



**Author Hospitality Assistant
Recruitment Pack**

Author Hospitality Assistants

Edinburgh International Book Festival 2025

Contract

Full-time and Part-time positions available. Fixed Term 7 - 25 August 2025

Thursday 7 and Friday 8 August will be spent on preparation and staff training during office hours, followed by a shift pattern through the duration of the Festival.

Full-time roles are a minimum of 40 working hours per week, with the possibility of additional hours.

Part-time roles are 20 working hours per week, with the possibility of additional hours

Salary

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

Key Dates

Staff Training 7 and 8 August 2025

Opening day of the Festival: Saturday 9 August 2025

Final day of the Festival: Sunday 24 August 2025

Pack up: Monday 25 August 2025

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 Book Festival has a permanent staff of 23 throughout the year, expanding over the spring and summer to a peak of around 150 staff during the Festival. The Author Hospitality team comprises 2 Managers and 6 Assistants. They are responsible for looking after participants on site, ensuring a welcoming and professional environment.

The role

Our Authors' Area provides a private space for Festival participants to relax before and after events, meet with fellow authors and artists, and enjoy some light refreshments away from the press and members of the public. Author Hospitality staff are responsible for ensuring that authors remember their time in Edinburgh for a warm welcome, relaxed atmosphere, and efficient service.

The post will be Line Managed by Author Hospitality Manager, Helen Ella.

Key responsibilities

The role of an Author Hospitality Assistant at the book festival is to contribute to the overall success of the event by providing excellent customer service, support, and assistance to all participants.

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. As a hospitality assistant at a book festival, your role revolves around ensuring that authors, attendees, and staff have a positive experience throughout the event.

Key elements of this role include:

- **Customer Service:** Providing exceptional customer service to all guests, including authors, publishers, attendees, and other staff members. This involves being friendly, approachable, and helpful at all times.
- **Author Support:** Assisting authors with any needs they may have, such as ensuring they have water, snacks, or other necessities, and guiding them to the right place ahead of their events.
- **Maintaining the Hospitality Space:** Maintaining stocks of food, drink and crockery. Ensuring that the author hospitality area is kept clean and tidy.
- **Teamwork:** Collaborating with other hospitality assistants, as well as staff from other departments, to ensure smooth operations and a seamless experience for everyone involved.
- **Professionalism:** Representing the festival in a professional manner at all times, including adhering to dress codes, following event protocols, and maintaining a positive attitude, even in high-pressure situations.

Person Specification

Successful candidates will possess the following:

Essential

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

Desirable

- Experience or an understanding of live literature or festival organisations
- Previous hospitality experience and/or certification

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

Author Hospitality Assistants are based at our Festival site in Edinburgh Futures Institute on Lauriston Place.

In general, staff are required to work an average of 40 hours per week (6 days out of 7), on a shift basis, between Monday and Sunday. Morning shifts can start from 08:30 and evening shifts generally finish at 23:00. Rotas will be issued at the beginning of your contract but may be

subject to change. There will be two training days, Thursday 7 August and Friday 8 August 2025. Attendance on both 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 ([no more than one page](#)) 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. Please specify whether you wish to apply for a full-time or part-time role (note that the majority of roles will be full-time).

If the job description doesn't answer your questions, please contact Helen Ella, yurt.manager@edbookfest.co.uk

Closing date for applications: Monday 19 May at 23:59

Interviews

Interviews w/c 26 May. Interviews will likely take place over a video call, so if you are not local to Edinburgh there is no requirement to travel.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival Ltd has its registered office at 121 George St Edinburgh and is a company limited by guarantee (SC079939) with charitable status (SCO10120).