

The Docent Program at the Barnes Foundation

About the Program

The Docent Program began in 1999 to advance the educational goals of the Barnes Foundation and to serve the needs and interests of our visitors, creating welcoming and informative educational experiences in our galleries. Docents lead a variety of tours about our collection and special exhibitions.

Docent applicants undergo extensive, rigorous training to learn the highest standards of content and presentation. Those wishing to volunteer should be comfortable working and communicating with the public.

All accepted applicants for the docent program are required to attend a six-month training practicum to learn the theories of Dr. Barnes, the history of art as it applies to the collection, presentation skills, and research techniques. Training classes are held on Saturday mornings. Volunteering in the docent program requires a high degree of motivation and dedication, and a minimum commitment to providing at least 60 hours of volunteer service per year for at least three years. The experience is highly rewarding.

Beyond the completion of the docent practicum, the docent training program requires the successful enrollment/completion of the following courses at the Barnes Foundation. You can take these courses during docent training at no cost to you.

- Elements of Art course (1 semester course)
- Traditions of Art course (1 semester course)
- 1 Understanding Materials and Techniques short course
- 2 Art in Context short courses

How to Apply

The Barnes is looking for docent applicants from all backgrounds and walks of life. No formal art background necessary. A passion for art and desire to learn are required.

The next docent class is tentatively scheduled for late 2022. Inquiries about the docent program can be sent to pbirmingham@barnesfoundation.org.