

The University of Manchester

Job Description

Job title:	Exhibitions and Public Engagement with Research Assistant
Reports to:	Exhibitions and Public Engagement with Research Coordinator
Organisation unit:	University of Manchester Library: Curatorial Practices
Date:	January 2021
HERA:	MAPPS-UML-CP-R&L-B (262, Grade 3)

Overall purpose of the job:

- To assist the Exhibitions and Public Engagement with Research Manager and Coordinator in the design, creation, implementation and evaluation of innovative and inspiring exhibitions and public engagement with research programmes, which connect public audiences (in person and digitally) to the Library's world-class Special Collections and the research that takes place around them
- To assist the Exhibitions and Public Engagement with Research Manager and Coordinator in implementing robust evaluation methodologies and measures to demonstrate the impact of exhibitions and public engagement with research programmes
- To collaborate with the Curatorial Practices Visitor Services team to ensure an outstanding and audience-focussed visitor experience at the John Rylands Library

Key responsibilities:

- To contribute to an environment that values and celebrates the diverse nature of the University of Manchester's population and to take positive steps to achieve equality in the workplace and to both meet and exceed our obligations under equality legislation
- To assist the Exhibitions and Public Engagement with Research Manager and Coordinator in the development, implementation and evaluation of innovative and inspiring exhibitions and public engagement with research programmes (including digital), connecting diverse audiences with the Library's world-class Special Collections and the research that takes place around them, working closely with the John Rylands Research Institute (JRRI) and researchers at the University of Manchester
- To support the Exhibitions and Public Engagement with Research Manager in implementing robust evaluation methodologies and measures to demonstrate the impact of exhibitions and public engagement with research programmes, in support of the University's Research & Discovery and Social Responsibility goals, and in particular supporting the University's Research Excellence Framework (REF) submissions
- To take an audience-focussed approach to the delivery of the Library's exhibitions and public engagement with research programmes

- To support events, both online and on site at the Library, assisting with planning, promotion, ticketing, reception, and IT support, under the supervision of the Exhibitions and Public Engagement with Research Manager and Coordinator(s)
- To support the Curatorial Practices Services Manager and the Building Care and Visitor Services teams in delivering an outstanding and audience-focussed visitor experience at the John Rylands Library combining a holistic reception/welcome, retail offer, visitor engagement, exhibitions, displays, interactives and events
- To develop and maintain sufficient knowledge of the collections to understand their relevance to specific exhibitions and public engagement with research activities and to advise visitors and respond to enquiries
- To answer visitor enquiries in person, over the telephone or via the CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system
- To support the Visitor Services team by invigilating galleries, welcoming and serving visitors, handling cash, maintaining stock levels, performing stock checks and ensuring that the visual appearance of the shop is maintained to a high standard
- To follow the Library's financial procedures for cash and cashless transactions
- To work flexibly in order to accommodate audience needs, e.g. by delivering events and activities which can happen on evenings and weekends
- To ensure the health and safety of visitors through appropriate management of spaces and reporting or resolving of issues
- To participate in a 7-day rota to cover shifts (including evenings, weekends and Bank Holidays)
- To staff out of hours events when required
- To take an active approach to continuing professional development
- To be responsible for compliance with and the embedding of University policies, procedures and requirements - in particular those relating to health and safety; equality, diversity and inclusion; and information governance
- Such other duties as may reasonably be associated with the grade and a role of this nature
- To work at any Library site as required
- To be flexible in relation to hours of work as may be reasonably requested from time to time
- To ensure visibility for our customers you will be required to wear branded clothing provided by the Library
- To understand the specific context within which the role operates and how it relates to the wider University goals and business processes, in order to facilitate informed decision making
- To ensure the working environment reflects the University's and Library's values

Person Specification:

Essential knowledge, skills and experience:

- Educated to GCSE level A-C in Maths and English or equivalent
- Experience of working well within a team and ability to actively use own initiative
- Experience of delivering programming with confidence – events, tours and activities - to a set of required criteria (e.g. tone, content) for diverse audiences
- Ability to communicate effectively on the telephone, via email and in person
- Experience of delivering excellent customer service
 - Good listening skills
 - A warm, friendly and proactive approach to interactions
 - An ability to communicate well with people from many backgrounds

- A strong sense of personal responsibility in representing our standards of service
 - An ability to anticipate visitor needs and act upon that
- Experience of prioritising tasks and working without constant supervision in a position of trust
- Experience of detailed work – to follow processes and ensure accurate information is exchanged in a concise and balanced way
- Excellent digital literacy, especially social media, Microsoft Office packages, including Outlook, Excel, Word and PowerPoint, and online collaboration tools such as Zoom and Teams, with experience of working with digital systems to interact with customers and collect data
- Flexible attitude to work and adaptability to changing circumstances
- Ability to perform the physical tasks associated with the role
- Willingness to work at any University of Manchester Library
- Willingness to wear supplied Library branded clothing
- Willingness to train as a first aider
- A good record of personal and professional development and evidence of an active approach to CPD

Desirable skills, knowledge and experience:

- Understanding of good practice in public engagement with research practice and of the importance of outstanding impact case studies within the context of the Research Excellence Framework
- Experience of interpreting Special Collections materials for public audiences