

Press and Communications Assistant

Background

Whitechapel Gallery is the artists' gallery for everyone.

For over a century we have engaged young and diverse audiences by premiering world-class artists from modern masters such as Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Frida Kahlo to contemporaries such as Sophie Calle, Lucien Freud, Gilbert & George and Mark Wallinger.

We are proud to continue this tradition today. With beautiful galleries, exhibitions, artist commissions, collection displays, historic archives, education resources, inspiring art courses, dining room and bookshop, the 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.

Role

This role provides an exciting opportunity to support the promotion of Whitechapel Gallery's world-leading programme; from new artist commissions and survey exhibitions, to prestigious awards and late night music events. The Press and Communications Assistant joins an influential Audiences and Communications team as the Gallery continues to develop its brand and grow engagement with young and diverse audiences.

Pro-active and organised, this role provides a vital support to the Head of Press and Corporate PR, ensuring efficient office administration, effective handling of press enquiries and assisting with the ongoing generation of media coverage. Highly motivated by working within contemporary culture, the Press and Communications Assistant is enthusiastic about contributing creative press ideas to promote the Gallery's exhibitions, educational activities, events and projects. The role offers the opportunity to build media contacts across digital, print and broadcast, reach new audiences and expand the Gallery's reputation and reach.

Job description

The Press and Communications Assistant reports to the Head of Press and Corporate PR. The Audiences and Communications team comprises: Director of Audiences and Communications, Head of Press and Corporate PR, Head of Marketing and Membership, Design and Production Manager, Marketing Officer (Campaigns) and Marketing Officer (Membership).

Accountability

The Press and Communications Assistant is accountable to the Head of Press and Corporate PR.

.....

Duties and Responsibilities

Press campaign support

- Act as first point of contact for daily press enquiries, ensuring excellent and efficient service provided
- Issue press materials on request
- Escalate enquiries to team where appropriate
- Draft media materials, e.g. biographies and press releases
- Draft media lists including new and relevant targets
- Undertake research tasks. i.e. gather assets from colleagues and partners
- Respond to and supervise filming requests
- Generate regular listings coverage to support campaigns
- Participate in campaign development, and contribute creative ideas for coverage
- Manage press campaigns for smaller scale projects on occasion, as directed and overseen by the Head of Press and Corporate PR
- Regularly read a wide variety of media to keep informed and identify coverage opportunities
- Develop media contacts, particularly digital, bloggers and online influencers

Press administration

- Maintain and update media database
- Log and archive press cuttings
- Oversee subscriptions and ensuring publications library remains up-to-date
- Update the website with press materials and as directed by Communications team

Communications images

- Source images for Communications use, clear copyright and negotiate usages
- Maintain a resource of images for media, using Dropbox
- Ensure all images are correctly captioned and accredited
- Issue imagery to media

Communications event organisation

- Manage logistical arrangements for media views, readers events and other Communications events including room, audio visual and catering bookings
- Support the Director of Audiences and Communications in departmental culture-building activities (for example team away days, celebrations, exhibition visits and sharing inspiration and insight)
- Create and distribute invitations using Mailchimp email system
- Collate RSVPs
- Prepare materials to give to guests (for example goodie bags or press kits)
- Make travel bookings
- Liaise with external suppliers

Departmental administration and reporting

- Ensure that the Communications office is well organised and up-to-date, including online and physical filing systems
- Ensure that departmental budgets are organised and accurately logged on financial spreadsheets and programmes
- Raise purchase orders and collate receipts for the departmental credit card
- Support the Director of Audiences and Communications, Head of Press and Corporate PR, Head of Marketing and Membership and Design and Production Manager in the organisation of meetings, agendas and minutes, in addition to:
 - Weekly Audiences and Communications team meetings
 - Seasonal programme review meetings
 - Seasonal finance meetings
 - Quarterly trustees meetings
- Distribute departmental post
- Manage the Press Office and Marketing general email inboxes
- Lead on the timely creation of seasonal activity reports
- Gather information for other reports as directed by Communications team
- Attend Gallery events as directed
- Ensure that the Gallery, artists, partners and sponsors are correctly credited across all activities

Personal Specification

Essential

- Experience of media relations within the cultural sector
- Demonstrable understanding of the UK media landscape
- Experience of event organisation
- Good writing skills, with the ability to produce original, accurate and appealing copy
- Ability to communicate with different types of people at all levels
- An organised, flexible approach with the ability to prioritise workload
- Ability to think creatively and work under own initiative
- Excellent attention to detail, time management and project management skills
- IT literate with specific experience of using MS Word, Excel, Powerpoint and PhotoShop

Desirable

- Knowledge of the Whitechapel Gallery
- Knowledge and understanding of the UK arts, tourism and leisure sectors
- Knowledge of social media platforms
- Previous experience of using Gorkana, Mailchimp and Wordpress

Conditions of Work

- Permanent contract: 5 days per week
- Hours of work: 9.30am – 5.45pm, Monday to Friday, plus some occasional weekend and evening work, which will be compensated by time off in lieu
- Salary: £21,500 per annum
- The period of notice is 2 months in writing on either side, 2 weeks during probation period
- Probation period: 6 months

In addition, the benefits you are eligible to receive are, subject to availability:

- 25 days annual holiday (pro rata for part-time staff)
- Option of 5% of your gross salary provided as employers' pension contribution
- Discount from the Gallery bookshop
- Discount from the Whitechapel Café/Bar
- Discounts on editions (one per edition) and publications
- Training opportunities
- Annual research/travel grant of £200 (pro rata equivalent for part time staff)
- Option to participate in the Childcare Voucher scheme.