



Edinburgh  
International  
Book Festival



Access Officer

# Access Officer – Fixed Term Contract: Job Description

## Contract

Fixed-term contract: Tuesday 11 June – Monday 26 August 2024

This is an on-site role at the Edinburgh International Book Festival office on George Street, Edinburgh, and at our Festival site at the Edinburgh Futures Institute, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh.

## Rate of Pay

£13.88 per hour, paid weekly in arrears by bank transfer (plus holiday pay).

## Key dates

The Edinburgh International Book Festival runs from Saturday 10 August – Sunday 25 August 2024.

Advance Booking: Friends and sponsors of the Book Festival: 13 – 17 June 2024

Booking opens to the public: Thursday 20 June 2024 (TBC)

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## Background

The Edinburgh International Book Festival brings leading and emerging Scottish, UK, and international authors and thinkers together to inspire each other and audiences through an extensive programme of public events, including conversation, interactive activities, and performance. The Book Festival takes place in person in Edinburgh but has a significant digital offering to reach authors and audiences around the world.

The Book Festival has a 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 Children's Programme - comprising author events, activities, and workshops - is produced for young audiences of all ages, from babies to teenagers. In addition, an extensive Schools' Programme is created for primary and secondary pupils, as well as teachers, with thousands of school children attending each year. All tickets to schools' events are free, and each child goes home with a free book.

Through our Communities Programme we bring local people and organisations from across Scotland together with professional writers and artists to have big conversations, unearth new stories and provide a space for everyone's voice to be heard. As an organisation of local, national, and international reach, we shine a light on underrepresented communities, supporting them to develop their voices through cultural activity.

## The Role

This is an exciting opportunity to work with a wide range of teams, external stakeholders and customers to help make the Book Festival as accessible as possible. The Access Officer act as a point of contact for our audience, coordinating our accessible programming and liaising with contractors supplying our BSL and caption provision. They will update our reserved seating database, contact customers to confirm requirements and manage access ticket bookings, including group bookings.

The Access Officer will be largely based within the Box Office team, but also be required to work closely with the Front of House team, the Site and Production team, the Marketing team and the Programme team. The Access Officer will also be a member of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Group.

The Box Office team comprises the Manager, Supervisors, Schools Booking Coordinator and increasing numbers of sales staff in the run-up to the Festival. The Box Office operates on the Red61 ticketing system.

The post will be line-managed by the Audience Services Manager.

## Key Responsibilities

- Booking BSL interpreters and captioning services as required
- Being a point of contact for different accessibility partners
- Working closely with the Site and Production team to make sure the Festival site is as accessible as possible
- Working with the Programme team on specified events
- Contacting customers to confirm access requirements
- Advising on facilities provided and suggesting suitable events in the programme to customers
- Collating materials and information that make the Festival more accessible for audiences e.g. Easy Read guides, maps, visual guides
- Maintaining our reserved seating database and generating seating reports
- Working with groups such as Artlink to book tickets
- Liaising with the FOH team and Box Office to ensure access requirements are communicated correctly during the festival
- Handling access bookings and issuing tickets using the Red61 ticketing system by phone, in person and by post
- Resolving customer queries and providing excellent customer care at all times
- Staffing the on-site Access and Information desk during the Festival and acting as point of contact for site access requirements
- Collating feedback and recommendations, leading on debrief meetings with customers, partners and stakeholders for the evaluation and future development of our processes and systems
- Sharing best practice examples of access provision to staff team, including training opportunities and online resources
- Engage in sustainable practices while in the workplace and adhere to the Book Festival's environmental sustainability policies
- Any other duties as required by the Box Office Manager

## Person Specification

This is an ideal opportunity for individuals who wish to build on their existing customer service skills in a festival environment, while making the Book Festival as accessible as possible. Previous experience in a similar role would be beneficial. Excellent communication and teamwork skills, and a willingness to learn and adapt quickly are all essential for this role. A good understanding of the barriers that face people attending events is required, preferably through having some lived experience.

The successful candidate will possess the following:

### Essential

- Commitment to high levels of customer service, with experience of dealing with customers both in person and on the telephone.
- An understanding of the broad range of barriers that can prevent people accessing the Festival
- Self-motivated and passionate about improving access and inclusion
- Strong communications skills and the ability to interact with a wide range of people
- Empathy and the ability to maintain confidentiality
- A positive, flexible attitude and calm manner under pressure
- The ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team, and to advocate for others if necessary
- Strong administrative and IT skills

### Desirable

- Previous experience working in the field of accessibility and inclusion
- Experience of Box Office ticketing systems, in particular Red61 ticketing
- Experience in a festival or arts venue
- Ability to use British Sign Language

## Staff welfare

The Book Festival has developed an open and active staff welfare culture and is committed to making everyone 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. Members of staff have chosen to be trained in First Aid for Mental Health, ensuring awareness of staff well-being is embedded in our culture. We have a Safer Spaces Policy, which actively promotes a culture where everyone's experience (staff, artists, associates, and visitors) is valued, and no-one is made to feel unsafe or excluded.

## Terms and conditions

The post is based at our offices, 121 George Street, Edinburgh; satellite locations as required; and at the Festival site at the Edinburgh Futures Institute during August. Normal hours of work are 09:30 – 17:30, Monday to Friday during June, apart from the Friends Advanced Booking weekend when staff will be required to work on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 June 2024.

Additional hours will be required during the Festival itself, when staff should expect to work a six or seven day week (most staff are usually scheduled to have two days off during the Festival). Rotas are issued in advance of the Festival.

The rate of pay for this position will £13.88 per hour. Wages are paid weekly in arrears by bank transfer.

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. You can get further details of the scheme from the Head of Operations & Finance.

## 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 a commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

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

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 14 April 2024, 23:59

**Interviews:** w/c 22 April and 29 April 2024

## Interviews

Interviews will be held at the Book Festival offices at 121 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4YN (for local candidates) or virtually if preferred.

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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 (SC010120).