

## **Job Description: Access Assistant (Box Office)**

### **Contract**

Temporary: Monday 05 August - Monday 26 August 2019.

### **Rate of pay**

£9.00 per hour, paid weekly in arrears by bank transfer (plus holiday pay).

### **Key dates**

The Edinburgh International Book Festival runs from 10-26 August 2019.

Monday 05 August - Wednesday 07 August will be training days.

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### **Background**

The Edinburgh International Book Festival, a non-profit making organisation, is a distinctive international showcase celebrating the written word, literature and ideas. It brings leading and emerging international, British and Scottish authors and thinkers together to inspire each other and audiences in an extensive programme of public events.

In recent years, debate, discussion, performance and interactive events have become prominent features of the Festival, complementing the more traditional interview-style events and readings, and contributing to the Book Festival's reputation as a powerful forum for the public to exchange views with writers and experts on a wide range of issues: social, ethical and political as well as literary and cultural. At the heart of the Book Festival's activity is an integrated approach to creative learning and education with the aim of expanding participation in democratic discussion, fostering a love of reading and developing engaged, knowledgeable audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

The first Edinburgh International Book Festival took place in Charlotte Square Gardens in 1983 with around 30 author events; now it stages over 900 each August, attracting around 250,000 visits, making it the largest public celebration of the written word in the world. The Book Festival takes place in a temporary, tented Festival Village, created and built each year in Charlotte Square Gardens and more recently on neighbouring George Street.

The Book Festival's children's programme offers a comprehensive series of author events, activities and workshops for audiences ranging from babies to young adults, attracting audiences of 20,000 each year. In addition, an extensive schools programme is created especially for primary and secondary pupils, attended by around 14,000 school children.

Through an award from players of People's Postcode Lottery, the Book Festival has expanded its activities to create On The Road, a wide-ranging programme of live-literature events and mini-Festivals which take place in communities around Scotland across the year.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival has an annual turnover of around £2.8 million. Under 20% of income comes from Creative Scotland and the City of Edinburgh Council to support core operations. The rest is raised from ticket sales and the sales of books through the Book Festival's highly successful independent bookshops in addition to corporate sponsorship, trusts and foundations, individual donations.

We are committed to reducing our environmental impact, increasing our sustainability and creating a forum for discussion to bring environmental concerns and the climate change debate to a wider public. We are part of the Green Arts Initiative, a community of over 200 Scottish arts and cultural organisations working to improve their environmental performance, run by Creative Carbon Scotland and Festivals Edinburgh. We have our own Green Team - a cross-departmental team of staff who champion sustainability. The Green Team ensure that environmental matters are considered at every stage of activity to help identify where changes can be made, however small, to reduce our impact.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival is a founder member of Festivals Edinburgh, the organisation created by Edinburgh's 11 major Festivals to support their joint strategic development and maintain their position as global leaders.

### **Box Office team**

The Box Office comprises the Manager, Supervisors, Schools Booking Coordinator, Access Officer and increasing numbers of sales staff in the run-up to the Festival. The Box Office can be very busy - during the Festival staff can work long days during a six-day week on a rota. The Access Assistant reports to the Box Office and Operations Manager. The Box Office operates on the VIA ticketing system.

### **Key duties and responsibilities**

- Handling access bookings and issuing tickets using the VIA ticketing system by phone, email or in person
- Liaising with the FOH team to ensure access requirements are communicated effectively during the festival
- Resolving customer queries and providing excellent customer care at all times
- Maintaining accurate customer records
- Staffing the on-site Information Desk during the Festival
- Maintaining our reserved seating database and generating seating reports
- To promote and adhere to our environmental policy and sustainability goals
- Other duties as required by the Box Office Manager and Supervisors

## Person specification

This is an ideal opportunity for individuals who wish to build on their existing box office and customer service skills in a high-pressure festival environment. Excellent customer service and communication skills, enthusiasm, and an ability to work effectively as part of a small team are all essential for this role. Previous experience in a similar role would be beneficial.

### Essential:

- Commitment to high levels of customer service, with experience of dealing with customers both in person and on the telephone.
- An understanding of the broad range of barriers that can prevent people accessing the festival
- Self-motivated and passionate about improving access and inclusion
- Strong communications skills and the ability to interact with a wide range of people
- Excellent attention to detail
- An enthusiastic personality and a flexible, positive attitude
- The ability to remain calm and focused under pressure
- The ability to work as part of a team
- Previous experience of cash handling procedures
- Strong IT skills
- Passionate about literature and the arts

### Desirable:

- Experience of Box Office ticketing systems, in particular VIA
- Experience in a festival or arts venue

## Terms and conditions

The post is based at the Festival site in Charlotte Square Gardens, George Street, and in our offices. In general, staff are required to work an average of 48 hours per week (6 days out of 7), on a shift basis, between Monday and Sunday. Morning shifts can start from 09:00 and evening shifts generally finish at 21:00. Rotas will be issued at the beginning of your contract. Attendance at all training days is compulsory.

Wages are paid weekly in arrears by bank transfer.

We are committed to making the Book Festival as accessible as possible to customers, participants, sponsors and staff. If you have any specific access requirements or concerns, please let us know and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival is an equal opportunities employer and an Investor in People.

## Applications

To apply for this position please complete an application, upload a covering letter addressed to Catherine Smith, and a CV using our recruitment portal <http://www.edbookfest.co.uk/about-us/jobs>.

We do not accept applications by post or email. Due to the volume of applications we receive, it may not be possible to respond to everybody.

If the job description doesn't answer your questions, please contact Catherine Smith [jobs@edbookfest.co.uk](mailto:jobs@edbookfest.co.uk) or call the Book Festival office on 0131 718 5666.

Please note that we do not appoint without interview. Due to the number of temporary staff we hire each year, our interview schedules are very busy and we strongly advise that you ensure you are available during the interview week(s). In some cases, if travel to Edinburgh is impossible we will interview by Skype, but we prefer to meet all candidates in person.

**Closing date for applications:** Friday 19 April, 17:00

**Interviews:** Weeks commencing 29 April and 6 May

Interviews will be held at the Book Festival offices at 5 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh EH2 4DR.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival Ltd has its registered office at 5a Charlotte Square, EH2 4DR and is a company limited by guarantee (no SC 79939) with charitable status (SCO10120).