

HLF Visitor Services Traineeship

Work based training tasks and projects

Background

For over a century the Whitechapel Gallery has premiered world-class artists from modern masters such as Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Frida Kahlo to contemporaries such as Sophie Calle, Lucian Freud, Gilbert & George and Mark Wallinger.

With beautiful galleries, exhibitions, artist commissions, collection displays, historic archives, education resources, inspiring art courses, dining room and bookshop, the newly expanded Gallery is open all year round, so there is always something free to see.

The Gallery is a touchstone for contemporary art internationally, plays a central role in London's cultural landscape and is pivotal to the continued growth of the world's most vibrant contemporary art quarter.

Heritage is a major part of the Gallery's structure, programming and history and is incorporated into departmental daily activities in project specific areas within Development, Education and Exhibitions, and more generally into areas of organisational activity relating to the wider context of the arts sector. These are identified as conservation and sustainability within the Operations team, marketing of the organisation's heritage as part of the Communications department and access awareness through Visitor Services.

Trainees will gain valuable departmental skills and experience as outlined in this document combined with workshops and training, as a cohort, for specialist heritage skills. This training will complement the work of the department and allow each trainee to gain an insight into how heritage and conservation is relevant across the Gallery by undertaking training in project management, research into local history, collection conservation, digital technology, customer care and communications.

The Visitor Services trainee will be on the forefront of engagement with the public and will develop an understanding of customer care and accessibility as well as security and conservation within a Gallery. Actual heritage focused projects will be agreed between trainee and line manager during the induction process, but might include the opportunity to research, develop and hold public tours.

Visitor Services Department

The Visitor Services department consists of: Head of Visitor Services; Visitor Services supervisor; Visitor Services Officer - Sales; Visitor Services Officer - Tickets; Visitor Services Officer - Access; Visitor Services Officer - Communications; 5 casual Visitor Services Assistants and a number of Gallery Invigilators, Gallery Assistants and Duty Managers.

Supervisor

Visitor Services Manager

Tasks and Projects

Across the year, the Trainee can expect to receive work-based training and supervision to develop competency in the following tasks:

- Welcoming all visitors, individuals and groups, to the Whitechapel Gallery.
- Dealing with enquiries and giving information about all aspects of the Whitechapel Gallery, including current and forthcoming exhibitions, public and education events and activities, the building and facilities including the bookshop, café and restaurant, development and fundraising schemes and the gallery's history and mission.
- Providing excellent customer care following existing guidelines and policies. Developing knowledge and awareness of particular access requirements and pro-actively providing the highest possible standard of service for each visitor.
- Being well informed and able to answer enquiries about other arts venues and activities as well as the area's cultural history and general travel/tourist information.
- Taking ticket bookings and capturing data, using a computerised system, by telephone, e-mail and in person.
- Completing the daily cashing up and dealing with any discrepancies in the first instance.
- Promoting the membership scheme and other sponsorship opportunities.
- Servicing the cloakroom.
- Operating an effective reception service, acting as liaison point between Whitechapel Gallery staff and their visitors and managing the telephone switchboard and computerised calendar.
- Monitoring pick - up and delivery of small parcels and documents by couriers and promptly inform relevant departments of all deliveries.
- Ensuring the foyer and front desk space is clean and tidy and information material is readily available and attractively displayed.
- Invigilating all Gallery spaces, ensuring that the security and conservation of the art works are not compromised. Providing excellent and pro-active customer service based on existing guidelines.
- Having knowledge of health and safety, access and disability awareness and a thorough understanding of evacuation procedures (training provided).
- Informing the Duty Manager immediately in the event of damage to building or artwork, Health and Safety and security matters or any other emergencies that may occur.
- Attending meetings as appropriate and providing feedback and comments to maintain excellent standards and assist with the continuous improvement of services.
- Helping with basic set up of events, private views and gallery hires.
- Assisting with the opening and closing of the Gallery and off-site exhibition spaces.
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- Assisting with the research, development and delivery of introductory public talks and tours on the Whitechapel Gallery's history, architecture and programme.

Accreditation:

All six HLF Trainees will undertake an EDI Level 3 Diploma in Cultural Heritage. The pathway within this qualification will be chosen with the guidance of line managers and an EDI assessor according to the specific duties of the Trainee. All accreditation is work-based, and assessed through work-based evidence collection with the guidance of an EDI assessor. Level 3 is an A-Level equivalent qualification. Applicants who have studied to level 3 and beyond in an academic context are not excluded from applying due to the specialised nature of the course content and the invaluable real-world context of the work-based training, however it is recommended that all candidates read the EDI Candidate Pack carefully and consider the suitability of this qualification to their individual needs before applying. The full candidate pack for the EDI Level 3 Diploma in Cultural Heritage is included in the Application Pack.

Competencies

- Ability to work in a team.
- Experience of working in a customer facing environment.
- Ability to organise practical and administrative work.
- Attention to detail and high aesthetic standards.
- Ability to communicate clearly and concisely in an appropriate manner and a high level of diplomacy.
- IT skills including Word, Excel, the use of internet and databases
- Understanding of risk assessments and basic health & safety as it applies to building and art conservation.
- Knowledge of contemporary art and public building operations

Please demonstrate how your skills and experience match the competencies for this role when making an application. Before making an application, please refer to the information provided regarding entry criteria for the HLF Skills for the Future Traineeships programme.

Other details

- Traineeship Coordinator: Administration Manager
- Supervisor: Strategic Relations Manager
- Hours: 9:30- 5:45pm, with an hour for lunch. Monday - Friday
- Duration: 12 months
- Bursary: £14,500 (paid in 12 monthly installments)
- Benefits (subject to availability): Discount at the Whitechapel Café/Bar, discount at the Gallery bookshop and a card which offers free entry to a number of London museums and galleries

Closing date: **Midnight Sunday 5 April 2015**
Interviews: **Thursday 30 April 2015**
Start date: **Tuesday 2 June 2015**

Skills for the Future Traineeships are supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Whitechapel Gallery strives to be an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Charity number: 312162 Company number: 4093862

