



**Access Assistant
Recruitment Pack**

Job Title: Access Assistant

Contract

Fixed-term contract from Wednesday 6 August — Sunday 24 August 2025, full-time.

This is an on-site role at our Festival site at the Edinburgh Futures Institute, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh.

Rate of pay

£12.60 per hour, paid weekly in arrears by bank transfer (plus holiday pay).

Background

The Edinburgh International Book Festival is a world-leading cultural festival, with democracy, creativity and ideas exchange at its heart. We celebrate the power of words and writing in all of their dynamic and imaginative forms, bringing diverse perspectives together, and empowering our audiences to deepen their understanding of our ever-changing world.

Since 1983, we have welcomed hundreds of thousands of visitors to engage with the world's greatest and emerging writers, thinkers, artists, and performers. Each year, we programme innovative events that broaden the horizons and enrich the minds of our audiences, both in Edinburgh and online. These take the form of on-stage conversations, workshops, creative masterclasses, think tanks, and more, all informed by a culture of open dialogue, curiosity about the perspectives of others, and active embracing of new ideas and experiences.

A registered charity, we are run by a passionate team who believe in the power of words and ideas to ignite imaginations, foster human connection, and challenge the status quo – as well as to offer solace, nurture wellbeing, and spread joy. Our Festival aims not just to open up conversations, but to broaden them too: existing as a space where nuanced discussion happens.

At the heart of our Festival is a commitment to accessibility, inclusivity, and the creation of a truly democratic environment for the exchange of ideas and collaborative thinking. We give a platform to voices who are often overlooked and aim to break down barriers to access for those who might not typically see themselves as a book festival audience. More than just a summer festival, we work year-round with partners in the local community – with schools, libraries, prisons, hospitals, and other community hubs – with the aim of developing engaged, knowledgeable audiences of all backgrounds and ages. The Festival also makes hundreds of events available to watch online via a Pay What You Can model,

offering audiences who cannot attend in person the opportunity to take part, and making the Festival truly global in nature.

Over the last four decades, we have continually transformed our Festival model to reflect our rapidly evolving world, and ensure our ongoing relevance, with a programme balancing today's most challenging topics with exploration of how we can work together towards a brighter future. In 2024 this evolution saw the beginning of a new chapter of our story under the leadership of our new director, Jenny Niven, including our successful first year of presenting the Festival in our new home of the Edinburgh Futures Institute – a new university building created from the stunning renovation of the city's old Royal Infirmary, and positioned at the heart of the city's Festival environment. We are excited about the opportunities this will offer us to collaborate with new partners and share new innovations and voices with our audiences, now and far into the future.

The team

The Access team are based at the Edinburgh Futures Institute, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh and are responsible for staffing the Access desk. The Access team works closely with the Box Office and Front of House teams. During the Festival the Access desk is usually open 09:30-21:00 daily but occasionally stays open later depending on the timing of the last event.

The post will be line-managed by the Access Officer.

Key responsibilities

- Assisting customers with access needs in purchasing tickets using the Red61 ticketing system by phone, email or in person
- Staffing the information point and access cabin
- Overseeing the hire of hearing loops, wheelchairs and mobility scooters on site
- Liaising with the FOH team and Box Office to ensure access requirements are communicated correctly during the Festival
- Ensuring the Quiet Space is kept clean and tidy
- Resolving customer queries and always providing excellent customer care
- Maintaining accurate customer records
- Promoting and adhering to our environmental policy and sustainability goals
- Other duties as required by the Access Officer

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.

The successful candidate will possess the following:

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
- Empathy and the ability to maintain confidentiality
- Strong communications skills and the ability to interact with a wide range of people
- Excellent attention to detail and great administrative and IT skills
- 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

Desirable

- Previous experience working in the field of accessibility and inclusion
- Previous experience using Red61 ticketing system
- Experience in a festival or arts venue
- Passionate about literature and the arts

Staff wellbeing

The Book Festival is developing an open and active staff wellbeing culture and is committed to making everyone in our team feel safe, welcome and included. An Employee Assistance Package is available which offers a variety of levels of counselling, one-to-one personal support and resilience tools, along with personal legal and financial advice and family support. Several of our team have chosen to be trained in First Aid for Mental Health and our Safer Spaces Policy actively promotes a culture where everyone's experience (staff, artists, partners and audiences) is valued and no-one is made to feel unsafe or excluded. We continue to reflect and consult with our team.

Terms and conditions

The post is based at the Festival site at the Edinburgh Futures Institute, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh. In general, staff are required to work an average of 42 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 but may be subject to change. Attendance at all training days is compulsory.

The rate of pay for this position will be £12.60 per hour. Wages are paid weekly in arrears by bank transfer.

Edinburgh International Book Festival will auto enrol you in their NEST pension scheme 3 months from the start date of your employment. You can choose to join the scheme from

the start date of your employment. You can get further details of the scheme from the Head of Operations & Finance.

Equal opportunities

The Edinburgh International Book Festival is an equal opportunities employer and a Real Living Wage employer. Our work is framed by a commitment to Equity, Diversity, Care and Inclusion.

The Book Festival is a working environment where everyone is treated fairly, and our differences are celebrated as strengths. We actively encourage applicants with diverse backgrounds and experiences to apply.

If you have any specific access requirements, please let us know and we will do our best to meet your needs.

How to apply

Please read the job description carefully and complete the online application using the links on our website: <https://www.edbookfest.co.uk/about-us/jobs>.

Please ensure you upload a copy of your current CV (no more than two pages) and an application letter outlining your suitability for the role and why you wish to work at the Book Festival. You may include any other information that supports your application, and we ask that you provide two recent professional references.

If the job description doesn't answer your questions, please contact Catherine Smith, jobs@edbookfest.co.uk

Closing date for applications: Friday 23 May 2025, 23:59

Interviews

Interviews: w/c 16 June 2025

Interviews will likely take place over a video call, so if you are not local to Edinburgh there is no requirement to travel.