



**Front of House Assistant  
Recruitment Pack**

## Front of House Assistant: Job Description

### 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 Front of House team comprises the Manager, Assistant Manager, Supervisors and Front of House Assistants. They are responsible for looking after our customers on site and ensuring our audiences are seated promptly.

## The role

Front of House Assistants have specific responsibility for:

- Managing queues and seating audiences efficiently to ensure events start on time
- Monitoring venues and public areas (including toilet facilities) to ensure that they are kept clean, tidy, safe and fully stocked with relevant supplies
- Answering customer queries, providing up-to-date information and excellent customer care at all times
- Assisting families with young children and patrons with disabilities around the site
- Assisting in venue set up, including preparation of reserved seating for disabled customers and distribution of materials for children's workshops and interactive events
- Operating roving microphones for question and answer sessions
- Liaising with teachers to check large school groups on and off site
- Monitoring the audience and venues to prevent and detect emergency situations
- Evacuating the public in the event of an incident
- Contributing to our environmental sustainability work by encouraging visitors to use the on-site recycling facilities

## Person specification

This is an ideal opportunity for individuals who wish to build on their existing 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 team are all essential for this role.

The successful candidate will possess the following:

### **Essential**

- Previous customer-facing experience, preferably in a festival or arts environment
- Excellent customer service and confident communication skills
- High standards of presentation, commitment and responsibility
- Attention to detail and ability to problem-solve under pressure
- The ability to work as part of a team
- An enthusiastic personality and a flexible, positive attitude

### **Desirable**

- Experience or an understanding of a live events or festival environment
- Experience of working with children and families

### **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. 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 our Festival site in Edinburgh Futures Institute on Lauriston Place.

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 08:00 and evening shifts generally finish at 23:30. Rotas will be issued at the beginning of your contract but may be subject to change. There will be two training days, Wednesday 6 August and Thursday 7 August 2025. Attendance at all training days is compulsory.

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

### **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](mailto:jobs@edbookfest.co.uk)

**Closing date for applications:** Sunday 11 May at 23:59

## Interviews

**Interviews:** w/c 26 May and 2 June

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