



Volunteer Handbook

Welcome! Kwey! Bienvenue!

Thank you for joining the volunteer team at Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre (CDCC). As a volunteer, you are an essential part of our mission to support arts, education, and community programming in a historic and inclusive downtown Ottawa venue. We value your time, energy, and dedication.

The following document contains information to help orient new volunteers as they join the team at CDCC. The contents within this document will go together with your volunteer training. Please read carefully and don't hesitate to reach out with any questions!



1. About CDCC

A. Overview of CDCC's mission, history, and values

Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre (CDCC) is Carleton University's Arts, Performance and Learning Centre. CDCC provides a welcoming, professional and safe environment to foster programming that is multigenerational, diverse, and inclusive. Originally built as the Dominion-Chalmers United Church between 1912 and 1914, the building was acquired by Carleton University in 2018. The university's first downtown Ottawa building and is managed by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS). The centre will serve a variety of user groups from the community at large.

Designed by Montreal architect Alex Hutchinson, the building is distinguished by its Byzantine Revival architecture and features a square auditorium, octagonal balcony, vaulted ceiling, and dome supported by eight massive columns. High-quality materials, including chestnut interior woodwork, oak furnishings, and an exterior of Nepean stone with Miramichi sandstone and limestone, reflect the craftsmanship and ambition of the period. The building is widely recognized for its architectural presence and exceptional acoustics. Investment in preserving the building's structural integrity is essential to safeguarding its heritage value and ensuring its continued public use for generations to come.

To learn more about the History of the Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre, head here:

<https://carleton.ca/cdcc/history/>



B. Introduction to staff and facilities

i. Facilities

Basement Floor – Level 1	
Fellowship Hall	Large and spacious multi-purposes flex space. Ideal large classroom or small presentation space.
Ground Floor – Level 2	
Sanctuary Main Hall	Main historic hall and largest capacity in the building (can seat up to 844 guests). Varied use, but most used as a traditional performance space. Home to CDCC's Casavant Pipe Organ.
Woodside Hall	Large, high ceiling room with great natural light. Adjacent to CDCC's garden. Often used as a reception or lecture space. Sometimes used as a lobby area for Sanctuary performances.
Woodside Kitchen	Basic service kitchen available to support catered meals & receptions.
Jean Teron Green Room	Ideal green room or meeting space. The Jean Teron Green Room tends to be booked alongside large concert events in the Sanctuary as a green room or volunteer room.
Library	Small meeting room for <10 people. Tends to be booked alongside the Sanctuary Main Hall as a guest or solo artist green room.
Parlour	Ideal reception room or meeting space, that can accommodate 130 individuals, standing. Can be booked alongside concert events in the Sanctuary as a room for pre- or post-concert reception. Includes a small kitchenette.
Upper Floor – Level 3	
Classroom 14	Spacious multi-purposes flex space, often used for classes or as a meeting space.
Classroom 15/16	Room with hardwood oak sprung floor. Ideal for dance, movement and drama classes or meeting space.
Classroom 17	Spacious multi-purposes flex space, often used for classes or as a meeting space.
The Hive	The Hive is a special collection of small meeting rooms and practice rooms located within the CDCC. Interested users can apply for a free membership and orientation that opens access to an online-only portal to book and cancel rooms within The Hive!



ii. Staff (As of April 2026)

Fulltime staff who are here regularly:

Name	Title	Onsite	Role
Ashique Fahim	Events & Production Assistant	Evening/Weekends	Assists with advancing client events once booked
Deanna Singh	Booking and Events Assistant	Weekday Evenings	Manages booking calendar
Greg Tuck	Custodian	Weekdays	Cleans and cares for building
Gwen Davie	Production Coordinator	Weekdays	Assists with advancing client events once booked
Nadine Snowling	Outreach Coordinator	Weekdays	Supports with fundraising and oversees volunteer program
Mara Brown	Director	Weekdays	Manages all aspects of the building and programs

Parttime staff roles who you will see often but not always:

House Staff: Support with day to day running of the building. They can be found in the Main Office, and are your go-to for things like building maintenance needs, locking/unlocking of rooms, guest requests, etc.

