



Volunteer Front of House Crew

Job Description

The Old Electric (TheOE) is the new home of The Electric Sunshine Project cic (TESP). Funded by Reaching Communities Lottery; it is the start of a collaborative connection between a range of organisations, independent creatives and participants; how it evolves between 2020-2023, determines how it will exist beyond then.

This document is written from the perspective of TESP, however, it is acknowledged that as the partnership develops, this may evolve to incorporate other ways of working.

TESP's core purpose is to ensure that arts and creativity is accessible for all Blackpool communities.

Mission Statement

The Electric Sunshine Project offers creative experiences; workshops, events, projects and shows, and a new meeting place for communities. We aim to reduce barriers for children, families and adults in the Blackpool and Fylde coast areas to connect with their own creativity. We encourage people to think, unlock their creativity and grow in confidence while having fun. With our profits being reinvested into the local community, we are the only socially engaged theatre who use the arts as a transformative process to positively change the town of Blackpool.

We define volunteers as; unpaid individuals who make a choice, freely, to use their time, experience, knowledge and skills in an organisation, doing something to benefit a group in a community.

As such, our volunteer team are at the very heart of this new venue.

We know that our volunteers benefit from being part of a friendly, dedicated and diverse team and have already gained in confidence, experience and social networks by being part of a new creative building at an exciting point in its development.

Alongside valuable experience to enhance your CV and job applications, we take an individualised approach to your personal and professional development and have created a credit system which enables you to use credits gained from your volunteering sessions against a variety of courses, activities, tickets and discounts in and outside of the building.

We are looking for people who can volunteer for at least one morning, afternoon or evening each week.

Our opening hours are: Monday - Sunday (including Bank Holidays) 08:00-23:00

Although this is managed according to the programming demands. There will be periods, particularly initially and while Covid-19 is still prevalent, when the venue will be “dark” (not open to the public).

A typical day will be divided into 3 shifts: 8am-1pm | 1pm-6pm | 6pm-11pm

The OE has the following spaces:

Ground Floor: the main entrance foyer to the building with a secure desk for meeting and greeting participants, audiences and visitors, from where we can take bookings and sell merchandise.

The Vault is a small woodshop, managed by Urban Organic.

The Sound Booth is a sound-proofed area for learning DJ-ing techniques and making recordings, managed by Think Forward.

First Floor (The Mezz): Incorporating an administrative area, a bookable meeting room, and a flexible workshop space incorporating a presentation gallery/puppet booth (capacity 50)

Second Floor: The Theatre; an amphitheatre-style auditorium with flexible seating/standing and staging possibilities which holds up to 200 people

Third Floor; Gallery: A cafe area housing up to 35 people, which services the rest of the building and is also useable as a space in its own right; includes a book exchange, vinyl-playing station, piano and other instruments plus a full cafe-style menu. The venue is not licensed for alcohol.

The building has lift access to all levels.

As a theatre, there are some areas that are necessarily dark, we would aim to work with all involved to ensure The OE is a fully inclusive and safe environment for all.

The role of a Front of House Volunteer is:

To be the first point of contact for all our visitors, providing a helpful, welcoming and friendly greeting, creating an hospitable and safe environment for all, answering general queries, supporting everyone's enjoyable visit and future return visits to The OE.

Our volunteer crews support the smooth-running of the foyer, the cafe, the auditorium and provide valuable support to projects and group-activities. Under the supervision of a Duty Manager, the Front of House crew are responsible for the smooth running of the shows and support in the case of health and safety incidents including fire or other kind of evacuation of the building.

As such the role will be varied and require you to be trained in fulfilling various positions and tasks within the building. As much as possible, personal preferences for duties will be taken into account, however we would love it if everyone was initially trained in all aspects of cover needed in the building.

Key Tasks will include:

- Providing a friendly greeting to all visitors on arrival, responding courteously and helpfully to general enquiries, informing visitors about current activities to help them plan their visit and thanking all for their visit as they leave
- Checking visitor booking details be this via ticket, list, app or other and assisting with audiences who would like to make new bookings
- Recognising and responding to the specific needs of all our visitors and providing support, as required, to those with disabilities and/or small children in particular
- Attending pre-session briefings with the Duty Manager
- Assisting with the evacuation of visitors in an emergency situation
- Working with the Duty Manager and other crew members to ensure the smooth running of all activities taking place within TheOE
- Ensuring that merchandise is well presented and secure, assisting with sales and stock control
- Maintaining levels of cleanliness so that all areas are tidy and presentable at all times
- Remaining vigilant to any potential Health & Safety risks or breeches in security
- Promptly reporting any maintenance issues
- Monitoring audience comfort and satisfaction; being vigilant to audience behaviour and physical issues that could potentially cause disruption, injury or affect other audiences and assisting any audience members who need to leave the auditorium during the performance and again when re-admitting them
- Keeping your OE uniform clean and presentable and visible at all times whilst on duty and agreeing to not visibly wear it when outside of the venue

This role would particularly suit anyone who:

- shows or is interested in developing self-confidence, an approachable demeanour and good communication skills
- is well-presented, has good time-keeping, is dependable and comfortable working as part of a team
- understands the need for and value of first class customer care
- has a positive approach to the role, the organisation and towards Blackpool as a place to live and visit and who can see the positive benefits of what TheOE is offering

No experience or qualifications are necessary as this is an excellent opportunity to gain new skills, professional and personal experiences and, in some cases, qualifications.

As a volunteer in this new and exciting venue, you will be required to be versatile and adapt to changing situations and whilst we recognise not everyone will come with this ability, we anticipate that a proactive stance to your own developmental needs will help to build the supportive and nurturing environment in which we can all thrive.

Volunteers will be given:

- An introductory welcome session which includes a tour of the building and a chance to ask any questions and to meet members of the existing team
- Full training in health & safety practice, all relevant policies and evacuation procedures
- An initial 3-month probationary period after which a notice period of 4-weeks on leaving the role will be required on both sides

Prior to commencing their Volunteer role, we will need two references from suitable persons (excluding relatives). Examples would include a landlord, ex-employer, former teacher, doctor and someone who has known the potential volunteer for over two years. The reference will attest to the potential volunteer's character and suitability for the role.

As part of our commitment to the rehabilitation of offenders, a disclosure of previously recorded criminal activity does not necessarily exempt you from a role. Anyone with previous criminal backgrounds will be invited to take part in a risk assessment interview to consider your individual relevant circumstances.

We are proud to be an Equal Opportunities organisation; we celebrate diversity and will not discriminate based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other characteristics protected by law.