

Mississauga Festival of Trees

Volunteer Manual 2025

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Welcome Message

Thank you for being part of the Mississauga Festival of Trees!

Our volunteers are the heart of this event — your time, enthusiasm, and community spirit help us create a warm, creative, and inclusive experience for all visitors.

General information

About Creative Hub 1352:

CreativeHub 1352 is a charitable non-profit that powers arts, culture, and community in Mississauga. As the lead tenant and key partner of the historic Small Arms Inspection Building, we deliver year-round programming in the arts, heritage, and environmental stewardship that engages tens of thousands of residents and visitors annually.

Our roots trace back to the successful 2008 community effort to save the SAIB from demolition. Since 2018, we've worked with the City of Mississauga to transform this landmark into a thriving cultural hub — growing attendance, expanding programming days each year, and creating opportunities for artists, makers, and community members to connect.

About Mississauga Festival of Trees:

The **Mississauga Festival of Trees** returns this **December 5–14, 2025**, transforming the historic Small Arms Inspection Building (SAIB) into a spectacular holiday destination of art, light, music, and markets. Now entering its fifth edition, the Festival has become a much-loved holiday tradition — welcoming thousands of families, neighbours, and visitors to celebrate creativity and community.

The Festival is a ten-day celebration of creativity and community. Highlights for 2025 include:

- **10+ curated art installations** by Ontario artists, reflecting cultural traditions, environmental themes, and community identity.
- **Artisan & Culinary Markets** with 98+ local vendors, generating income for small businesses and artisans.
- **10+ live performances** across folk, jazz, rock, and multicultural traditions.
- **20+ hands-on workshops**, developed with partners including Heritage Mississauga, Toronto Region Conservation, and Indigenous educators (e.g., Eagle Spirits of the Great Waters).

Check out the 2024 Highlight reel:  [updatedMFT2024Reel.mov](#)

How Volunteers Can Make This Event Extraordinary

How to become a Volunteer

People interested in becoming volunteers can apply through the CreativeHub1352 website at [this link](#). Applicants need to be fifteen years old or older. There will be questions on the application about your interest in volunteering for CreativeHub 1352, as well as your availability, and any certifications you may have that would come in handy as a volunteer.

Once you are approved as a volunteer, you will be sent an email with links to the volunteer waiver, which will need to be signed, as well as the Volunteer Handbook, which you will need to acknowledge reviewing. Then you will be ready to become a volunteer!

Volunteers, just like CreativeHub 1352 staff, are expected to abide by our [Event and Program Health and Safety Policy](#). Please familiarize yourself with the Policy, and the responsibilities that come with being a volunteer with CreativeHub 1352. CreativeHub 1352 is committed to providing an environment in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Violence or harassment will not be tolerated from any person including volunteers.

All volunteers must follow CreativeHub 1352's [Incident Reporting Policy](#) and promptly report any incident, near miss, or safety concern to staff using the required Incident Report Form.

How to sign up for Volunteer Shifts

Once you are approved as a volunteer, you will have access to Better Impact, our volunteer management system. You will log into your [MyImpactPage](#) to gain access to the volunteer shifts that are available.

Once you open your MyImpactPage, you will click on the Opportunities heading, and select either the Opportunities Calendar or the Opportunities List. From either the Calendar or the list view, you will be able to select the volunteer shift(s) that you would like to sign up for.

A recording of the orientation will be shared after the Volunteer Orientation, but we encourage all volunteers to attend the orientation, so that you can ask questions about the volunteer opportunities. If you attend the virtual Orientation, that time will count towards your volunteer hours, so it pays to attend!

If you are signed up, you show up!

We expect our volunteers to take a volunteer shift as seriously as they would a shift at a job - if you are signed up, we expect you to be there. Each role is important for a successful Festival. **Ensure you have transportation to and from the Small Arms Inspection Building** - many volunteers cancel at the last minute because they simply cannot get to the Building. Make sure you have a ride or are able to get to the building by public transportation in time for your shift.

We will send you an email a few days before your shift, asking you to confirm whether you will be coming or not. If something comes up, and you cannot make your shift, we ask that you let us know at least 24 hours in advance so that we can offer the shift to someone else.

