

Job Description: Authors' Yurt Manager 2019

Contract

Fixed term: 5 August - 27 August, full time.

5-9 August will be spent on preparation and staff training during office hours, followed by a shift pattern through the duration of the festival with a minimum of 48 working hours per week.

Rate of pay

£10.80 per hour, paid weekly in arrears by bank transfer (plus holiday pay)

Key dates

The Edinburgh International Book Festival from 10 to 26 August 2019. The Festival site will be closed to the public but open for events as part of our Schools programme on 27 August 2019.

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 also 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.

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.

The team

The Book Festival has a permanent staff of 26 throughout the year, expanding rapidly over the summer to a peak of around 120 staff during the Festival itself.

The Programming team comprises the Director, Associate Director, Children & Education Programme Director, Programme Manager, Creative Learning Manager and Author Logistics Officer. Several temporary staff are added to the team in the run up to the Festival, including a Programme Administrator, a Programme Logistics Assistant, two Authors' Yurt Managers and five Author Hospitality Assistants.

The role

Our Authors' Yurt provides a private space for authors to meet fellow participants, relax and prepare for their events. Hospitality staff are responsible for ensuring that authors remember their time in Edinburgh for a warm welcome, relaxed atmosphere and efficient service. The Authors' Yurt Managers work on a shift basis to ensure the Yurt is presentable and secure at all times, managing a team of Author Hospitality staff, handling author queries and complaints and liaising with the Programme Team to ensure efficient delivery of the Festival.

Key duties and responsibilities

Pre-festival duties

- Planning Yurt staff training and checking rotas
- Finalising the Yurt day book

- Carrying out training with Author Hospitality Assistants
- Liaising with Book Festival staff and on-site catering to order supplies
- Coordinating final preparation and setup of the Yurt prior to opening

During the festival

- Overseeing the opening and preparation of the Yurt each morning, and ensuring that it is properly cleaned, secured and closed each night (in line with the rota)
- Managing Yurt staff, including monitoring performance, appearance and timekeeping. Dealing with minor disciplinary matters promptly and reporting more serious concerns to management
- Monitoring the Yurt and outside hospitality areas to ensure that they are kept clean, tidy, safe and fully stocked with relevant supplies such as refreshments and welcome packs
- Maintaining a welcoming, calm and professional atmosphere inside the Yurt and liaising with other departments to ensure efficient delivery of the Festival and a memorable experience for authors, chair people and guests
- Liaising with on-site catering to ensure refreshments are fully stocked daily and provide feedback when necessary
- Dealing with author queries and complaints and elevating issues to Programme Team in a timely and professional manner
- Representing the department at daily staff meetings
- Checking staff timesheets and providing relevant information to payroll department on a timely basis
- Completing staff appraisal reports post-Festival

Person specification

The successful candidate will possess the following:

- Outstanding customer service and hospitality skills
- Experience of managing staff, ideally in a customer facing environment
- Good communication skills, written and oral
- Attention to detail
- A calm, flexible and positive attitude

Additional qualities which may be useful include:

- A current First Aid at Work certificate
- Experience of working in live literature or performing arts environments

Terms and conditions

The post is based at 5 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh and at the Festival site in Charlotte Square Gardens during August.

Normal hours of work are 9:30 - 5:30 Monday to Friday until the festival begins; during the festival the Authors' Yurt Managers work on a shift basis between 8:30am and 11:00pm for shifts of up to 10 hours at a time. With Authors' Yurt Managers on roster each Manager is entitled to a minimum of one day off during the Festival.

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

Please read the job description carefully, complete the online application at <https://www.edbookfest.co.uk/about-us/jobs> and **upload a letter** outlining how you meet the person specification, why you wish to work at the Book Festival and any other supporting information you feel relevant.

If you would like to discuss the role further, please contact Ioannis Kalkounos, Programme Manager at ioannis@edbookfest.co.uk or call him at the Book Festival office on 0131 718 5666.

Closing date: Friday 10 May 2019, 17:00

Interviews: week commencing 27 May 2019

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).