

BACKGROUND

Somerset House is a spectacular neo-classical building in the heart of London, sitting between the Strand and the River Thames. The building you see today, built on the site of a Tudor royal palace, is one of London's architectural gems. It was designed by Sir William Chambers and constructed between 1775 and 1803 to accommodate government offices including the Navy Board and the learned societies.

Somerset House Trust was established in 1997 to maintain and conserve the historic site that extends across six acres, run a centre for culture and the arts and to open up the site for the enjoyment of the public. In 2000 the restored courtyard, South Wing and River Terrace opened to the public.

Since 2000 the Trust has established a distinctive public programme, with an ice rink in the winter and concerts and an open-air film season in the summer. Somerset House Trust presents an integrated public arts programme across the site in collaboration with The Courtauld Institute of Art, whose acclaimed collections are now complemented by a series of exhibitions on contemporary fashion, architecture and design in our Embankment Galleries which have included *Maison Martin Margiela '20' The Exhibition* and *Dior Illustrated: Rene Gruau and the line of Beauty*.

Additionally, Somerset House hosts the prestigious London Fashion Week in February and September each year, and from April 2011 we will host the World Photography Festival.

Somerset House is also home to a growing number of creative organisations including the British Fashion Council, The Courtauld Institute of Art, The Sorrell Foundation, The Clore Leadership Programme, The Royal Society of Literature, Sound and Music, Editorial Intelligence and a group of artists and writers in residence.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Visitor Services Gallery Supervisor

Somerset House runs a programme of temporary paying exhibitions and free displays. We are looking for a team of people available to work from 20 March to 4 April 2012. Hours are full and part-time and will include late nights and weekends. The post holder will work for the Visitor Communications and Public Displays Department. The Somerset House Trust Gallery Team is an excellent opportunity to work within the cultural sector for those who enjoy interacting with the public and ensuring their safety and visitor experience. And for those who want to be an excellent ambassador for Somerset House Trust.

KEY TASKS

- To be welcoming and attentive to ensure a high quality of visitor experience at Somerset House
- Supervising staff on a daily basis and ensuring the smooth running of the gallery including floats and tills balance; carry out change runs; end of day banking; ensure all positions are covered including breaks
- Ensure all important and relevant information is disseminated to the team on a daily basis
- Work closely with Visitor Services Co-ordinator to manage, improve and to ensure the smooth running of the exhibitions
- Produce daily information reports for the Visitor Communications and Public Displays department in order to raise issues and improvements where appropriate
- Train staff in all aspects of invigilation and admissions
- Work closely with the Exhibitions department and conservators to supervise and monitor the care of the objects on display
- Sell admission tickets and exhibition merchandise
- Ensure the gallery is invigilated to the highest possible standard
- Actively promote exhibitions and events taking place on site
- To be fully informed about Somerset House, it's history and current programme
- Carry out visitor research surveys
- To be a part of a team that will give a series of Gallery tours to the public (optional)
- Carry out other ad-hoc duties in line with the post which may be required

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL

- Experience of managing a team
- Previous experience of working in a customer service environment
- Ability to adapt to a variety of situations
- Must be proactive and have excellent problem solving skills
- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to deal with difficult situations and communicate difficult messages

- Knowledge of Excel and Word
- Experience of banking and balancing end of day takings
- Stock control
- Financial reporting
- Enjoy working as part of a team
- Have an interest in art and design and or photography
- Committed and focused approach to work
- Flexible in approach to work and hours
- Must be visitor focused as outlined in our team code of conduct

DESIRABLE

- Knowledge of Health and Safety and First Aid
- Knowledge of other languages

Job title: Supervisor

Department: Visitor Communications and Public Displays

Reporting to: Visitor Services and Gallery Co-ordinator

Initial Contract: Duration of confirmed exhibition

VISITOR SERVICES AIM:

“To help visitors to explore, enjoy and relax at Somerset House”

CORE STANDARDS:

- **Welcoming**
- **Proactive**
- **Knowledgeable**
- **Making a Difference**

OUR CORE STANDARDS EXPANDED:

Welcoming

- Acknowledge visitors positively (positive body language)
- Offer a greeting
- Sound friendly, interested and enthusiastic
- Present yourself professionally (appropriate to your role), displaying the SH badge

Proactive

- Be aware of visitors in the building who may require help or support
- Anticipate visitors' needs
- Approach visitors where appropriate
- Start conversations where appropriate
- Offer advice, suggestions and help

Knowledgeable

- Know the site and visitor facilities
- Know what's happening on a daily basis
- Familiarise yourself with the local area
- Know a brief history about Somerset House
- Know the onsite organisations, SHT departments and key staff
- Know the Frequently Asked Questions

Making A Difference

- Look out for opportunities to improve the visitor experience
- Remember the common courtesies – put the visitors first
- Go the extra mile where possible

Inappropriate Behaviour (to avoid in public areas)

- Eating, chewing, drinking
- Using personal mobile phones
- Shouting (unless a real emergency), swearing or losing your temper
- Smoking
- Expressing inappropriate personal comments

- Expressing negative personal opinions

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT

SITUATIONS:

Enforcing Our Rules and Regulations Positively

- Assess the situation
- Approach visitors calmly and politely
- Explain the reason why they should not be doing it
- If possible, point out an alternative
- Finish on a positive note

Complaint Handling

- Stay calm and don't take it personally
- Show empathy by listening carefully, not interrupting and apologising (not necessarily agreeing)
- Take responsibility for it (resolve it yourself or explain who you will contact, or call your manager or duty manager)
- If they want a formal response, direct them to the Comment Cards
- Finish on a positive note

FIRE EVACUATION SITE WIDE PROCEDURE

Somerset House has a fully automated voice announcement Fire Alarm system.

If Security Control is alerted by a detector or if a guard is alerted by an incident which may give rise to a fire, a coded message is activated:

“Would Mr Pennethorne please contact Security Control”

NB: This alerts the fire wardens to find their tabards, arm bands, radios and for staff to shut windows, collect their personal belongings and wait for further instructions.

If Security ascertain the alert is not due to smoke or heat they will deactivate the alarm:

“Mr Pennethorne is no longer required at Security Control”

NB: You may now return to your normal duties.

If fire or smoke is subsequently detected by Security, or if someone has smashed the alarmed break glass the coded message will be followed by an evacuation message:

“Your attention please, there has been an incident in the building, please leave immediately by the nearest available exit, do not use the lift”

You do not re-enter the building until you hear the following announcement:

“The fire alarm has been cleared you may now return to the building”

I CONFIRM I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE ABOVE:

NAME (PLEASE PRINT):

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CONTACT (ICE)

NAME:

CONTACT NUMBER:

RELATIONSHIP TO YOU: