

ROGER WILLIAMS PARK ZOO AND RHODE ISLAND ZOOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

PLAY PARTNER VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

PEOPLE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE AT THE ZOO

Please mail completed application to:

Manager of Volunteer Resources
Roger Williams Park Zoo
1000 Elmwood Avenue
Providence, RI 02907

Email completed application to: volunteer@rwpzoo.org

Application Deadline: February 26th, 2024

Please direct all questions to: playpartner@rwpzoo.org

Play Partner Volunteer

Position Description

POSITION TITLE:	Play Partner
CLASSIFICATION:	Volunteer
DEPARTMENT:	Education
REPORTS TO:	Play Partner Program Specialist/Our Big Backyard Program Manager
DUES:	One-time \$20 fee for first-time program participants upon acceptance. Optional \$15 to purchase a Play Partner t-shirt, \$40 for a sweatshirt. Aprons are provided for daily use at no charge.
COMMITMENT:	45 hours per year; minimum one-year commitment

Summary of Responsibilities:

Play Partner volunteers facilitate and support children's free play at Hasbro's Big Backyard at the Roger Williams Park Zoo. In this space, Play Partners help families create memories through outdoor play experiences that connect them to the natural world. This position doesn't work with the handling or care of animals. Our Big Backyard includes a raven habitat and native animals that are regularly seen such as songbirds, chipmunks, and pollinating insects.

This volunteer opportunity is a great way to grow skills and experience with play-based early childhood education and to explore the introduction of environmental education at the developmental level with infants through elementary ages.

Essential Position Functions:

1. Deliver developmentally appropriate play-based activities and monitor Play Stations:
 - Indoor: Nature Swap (requires computer use) and Activity Room.
 - Outdoor: Drip Drop Water Garden Play Station, Creativity Corner Play Station, Sticks and Stones Building Zone Station, Beyond the Fence Play Area, and the Treehouse.
2. Assist in the supervision and safe play of children and zoo patrons.
3. Appropriately communicate and liaise with zoo staff and patrons of all ages.
4. Assist with the upkeep of resources.

Requirements:

1. Must be at least 16 years old as of April 1st. Age verification may be required.
2. Ability to pass a background check upon selection as a Play Partner (applicants 18 and older only).
3. If selected for an interview, candidates should be available to interview in-person at the Zoo on January 10, 2024, from 6:00PM-8:00PM or January 13, 2024, from 10:00-12:00PM. If unavailable, please include this information at the time of application.
4. Attend and participate in a required one-day Play Partner training session (tentatively scheduled as March 9th 10:00AM-3:00PM, March 16th 10:00AM-3:00PM, and March 13th 12:00PM-5PM.
 - a. If under 18 at time of first shift, a parent/guardian must attend the first hour of the volunteer position-specific training session.
5. Participate in general orientation required of all staff and volunteers, which may include in-person and online components.
6. Volunteer for at least 45 hours per season by committing to a 3 hour shift each week.
 - a. The Play Partner season begins April 1st and concludes Indigenous Peoples' Day/Columbus Day each year.

- b. Morning (9:30AM-12:30PM) and afternoon (1:00PM – 4:00PM) shifts are available daily. Volunteers commit to a regular weekly schedule on the same day and at the same time each week. Accommodation can be made for students and persons with transportation needs.
 - c. Please note: Indigenous Peoples' Day/Columbus Day-April 1st: Season ends. Shifts are scheduled by staff for special events, or specific needs only.
7. Arrive on time and stay for the entire shift unless prior arrangements have been made with staff supervisor.
 8. Ability to be outside, in all weather, for the duration of your shift.
 9. High level of comfort speaking with the public, especially children. Comfortable speaking with diverse groups regardless of their ages, personalities, backgrounds, etc.
 10. Effectively support the mission and priorities of Roger Williams Park Zoo.
 11. Must be committed to creating meaningful connections to nature through play and exploration.
 12. Adhere to all policies described in the Roger Williams Park Zoo Volunteer Handbook.
 13. Must be willing to engage with children/families, adapt to changing situations, show patience, be positive and enthusiastic about nature/play, and have a willingness to learn new things.

Benefits:

1. Free year-round admission to Roger Williams Park Zoo for yourself.
2. Eight free passes per year to Roger Williams Park Zoo for your friends and family upon completion of your 45-hour yearly service commitment.
3. Opportunities for continuing education and networking.



