and the docents. The majority of tours are for college students but we also serve many groups of K-12 students and adult community members.

Adult Outreach Talks

UAMA docents give engaging presentations in various locations around Tucson including senior centers and public libraries. These talks allow us to share art experiences with people across Tucson who may not otherwise visit the museum as well as increase the public's awareness of the museum. Focusing on artworks and artists from the UAMA collection, docents have the flexibility to pick their own topics and spend many hours planning and researching their presentations prior to presenting them.

Public Art Tours

In partnership with the UA Visitor Center, UAMA docents provide free monthly walking tours of public art on campus. Tours last about an hour and incorporate discussion and activities to get participants talking and interpreting artworks as a group.

School ArtReach

Docents sometimes facilitate outreach programs in local schools. The museum offers several lessons that integrate art within other subjects like science, literacy, and Arizona state history. The lessons include inquiry-based looking strategies, critical thinking, creativity, and an art making project.

Special Events

Docents can also assist with special events like Family Days, exhibit openings, galas and outreach tables at community events like the Festival of Books. The tasks vary and may include welcoming visitors, facilitating activities, or sharing info about museum programs.

What can I expect from the docent training program?

Training for new docents will take place **September 2019 – April 2020 on Monday mornings from 9:00am-12:00pm**, with a coffee break usually around 10:30am-11am. One Monday each month, there will be an art history lecture in place of the docent meeting and we will only meet from 10am-12pm. New docents can miss up to two sessions per semester and still graduate from the training program.

The training will include many topics presented in a variety of formats. Through the training, docents will:

- Be familiar with a variety of artists and artistic processes, mediums, styles, and historical periods
- Value and practice inclusive and learner-centered teaching, touring, and presentation methods
- Learn about the diversity of the Tucson and University of Arizona communities and practice educational approaches that welcome visitors of all perspectives and backgrounds
- Consider and develop their own strengths and skills as an educator
- Learn ways to engage groups of various ages and developmental stages
- Practice different approaches for analyzing and appreciating artworks
- Learn about the history of the UAMA and its permanent collection of over 6,000 artworks

Training sessions will require active participation and vary in approach including lectures, exhibition tours, hands-on practice, partner and group work, and workshops with visiting speakers. Expect to actively participate in group discussions and complete various assignments and readings.

Do not expect a linear approach to learning the history of art. Sessions will often focus on what is currently on display at the museum, including the permanent collection and temporary exhibitions. As such, there will usually be a mixture of artists, styles, and time periods to explore.

In addition to attending trainings, each new docent will complete some additional requirements during the year:

- Shadow 8-10 tours at UAMA and attend 2-3 docent talks at community locations
- Lead a mini-tour for the docent group at the end of fall semester
- Create an outline and present a 20-minute graduation tour for the docent group at the end of spring semester. New docents will select their own theme and intended audience for the tour and receive feedback from docents and UAMA Education staff

New docents will be matched with a current docent mentor to provide support and feedback throughout the training process. Current docents are a fantastic resource for learning more about the UAMA permanent collection, tips for how to prepare and research tours and talks, and general advice. New docents and mentors often spend extra time meeting outside of training sessions to learn more about certain topics or get individual feedback.

Docents and staff also have fun getting to know each other! We host a docent appreciation luncheon in December and a potluck celebration in April to thank everyone for all their hard work. We also have coffee (and sometimes treats) in the lobby from 10:30am-11am on Mondays.

What other requirements or expectations are there for UAMA docents?

All docents are required to become UAMA Members at the Individual level which has an annual fee of \$50.

Docents are also welcome to become members at a family level or higher giving level. By joining as a member, you are helping to support exhibitions, programming, and events and will enjoy great benefits like free admission and access to exclusive events. Find more information about UAMA Membership levels and benefits online:

<https://artmuseum.arizona.edu/giving-opportunities/membership>

In addition to training materials provided by UAMA, docents may also choose to purchase The Docent Handbook or the revised edition The Docent Handbook 2, published by the National Docent Symposium Council, for \$30. This is a practical guide with ideas and best practices for docents and interpreters on topics like learning styles, object-based teaching, working with different audiences, using technology, and language and approaches for talking about cultures other than your own.

More info: <https://www.nationaldocents.org/docent-resources/docent-handbook/how-to-order>

In general, docents are expected to:

- Strive to fulfill the education mission of UAMA
- Act as an ambassador both at and away from the Museum
- Treat all visitors with respect and hospitality, value the knowledge all people bring with them
- Understand that approaches might need to be adjusted to fit the group or audience
- Feel comfortable working in a team atmosphere with people of various backgrounds and points of view
- Respect requests and directions from Museum staff, including security staff and gallery monitors
- Pay attention to the dates of exhibitions and programs at the Museum, use the website and bi-weekly Member emails to find information in addition to announcements during docent meetings
- Be prompt and dependable in correspondence, much of which is done via email
- Be comfortable speaking in front of a group
- Be capable of speaking, moving, and leading groups for an extended period (60 minutes or more)

How do I apply for the 2019-2020 New Docent Training?

Fill out an application available on our website: <https://artmuseum.arizona.edu/volunteer-docent-program>

There are three different ways to submit the application:

- Print the application and mail it or bring it to the Museum in person
- Download the application, fill it out on the computer, and email to willa@email.arizona.edu
- Fill out the online form version of the application, also available at the website above

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact:

Chelsea Farrar, Curator of Community Engagement cjfarrar@email.arizona.edu

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Thank you for your interest!