



Sponsorship & Partnerships Officer

Recruitment Pack

Sponsorship & Partnerships Officer: Job Description

Contract

Full-time, permanent. We welcome proposals for flexible working arrangements.

Salary

Starting at £26,000 to £29,000 per annum

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. All staff members play a role in the ongoing development of the organisation through full team planning and debrief meetings during the year. The heads of each department form the Senior Management Team.

The Development (fundraising) team is made up of six roles: Development Director, Sponsorship & Partnerships Manager, Sponsorship & Partnerships Officer, Individual Giving Manager, Individual Giving Officer, and Development Assistant. The team is currently responsible for raising around 50% of the organisation's income, and plays an integral role in ensuring the Book Festival's ongoing success and ability to meet its targets and goals.

The Role

The Sponsorship & Partnerships Officer is a key member of the Book Festival's high-performing Development (fundraising) team, reporting to the Sponsorship & Partnerships Manager.

The Sponsorship & Partnerships Officer will be responsible for managing an agreed portfolio of cash and in-kind sponsors and partners, working with internal teams to ensure agreed benefits are successfully delivered, persuading previous partners to come on board each year, and prospecting for new organisations for the Book Festival to approach.

With the Book Festival settled in its new long-term home at the Edinburgh Futures Institute, and the imminent launch of a new strategic plan, prospecting will be an exciting opportunity as well as a key priority. The post holder will help coordinate supporter communications and organise a year-round programme of cultivation and stewardship activities and events. They will also support the Sponsorship & Partnerships Manager and Development Director, working collaboratively to ensure the success of the Festival's fundraising ambitions.

It is a time of change for the organisation, and particularly for the Development team, following the end of our relationship with Baillie Gifford. An ability and willingness to think creatively and work proactively will be key. This role is an excellent opportunity for someone to gain a broad range of sponsorship and partnership experience, driving growth within the supportive structure of a highly experienced team, as we innovate and develop our sponsorship offer to respond to the needs of our organisational ambitions.

Key Responsibilities

Account Management

- Manage an agreed portfolio of cash and in-kind sponsors and partners up to a value or circa £10,000 – maintaining close, communicative and highly responsive relationships, and aiming where possible to increase value from year to year.

- Act as the driving force behind internal operations, logistics, and coordination of sponsorship at the Book Festival to ensure its effective and timely management throughout the annual festival cycle.
- Play a key role in the coordination and successful delivery of sponsorship benefits including hospitality, ticket allocation, branding, marketing, sampling and presence on site.

New Business / Sales

- Proactive research into relevant brands and new corporate prospects that reflect the values, ethos and aims of the Book Festival.
- Targeted approaches to researched prospects to secure meetings and develop relationships.
- Maintain the prospect pipeline with accurate record-keeping relating to prospects and approaches made.
- Develop innovative, attractive, well-researched proposals, funding applications and overview documents for prospective and returning sponsors and supporters.
- Assist the Sponsorship & Partnerships Manager and Development Director with approaches where required.

Wider Fundraising

- Maintain Book Festival databases, systems and resources to support the smooth delivery of sponsor relationships and benefits, and to maximise income.
- Support the delivery of a year-round programme of cultivation and stewardship activities and events for sponsors and prospective supporters.
- Maintain accurate financial records of sponsorship expenditure and ensuring all Book Festival sponsors are invoiced correctly.
- Support the Sponsorship & Partnerships Manager with annual ethics and risk assessments for all returning sponsors, as well as key prospects.
- Assist the Sponsorship & Partnerships Manager and Development Director with Major Sponsor relationships when required.
- Deputise for the Sponsorship & Partnerships Manager as required.
- Contribute appropriately to the wider work of the Book Festival Development Team.

Person Specification

Experience & Knowledge ***Essential***

- At least one year's experience of fundraising and/or account management or sales.

- Excellent relationship building skills, with an ability to quickly build rapport with colleagues and external stakeholders.
- Experience of planning and delivering events.
- Ability to prioritise a busy workload and work to deadlines.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills, written and verbal.
- Strong computer literacy and administration skills.
- Excellent attention to detail.

Desirable

- Direct experience of sponsorship and/or corporate partnerships in both account management (of existing partners) and new business (prospecting for new partners).
- Experience using CRM databases and event management systems.
- Experience working in a Festival or venue-based organisation.
- A willingness to carry out event related physical duties during the Festival.

Skills & Attributes

- A commitment to equality, inclusivity, and diversity.
- A proactive and positive approach to work.
- The ability to work flexibly and independently, taking initiative where required.
- A collaborative approach to effective team working.
- An interest in current affairs and a passion for books.

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 our offices 121 George Street, Edinburgh and at the Festival site in Edinburgh Futures Institute during August. Normal hours of work are 9:30–5:30, Monday to Friday (35 hour working week) outwith Festival time. Additional hours are required during the Festival itself, with some long days and working up to six days a week. Flexible/hybrid working is welcomed – our team work from the office at least three days per week and are expected to discuss and agree their work patterns with their manager and team. Time off in lieu is given for days worked outside agreed working patterns.

Employees receive 34 days of paid holiday per annum pro rata including public holidays. Six days are used for the shutdown of the office over Christmas, as well as four of the public holidays - Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, 2 January.

The salary for this position will be in the region of £26,000 to £29,000 per annum. The Book Festival will pay a contribution of up to 5% of salary into our approved, auto-enrolment pension scheme. Employees may make voluntary additional contributions through payroll.

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

We welcome conversations with potential applicants. Please contact Fiona Rae, Sponsorship & Partnerships Manager, via admin@edbookfest.co.uk Please 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** and an **application letter**. Your letter should outline your suitability for the post and why you wish to work at the Book Festival. You may include any other information to support your application.

Closing date for applications: Thursday 20 February 2025, 10am

Interviews

Interviews will be held on **Friday 28 February 2025** at the Book Festival offices at 121 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4YN (for local candidates) or on Zoom if preferred.

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).