



**AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM**

# Work experience 2026



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About the Australian Museum .....	3
Our mission .....	3
Our vision statement.....	3
Work experience in 2026 .....	4
A typical week.....	4
Placement opportunities .....	4
Roles and responsibilities .....	4
Eligibility.....	4
Application .....	5
Selection.....	5
Areas of specialisation available in 2026 .....	6
Ichthyology Collection.....	6
Entomology Collection .....	6
Marine Invertebrates.....	6
Design .....	6
Digital .....	7
Education.....	7
Public Programs .....	7
Genomics .....	7



## About the Australian Museum

For over 190 years, the Australian Museum has been at the forefront of Australian scientific research, collection and education. Australia's first public museum was established in Sydney in 1827 with the aim of procuring "many rare and curious specimens of Natural History."

In 1829, William Holmes was appointed the first custodian of the fledgling collection, then located in the old post office building in Macquarie Place. Initially known as the Sydney Museum or Colonial Museum, the institution was formally named the Australian Museum in 1836. The collection was housed in various buildings around Sydney until colonial architect Mortimer Lewis designed a dedicated building. Construction began in 1846 on a site in William Street near Hyde Park, and the new museum opened to the public in 1857 with just one exhibition gallery. Since then, the site has been modified many times to accommodate the growing needs of exhibitions, collections and staff.

Today the Australian Museum continues its dual roles in research and education. From a "beautiful collection of Australian curiosities", the Museum has grown to an internationally recognised collection of over 22 million cultural and scientific objects. Through exhibitions and other public programs, the Australian Museum continues to inform and amaze generations of visitors with natural history, and cultures of Australia and the Pacific.

### **Our mission**

To be the leading voice for the richness of life, the Earth, and culture in Australia and the Pacific.

### **Our vision statement**

To ignite wonder, inspire debate, and drive change.

We commit to transform the conversation around climate change, the environment and wildlife conservation, to prioritise First Nations cultures, and to continue to develop world leading science, collections, exhibitions, and education programs.



## Work experience in 2026

Every day at the Australian Museum (AM) is different. Our work experience program offers high school students the chance to explore a variety of careers including science and cultural research, education, public programming, curatorial and exhibition design, marketing, communications and corporate services.

All work experience opportunities provide practical learning to consolidate classroom teaching. This will support students' personal development and professional skills as they prepare to enter the workforce and make choices about their careers.

### A typical week

The AM offers a variety of different career opportunities. A typical week of work experience will allow students to work alongside a variety of staff members including those in our science and research teams, visitor experience and public engagement and behind the scenes administrative and creative departments.

### Placement opportunities

- Placements are open to NSW secondary school students in Years 10, 11 and 12.
- Offered during Terms 3 and 4 of 2026, over four possible weeks.
  - 27 July-31 July
  - 7 September-11 September
  - 19 October-23 October
  - 9 November-13 November
- Each placement is limited to 5 days (Monday to Friday), working 10am–4pm each day.

### Roles and responsibilities

- Determined by individual departments of the AM and outlined with students at the start of their placement.
- Successful students are expected to perform tasks to the best of their ability and uphold the values, mission, goals, policies and procedures set down by the AM, including safety regulations and clothing requirements.
- All work experience students will be responsible to the Manager, Education, or their nominee.
- Effective daily supervision, induction, guidance, and training will be provided by the department in which they are placed.

### Eligibility

- Students of all backgrounds are welcome to apply.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are strongly encouraged to apply, as are students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.



## Application

- **Open Friday, 20 February 2026**
- **Close Friday, 24 April 2026**

Successful applicants will be notified the week of Monday 25 May.

*Please note: The work experience program at the Australian Museum is in high demand and the number of applications outweighs the number of places available each year. We recommend that you are fully aware of our process dates as outlined above and have alternative arrangements in place in case your application is unsuccessful.*

To be considered, applicants must submit a work experience application form (on the [Australian Museum website](#)), including:

1. Nominating preferred dates based on availability and interest (areas of specialisation outlined in pages 6-7 of this document).
2. Providing a statement of interest, answering the following questions (no more than 100 words each):
  - a. Why have you applied for a work experience placement at the Australian Museum and which areas are you most interested in?
  - b. What do you hope to achieve by spending a week working at the Australian Museum, and how will it help you in your future?
3. Provide a statement of recommendation from your school Careers Advisor or other appropriate senior staff member to support your application.

