

Visitor Experience Volunteer

The Rum Story heritage attraction in Whitehaven wants to recruit local Visitor Experience Volunteers. We want your help in making our important but challenging histories more thought-provoking and engaging for visitors. This will support us to become an even more popular and educational visitor attraction.

The Rum Story

The Rum Story tells the history of the Jefferson family's business, which involved rum, shipping and the trafficking and enslavement of African people. This history sits alongside a wider history of Whitehaven as a significant shipping port, built on mining, then by wealth generated by the Transatlantic trade of enslaved African people.

Set in the original shop, cellars, warehouses and office of the family business, the attraction depicts life in 18th century Whitehaven. It's run by [Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners](#), a not-for-profit organisation.

The Rum Story Re-Imagined

From 2025-2030, we are working to make The Rum Story more accessible, inclusive, engaging and anti-racist. This is what we call The Rum Story Re-Imagined Project. We want lots more people, from all walks of life, to visit and come back. We want to tell the history in a more honest, in-depth way. The attraction talks about enslavement, but the way history is told is often shaped by who had the power and means to dominate the narrative at the time. We want to ensure that narratives that are not currently told, or which are told in a harmful way are heard and told better.

In 2025, in partnership with Anti Racist Cumbria and with funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, we consulted and engaged with over 1,000 people to create a set of recommendations to improve it. We've implemented some of these already, but most remain to be delivered over the next four years.

Role and responsibilities

We anticipate Visitor Experience Volunteers having these kinds of responsibilities:

- Help make all visitors feel welcome and cared for at The Rum Story
- Answer visitors' questions about everything from history to facilities to changes
- Share facts and stories to make the history more relatable and engaging
- Help keep watch over the exhibition and collection items on display
- Help staff members in the attraction shop
- Help to run tours around the exhibition and on the harbour
- Help to run workshops, events and exhibitions for the public
- Use your skills and experience to help us to implement our five-year plan

You will be based in The Rum Story and line-managed by Development Manager, Katy Haigh. You will also be supervised day to day by members of the retail team and Events and Marketing Officer, Grace Law.

This is a voluntary role, but we will cover travel costs and meal costs provided these fit within our expenses policy, are agreed in advance and are evidenced by receipts.

Skills and qualities needed

We are looking for people who live in West Cumbria with:

- Great people skills
- Great verbal communication skills
- Great team-working skills
- A welcoming and inclusive approach
- An interest in The Rum Story's history
- A commitment to The Rum Story Re-Imagined Project's aims and approach
- A willingness to learn

We particularly welcome applications from Black and Global Majority people.

Further information

Working at The Rum Story involves working with challenging and potentially triggering histories of enslavement and its legacies. Because of this we have a fund that all team members can access for racial trauma and wellbeing support from Rowan Carr, who is qualified in Embodied Coaching and Somatic Approaches to Healing Racial Trauma.

We can also support you through:

- The opportunity to debrief after meetings/events
- Access to desk space/meeting rooms while they are unused
- The use of organisational resources, such as printers, where possible
- Access to free training resources that are available to the team

To find out more or apply, email katy.haigh@rumstory.co.uk telling her a bit about you, why you're interested in this role and why you think you have the skills and qualities to do it well. We want to be flexible and inclusive so please don't be afraid to ask any questions.

Learn more about The Rum Story by visiting rumstory.co.uk or by following us on Facebook @The Rum Story – Official or on Instagram @therumstory.