

Visitor and Friends Experience Manager
Public Engagement Department
Up to £28,000, plus attractive benefits

About the Royal Academy of Arts

The Royal Academy of Arts is undertaking the most radical redevelopment of its central London site in its 247-year history. In 2018 (our 250th Anniversary) we will open a revitalised campus uniting Burlington House on Piccadilly with Burlington Gardens. This will include a new suite of galleries, our first dedicated Learning studio and a 250-seat auditorium. An enhanced public programme of exhibitions and debate will build on our already world class reputation for promoting the practice, understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts.

Visitor and Friends Experience at the Royal Academy of Arts

As an independent institution, our success relies heavily upon attracting and welcoming large numbers of visitors, in particular the 95,000 Friends of the Royal Academy, and ensuring that they experience the highest standards of customer service.

About this role

The newly-created post of Visitor and Friends Experience Manager will play a pivotal role in the implementation of the Visitor and Friends Experience strategy, leading the transformation of our visitor experience and the evolution of our key customer-facing teams. We have ambitions to be an award-winning venue for customer service and exceptional visitor experience.

You will work alongside all the front of house teams, ensuring optimum communication and that operational standards are high. Proactive and outgoing, most of your time will be spent front-of-house, coaching several visitor-facing teams, so warmth, diplomacy, enthusiasm and clear communication are vital.

You will also oversee a small customer care call centre operation and will look to improve existing processes and behaviours, coaching the team in excellent telephone etiquette, introducing conversion, sales, and problem solving techniques.

You will find the work and interaction rewarding, whilst being part of a friendly and inspiring team responsible for one of the most popular and revered visitor attractions in London.

About you

You must have extensive experience of achieving and maintaining excellence in customer service, ideally at a leading visitor attraction, a luxury hotel (senior Concierge), or within the high-end retail and hospitality sectors. You will be adept at delivering appropriate training and feedback to front-of-house teams, modelling standards of behaviour, ensuring a customer-oriented ethos at all times, and maximising opportunities to convert visitors to members and to cross and up-sell retail and catering offers.

An excellent communicator, mentor, team player, salesperson and leader, you will be articulate and friendly; a quick thinker; able to inspire, influence and build a rapport with a diverse range of people. Well presented, you will set the tone in appearance at all times. An interest in the visual arts is preferred.

Well-honed IT skills together with database experience (preferably Raiser's Edge) are essential.

Apply

You must fill in an application form to apply for this role. Please see the 'How to apply' section of our website <http://www.royalacademy.org.uk/careers-at-the-ra>

Closing date for applications: 1 May 2015
Interviews to be held: w/c 18 May 2015

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job: Visitor and Friends Experience Manager

Department: Public Engagement

Reports to: Head of Visitor and Friends Experience

BACKGROUND

The Royal Academy of Arts (RA) has brought together several of its core front of house teams within the new Visitor and Friends Experience department. Our ambition is to deliver a world-class experience for our 1m+ visitors and Friends of the RA to match the world-class facilities provided by the site redevelopment we will be completing in 2018.

Complementing the work of the wider Public Engagement department, the Visitor & Friends Experience team will ensure that the key customer touch-points during their visit and via telephone delight customers as well as 'getting the basics right', and maximise every opportunity to enhance visitor engagement, loyalty and sales.

MAIN OBJECTIVE

The Visitor & Friends Experience Manager is key to the successful implementation of the Visitor & Friends Experience strategy.

MAIN DUTIES

- Proactive implementation of the Visitor Experience strategy on the ground
- Act as a supportive mentor to front of house colleagues, encouraging excellent service, but acting firmly when standards are not met; provide daily coaching and mentoring to reinforce the behaviours and values of the RA, and ongoing constructive feedback
- Work alongside each of the front of house teams conducting daily walk-rounds, ensuring communication is effective and that operational standards are high. This will involve liaising with your own team and with teams for whom you have no direct line management responsibility – diplomacy, enthusiasm and clear communication are vital.
- Oversee the RA call centre and be responsible for achieving improvements, both in terms of efficiency (how swiftly calls are answered and dealt with), and consistency of tone and manner
- Conduct daily briefings and to collate and forward operational and maintenance issues from colleagues on duty
- Champion enthusiastic engagement with visitors both to aid people's knowledge of the Royal Academy, and to facilitate effective upselling of visitors into Friends and cross-selling into retail and catering
- Act as the departmental lead – where appropriate and within agreed parameters of responsibility
- Provide support to the Head of Visitor & Friends Experience and the Ticket Office Manager

- Provide technical support for the Membership team and manage the team to use the Raiser's Edge database effectively and accurately, meeting the needs, resources and priorities of the business. Act as the Raiser's Edge departmental contact, highlighting training requirements and more effective ways of working.
- Act as an ambassador for Friends and Volunteers ensuring their needs are considered in the delivery of daily operations, and that the front of house team has the ability and confidence to deliver what is required of them.
- Collaborate with the Events and Learning departments to support non-exhibition activity including the 'Lates' programme, cinema screenings, Courses & Classes and Events & Lectures programmes
- Support the Health & Safety Manager in ensuring that Health and Safety policies, procedures and regulations are known, understood and complied with by you, the team and all others who work with the team.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

- Able to demonstrate a passion for Visitor Experience innovation with the practical skills and experience to lead a team on the ground
- At least 3 years' experience leading a customer service team; be it in the hospitality, luxury retail or leading visitor attraction venue industries or similar.
- Sophisticated sales experience, able to proactively up-sell and cross-sell Academy opportunities with positive outcomes
- Enthusiasm for and experience of working with the public and motivating and inspiring front of house teams to provide an excellent visitor experience in a busy, customer-focused environment.
- Existing and in-depth people management experience with previous exposure to managing group recruitment; sound practical experience of delivering training and on-the-job coaching
- Superior experience of the Raiser's Edge database preferred
- Practical knowledge and previous experience of managing a small and sophisticated call centre (up to 6 lines)
- Ability to relate to many different/diverse people
- Friendly, warm and welcoming; patient; tactful; a good listener and quick thinker
- Excellent communication skills and command of English (both written and oral)
- Computer literate with an 'eye for detail' and an excellent knowledge of Microsoft Office
- Ability and willingness to take a proactive approach, seeking out relevant information and suggesting different and improved ways of working
- A problem-solver and solution-orientated
- A committed team player and leader with strong interpersonal skills
- A demonstrable interest in the visual arts is desirable, along with an enthusiasm for the vision and values of the Royal Academy, although no art history knowledge or visual arts background is required.