



VOLUNTEER WORK: A CAREER STRATEGY

Martin Lominy, Supervisor of educational and clientele services

Since 2009, around 30% of our volunteers are recent immigrants. The majority has a university degree and seeks employment. For them, volunteering in a museum is more than work experience; it is a means of integration as well as a career strategy.

Firstly, volunteering provides local work experience in various specialized fields where work can be difficult to access. In the field of museology, work is particularly limited and less available to the general public. Therefore, volunteers have the chance to participate in professional activities or discover a domain without returning to university. Sometimes, this can also be a strategy of career reorientation.

In addition, volunteer work is an excellent way to show your skills to potential employers or obtain references for future job applications. Those who are already known to the institution have an advantage. It is also an opportunity to create a network with other professionals within the field. In museology, not all jobs are announced and it's only by making contacts that one can have access to privileged information. According to *'Immigration et communautés culturelles Québec'*, « (...) around 80% of jobs are not announced either in the newspaper or on the internet. »¹

Finally, volunteering offers the possibility to improve in French and practice language skills in a French speaking environment. Learning French is necessary in order to find work in Quebec and, in particular, to work in a museum. Therefore, the positions in animation remain the most popular at the museum. Also, it is the most effective way to learn the professional language in a specialized domain

For all of these reasons, recent immigrants can find many benefits in a volunteer work experience and the museum continues to support immigrant volunteers throughout their learning experience.

[Testimonies of volunteers](#) – Emploi et solidarité sociale Québec

¹ <http://www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/fr/emploi/chercher-trouver/reseau-contacts.html>