

# A happening at the Arts Barns

Ever wonder where to go to find a unique and fun volunteer opportunity?

Today at the TransAlta Arts Barns, Volunteer Edmonton is hosting the second annual Festival Volunteer Fair.

Drop by between 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. to find out how you can volunteer for some of Edmonton's hottest arts and culture-related festivals.

The event, hosted by Volunteer Edmonton with the support from the Edmonton Arts Council, Fringe Theatre Adventures, the Edmonton Realtors Association, Industry Images and River City Event Rentals, is free of charge to attend.

"We want to help connect people to volunteer opportunities. If you're new to the city, have never volunteered before or just don't have much time to spend on searching, the process of finding a volunteer opportunity can seem daunting," says Janice Bell, director of Volunteer Edmonton. "That's why we hope this event breaks down some of those barriers for people."

Visitors will have the opportunity to browse the various displays and booths, speak one-on-one with festival representatives about volunteering and fill out volunteer applications on the spot.

With 32 different festivals celebrating visual arts, dance, music, culture, film, literature, performance and more, visitors should have no problem finding the right kind of short-term volunteer opportunity that matches skills and interests.

For those unfamiliar with volunteering, new to the city or with a limited amount of time to donate, festival volunteering is an ideal option.

"Since most festivals operate for a short period of time, you may be volunteering anywhere from a few days to a few weeks at most," she explains.

Given that one of the main reason people do not volunteer is lack of time, Bell hopes the Festival Volunteer Fair will engage the 52 per cent of Edmontonians who do not currently volunteer.

What makes volunteering at festivals even better is the behind-the-scenes experience that only festival volunteers can receive.

"You're part of something fun and

exciting," says Noree Claerhout, resource development manager for the Fringe Festival. "Depending on the festival, you might even be able to go to shows for free or meet the performers."

Claerhout also sees benefits for the festivals participating. Aside from volunteer recruitment, she believes events like the Festival Volunteer Fair is a great way for smaller or newly-established festivals that don't have the dollars or manpower required to reach a wide audience. "Edmontonians might be surprised to discover a number of festivals they didn't know existed," she remarks. "It's exciting to know that events like the Festival Volunteer Fair is

helping these festivals continue to thrive by offering a space to tell people what they're all about."

The Festival Volunteer Fair is a once-a-year event. To learn how you can become a volunteer for Edmonton's festivals, visit us today at the TransAlta Arts Barns. Door prizes are available.

If you can't make it, visit our website to view a list of participating festivals and their contact information at [www.volunteeredmonton.com](http://www.volunteeredmonton.com).

For more information or suggestions for story ideas, please contact Evelyn Pham, communications coordinator at [epham@volunteeredmonton.com](mailto:epham@volunteeredmonton.com), call (780) 732-6655 or check out our website at [www.volunteeredmonton.com](http://www.volunteeredmonton.com).



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