

# Volunteer Application Form

(You can copy and paste this form into a word processor or email, then email it to denver.fowler [at] dickinsongov.com)

Name:

Current job or university:

Degrees earned or in progress (degree, school, major, year):

Briefly list any relevant coursework or other academic experience, such as sedimentology or anatomy:

Briefly list relevant and/or long-term work experience (employer, position, years):

## Travel Dates

Fieldwork will begin around Early June, and continue until Late August (our plans are still evolving). We strongly encourage at least three weeks for new volunteers, but we recognize that 2 weeks might only be possible for people who otherwise work full time. However, you are encouraged to stay longer - many people come for 3 weeks and wish they had stayed for much longer!

Preferred dates (general dates, like “first 3 weeks of June” are fine):

Total weeks:

Mode of transportation:

## **Outdoor Experience and Abilities**

Level of camping experience - A: never camped before, B: a few nights, C: several weeks at a time, D: I lead trips and/or sell equipment. If C or D, please briefly describe.

Level of hiking ability - A: 1 mile is a lot, B: can hike a number of miles without problem, C: 2 miles uphill with a 50 pound backpack - no problem, D: I love backpacking 10 miles a day.

Physical strength - can carry over 50 pounds in arms A: 10 feet, B: 1/4 mile, C: 1 mile or more, D: can't lift 50 pounds

Physical strength - can carry 50 to 75 pounds on back A: 10 feet, B: 1/4 mile, C: 1 mile or more, D: can't even stand up with 50 pound backpack

Flexibility - can spend hours at a time sitting/squatting/lying bent in awkward positions on hard rock (with one garden kneepad) A: yes, all day, B: maybe, with enough padding, painkillers, and breaks, C: no, bad back and/or knees

Rattlesnakes, spiders, scorpions - A: terrified, B: fine as long as they don't get within striking distance, C: I enjoy handling venomous creatures.

Weather tolerance - A: sensitive to heatstroke or hypothermia, B: should be fine if I'm dressed properly, C: born in a desert and/or Antarctica.

First aid - list any training and certification:

## **Tool Use and Fieldwork Experience**

(We don't expect everyone to have all of these skills, we just want to form a crew with a variety of talents.)

Please describe any paleontology, archaeology, geology, or biology fieldwork experience:

Briefly list any experience (such as carpentry, construction, farm or ranch work, plumbing, car maintenance, or other mechanical work) working with tools, using heavy machinery, or repairing things like pipes or cars:

List which of the following tools and equipment you A: have used occasionally, or B: have extensive experience with – jackhammer, ATV, shovel, Paleopick/maddock/pickaxe, rock hammer, mallet, chisel, awl, dental pick, burlap and plaster, etc.

Quarrying delicate fossils requires patience, fine motor skills, and attention to detail. Please briefly describe any relevant preparation or artistic experience.

You must also have good eyesight, naturally or with glasses or contacts. Can you read the date on a U.S dime (~8 point font size)?

## **Nutrition**

We strive to cook nutritious and delicious meals for our crews, and you will be expected to help to the best of your culinary ability. We make reasonable accommodations for allergies and dietary preferences (vegetarians, etc.), especially with your help. Keep in mind that our grocery selection may be limited to common, simple foods (i.e. not organic or expensive). You are expected to always eat well-balanced meals to keep up your energy and strength. Below is a list of common foods we eat in the field; we eat many more foods than are listed here, and are always happy to try new dishes.

Which of these common foods or cuisines do you **Not** eat? (Please mark an x by foods you do **not** like to eat).

\_\_\_ beef

\_\_\_ chicken

\_\_\_ pork

\_\_\_ green vegetables

\_\_\_ salad

\_\_\_ broccoli

\_\_\_ carrots

\_\_\_ peas

\_\_\_ tomatoes

\_\_\_ onions

\_\_\_ fruit

\_\_\_ pasta

\_\_\_ bread

\_\_\_ potatoes (other than French fries)

\_\_\_ rice

\_\_\_ beans

\_\_\_ cheese

\_\_\_ cereal

\_\_\_ Mexican

\_\_\_ Italian

\_\_\_ Chinese

\_\_\_ Thai

\_\_\_ Indian

## **Smoking**

Summers in Montana are often very dry with a high fire danger. The vast majority of our volunteers do not smoke. Smokers must take extra precautions to prevent fires.

Choose one of the following:

☐ I do not smoke.

