

Job Description: Front of House Manager 2020

Contract

Full time, fixed term contract: 6 July until 9 September 2020.

The ideal candidate would be available for additional days in advance of the start date during May to be agreed with the Audience Services Manager, to assist with recruitment and planning.

There is also an option to assist the Box Office and Access teams during June if additional days would be preferred, or to create a continuous contract from May until September.

Rate of pay

£13.10 per hour, paid weekly in arrears by bank transfer (plus holiday pay).

Key Dates

- Programme launch: Thursday 11 June 2020
- Tickets go on sale: Saturday 27 June 2020
- The Edinburgh International Book Festival runs from 15 August - 01 September 2020, including the Baillie Gifford Schools Gala Day.
- Debrief day: 9 September 2020

Background

The Edinburgh International Book Festival, a non-profit making organisation, is a distinctive international showcase celebrating the written word, literature and ideas. It brings leading and emerging international, British and Scottish authors and thinkers together to inspire each other and audiences in an extensive programme of public events.

In recent years, debate, discussion, performance and interactive events have become prominent features of the Festival, complementing the more traditional interview-style discussions and readings, and contributing to the Book Festival's reputation as a powerful forum for the public to exchange views with writers and experts on a wide range of issues: social, ethical and political as well as literary and cultural. At the heart of the Book Festival's activity is an integrated approach to creative learning and education with the aim of expanding participation in democratic discussion, fostering a love of reading and developing engaged, knowledgeable audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

The first Edinburgh International Book Festival took place in Charlotte Square Gardens in 1983 with around 30 author events; now it stages over 900 each August, attracting around 250,000 visits, making it the largest public celebration of the written word in the world. The Book Festival takes place in a temporary, tented Festival Village, created and built each year in Charlotte Square Gardens and on neighbouring George Street.

The Book Festival's children's programme offers a comprehensive series of author events, activities and workshops for audiences ranging from babies to young adults, attracting family audiences of around 20,000 each year. In addition, an extensive schools programme is produced especially for primary and secondary pupils, attended by around 14,000 school children.

Through an award from players of People's Postcode Lottery, the Book Festival has expanded its activities to create a wide-ranging community programme including live-literature events and performances, artists' residencies and mini-festivals, which take place in different communities around Scotland across the year, including a growing series of events in Scottish prisons.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival has an annual turnover of around £3.2 million. Under 20% of the Book Festival's income comes from Creative Scotland and the City of Edinburgh Council to support core operations. The remainder is raised through ticket sales, the sales of books through the Book Festival's highly successful independent bookshops, corporate sponsorship, grants from trusts and foundations and donations from individuals.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival is a founder member of Festivals Edinburgh, the organisation created by Edinburgh's 11 major Festivals to support joint strategic development and maintain the position of Edinburgh's festivals as global leaders.

[The Front of House team](#)

The Front of House team comprises of the Manager, Assistant Manager, six Supervisors and around forty Assistants. With over 250,000 visitors annually, effective care of our audience is vital to the success of the Festival; the Front of House team play a vital role in ensuring the smooth running of events on site and the safety and comfort of all visitors.

[The Role](#)

This is a challenging, fast-paced role at the heart of the Festival operation, ideally suited to an experienced, energetic Front of House Manager with excellent customer service skills and the ability to think on their feet. Effective management of a large team of temporary staff is crucial. The Front of House Manager reports to the Audience Services Manager, who also oversees the Box Office and Access teams.

Pre-Festival Duties

- Ideally, with the Audience Services Manager, assist with recruitment of all new Supervisors and Front of House Assistants (this process happens in May/early June)

- Preparing Front of House rota (July)
- Planning and delivering training with Supervisors and Assistants (early August)
- Coordinating final preparations of venues prior to the festival opening

During the Festival

- Taking overall responsibility for the smooth running of all venues on site; liaising with all teams and directing staff to ensure that venues are prepared, opened and audiences promptly seated for events to start on time; queue management; assisting customers with access requirements; quick and effective resolution of any issues that might affect the overall schedule or the customer experience on site
- Managing Front of House staff, including monitoring performance, appearance and timekeeping. Dealing with minor disciplinary matters and promptly reporting more serious concerns to management
- Providing leadership to staff and audience members in the event of an evacuation or incident
- Answering customer queries and resolving complaints in accordance with Book Festival policy, ensuring customers receive the highest standard of service at all times
- Representing the department at daily staff meetings and clearly communicating relevant information to the Front of House team
- Monitoring venues and public areas (including toilet facilities) to ensure that they are kept clean, tidy, safe and fully stocked with relevant supplies
- Contributing to our environmental sustainability work by ensuring staff are fully aware of on-site recycling facilities and encouraging visitors to use them
- Ensuring that event information is correctly written up on venue information boards
- Checking staff timesheets and providing relevant information to the payroll department on a timely basis
- Assisting with the all staff training and induction day prior to the Festival
- Completing staff appraisal reports post-Festival

Person Specification

The successful candidate will possess the following:

- Previous Front of House experience at manager or supervisor level
- Experience of managing a large team of temporary staff
- Experience of working at a large-scale festival or similar event
- Experience of training and managing staff in a customer facing environment
- Outstanding customer service skills
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written
- Attention to detail
- A flexible, positive attitude and a calm manner under pressure

Additional qualities that may be useful include:

- A current First Aid at Work certificate
- Experience of live literature events

Terms and conditions

Ideally you would be available for approximately 10 days of work during May to recruit new assistants and supervisors.

Outwith the Festival our office hours are 09:30-17:30, Monday to Friday. During the Festival (15 August - 1 September) you will work a mix of morning and evening shifts, between Monday and Sunday with two days off across the Festival. Early shifts usually begin at 8am and evening shifts finish at approximately midnight.

In general, during the festival staff are required to work an average of 48 hours per week (6 days out of 7), on a shift basis, between Monday and Sunday. Attendance at all training days is compulsory. Wages are paid weekly in arrears by bank transfer.

The 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. Membership of the scheme requires a minimum contribution from employees in line with statutory requirements (5% at 2020). As your employer we will contribute in line with statutory requirements (3% at 2020). You can get further details of the scheme from the Head of Operations & Finance.

We are committed to making the Book Festival as accessible as possible to customers, participants, sponsors and staff. If you have any specific access requirements or concerns, please let us know and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival is an equal opportunities employer and an Investor in People.

Applications

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>. We do not accept applications by post or email. Due to the volume of applications we receive, it may not be possible to respond to everybody. If the job description doesn't answer your questions, please contact jobs@edbookfest.co.uk or call the Book Festival office on 0131 718 5666.

Please note that we do not appoint without interview. Due to the number of temporary staff we hire each year, our interview schedules are very busy and we strongly advise that you ensure you are available during the interview week. In some cases if travel to Edinburgh is impossible we will interview by Skype, but we prefer to meet all candidates in person.

Closing date: Monday 16 March 2020, 17:00

Interviews: w/c 23 March 2020

Interviews will be held at the Book Festival offices at 5 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh EH2 4DR

The Edinburgh International Book Festival Ltd has its registered office at 5a Charlotte Square, EH2 4DR and is a company limited by guarantee (no SC 79939) with charitable status (SC010120)