Our no-show policy: Cancellations less than 24 hours from the start of your shift will be considered a no-show, and affect your ability to continue as a volunteer with CreativeHub 1352. We will cancel future shifts that you have signed up for after one no-show. If you would like to continue as a volunteer after a no-show, please reach out to the Director of Volunteer Development, Nichol, at nichol@creativehub1352.ca.

Considerations before you arrive:

- Please refer to your specific role to see how you will be expected to dress
- We are a scent-free workplace, and expect our volunteers to not arrive wearing strong scents.
- We are located at 1352 Lakeshore Road East, where Dixie Road and Lakeshore meet.
📍 1352 Lakeshore Rd E
- If you are driving, while there is plenty of parking in the lot adjacent to the building, we are asking volunteers working during Market hours to park at McKenna Logistics at 1260 Lakeshore Road East to allow as much space in the main parking lot as possible for market patrons. It is a short walk to the Small Arms Inspection Building from there. If accessibility is an issue for you, or the weather makes it unsafe to walk that far, please do park in the Small Arms parking lot. If you are taking transit, Miway Route 23 stops at Lakeshore Road and Dixie Road.
- Please bring a water bottle - there is a refill station in the building. Bring snacks if you have any food sensitivities. There will be some snacks available to volunteers, but we cannot guarantee the availability of food that meets your dietary requirements.

Upon arrival:

- Please check in with the Volunteer Captain for your shift. You will be informed ahead of your shift who the Volunteer Captain will be.
- There is a coat room to leave your personal belongings (where?) at your own risk, the room is only for staff and volunteers
- The Volunteer Captain will provide you with a lanyard identifying you as a volunteer.
- Please inform the Volunteer Captain if you require any accommodations.
- The Volunteer Captain will provide you with a food voucher that can be used with the market food vendors.

During your shift:

- Warm Greetings

- Welcome every guest with a friendly smile and a warm greeting.
- Be the first positive connection they have at the event.
- Answer questions from the public and vendors, if you know the answer; otherwise, ask the Volunteer Captain, CreativeHub staff, or City Staff for the answer
- Encourage Donations
 - Let attendees know this is a pay-what-you-can event.
 - Share that CreativeHub 1352 is a nonprofit charitable organization dedicated to making this space a creative hub accessible to all.
 - Explain that donations help support local artists, performers, and community programs — and help keep the Festival magical for everyone.
- Highlight Art Installations
 - Inform guests about the 10 stunning art installations representing trees.
 - Remind attendees that while these installations are for everyone to enjoy, they should not be touched, as noted on signage.
- Promote Vendors
 - Mention that there are 43 craft and culinary vendors offering local, handmade creations.
 - Encourage visitors to shop and support small, local businesses and artisans.
- Foster a Positive Experience
 - Be approachable and ready to assist guests with questions or directions.
 - Help ensure the event feels welcoming, inclusive, and memorable for all.
 - While volunteering, please keep phones in pockets and headphones/earbuds put away so that you can attend to your responsibilities and engage with the public fully

At the end of your shift:

- Check out with the Volunteer Captain at the end of your shift and return your volunteer lanyard
- Ask Volunteer Captain to sign your hours, if needed

Volunteer Roles & Responsibilities:

Market Volunteer Captain

- Arrive for shift 15 minutes ahead of your shift to ensure you arrive before other volunteers; check in with the Festival Manager and locate the Volunteer Captain clipboard in the volunteer bins
- Greet all volunteers as they arrive and check them off on the volunteer list

- If volunteers haven't signed a waiver, have them sign online on the iPad or sign a paper copy
- Provide volunteers with their lanyards
- Review with volunteers their duties for the day; ensure they have everything they need for their shift; ask them if they require any accommodations and help to meet them
- Ensure they know where the washrooms and water bottle refill station is
- Answer any questions they may have about their shift
- Liaise with the Festival Manager to see which tasks require support from the Market Attendants
- Answer questions from vendors or attendees if you know the answer; otherwise, speak with CreativeHub 1352 staff or City staff to find the answer
- Rotate Market Attendants through the other volunteer roles to give other volunteers a chance to take a break
- As volunteers inform you that they are leaving, check them out on the volunteer list and collect their volunteer lanyard, signing their hours log if needed
- When handing over between shifts, review which volunteers have arrived, which have left, which require accommodation, and any other issues that have come up
- When all volunteer tasks have been completed and all volunteers have signed out, complete the Volunteer Captain log and place the Volunteer Captain clipboard in correct volunteer bin

