

Application Pack for
Curatorial Assistant

Deadline: 10:00am on Tuesday, 13 February 2024



Whitechapel Gallery

Whitechapel Gallery was founded in 1901 with the aim to bring great art to the people of East London. From the outset, the Gallery pushed forward a bold programme of exhibitions and educational activities, driven by the desire to enrich the cultural offer for local communities and provide new opportunities for ground-breaking artists from across the globe, to showcase their works to UK audiences, often for the first time.

From ground-breaking solo shows to thought-provoking exhibitions, the Gallery's focus on bringing artists, ideas, and audiences together, remains as important today as it did over a century ago, as does its commitment to its local communities.

We are proud to be a cultural institution that is locally embedded and globally connected, cementing the East End, as one of the world's most exciting and diverse cultural quarters. We recognise the critical role that art can play in firing up our imaginations, reflecting our lived experiences and opening up new possibilities for thinking, feeling and dreaming.



Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

The Whitechapel Gallery will occupy a distinctive and radically different position in the social and cultural landscape. We will build on our pioneering history as a place for contemporary art and ideas, translating and animating it for our time.

Our Mission

The Whitechapel Gallery is a ground-breaking art institution that has existed for over 100 years. We make contemporary art and ideas accessible to local and global audiences in the East End of London, recognising the critical role that art can play in firing up our imaginations, reflecting our lived experiences and opening up new possibilities for thinking, feeling and dreaming.

Our Values

- We are proud to be a cultural institution that is **locally embedded and globally connected**. Whitechapel is a gallery and a geographical location, located accessibly on the high street (with a tube station in our basement!)
- We want our building to be a **soulful and intimate destination** for local, national and international visitors: a social and civic space that is free and open to all.
- **Education** sits at the heart of the Whitechapel Gallery. Our programme emphasises close collaboration with local families, schools and communities, which we value as key stakeholders in our organisation.
- We take risks in programming lesser-known and neglected artists and in **making challenging artworks and ideas accessible** to all our audiences, putting artists and ideas at the centre of everything we do.
- We focus proudly on the work of **women artists and artists of colour**, championing their contribution to contemporary art and society and forging connections with new audiences, partners and participants in the Gallery's programmes.
- We are committed to making the Whitechapel Gallery **a permeable cultural institution that spills beyond its gallery walls**, actively seeking partnerships beyond the Gallery, and creating opportunities for artists and audiences to shape and influence what we do.
- We are unafraid to have **a social and political agenda**, working with artists and ideas that address the key issues and concerns of our times.
- We are dedicated to safeguarding the long-term future of the Whitechapel Gallery by building its cultural, social and political capital and ensuring its **sustainability – artistically, environmentally and economically**.

Curatorial Assistant

Contract:	Fixed-term (16 months), Full-time
Hours of work:	Full-time, 36.25 hours per week. Monday to Friday 9:30am-5:45pm, with one hour for lunch. Due to the nature of the job, some early morning, evening and weekend work will be required, as well as occasional travel. This will be compensated by time off in lieu.
Salary:	£26,000 per annum
Probationary period:	6 months
Notice period:	1 month

Role

The Curatorial Assistant at Whitechapel Gallery will play a key role in supporting the delivery of our exhibitions, helping to achieve our mission to put artists and audiences at the heart of everything we do. This role offers career development opportunities and aims to attract people from diverse backgrounds into the arts sector.

Accountability

The Curatorial Assistant is part of the Exhibitions Team and is managed by the Curator.

If you are passionate about the role, we encourage you to apply even if you don't fulfil all the job specifications. We are open to accommodate the strengths and development areas of the postholder.

About you

Essential qualities include:

- A relevant degree in Art History or Curating, or relevant equivalent education and experience.
- A firm commitment to and interest in contemporary art, especially in diversifying perspectives of art history.
- Experience of arts administration in a public gallery or museum, or other relevant organization.
- Experience in maintaining and managing budgets.
- Excellent administrative skills and attention to detail.
- Flexibility and ability to manage competing priorities and deadlines.
- Proficiency in word processing, internet, email, and spreadsheet applications.
- Initiative, independence in problem-solving, and a collaborative approach to working.
- Strong research, writing, and presentation skills, with clear expression tailored to different audiences.
- Good negotiation skills and the ability to handle sensitive situations with diplomacy.
- Commitment to diversity, inclusivity, and respect for all colleagues and visitors.

Qualities that are desirable for this role are:

- Familiarity with exhibition or collection management software.
- Experience in loan administration, shipping, insurance and customs.
- Experience in editing and print production.
- A relevant postgraduate qualification.
- Experience with the care, handling and installation of artworks, including condition reporting and packing procedures.

