



Paper Trails Trainee Artists-Care Homes (freelance)

Paper Trails Trainee Artists- Care Homes (freelance) – Job Description



Contract

Freelance (September-December 2025)

Fee

£4,400.00

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. 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 which platforms the most interesting and inspiring publishing from around the world, and balances today's most challenging topics with exploration of how we can work together towards a brighter future.

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 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 at the heart of civil society where nuanced discussion can happen and a spectrum of perspectives can be explored. We believe this role, supporting and influencing public conversation, is vital to society and to the Festival's future.

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.

In 2024, our evolution saw the beginning of a new chapter under the leadership of Festival Director, Jenny Niven. It was also our first year presenting the Festival in our new home of the Edinburgh Futures Institute – a cutting-edge 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 offers us to collaborate with new partners and share innovations and a wide range of voices with our audiences, both now and far into the future.

Overview

As part of our ambitious new programme, Paper Trails, Edinburgh International Book Festival, in collaboration with Edinburgh Libraries' Mobile Library Service, is seeking to appoint two trainee artists to support our four writers in residence to deliver five-week creative projects in older people's residential care homes across Edinburgh. The projects will coincide with and enhance the visits from the libraries team. We want to bring the joy of the Book Festival to people across Edinburgh, who cannot come in person.

At the Book Festival, 'artist' encapsulates a diverse range of creative outputs: authors, illustrators, comic creators, spoken word artists, playwrights, visual artists, and musicians producing work for all ages of audiences and readers. For this role we are particularly interested in applications from early career artists who would like to develop experience of working with older people, people with dementia, and people with age-related illness in residential settings.

Edinburgh International Book Festival Communities Programme

The Edinburgh International Book Festival Communities Programme brings together the very best from groups and organisations across the country with the energy and excitement of the August Book Festival. Produced in collaboration with a variety of partners, this programme of residencies, festivals, and one-off events brings authors, artists, and audiences together to inspire each other and to be inspired, to share stories and experiences, and bring books to life for people of all ages in their own communities.

Paper Trails is a new five-year project working in partnership with Edinburgh Libraries to co-design bold creative experiences with communities across the city to address local needs. To learn more about our Communities Programme visit our blog:

<https://ontheroad.edbookfest.co.uk>

Edinburgh Libraries' Access and Mobile Library Service

Edinburgh Libraries' Access and Mobile Service encompasses a range of provisions designed to ensure residents across the city have equitable opportunity to access Library and other Council services. The mobile library makes around 70 different stops across the city covering areas from Balerno and Ratho to Leith and Restalrig. It also visits sheltered housing and retirement flats where a selection of books are brought directly into social areas for residents to browse and select from. The mobile library team work with the care homes to ensure the selection is relevant to the residents and spend a great deal of time responding to requests for specific titles or genres of books to ensure the library visits are engaging and have a positive impact.

The Role

We are seeking two early career artists who would like to develop their experience of working with older people and who can work in a creative and responsive way to ideas from the Book Festival, participants and key partners. This will involve working closely with the Paper Trails Writers in Residence (Ellen Renton, Xana Marwick, Ken Cockburn, and Julie McNeil) to develop the emerging shape and content of the programme in conversation with the care home staff and mobile library team.

Key Responsibilities

- To support the Writer in Residence to enable the participating groups to have their voices heard and their creative work to be nurtured and valued throughout the project
- To attend all Paper Trails workshops as outlined in the project schedule, taking on a project support role
- To help plan project activities in a timely and professional manner, in collaboration with the Writers in Residence, care home staff, and participants as required
- To suggest possible additional artists or artistic elements to support the emerging ideas across the project as a whole
- To participate in marketing and publicity activity as required
- To write a blog about the traineeship for Book Festival's On the Road Blog
- To participate in the project's evaluation process, and to provide regular feedback to the Book Festival and its partners

Suitability

This role is suitable for early career artists who have not worked in participatory, community settings and would like to develop their practice in working with older people in residential care homes. As part of the traineeship you will receive informal mentoring and support from the Writers in Residence and the Book Festival's Director of Communities and Equalities. Additionally, you will be provided with vulnerable adults protection training, Scottish Book Trust Reading is Caring training and support to join the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme.

Personal Specification

Essential:

- Early career artist with some experience within the literary and/or cultural sector
- An interest in developing creative practice in participatory, community, care settings
- Ability to take the lead from/work with the creative ideas of another artist/writer
- Open and flexible attitude to evolving projects and responding to participant and partner input and ideas
- Excellent communicator who can work with and represent the project
- A creative thinker who can provide support in troubleshooting and creative problem-solving
- Commitment to equal opportunities and social inclusion; tolerance and respect of difference
- Generosity of spirit and a willingness to learn from others.

Desirable

- Experience of collaborating across different art-forms
- Experience/appreciation of cultural programming

Personal attributes

- Positivity and resilience
- Plans ahead but will happily adapt and develop plans as new opportunities arise
- Motivated, pro-active and enthusiastic, even in the face of challenges
- A strong commitment to equality, inclusivity and diversity
- A willingness to work out with standard office hours, as the job dictates

Fee Breakdown

Trainee Delivery Fees	£150 per day x 5 sessions x 4 care homes	£ 3,000.00
Trainee Training fees	£120 per day x half day	£ 60.00
Trainee R&D Fees	£120 per day x 2 half days x 4 care homes	£ 480.00
Trainee Evaluation Fee	£120 per day x 1 half day	£ 60.00
Trainee travel	£25 (max) per day x 30 days	£ 800.00
Total		£ 4,400.00

Project Timeline

w/c 28 September: half-day research and development visits start

Wed 1 October, AM: half-day training at the Book Festival offices

w/c 6 October: project delivery begins in care homes (project start dates will be staggered throughout October and November)

w/c 15 December: final project delivery end

w/c 12 January: half-day evaluation session at the Book Festival offices

Equal Opportunities

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

The Book Festival is a working environment where everyone is treated fairly, and our differences are celebrated as strengths. We 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

Applicants must submit the following to jobs@edbookfest.co.uk:

- CV
- Cover letter outlining how you meet the person specification and including a 300-word statement on what you would like to learn/develop during the traineeship

Closing date for applications: Wed 17 September, 12noon

Interviews will be held on: Wed 24 September

If you have any questions about the role not answered by the above, please contact Noëlle Cobden on noelle.cobden@edbookfest.co.uk.