Volunteer Role Description:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteer Role:</th>
<th>Comparative Social Learning Data Analysis and Experimental Support Volunteer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department:</td>
<td>Institute of Zoology (IoZ), Science Directorate</td>
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<td>Location:</td>
<td>Desk-based at Regent’s Park and/or home-based Some assistance in and around animal enclosures at London and Whipsnade zoos.</td>
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<td>ZSL Contact/Supervisor:</td>
<td>Simon Kenworthy, IoZ PhD student supported by wider IoZ staff and the EAC time alongside keepers</td>
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**Purpose of role/project:**

Current PhD research at the Institute of Zoology focuses on cognition and learning within primates. The PhD project is focused on wild baboon populations, with this complimentary project exploring learning in ZSL’s primate collection.

This collaborative project exposes every primate at ZSL to standardised puzzle boxes as cognitive enrichment. Through this standardisation, we can compare how individuals solve puzzles and who they learn from in their social groups.

We are in search of volunteers who are interested in collective cognitive data, coding videos for analysis and supporting a large-scale collaborative and scalable project across ZSL.

**Commitment of role:**

We are seeking one or two volunteers to assist mainly in the coding of videos from cognitive experiments involving the primates at ZSL, but also to support in conducting cognitive experiments if interested. Estimated to be 1-2 days volunteering a week.

We expect the role to last between 5-11 months depending on logistical constraints of primate availability for inclusion in the project.

However, if volunteers express an interest to contribute for an extended duration, there’s an opportunity for further data analysis, contribution to conference presentations and inclusion of species outside of primates, and the role can be extended accordingly.

**Main tasks volunteer will be asked to undertake:**

Assisting with coding videos of cognitive experiments, which may involve:
- Attending regular in-person meetings at London Zoo to transfer data and check-in with the team
- Recording individual primate interactions with puzzle boxes using videos and dictation (provided)
- Recording individuals observing others interacting with puzzle boxes using videos and dictation (provided)
- Recording other relevant behaviours seen during experiments
- Collating data into analysable format and conducting provisional analysis

Providing practical support with experiments in person at London Zoo with possible Whipsnade Zoo experiments (transport can be offered by the Supervisor if needed), which may involve:
- Supporting building and preparing puzzle boxes
- Recording experiments using provided camera equipment – being comfortable collecting data and clearly dictating into camera is essential
- Assist in preparing, deploying, withdrawing and cleaning puzzle boxes
- Sharing data immediately after each experiment has been completed
- NB. Experiments commonly take place in the morning before zoo visitors arrive, so flexibility in start time is required due to changeable animal keeper schedules

**Anticipated skills and experience that the volunteer will bring:**

- Enthusiasm and an interest in animals and conservation.
- Some knowledge and interest in animal behaviour.
- Clear understanding of general scientific experimental design principles.
- Good computer literacy and ease using different software packages.
- Punctuality and good time-keeping, which is essential during experimental data collection.
- Good attention to detail and the commitment and willingness to undertake repetitive tasks.
- Good levels of English to enable clear communication and understanding.
- Good initiative and proactiveness, and a willingness to learn, follow instructions and communicate.
- Experience of using R would be an advantage to those who want to conduct data analysis but isn’t essential.
- Commitment to attend induction and ongoing training.
- Ability to demonstrate ZSL’s values – inspiring, innovative, impactful, collaborative, ethical and inclusive.

**NB. Volunteers must be aged over 18 years for this role.**
| **Skills and experience volunteer will gain:** | • The opportunity to be involved in an international conservation charity.  
• The opportunity to work with an excellent highly motivated research/fieldwork team.  
• The opportunity to collaborate and network with ZSL scientists, keepers, curators and the evidenced-based animal care team.  
• Experience in conducting cognitive experiments and coding.  
• Training and an opportunity to learn new skills.  
• Support from an experienced research/fieldwork team. |
| **Relevant training may include:** | • ZSL site induction.  
• Induction to the design of the experiment and behavioural data collection.  
• Training in the construction of puzzle boxes.  
• Induction to the role and software to undertake role.  
• Basic training in R if coding tasks are undertaken.  

Beyond this, we will offer a regular programme of appropriate refresher training and learning opportunities. There will also be opportunities to attend ZSL updates. |
| **Support and resources provided:** | • Centralised ZSL Volunteer Management Team for general enquiries, support and problem-solving.  
• Named ZSL contact/supervisors from IOZ to provide support and guidance in this role.  
• Volunteer ID pass.  
• Regular Staff and Volunteer e-newsletter.  
• Access to all relevant role-related equipment, including ZSL laptop and on-site desk space.  
• Access to Volunteer Mess Room on site with complimentary tea and coffee.  
• Access to discounted Staff and Volunteer catering options.  
• Opportunities to attend optional ZSL volunteer recognition and thank you activities.  
• Discounts on ZSL products, experiences, and activities.  
• Travel expenses to and from ZSL sites will be reimbursed up to £15 a day on volunteering and training days. |
| **Workplace Conditions:** | • This role is based indoors for data coding and analysis but can involve outdoor work if supporting experiments.  
• Please note this role is home/office (Regent’s Park) based and can be flexible. Desk space is available at London Zoo. |