Front of House (FOH) Liaisons: Directly support clients with their Front of House needs during an event. This includes welcoming and overseeing all event guests and event customer service – including ticketing, greeting, ushering, event inquiries, and beyond. The CDCC Front of House Liaison is assigned to all medium to large events based on the event scope and/or anticipated attendance (generally for events expecting over 150 guests) to support the event’s front of house team. The CDCC FOH Liaison is dedicated to the event as a lead CDCC point person during the assigned timeframe, whereas CDCC house staff have other ongoing administrative and building responsibilities.

Technicians: Provide technical support to events where required – this includes lighting, audio/visual and more. Generally, they are present for large scale events.



2. Volunteering at CDCC

A. Volunteer Program Mission

To enhance guest experience, support event operations, and foster community engagement through meaningful volunteer involvement.

B. Building Ambassador

At present, CDCC has one main volunteer role: **Building Ambassador**.

Building Ambassadors to elevate the centre's guest experience at events. As part of our Front-of-House Volunteer Team, you will help create a warm, professional, and inclusive experience for all visitors. Your role supports the smooth delivery of arts and community events while ensuring guests feel welcomed, informed, and cared for from the moment they arrive. The main roles and responsibilities for the role will include (but are not limited to):

- **Act as a “Pillar of Information”:** Be visibly available throughout the CDCC to assist guests with wayfinding, directions, and questions. Maintain strong knowledge of the building layout, event locations, and guest services to provide clear, confident information as needed.
- **Support Guest Flow & Respond to Visitor Needs:** Help ensure smooth movement before events, during intermission, and after performances by proactively routing guests, staying attentive and people-focused, anticipating questions, and offering support to visitors of all ages and abilities.
- **Assist with Safety & Emergency Support:** Remain alert and responsive to guest needs, promptly report hazards or concerns, and support staff in implementing safety and emergency procedures.

iii. Building Ambassador Shift Responsibilities

Arrive:

- Your shift will start 30 minutes before doors for the scheduled event.
- Head to the Main Office (off the Lisgar Street entrance) and let the team know you have arrived.
- They will let you know who the FOH Liaison is for the evening. This will be your main point of contact. If there is no FOH Liaison scheduled, you can liaise with House Staff.
- FOH Liaison will share information about the event, using the [FOH Pack - Event Info Sheet](#) as a guide.
- You can leave your belongings in the Volunteer Nook. CDCC is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.



Greet and Guide

- Head to your post and set up the Volunteer Podium – we ask that you stay near the podium through your shift, so we know where to find you if needed.
- Provide guests a warm welcome and offer clear wayfinding support, as required.
- Assist with smooth movement before, during intermission, and after events by proactively routing guests, staying attentive and people-focused, anticipating questions, and offering support to visitors of all ages and abilities.
- Remain vigilant to guest needs, promptly report hazards, and support staff during emergencies.

Breaks

For 4-hour shifts, volunteers are entitled to a 15-minute break or for 5-hour shifts, a 30-minute break. We invite you to take your break 15 minutes after the show begins, to ensure you are back by intermission. Please let the FOH team know when you are taking your break and when you return.

Closing

- Stay at post until all guests have exited the performance space.
- Return podium to storage area alongside your lanyard and clipboard.
- Check in with FOH Liaison, to see if they need any additional support.

iv. Supporting Guests

We anticipate that guests will have all sorts of questions for you! **As a reminder, you are an ambassador for the building, not the actual event.** We expect you to maintain a strong knowledge of the building layout, event locations and guest services and are welcome to direct event-specific questions (such as information about the presenting organization and/or artist) to the event organizer.

We have prepared a FOH Pack (See Appendix at the end of this Handbook), which includes documents that you will have available during your shift. This includes information such as:

- **Building Plans** – To help orient guests to where they need to go
- **Parking Lot Information** – To provide information on the parking lot
- **Building History**
- **Frequently Asked Questions**

Guest interactions are one of the best parts of the role but can sometimes bring challenges. Here are some points to keep in mind when interacting with guests:

Guest interaction

- Be approachable, calm, and respectful
- Smile, make eye contact, and offer help



- Give clear directions; if unsure, say “*Let me check*” and connect guests with staff
- Avoid assumptions about why someone is in the building

Conflict resolution

- Stay calm and non-judgmental
- Listen first; keep tone neutral and body language open
- If a situation feels challenging or unsafe, involve staff
- Try: “*Are you here for an event?*”

C. Attire

Volunteer name tags and/or lanyards are to be worn to designate CDCC Volunteers. All volunteers are asked to wear clean, professional black attire.

