

Meet-the-Locals Volunteer Programme Factsheet

Objective

- Recruit local residents familiar with Hong Kong’s local living culture to become “Hong Kong Pals”, and introduce the city’s way of living and culture, as well as make travel recommendations to visitors from across the globe.
- Allow Hong Kong residents to take up front-line positions of servicing visitors, displaying the warm, hospitable face of the city.

Program Detail

- The Meet-the-Locals Volunteer Programme is organised by HKTB with support from various parties of the community:
 - Agency for Volunteer Service (AVS) on recruitment and selection phrase
 - Travel trade representatives as members of the selection panel
 - Local specialists to provide training to volunteers
- After receiving training, the Meet-the-Locals volunteers identified as “Hong Kong Pals” will offer services at HKTB Visitor Centres, introduce features of Hong Kong’s way of living and culture, as well as make travel recommendations based on their own favourite sites and activities.

Timeline:

Recruitment	6-31 May 2009
Selection	June 2009
Training	July 2009 to September 2009
Service at Visitor Centres	October 2009 to September 2010

Requirements

- Passionate about Hong Kong
- Outgoing and eager to mingle with visitors
- Good command of Cantonese, English and Mandarin. Knowledge of additional language would be an added advantage
- Knowledgeable in areas, such as dining, wine tasting, Cantonese opera, Chinese musical instruments, architecture, hiking, heritage and Hong Kong history
- Physically fit for the duties
- Hong Kong citizens at age 50+
- Current employees of HKTB and their relatives are not allowed to participate in the programme

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment:

- From 6 May, Hong Kong residents may browse the website of the Agency for Volunteer Service (AVS) for the programme details, and download an application form. Applicants should submit the completed form to the Agency on or before 31 May.

Selection:

- After assessing the submitted application forms, AVS and HKTB will jointly shortlist a maximum of 100 potential candidates for first round of interview, from which a maximum of 50 candidates will be selected for the panel interview.
- The HKTB will invite representatives from AVS and the travel trade to form a selection panel. The panel will conduct interviews with the shortlisted candidates in June 2009. A maximum of 30 volunteers will be selected.

Training

- **60 hours of training:** The volunteers will undergo a comprehensive 60-hour training programme organised by the HKTB, which will cover:
 - History of Hong Kong
 - Natural Scenery
 - Artefacts and Historical Landmarks
 - Arts and Culture
 - Fashion
 - Food and Drink
- **Local Specialist:** A group of local specialists on various subjects will participate in the training programme and provide additional knowledge of Hong Kong's living culture to the volunteers. They include:
 - Cross-media artist Mr Craig Au Yeung
 - Founder of China Polar Museum Foundation, Dr Rebecca Lee
 - International food & wine critic Mr William Mark
 - Ecologist Mr Samson So
 - Fashion designer Mr William Tang
 - Previous Chief Curator of Hong Kong Museum of History, Dr Joseph Ting
- **Training from HKTB:** In order to ease the "Hong Kong Pals" into their new role, the HKTB will also provide them with information about the status of Hong Kong's tourism industry, techniques for servicing tourists and modes of visitor spending.

- **Practical Training:** Volunteers will have the chance to participate in various local tours, including those under the Nature Kaleidoscope and Culture Kaleidoscope programmes of the HKTB.

Service Locations and Hours

- **Locations:** Between October 2009 and September 2010, the Meet-the-Locals volunteers identified as “Hong Kong Pals” will offer services at HKTB Visitor Centres located at the Tsim Sha Tsui Star Ferry Concourse and The Peak.
- **Service Hours:** The volunteers will service at the Visitor Centres every Friday, Saturday and Sunday under two shifts (1200 – 1500 hrs / 1500 – 1800 hrs).
- **Transportation Allowance:** HKTB will arrange the “Hong Kong Pals” to work in team of 2. Each volunteer will be assigned maximum 4 shifts of duty each month and will be provided with transportation allowance of HK\$120 per shift.

Hong Kong Tourism Board
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