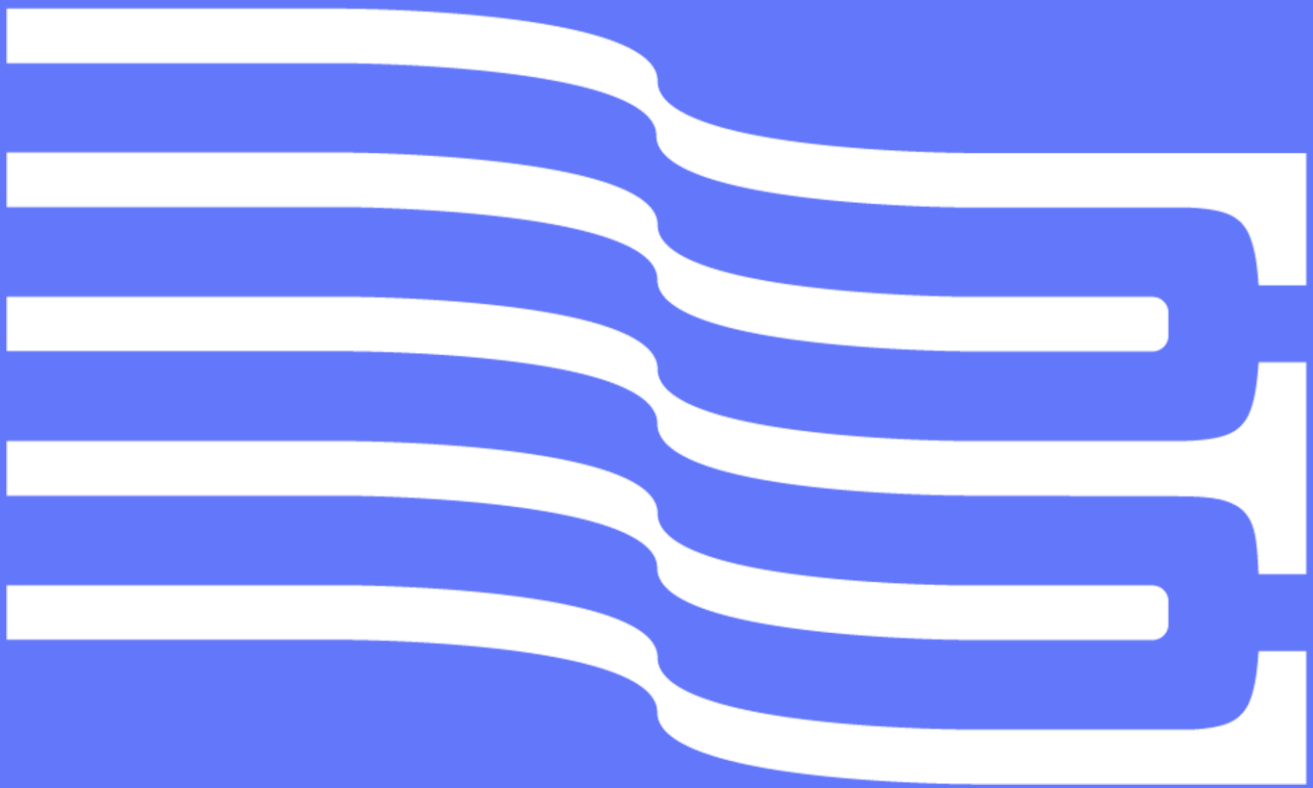




Edinburgh
International
Book Festival



**Author
Hospitality
Assistant**

Author Hospitality Assistant: Job Description

Contract

Temporary, full-time: 8 - 25 August 2024

Thursday 8 and Friday 9 August will be spent on preparation and staff training during office hours, followed by a shift pattern through the duration of the Festival, working approximately 40 hours pw (with the possibility of additional hours up to 48 hours).

Salary

£12/hr, paid weekly in arrears by bank transfer (plus holiday pay).

About the Edinburgh International Book Festival

Edinburgh International Book Festival is a democratic, inclusive celebration of creativity, imagination, and ideas, which ignites exchange, empowers audiences, and fosters human connection.

We create spaces for critical thinking and nuanced debate across cultural, ethical, and political issues; champion writers from around the world; and shape interactive experiences with the world's finest writers and thinkers. We want everyone who joins us to feel safe to express themselves and take ambitious leaps of thought in a climate of mutual respect.

We're outward looking and internationalist in our approach. We introduce audiences to first class work from around the world, supporting empathy and understanding, and celebrating Scotland's writers within the global context.

We also have a broad programme of inspiring and innovative events for schools, and children and their families. We're committed to reaching those who may face barriers to being part of the Book Festival, integrating creative learning and community engagement, and giving agency to people not always heard in cultural spaces.

Background

The Book Festival was founded in 1983 with around 80 events in a marquee in Charlotte Square Gardens. By 2019, we were still in the Gardens but one marquee had evolved into a whole village of tents, hosting a programme of over 900 events with authors from across the world.

With the global pandemic, like everyone else, our world changed. We responded quickly and in August 2020, we staged an acclaimed digital Book Festival, where writers came together and thousands of people from across the world gathered and interacted in real-time chatrooms and live Q&As. 2021 to 2023 saw more transformation: a long-term strategic partnership with the University of Edinburgh enabled us to stage hybrid Festivals on a new site at the Edinburgh College of Art.

In 2023, we also welcomed a new Director, Jenny Niven, whose bold vision will lead us through the next period of transition with optimism and positivity. From 2024 we will be in a new home at the Edinburgh Futures Institute, a landmark development at the University. Our new venue offers us the possibility of multi-disciplinary collaboration and placemaking, and building new experiences for writers, audiences and partners in the physical and digital space.

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

The Role

Our Author Hospitality area provides a private space for authors to meet fellow participants, relax, and prepare for their events. Hospitality staff are responsible for ensuring that authors receive a warm welcome and enjoy a relaxed atmosphere and efficient service during their stay in Edinburgh.

The post will be Line Managed by Author Hospitality Managers, Helen Ella and Michael Merillo.

Key Responsibilities

As a hospitality assistant at the 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 in the green room, and guiding them to their sessions.
- **Maintaining the Hospitality Space:** Maintaining stocks of food, drink, and crockery. Ensuring that the author hospitality area is kept clean and tidy at all times.
- **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.

The role of a hospitality assistant at a Book Festival is to contribute to the overall success of the event by providing excellent customer service, support, and assistance to all participants.

Person Specification

Successful candidates will possess the following:

- Customer-facing experience.
- 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.

Additional experience that may be useful includes:

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

Personal attributes

- A commitment to equality, inclusivity, and diversity.
- A proactive and positive approach to work.
- The confidence to ask for assistance and support when necessary.
- The ability to communicate honestly, openly, and consistently.

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 the Festival site at the Edinburgh Futures Institute during August.

Author Hospitality Assistants are required to work an average of 40 hours a week hours per week (6 days out of 7), on a shift basis, between Monday and Sunday. There will be the possibility of additional hours up to 48 hours. Morning shifts will start at 08:30 and evening shifts finish at 23:00. Rotas will be issued in advance of the Festival but may be subject to change.

Wages are paid weekly in arrears by bank transfer.

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.

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 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 Lilidh Kendrick (lilidh.kendrick@edbookfest.co.uk)

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 8 May

Interviews: Tuesday 21 Wednesday and Wednesday 22 May

Interviews

Interviews will be held 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 (SC010120).