

Operations Assistant

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.

Role

To assist the Operations department in the operation, maintenance, technical support, resourcing, cleanliness, security and safety of the Whitechapel Gallery and its many functions, with a particular focus on maintenance and facilities.

Accountability

The Operations Assistant is part of the Operations team and is managed by the Operations Manager and Technical Production Manager.

Job description

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Duties & Responsibilities

Building Maintenance

- Maintain and carry out daily and other scheduled checklists of works to the presentation and upkeep of the Gallery building including painting, repairs and janitorial duties in adherence to conservation guidelines
- Maintain operations stores, manage stock of equipment, and order consumables.
- Identify and carry out electrical, mechanical and plumbing maintenance where appropriate, and co-ordinate and supervise all specialist contractors on site.
- Communicate and liaise with Gallery stakeholders regarding building works, maintenance and other projects.
- Liaise with, supervise and co-ordinate contractors and maintenance operatives on site to ensure their tasks are carried out as instructed and in line with Gallery protocols.
- Monitor maintenance inbox and requests. Prioritise and carry out remedial works as appropriate directing tasks to other team members via maintenance task lists.
- Instigate building surveys and undertake works to improve physical presentation of the building.
- Carry out preventative maintenance and clearing of gutters, gullies and drains.

Technical Support

- Assist with technical set up events including projectors, speakers and microphones
- Liaise with external IT company to provide onsite IT support to staff
- Communicating with and assisting freelance AV technicians on event delivery
- Testing slides, video and audio materials ahead of events
- Assisting with wider Gallery technical support including private hires, exhibitions, events and festivals
- Maintenance and testing of AV and IT equipment
- Willingness to develop AV technical skills to support the Galleries event program

Facilities & Resource Management

- Maintain awareness of activities and programme in relation to the planning of building works and other building activities.

- Provide support to the Exhibitions technical team throughout the installation and upkeep of exhibitions.
- Administer event booking forms, resource requirements and the room booking diary.
- Monitor the cleanliness of meeting rooms, security, safe storage and set up of event room furniture and equipment.
- Ensure familiarity with the Building Management System and the monitoring of environmental conditions liaising with Exhibitions department as appropriate.
- Action requests and tasks such as the moving of stock and deliveries, collecting editions, and assisting where necessary.
- Monitor the effectiveness of waste disposal contracts and dispose of gallery waste according to relevant protocols.

Health & Safety

- Jointly responsible for the monitoring and upkeep of the fire alarm system.
- Undertake role as a Fire Marshall during evacuations, and perform evacuation duties where requested.
- Maintain an awareness of risk assessment and first aid procedures, and ensuring public, contractor and staff safety.
- Responsible for ensuring plant access, safety and security, and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) throughout the Gallery.
- Adhere to Gallery Health & safety protocols and assist in the provision of a safe working environment for staff, public and contractors.

Security

- Undertake duties as a keyholder for the Gallery, locking and unlocking on a flexible rota basis and covering additional shifts where required. This will include early morning shifts and acceptance of a flexible working pattern and will also include covering out of hours, bank holidays and festive periods as required.
- Undertake shifts as a Duty Manager as and when required.
- Respond to emergency callout requests remotely, and liaise with building monitoring contractors where necessary.
- Assist with the maintenance and operation of intruder alarm, key management systems, CCTV and access control systems.
- Maintain a general awareness of security throughout the Gallery.
- Liaise with the emergency services and local authority in the reporting of security incidents.

Sustainability

- Uphold the Gallery's Environmental Policy and maintain an awareness of sustainability issues, particularly in relation to the efficient running of buildings and utilisation of resources.
- Look to reduce energy consumption through heating and lighting management and efficient office behavior.
- Supervise the proper use of the gallery's waste and recycling facilities, train assist users on waste protocols and maintain the waste disposal area.

Other

- Any other duties deemed fit by the Operations Manager or the Technical Production Manager.
- Participate in shared administrative duties such as hosting meetings, administering building and supplier records and providing technical guidance to staff across all sectors of the gallery.
- Represent Whitechapel Gallery at public events, meetings and networking on behalf of the organisation.

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.

Person Specification

Essential

- Experience of working within a public building

- Experience of keeping a place of work tidy and well organised to a high standard
- A keen eye for detail with regards to physical and aesthetic presentation of a building
- Strong organisational, communication and administrative skills
- A basic understanding and willingness to learn the operation and deployment of Audio Visual and IT equipment and systems
- Problem solving skills and an ability to follow instruction
- The ability to act with tact and diplomacy with individuals from a variety of situations and backgrounds
- A strong work ethic and ability to work in a proactive, organised and methodical fashion
- Experience of using Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and e-mail to intermediate office standards
- Practical awareness of health and safety issues

Desirable

- Experience in any of the following practical tasks: painting, carpentry or housekeeping
- Experience with AV equipment in any of the following areas: live performance, film projection, lighting, live streaming or audio recording
- Experience with IT in any of the following areas: installation, troubleshooting, maintenance or audio and video editing
- Interest in contemporary and visual art as well as education, arts and community programmes
- Previous gallery or museum work
- Previous experience in a public facing role
- Knowledge of First Aid

Conditions of Work

- Full time permanent position with flexible working hours depending on current workloads and keyholding rota. This position will include some work at evenings and weekends.
- Starting salary: £22,000 gross per annum
- Core hours are Monday to Friday 09.30 to 17.45 or equivalent hours on a flexible basis according to rota requirements. This includes 07:30 starts and 22:30 finish times, plus occasional weekend work which will be compensated with time off in lieu
- 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:

- 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.