

Head of Exhibitions

Application pack

Closing date: Midday on Tuesday 14 May 2024

Interviews: Tuesday 21 May 2024



Zineb Sedira: *Dreams Have No Titles* at Whitechapel Gallery, London 2024



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Sculpting Conversations at Whitechapel Gallery, London 2023



Life if More Important than Art at Whitechapel Gallery, London 2023



Somali Museum: Any-Space-Whatever at Whitechapel Gallery, London 2023



Andrew Pierre Hart: *Bio-Data Flows and Other Rhythms – A Local Story* at Whitechapel Gallery, London 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**.

Head of Exhibitions

- Contract:** Permanent
- 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:** £40,000- £50,000 per annum, depending on relevant experience.
- Probationary period:** 6 months
- Notice period:** 3 months

The role

Working closely with the Director, Gilane Tawadros, the Head of Exhibitions is part of the senior management team, ensuring that artists and audiences are at the heart of everything we do. The successful candidate will be a dynamic, engaged and knowledgeable leader with extensive experience of curating, exhibition-making and delivery. You will lead on the strategic, organisational and everyday management of the Exhibitions team and will relish the opportunity of working collaboratively with artists, external curators and partners, nationally and internationally as well as with colleagues across Whitechapel Gallery.

You will be passionate about delivering the Whitechapel Gallery's mission to 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 lived experiences and opening up new possibilities for thinking, feeling and dreaming.

You will have extensive knowledge and proven experience as a curator, researcher and manager; be committed to making the Whitechapel Gallery a diverse, permeable and accessible organisation; and be attuned to contemporary debates and discourses around artistic practice and the role that art institutions can play in wider society. You will also have significant experience working in art museums or galleries, leading diverse teams and taking responsibility for managing budgets and project delivery.

You will be a member of the senior leadership team and contribute to the leadership and management of Whitechapel Gallery with a focus on the exhibitions programme and the cultivation of collaborative partnerships, locally, nationally and internationally.

Line Management

The Head of Exhibitions has responsibility for the line management of the Exhibitions team.

Accountability

The Head of Exhibitions reports to the Director.

Person specification

Essential qualities include:

- At least five years' relevant experience of curating and managing contemporary art exhibitions within galleries or museums.
- Extensive experience of working with artists on exhibitions and commissions.
- A postgraduate qualification or equivalent (MA or PhD) in History of Art, Museum Studies or other relevant subject.
- An extensive knowledge of visual cultures and their international context.
- Commitment to engaging existing and developing new diverse audiences locally and globally.
- A working knowledge of current and emerging discourses in the museum/culture sector.
- Excellent writing and presentation skills, with the ability to write for, and speak to, a wide variety of audiences and stakeholders, including funders.
- Experience of leading a professional gallery or museum team, including business planning, budgeting, all aspects of staff management and development.
- Substantial experience of exhibition planning, access and accessibility, and delivery.
- Ability to work as part of a team and independently, remaining calm under pressure.
- Excellent understanding of the UK and international art world.
- Demonstrable ability to represent Whitechapel Gallery in professional contexts, nationally and internationally.
- Good negotiation skills and the ability to handle sensitive situations with diplomacy.
- Ability to embody, across all work areas, the values of Whitechapel Gallery as set out in the gallery's vision and strategic plan.

Qualities that are desirable for this role are:

- An understanding of and commitment to the unique history and legacy of Whitechapel Gallery.
- An understanding of the communities, constituencies and networks of which we are part or in which we are located.
- A desire to build better and stronger relationships with those communities, constituencies and networks with whom we co-exist.

Whilst the above person specification offers a useful guide to the experience level expected, we welcome – and encourage - applications from anyone who feels they could bring alternative, equally beneficial skills, experience and perspective to the role.

Key Responsibilities

- Work closely with the Director and other senior managers to deliver the strategic aims and objectives of Whitechapel Gallery.
- Assist the Director in implementing strategic objectives through the formulation of operational plans and accompanying budgets, and carrying forward organisational priorities.
- Assist the Director in the development of the exhibitions programme and partnerships with local, national and international partners.
- Assume the role of project manager during the design and construction of exhibitions at the Gallery.
- Work closely with the Director of Development, assist with or lead on the preparation of funding applications and proposals to trusts and foundations and other funders, relating to exhibitions and be confident speaking about the Gallery and presenting its programmes to funders.
- Work closely with the Director of Education and Public Programmes to ensure that programming across the Gallery is integrated and consistent.
- Lead and co-ordinate the development and delivery of the artistic programme, operational plans and budgets for the exhibitions department.
- Lead the planning, budgeting and delivery of all exhibitions at Whitechapel Gallery, in collaboration with colleagues.
- Line manage and develop the Exhibitions team, including performance management and preparation of individual and departmental objectives.
- Work with the Deputy Director to oversee exhibition-related publications, including advising on content and commercial viability.
- Work closely with the Deputy Director and Head of Operations and Visitor Services to ensure that exhibitions, spaces and artists' commissions are produced to the highest level of access and accessibility.
- Develop local, national and international collaborations and partnerships to support delivery of our goals.
- Deputise for the Director in representing the Gallery with press, patrons and donors and the international art world.
- Any other reasonable duties as requested by the Director and Deputy Director.

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.

If you would like to have an informal discussion regarding the role, please email director@whitechapelgallery.org

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. We accept video applications and audio applications. We are committed to offering an interview to disabled candidates who meet the minimum criteria for the job. By 'minimum criteria' we mean that the individual must provide us with evidence in their application form, which demonstrates that they meet the qualifications, skills or experience defined as desirable in the Person Specification.

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.

