

Museum Freecycle UK: A How-To Guide

Introduction

Museum Freecycle UK has been created for the UK museum industry to use to exchange exhibition build items and other museum-specific materials **for free** in order to reduce the environmental footprint of the industry.

Museum Freecycle UK was set up by architects and exhibition designers Urban Salon and The Freecycle Network, and is supported by SHARE Museums East and Collections Trust. It is the world's first industry freecycle group and the world's first national freecycle group. Museum Freecycle UK is hosted by Freecycle and builds on its tried and tested infrastructure and protocols. The network is set up for the free exchange museum items only.

Step One: Signing Up to Freecycle as a museum

To use Freecycle and to join the Museums Freecycle UK group, you first need to sign up for a free account. The Museums Freecycle UK group is members only, and you will need to be approved to join by a Moderator to post or reply to offers (see *Step Two*). To make this easier for the moderators, please sign up using your corporate e-mail address, eg. yourname@museumname.co.uk. That way the moderators will know straight away that you are joining from a museum. If you do not have a corporate e-mail, sign up using your home address and follow the instructions in *Step Two: Joining the Museums Freecycle UK Group*.

To sign up go to <https://groups.freecycle.org/group/MuseumFreecycleUK> and follow the instructions below:

- Click on the green "Sign Up/Login" button
- Click "go to SignUp form" under "I'm not a Freecycle User"
- Choose a username & password – we recommend you use your museum name (or reference it) in the username, especially if you are not using a corporate e-mail address – and check the terms & conditions box
- Click Sign Up

Step Two: Joining the Museums Freecycle UK Group

Make sure you are logged in with your new account, and return to the main group page at <https://groups.freecycle.org/group/MuseumFreecycleUK>.

- Click the green "Join This Group" button
- You will need to be approved by one of the moderators before you can post or respond to offers/requests. This should happen within a day or two, but if not, use the "Contact Moderators" link at the top of the page to send a message requesting to join.
- **If you did not sign up with an organisation e-mail account or use your museum name as your username** please use the "Contact Moderators" function to ask the Moderators to approve you, stating which museum you are joining from.

Once approved, you will receive a confirmation e-mail and several Admin messages from Museum Freecycle UK.

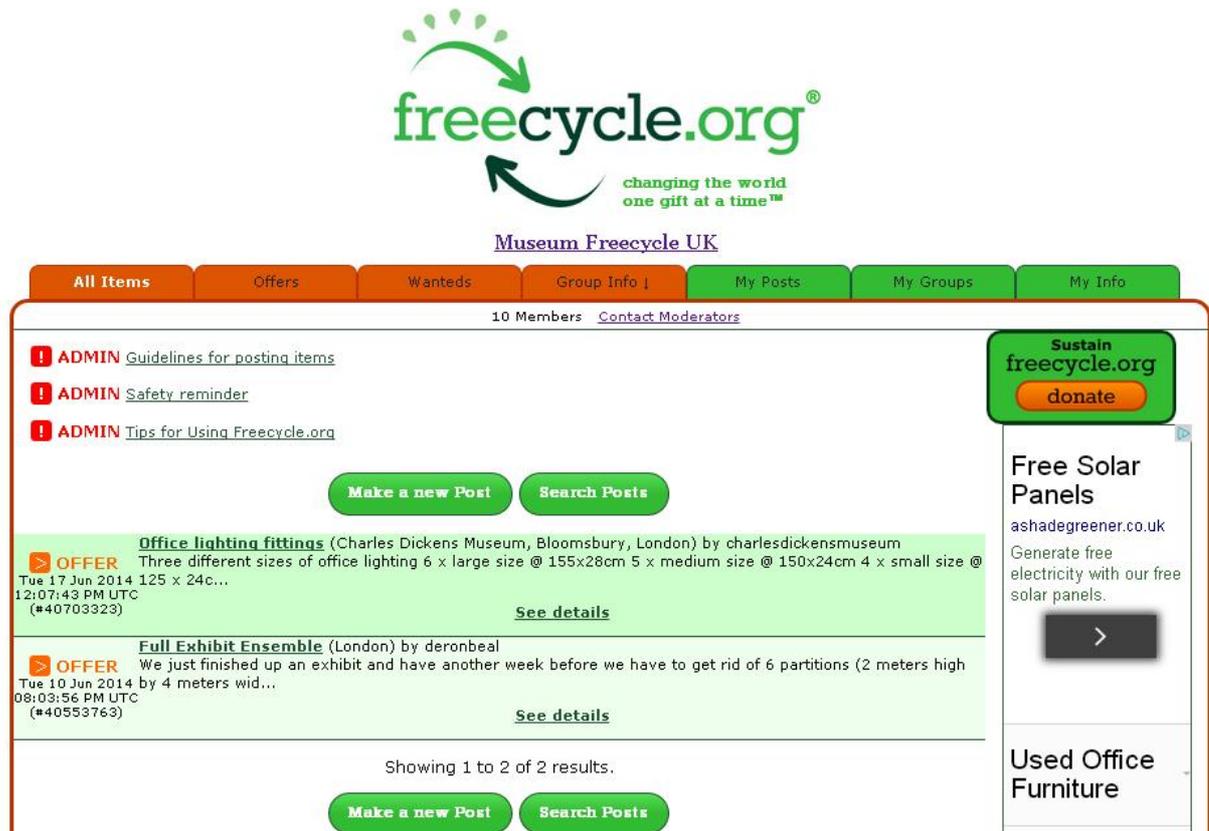
You will thereafter automatically receive e-mail notifications of Admin updates and new offers/requests, but you can customise this or turn it off if you find you are getting too many notifications. To change your email preferences:

