

Dear Docents,

First and foremost, thank you to all of our docents who have contributed to the success of Getty and the programs you have supported over the years. We deeply appreciate your time and commitment.

This letter is to provide you with information regarding changes that will be made to Getty's Docent Program and the expected impact.

The Education Department and Docent Program team have spent the last few years studying and examining our programming and its impact on our audiences. We've noted that the demand for tours has decreased significantly over the past few years, as visitors are increasingly relying on other methods to access information about the collection, or seeking out specialty experiences more tailored to their individual interests. Not surprisingly, other institutions of Getty's size have observed similar patterns in their tour attendance and programming.

With many considerations in mind, we have made the decision to reconfigure our Public Tours Program (Gallery and Site) at the Getty Center and the Getty Villa to better serve visitors in the future. What this means is that **a new docent role** will be created which will be **responsible for touring both galleries and the sites**. The impact is that the general public docent corps will be significantly reduced. While this represents a substantial change to the configuration of the docent program, we believe it will allow us to create a more flexible tour program that will better serve the evolving visitor experience.

Change is never easy, and a change of this magnitude was not something that we considered lightly. We understand that this news may evoke mixed feelings. Our goal is to make this transition as smooth as possible, and we want to explain what you can expect in the weeks and months ahead.

This reconfiguration will take the following form:

- Beginning in early November, interested docents will be invited to submit an application to the Docent Program Team. Interviews for selected docents will be arranged and conducted by staff starting in January 2026. You can access the application here: https://gettydocents.volunteerportal.org/?nd=vms_load_form&form_id=14
- As of January 5th, Education staff will lead all public tours for the first several months of the new year and docents will be removed from their Public Tours

Program shifts. This means we will have no docents touring with the general public until the reconfiguration of the program is complete.

- Selected docents will be invited for in-person interviews/short teaching demonstrations in January and February.
- From March – May 2026, individuals selected for the new docent role will be trained with the expectation that they will be leading tours by the end of their training in May.

As noted above, this plan was made after examining the changing landscape in museum education and visitor experience and recognizing that the quality we are striving for in our programming requires a major shift in approach. Those docents who are either not interested in or not selected for the new docent role will no longer be part of Getty's Docent Program, but will receive the following benefits as our way of saying thank you for your years of service:

- A gift certificate to the Museum Store of \$100
- 10 Friends, Family, and Colleagues Tickets with an expiration date of 2030
- A free one-year membership to the North American Reciprocal Museum Association (NARMA), allowing you to visit museums all over North America for a reduced rate

We welcome the opportunity to hear from you about these upcoming changes to the Public Tours Program. Over the next two weeks, Liz Andres, Bonnie Wright, and Eric Bruehl will be attending briefings in order to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your dedication to Getty's Docent Program, and for your understanding as we strive to best serve our museum visitors.

Thank you,

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Keishia Gu | Head of Education | J. Paul Getty Museum