



Trailblazer Volunteer Recruitment

Volunteers are an essential part of the Trailblazer experience. Not only do they keep kids engaged and safe on board, they also provide a chance for kids to see community members with whom they have a local connection get excited about STEM.

Volunteer docents can be parents, PTA members, substitute teachers, college or high school students (9th grade and older only), or employees of a local business that supports your school or cause. They do not need to have any special skills in education or STEM.

- A **minimum of 6 volunteers** is required at all times visitors are touring.
 - Volunteers do not need to have any experience or technical background. All activities are easy to learn and TAME staff will brief the volunteers prior to the tour.
 - 1-2 additional volunteers are recommended as backup.
- Volunteers should be scheduled to **arrive 40 minutes before** the Trailblazer opens in order to attend hands-on orientation.
 - Late volunteers and no-shows disrupt the program, which could result in schedule changes. Please stress with your volunteers the importance of arriving on time.
- Failure to provide at least 6 volunteers will result in exhibits being shut down or possible cancellation of your program.

When recruiting for volunteers, it is recommended to **start as early as possible** with a clear explanation of the needs of the role.

The role can be described as follows:

“The Trailblazer is an interactive museum-on-wheels that has a proven impact on the students it serves, inspiring them to stay engaged in STEM in school and potentially pursue a lucrative STEM career one day. Volunteers can expect to have a fun and unique experience where they see a child’s eyes light up with excitement and possibility.

Inside the Trailblazer there are 5 exhibit areas: Energy, Space, Biotechnology, Aerodynamics and Weather. As a volunteer docent, you will stay in one exhibit area during your time on board and assist visitors with exhibits and share information about STEM careers associated with that topic. These volunteer positions require standing and speaking in a loud environment. TAME will provide snacks and water. Scripts and training will be provided, so no special background in STEM is necessary.”

Tips on recruiting:

- 1) Set your schedule as soon as possible. Your volunteers will need to know what time they are expected to arrive (40 minutes before doors open) and what time they’ll be finished.



Texas Alliance for Minorities in Engineering

- 2) Tap into their motivation by sharing the potential impact they will have, emphasizing that their volunteering will make a meaningful difference in the lives of your students.
- 3) Remind them that no prior experience in STEM or education are necessary.
- 4) So that volunteers only have to prepare for the one station they'll be helping with, allow volunteers to select the content area they will lead when they sign-up, or pre-assign them a station.
 - a. If someone you're asking has an expertise in one of our content areas (Energy, Biotechnology, Aerodynamics, Weather or Space), encourage them to sign up for that position.
- 5) Stay in touch with your volunteers prior to the experience. Thank them when they sign up, and send them reminders to review the training materials and keep the date in mind, explaining the importance of showing up on time.

Online Resources:

- www.VolunteerSignUp.org
 - This site allows you to create an online volunteer sign-up page. Set times, give descriptions of the positions and gather contact information from your volunteers using this tool. This recruiting tool will help you complete the TAME Volunteer Schedule form which asks for their name and email address.
 - See an example of how this form works here:
<https://www.volunteersignup.org/KW73W>
- Pre-training content and copies of the exhibit area scripts can be found online for each Trailblazer:
 - **Trailblazer 1:** <http://www.tame.org/programs/trailblazer/trailblazer-guidelines-training/trailblazer-i-volunteer-training>
 - **Trailblazer 2:** <http://www.tame.org/programs/trailblazer/trailblazer-guidelines-training/trailblazer-ii-volunteer-training>