- Click the "My Groups" tab (in the green half of the top menu bar, see *Step Three: Navigation* below)
- Click "Change Settings"

- You will see a drop down box marked “Email Preference”
- Choose from the options “None apart from ADMINS”, “Email Digest” (which e-mails you a summary every 25 posts) or “One for Each Post”
- Click “Change Email Preference”

Step Three: Navigation around Museums Freecycle UK

From the main Museums Freecycle UK page, you can view and post offers and requests, Admin messages from the Moderators, and group information:



Menu Bar:

To view all items, offered and requested, click the orange “All Items” tab at the top of the page.
 To view just Offers or Wanted, click the appropriate tab.
 To view a group description, shared files, and group links, click the orange “Group Info” tab.
 The green tabs to the right are specific to you – you can view posts you have made, plus your account information and details of groups you belong to.

The “Contact Moderators” link underneath the menu bar can be used to contact the whole Moderator team.

Admin Messages:

For tips on how to post an offer or request, read the Admin message “Guidelines for Posting Items” via the link in the top left. You can also view Freecycle’s safety reminder and general “Tips for Using Freecycle”.

Step Four: Posting or Responding to an Offer/Request

Use the green “Make A New Post” button to **create a new Offer or Request**.

- Choose whether it is an Offer or a Wanted post
- Enter a short description which will appear in the post’s subject line, eg. “display case” or “acid free tissue”
- Add your location
- Write a full description for your item. Don’t forget to add details like dimensions, and contact details if you want to be contacted directly. Remember, everything on Freecycle is offered and requested **free of charge with no strings attached** so please do not ask for or offer money or a trade/swap.
- Upload a photo if needed (photos will need to be approved by a moderator before they show to other users)
- Click “Make the Post”

To respond to an offer or request, you can either:

- reply to the post within the group and make arrangements, or
- contact the poster directly if they have left contact details.

As a general rule, it is the recipient’s responsibility to collect an item, but you can make any transport arrangements you like as long as both parties agree.

Once you have received an item you requested, or someone has collected an item you were offering, you will need to mark it as Taken or Received to remove it from the active posts in the group.

- Click on “My Posts” (top right, in the green half of the menu bar) and find the appropriate post.
- Click “Mark as Taken” or “Mark as Received”.
- You will be taken to a new screen that shows a default Taken or Received message. You can edit this message if you want to, but if not, just click “Send Taken/Received message”. Your Offer/Wanted will then be removed from the board and those who choose to receive emails will also receive an email notification with your Taken/Received message.

For any other questions or comments, please contact the moderators or visit the Freecycle FAQ page at <http://wiki.freecycle.org/MemberFAQ/>