

Commercial Events Officer

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 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 and accountability

The Commercial Events Officer works within Whitechapel Gallery Ventures Limited, the trading subsidiary company through which commercial income for the Whitechapel Gallery is channelled. The post holder's main responsibilities are securing and managing all commercial venue hire across the Gallery's available spaces to meet a set income target and deliver an excellent standard of client service.

The Commercial Events Officer is line managed by the Director of Commercial Enterprises.

Job description

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Duties and responsibilities:

Sales, marketing & income generation

- Be responsible for securing and delivering venue hire events to achieve or exceed income targets in line with the Ventures Business Plan
- Act as the main point of contact for incoming hires, from enquiry to delivery
- Maximise the number of clients attending site visits, talking through what the Gallery can offer, in liaison with catering and other external suppliers
- Increase the value of each hire by proactively seeking to upsell occupancy, equipment and catering from the preferred suppliers list
- Proactively contact potential clients and convert into sales, if spaces are available and unused
- Capitalise on the potential for revenue generation that the Gallery's exhibitions programme will provide
- Occasionally help coordinate internal commercial events such as professional development courses
- Explore potential of regular venue hires to ensure a fixed income stream
- Regularly report to the Director of Commercial Enterprises on sales and approaches made to prospective clients
- Ensure all marketing resources including Whitechapel Gallery website, brochures, social media and listings on external events websites are up to date and utilised efficiently
- Liaise with the Communications Department on generating marketing material including e-bulletins and print collateral when needed

Service & client care

- Develop and maintain excellent working relationships with existing and potential clients, providing a first-class service and professional experience for the customer, encouraging repeat business
- Efficiently manage customer feedback, promptly addressing and resolving any issues in conjunction with the Director of Commercial Enterprises
- Engage in external networking and supporter engagement activities, to maximise income opportunities
- Represent the Gallery at industry conferences, networking events and associations with a view to increasing the Gallery's reputation as a venue and cultivate new potential clients
- Maintain a best in class approved external suppliers list and regularly audit our offer in comparison to competitors

Management of internal and external resources and relationships

- Develop and maintain excellent, progressive relationships and open communication with colleagues at all times

- Plan the use of resources including furniture, audio visual and IT, cleaning, catering and other supplies to ensure all events can be delivered to the agreed standard and budget
- Collaboratively liaise with other departments, e.g. Exhibitions, Development, Education, Operations and on-site caterer to successfully deliver events
- Ensure high-quality, detailed pre-event briefings are carried out to improve colleagues' knowledge and service quality
- Ensure efficient management of any supporting event staff, such as Gallery Assistants, Tours Guides, Event Liaisons, Technicians, through clear briefings and on-site support

Event delivery

- Oversee all events in their entirety, from planning to completion and post-event engagement
- Prepare event contracts for clients and ensure all event specifications are compliant with the Gallery's ethos and terms and conditions
- Deliver all events in line with the Whitechapel Gallery's terms and conditions, to ensure any guidelines for events are maintained, ensuring these are communicated and adhered to both across the Gallery and externally
- Ensure all finance requirements and invoices are completed as necessary, as well as any other paperwork as required for the event

Administrative responsibilities

- Ensure all paperwork including clients contracts and internal booking forms is filled in and supplied on time
- Ensure clients are invoiced accurately and promptly
- Ensure all income and expenditure is recorded promptly and accurately
- Ensure all prospects, clients and supplier contacts are recorded and managed
- Develop and maintain systems for engaging with clients, suppliers and peers, to maximise income generation
- Ensure our offer is competitive and in line with comparable venues
- Ensure our contractual paperwork is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current health and safety restrictions on event delivery
- Oversee the Hire inbox

Other

- Carrying out any other duties as deemed appropriate by the Director of Commercial Enterprises

Person specification

Essential criteria

- Experience of selling, organising and delivering events in a similar sector, field or venue
- Highly motivated and target driven individual, comfortable working towards set financial targets
- Collaborative approach and excellent communication skills, both written and verbal
- Excellent project and time management skills
- Excellent customer care with the drive to exceed expectations, ensuring service to highest standards
- Highly organised, with a methodical approach and attention to detail
- Experience of managing budgets and closely monitoring targets
- Commitment to the Whitechapel Gallery's values

Desirable criteria

- Understanding of the challenges and opportunities of selling an artistic and / or historic venue as a commercial space
- Experience in working with a different range of suppliers and contractors

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

The Whitechapel Gallery is undertaking a major policy review to address systemic discrimination; and considering what part we can play in reforming the arts sector overall. We are auditing our programmes, our staff and our audiences to assess successes and failures and bring about reform and innovation. Our Action Plan is guided by staff, but also draws on the experience of external organisations dedicated to combating racial injustice and social inequality. We want our workforce to represent all sections of the community and expect all our workers to have a strong commitment to work with the Gallery in creating an equal, diverse and inclusive workplace. Our ambition is to reflect society and to create a diverse, inclusive and welcoming environment for all to experience art.

Conditions of work

- 0.8 FT contract, one-year fixed term with the possibility of renewal
- Hours of work: 9.30am – 5.45pm, Monday to Friday, plus some early morning, evening and weekend work, as necessary to meet the needs of the business, which will be compensated by time off in lieu.
- Salary: £19,600 pro rata, actual salary £24,500 per annum
- The period of notice is 2 months in writing on either side
- 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 4% of your gross salary provided as employers' pension contribution.
- Discount from the Gallery bookshop (subject to availability).
- Discount from the Townsend Restaurant (subject to availability).
- Discounts on editions (one per edition, subject to availability) and publications (subject to availability).
- Cycle to Work Scheme
- Annual research/travel grant.
- Training opportunities.
- Access to Employee Assistance Programme – 24/7 telephone and online resources.