D. Scheduling

We ask Building Ambassadors to attend a minimum of 2 shifts a month. Volunteers will sign up for shifts using a Platform called iWork.

- You will be invited to join iWork via email. It will come from notify@iwork.ca and the subject will be *iwork invitation!*
- Click on the link, and you will be prompted to create your account. From there you can login directly.

For more information on iWork, see the how-to guide in the Appendix.

3. Health and Safety

A. Emergency Procedures

Emergencies can happen anytime. Volunteers are not expected to manage emergencies—only to observe, report, and follow staff direction.

- Stay alert and aware of your surroundings
- Report concerns immediately CDCC staff
- Follow instructions from staff at all times
- Direct all questions or uncertainties to staff
- Report any of the following to CDCC staff: Threats, Fire, Violent Behavior, Earthquake, Elevator Failure, Flooding, Plumbing Failure, Gas Smell, Hazardous Material Release, Medical Emergency, Suspicious Package, Utility Failure, Ventilation Problem



B. Incident Reporting

Report any Incident to your shift supervisor (FOH Liaison or House Staff member) and the Volunteer Coordinator. Incident reporting could be related to fire, policing or medical emergencies – or accidental damage to property (ie. Flooding or plumbing setbacks).

All private and confident information to be sent via email to the CDCC Director for reporting to Campus Security and/or Carleton Risk Management offices.

All reports should aim to reflect the following:

Who? Person(s) impacted, family/friends, witnesses (contact number where possible).

What? What was reported or observed.

Where? Room/location/areas.

When? Key milestones including time incident was noted or reported, times that emergency services arrived, times that circumstances changed for person(s) being impacted, etc.

Why? Is there a clear sign or communication of what caused the incident.

How? Details about what was done to support the incident or if there are any proposed follow-up actions.

Review the User Group Emergency Protocol Document in the Appendix. This is what all User Group's receive upon booking.

4. Visitor Information

A. Building Accessibility

We are committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment by identifying accessibility features, limitations, and support procedures across our spaces.

- **Building Access:** The main accessible entrance and ramp is at 290 Lisgar Street on the north side of the building. A second emergency exit and accessible ramp is located at 355 Cooper Street on the south side of the building.
- **Elevator Access:** There is elevator access to all four levels of the building.
 - Note: The Sanctuary Main Hall theatre balcony is not accessible by elevator.
- **Ramp Locations:** Ramps are located at the Sanctuary entrance adjacent to Lisgar Street; note that staircases at the back of the main hall are not accessible.
- **Service Animals:** CDCC welcomes guests and their service animals or officially certified support animals. Guests with service or certified support animals are requested to check in



with the front desk staff upon arrival to the building. Certification may be requested upon check in. Unfortunately, no other pets or animals are authorized in the building.

- **Accessible Parking:** One designated accessible parking space is available.

B. Scent-Free Environment

There are thousands of guests who visit the building each month with allergies and sensitivities to scents. Thank you for keeping the building scent-free.

C. Food and Beverage

Please note that only water is permitted inside the Sanctuary Main Hall.

Regular ongoing food and beverage services are not available at CDCC. We invite guests to visit nearby shops or restaurants for snacks or meals.

Thank you for noting that alcohol is not permitted at the venue, unless staff are notified in advance and a Special Occasion Permit (SOP) is in place by the event organizers. Thank you for noting that the use of cannabis is not permitted on the premises.

D. Lost and Found

- At the end of any event, the house staff on duty should do a final sweep of the space used by a client/ user group for lost and found items.
- Gather any items that have been left behind.
- Make a note with the date and the event (if possible) and place into the lost and found cupboard in the main office. For smaller items, you can place them in Ziplock bags and include the note accordingly.
- Every few months, the lost and found is purged/donated locally.

Thank you! Miigwech! Merci!

We are proud to welcome you as a CDCC volunteer. Your contributions help shape a more vibrant and connected community through the arts!

Contact & Support

Volunteer Coordinator / Outreach Coordinator

Email: cdcc.volunteer@carleton.ca

Phone: 613-520-4401

Website: www.carleton.ca/cdcc