Roger Williams Park Zoo/ Rhode Island Zoological Society

(RI Zoological Society is a nonprofit entity dedicated to the development and enrichment of Roger Williams Park Zoo.)

PLAY PARTNER VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Applicant Information

Applicants will receive consideration without discrimination based upon any legally protected class, including but not limited to race, age, color, religion, sex, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability, protected impairment, military status, veteran status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or ancestry, or other legally protected status except where a bona fide occupational qualification exists.

Full Name: _____ Date: _____
Last First M.I.

Present Address: _____
Street Address Apartment/Unit # City State ZIP Code

Phone: () _____ E-mail Address: _____

Complete if under 18 years of age.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Parent/Guardian Cell Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian E-mail Address _____

How did you hear about the Play Partner Program at RWPZ? _____

Are you legally prohibited from performing volunteer work of this nature in the U.S.? YES NO

Have you worked/volunteered for this organization in the past? YES NO If yes, when and in what capacity? _____

Have you ever applied to work or volunteer for this organization in the past? YES NO If yes, when? _____

Will you be 16 years old as of April 1st 2024? YES NO

Previous Employment/Volunteer Experience

From	To	Employer Name	Telephone ()
Position Title		Address	
Immediate supervisor and title		Summarize the nature of work performed and position responsibilities	
From	To	Employer	Telephone ()
Position Title		Address	
Immediate supervisor and title		Summarize the nature of work performed and position responsibilities	
From	To	Employer	Telephone ()
Position Title		Address	
Immediate supervisor and title		Summarize the nature of work performed and position responsibilities	

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(By providing the above information, you are authorizing RWPZ/RIZS to contact your former employers regarding your suitability for volunteer work.)

May we contact your present employer? Yes No

Education

EDUCATION	School Name	#Yrs. Attended	Degree Received	Subjects Studied/Major
High School				
College or University				
Graduate School				

Professional/Academic References

Please list two professional or academic references. Please do not list relatives. By providing these references, you are authorizing Rhode Island Zoological Society to contact these individuals regarding your suitability for volunteer work.

Full Name: _____ Relationship: _____ Years Known: _____

Company Name: _____ Phone: () _____

Full Name: _____ Relationship: _____ Years Known: _____

Company Name: _____ Phone: () _____

Paper Interview Questions

Submit a separate page with your application answering the following questions

1. Why do you want to volunteer as a Play Partner at Roger Williams Park Zoo?
2. What does "play" mean to you?
3. How comfortable are you with leading play-based activities? (circle one) **Very** **Somewhat** **Not at All**
4. Please briefly describe any professional experiences or skills you have that would be useful as a Play Partner (i.e. working with children, working with the public, free play opportunities, professional trainings, etc.).
5. Please list any interests or hobbies that could be applied in the "Our Big Backyard" play spaces.

RIZS Smoke-Free Workplace

By Rhode Island law, smoking is prohibited in all enclosed facilities within places of work without exception. This includes common work areas, auditoriums, classrooms, conference and meeting rooms, private offices, elevators, hallways, medical facilities, cafeterias, employee lounges, stairs, restrooms, vehicles, and all other enclosed facilities. All volunteers must abide by these smoking restrictions.

Disclaimer and Signature

I certify that the information stated above is true, correct, and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any misrepresentation of facts or any false or incomplete statements in this application are sufficient cause for dismissal if I am accepted as a volunteer. I authorize investigating all statements in this application in return for being considered for a volunteer position. I know that my completion of this application form does not mean that any volunteer positions are available. I acknowledge that RIZS has not promised that I will be accepted as a volunteer. I understand that RIZS has no obligation to offer me a volunteer position and that I have no right or entitlement to a volunteer position. I understand that any offer of a volunteer position by RIZS is for no definite period of time and that either RIZS or I may terminate the relationship at any time without prior notice and for any reason or cause. I have read the Play Partner description and certify that I am able to perform the duties described therein with or without reasonable accommodation. I understand that I am applying for a volunteer position. No payment or remuneration will be given in exchange for volunteer service. I certify that I am applying for this volunteer position out of a desire to further my personal education and development and the civic and community benefits that the Zoo provides.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (if applicant is under 18 years old): _____ Date: _____