## Selection

- Selection for placement will be based on the applicant's statement of interest in seeking a placement, their expected outcomes and their statement of recommendation from their School's Careers Advisor or other appropriate senior staff member.
- All successful applicants for 2026 will be notified the week of Monday, 25 May 2026.



## Areas of specialisation available in 2026

### Ichthyology Collection

Ichthyology is the study of fishes. There are estimated to be over 35,000 species of fishes worldwide and over 5,000 are from Australian waters. The Fish Research Collection contains many adult and larval fish specimens used by researchers worldwide. The collection contains specimens from all around the world, but has a large collection of fish from the deep-sea and Indo-Pacific reefs as well as larval fishes, gobies and freshwater fishes from New South Wales. The Australian Museum fish type collection is one of the most important in the world, containing over 12,600 specimens. Learn more about Ichthyology at the Australian Museum: <https://australian.museum/learn/collections/natural-science/ichthyology/>

*Placements only available 27 July-31 July*

### Entomology

Entomology is the study of insects including beetles, flies, cicadas, moths, earwigs, fleas, bugs, cockroaches, bees, dragonflies and termites. Insects are the most diverse group of terrestrial organisms, and this is reflected in the Australian Museum's entomological collection of specimens. It is the second largest insect collection in Australia and the largest collection in the museum. The entire collection is housed onsite at the Australian Museum in the Sydney. The Australian Museum Entomology Collection consists of an estimated 1.8 million pinned specimens, 100s of microscope slides and 500,000 lots (groups of individual specimens within a species) in ethanol. In total, the collection comprises 10-20 million individual insects, of which 30% has been digitised.

*Placements only available 7 September-11 September and 19 October-23 October*

### Marine Invertebrates

The Australian Museum Marine Invertebrate collection includes over twenty major groups of marine invertebrates with the exception of molluscs. The collection also includes freshwater and terrestrial representatives. The collection includes over 13,000 type specimens (those on which the scientific description of a species is based) and represents one of the oldest, largest, most diverse and best-studied assemblages of Australasian and Indo-Pacific invertebrate taxa. The collection has a focus on material from Australia, particularly New South Wales, but also has strong holdings for most taxa across the Indo-Pacific region as well as important samples from other international locations.

The Museum has over 511,000 lots dating from the 1800s, and we are one of the largest Marine Invertebrate collections in the Southern Hemisphere. Learn more about Marine Invertebrates at the Australian Museum: <https://australian.museum/learn/collections/natural-science/mineralogy/>

*Placements only available 7 September-11 September*

### Design

The Design team plays a critical role in the planning, development & delivery of exhibitions, displays, campaigns and programs for the Australian Museum. They work across various mediums in print & digital, including model making & 3D visualisations. The team includes 3D exhibitions designers & 2D graphic designers.



## Digital

The Digital Experience team works collaboratively across AM divisions and with digital design and development agencies on production of innovative digital products, inspired by the AM's natural science and cultural collections. The team produces digital content for the AM website including video productions, interactive virtual tours and accessible audio guides, as well as citizen science mobile apps and exhibition multimedia.

*Placements available 27 July-31 July*

## Education

The Education team develops world-class education offerings in science and culture through

- Curriculum-based programs;
- Outreach initiatives;
- Learning resources; and
- Teacher professional development.

We ignite cultural and environmental awareness across generations of learners, with programs grounded in best-practice, object-based pedagogy and enhanced by collections and exhibitions. Education key audiences are students (pre-, primary, secondary and tertiary) and teachers.

## Public Programs

The Programming team are responsible for the creation, development and presentation of high-quality activities which bring the work of the museum to life in interesting and engaging ways. We present a range of entertaining events and programs for everyone, from school holiday workshops, to talks and films, live music and dancing, and even museum sleepovers! Aside from attending exhibitions, Public Programs are a core way that people can learn more about their areas of interest. Our aim is to make the museum feel like a welcoming place for everyone, and reach community members who might not otherwise visit.

## Genomics

The Australian Centre for Wildlife Genomics (ACWG) focuses on projects related to wildlife forensics, aviation wildlife strike and a range of conservation genomics projects including the koala genome. The centre supports all molecular based research carried out by the Australian Museum Research Institute with a focus on ecological applications such as species identification, individualisation, conservation and small population management. Learn more about ACWG and Genomics at the Australian Museum:

<https://australian.museum/get-involved/amri/acwg/>

**For more information on what you could expect to be doing in each department, or any other queries you may have, please contact the Work Experience Coordinator at [learning.services@australian.museum](mailto:learning.services@australian.museum). We encourage queries from students directly.**