☐ I do smoke, and if I choose to smoke in camp I will do so in a designated grass-free area where my smoke will not bother other people, and I will dispose of matches and cigarette butts properly. I will not smoke in or near the quarry during the day (the fire danger is too high).

## **Personal Statement**

Please briefly summarize why you would like to join our field program, and why you would be a valuable addition to our crew. (150 words maximum)

## **Health Insurance**

No health insurance is provided. Due to the potentially dangerous nature of fieldwork, all volunteers must have proof of health insurance. If you currently do not have health insurance, and you are accepted to join our program, then you will be required to purchase insurance for the duration of your trip (international applicants would purchase travel health insurance).

Insurance provider name:

Policy number: Will be requested if you are accepted to join our field program.

## **English Language Proficiency**

Our field program is open to residents of all countries. The official camp language is English. If English is not your first language, please briefly describe your training and ability to understand and speak English.

## **Recommendation Form**

One recommendation form is required for all new volunteers. The writer of the recommendation should be a professor, boss, or former crew chief, whichever is most relevant (who is most familiar with your fieldwork and teamwork abilities?).

Applicant: Please read the entire recommendation form (below) so you are familiar with our expectations for volunteers. Give the form to your recommender; they should email the recommendation form directly to [denver.fowler \[at\] dickinsongov.com](mailto:denver.fowler[at]dickinsongov.com)

Please provide the contact information of your reference so that we can expect their emailed form.

Reference name:

Institution:

Relationship to applicant: none

Email address:

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## Recommendation Form

(You can copy and paste this form into a word processor or email, then email it to [denver.fowler \[at\] dickinsongov.com](mailto:denver.fowler[at]dickinsongov.com))

### Badlands Dinosaur Museum Summer Paleontology Field Program

#### Recommendation Form

Since 2016, Badlands Dinosaur Museum has established one of the largest summer field research programs in the northern Great Plains. Led by Dr. Denver Fowler and Dr. Elizabeth Freedman Fowler, each year we spend ~2-3 months collecting primarily vertebrate fossils from Mesozoic rocks of the region. We accept dedicated, hardworking volunteers to join us typically for a minimum of two weeks (negotiable depending on experience & transport). The field program is typically beneficial to college students interested in biological or geological research, although other ages are welcome; indeed, in 2019 and 2020 we were 50% crewed by non-college age volunteers. Note that this is NOT a summer camp or vacation; applicants are expected to work hard all day with excavations and camp duties.

Thank you for providing your recommendation for this applicant. The main goal of this form is to determine whether the applicant is appropriate for our fieldwork crew. If questions involve areas outside of your experience, please write “N/A” or “not applicable”. Please write explanations where appropriate.

Sadly, there are sometimes negative experiences with inappropriate volunteers, who may have had different expectations of what fieldwork involved, or lacked the life experience to deal with living outdoors with a team in rustic conditions for several weeks. It is disappointing both for the applicant and us if they have to be sent home early, as has happened several times in the past at previous institutions.

Paleontological fieldwork involves many potentially dangerous activities (hiking in steep terrain, carrying heavy objects, using sharp tools, encountering dangerous animals), although accidents rarely occur. Local medical care is at least an hour’s drive from most sites, with fully-capable hospitals farther away (~4 hours). We need to ensure that all volunteers are responsible, and will not endanger other crew members. Something as simple as forgetting to drink enough water can lead to heatstroke or severe injuries.

Please email the completed form directly to [Denver.fowler \[at\] dickinsongov.com](mailto:Denver.fowler@ dickinsongov.com) either as an attached Word document or copied and pasted into the body of the email. This recommendation should be sent directly from you, rather than returned to the student to send. Your responses will be kept confidential from the applicant.

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Name of applicant:

Name of reference (person completing this form):

Relationship to applicant:

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Please add spaces as needed for your responses. Thank you.

1. Does the applicant have any experience with fieldwork (scientific / camping / field trips)? Please explain.

1. Does the applicant follow instruction, and can be trusted to complete tasks without constant supervision?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
1. Does the applicant work well as part of a team? Will they get involved and be social? Will other crew members feel comfortable working closely and socializing with the applicant? How do they work under difficult conditions (extreme weather)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
1. Is the applicant a mature adult, capable of taking care of themselves, or are they still maturing and need supervision in their personal life?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
1. Would you select this applicant above other qualified students to join you in your own fieldwork or other project? Why or why not?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Is the applicant's first language English? If not, please describe their level of fluency with English (understanding and speaking).