Decor/Set-up/Load-In/Load-Out

- As directed by the Volunteer Captain or Market Manager, assist in the decor, set-up, load-in, load out or tear down of the event and market.
- Assist vendors and others, as assigned, to set up or tear down their tables and displays
- Assist with general site organization and ensure safe, accessible pathways
- Lifting up to 30lbs and physical activity involved
- What to wear:
 - Work clothes that are appropriate for physical work
 - Jackets, hats and gloves, as work may require you to be outside to to be moving frequently between indoors and outdoors
 - Closed-toe, no-slip shoes or boots that are appropriate for physical work

Greeter

- Greeters are the first people who patrons will meet at the Festival of Trees, as they sit at the CreativeHub 1352 table and greet people as they arrive
- Greeters will be provided with an attendee counting form; using the counter, count all people who attend the festival - it's very important that we have a running total of how many people attend; enter the hourly total onto the counter sheet
- Provide information to the public, including what is happening that day at the festival, and on the upcoming days of the festival
- Provide directions to washrooms, water bottle refill stations, etc.
- Direct questions to the Volunteer Captain, Festival Manager or City Staff when appropriate

- What to wear:
 - **Comfortable but professional clothing** (please no hoodies, offensive t-shirts). We are a classy family-friendly fest.
 - **Comfortable shoes**—there may be times when you are on your feet helping guests or vendors
 - **Blue bandana** will be provided—please wear it visibly to help guests identify you as volunteers.
 - You are welcome to wear festive sweaters and accessories.

Coat Check

- Coat check volunteers will be stationed in the coat check room close to the greeter desk
- Coat check volunteers will take coats and other belongings from festival patrons and provide them with check tickets
- Volunteers will maintain a watchful eye on the coats and other belongings left by patrons
- Volunteers will return belongings to patrons once they return their check tickets
- What to wear:
 - **Comfortable but professional clothing** (please no hoodies, offensive t-shirts). We are a classy family-friendly fest.
 - **Comfortable shoes**—there may be times when you are on your feet helping guests or vendors
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Market Attendant

- Market Attendants will provide general support to the Volunteer Captain and Event Manager.
- Market Attendants may be asked to step into other roles, such as greeter or the coat check, to give the volunteers in that role a break; they may also be assigned a different volunteer role if the volunteer who had signed up for that shift cancelled too late for the role to be filled, or was a no-show.
- When not assigned to a task, Market Attendants can walk around the market and provide patrons or vendors with assistance, but should check in frequently with the Volunteer Captain to see if there is something they could be doing to help
- Monitor the market for cleanliness and safety, and alert the Market Manager, Volunteer Captain or City staff if there is a clean-up or safety issue.
- What to wear:
 - **Comfortable but professional clothing** (please no hoodies, offensive t-shirts). We are a classy family-friendly fest.
 - **Comfortable shoes**—there may be times when you are on your feet helping guests or vendors
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Servery

- For volunteers on first shift of the day, assist with the set-up of the cafe, as directed by the Cafe Manager or the Volunteer Captain
- For volunteers on the final shift of the day, assist with the closure of the cafe, as directed by the Cafe Manager or the Volunteer Captain
- Greet customers and take food/beverage orders
- Input orders into a POS system using an iPad
- Handle basic cash and electronic transactions
- Assist with setup and teardown of the café area (including lifting up to 30lbs)
- Maintain a clean, welcoming service station
- Follow basic food safety and hygiene protocols under staff supervision, long hair will need to be tied back
- Only volunteers who are certified in Smart Serve can handle or serve alcohol
- What to wear:
 - Wear closed-toe shoes, short sleeves, and comfortable clothing suitable for movement
 - Clothes should be comfortable, but professional (no hoodies, offensive graphic t-shirts)
 - Festive or seasonal clothes are fine, but should be appropriate for food service (i.e. no glitter, loose or dangling items)