Duties and Responsibilities

Support the Director, Head of Exhibitions and Curators:

General

- Assist in coordinating, developing, and delivering exhibitions and commissions, including temporary exhibitions and special projects.
- Assist in monitoring and maintaining budgets for specific exhibitions and projects. This includes obtaining estimates, raising purchase orders, processing invoices, maintaining digital and physical budget files and liaising with the Finance Department and budget holders.
- Liaise with artists and their representatives, arts institutions and funders.
- Liaise with all Whitechapel Gallery departments, including Communications, Education, Development, Operations/Visitor Services, HR, Finance and Ventures, to secure a smooth flow of information.
- Actively seek to implement health and safety and equal opportunity policies.
- Develop and maintain a network among artists, galleries, and collectors.

Registrar

- Research loans and liaise with the Curators, Head of Exhibitions and Gallery Technical Manager to prepare loan documentation, administer loan requests and ensure loan conditions are fulfilled.
- Compile condition and packing reports, keep records of movement and conditions of works, and liaise with conservators and couriers when necessary.
- Organise exhibition-related transport, which includes updating shipping lists, obtaining estimates of costs, liaising with shippers and monitoring customs documentation.
- Coordinate the insurance of works of art either commercially or through the Museums and Galleries Government Indemnity Scheme.
- Oversee the administration and transport arrangements for specific exhibitions on tour and act as a courier for touring exhibitions when necessary.
- Draft, seek approval for and issue contracts to partner organisations, artists, curators and authors in consultation with the Department.
- Manage project documentation electronically and in paper files and archive past exhibition files.

Exhibitions organisation and administration

- Work with members of the Exhibition and Education Departments, artists, and external curators to research, organise and deliver high-quality, compelling and distinctive exhibitions.
- Conduct research, including gathering materials from studio visits, primary sources and literature.
- Assist with the exhibition-making process by maintaining checklists, inputting information on databases, minute-taking, and aiding in design and layout decisions.
- Assist the Gallery Technical Manager in sourcing and liaising with suppliers and subcontractors.
- Collate and copy-editing texts; researching, requesting, storing and returning images and obtaining copyright permissions for use in publications and communication materials.
- Assist in the production of catalogues and limited editions.
- Compile information for labels and text panels, writing interpretative material for the season guide, website and exhibition where applicable.
- Provide administrative support: handling enquiries, organising travel, and filing.
- Compile and send invitations for exhibition guest lists in liaison with colleagues in the Development and Communications Departments.
- Manage exhibition contacts on the database and private view/ dinner pro formas.
- Deal with routine enquiries, maintain databases (such as Raiser's Edge, Excel and Artlogic) and process responses to exhibition proposals with other members of the exhibitions team.
- Assist with private views and other Whitechapel Gallery events.

Other

- Lead tours of the Gallery and its exhibitions when required.
- Represent Whitechapel Gallery at public events and meetings.
- Keep up to date with professional best practices.

Benefits

Annual Leave

Staff are entitled to 25 days' paid holiday, plus statutory bank holidays, or the pro-rata equivalent if you work part-time. Annual leave entitlement is increased every 3 years by an additional day, capped at 5 days.

Pension Scheme

All staff are eligible to participate in the group personal pension scheme, with the Gallery contributing 5% of your gross annual salary.

Employee Assistance Programme

All staff have access to our Employee Assistance Programme, which includes a 24/7 compassionate helpline, expert advice and up to six free counselling sessions.

Training Opportunities and Travel Grant

We offer a range of training opportunities and learning programmes, including apprenticeships.

To support your development and encourage exchange with peers, all permanent staff are eligible for a £200 annual travel grant (pro-rata).

Discounts

Staff receive discount from the Gallery bookshop and from the Townsend Restaurant, both subject to availability. Staff receive discounts on editions (one per edition) and publications (subject to availability). Staff are entitled to a 75% discount on Gallery 2 hire (the hire fee element only) and 50% on all other spaces, both subject to availability.

Cycle to Work Scheme

For the benefit of both you and the environment, you can loan a bike through a Cycle to Work scheme.

Exhibitions

For each exhibition at Whitechapel Gallery, staff are invited to a guided tour by a curator.

Most major museums and galleries in London, and some beyond, grant free entry to exhibitions on presentation of your staff card.

Events

Staff can request one complimentary ticket for their own use for each public event at the Gallery, subject to availability.



How to apply

- Please return the application form in PDF format to recruitment@whitechapelgallery.org
- In the email's subject line, type your full name followed by the job title.

We would be grateful if you would fill in and return the Diversity Monitoring form with your application. When the application is received, the Diversity Monitoring form is removed and does not form part of your application. The information from these forms helps us monitor our recruitment campaign's effectiveness.

Unfortunately, due to the volume of applicants for advertised positions, we cannot contact unsuccessful candidates or give feedback on application forms.

If you are still waiting for a response from us by the advertised interview date, please assume that your application has been unsuccessful.

Access for people with disabilities

Please contact the Recruitment Team at 020 7539 3320 or via recruitment@whitechapelgallery.org if you cannot complete this form electronically or would like further access information.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

We want our workforce to represent all sections of the community and expect all our workers to firmly commit to working with the Gallery to create 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.