

# FREELANCE TOUR GUIDE COMMISSION

**FREELANCE COMMISSION:** Guided tours of exhibition '24/7' for pre-booked corporate and learning groups

**FEES:** £250 one-off research and preparation fee, £100 per guided tour (max 1.5 hours per tour)

**RELATED EXHIBITION:** 24/7

(Embankment Galleries, Somerset House, 31 Oct 2019 – 23 Feb 2020)

**ISSUED BY:** Learning and Skills Department, Somerset House Trust

**ISSUE DATE:** September 2019

**APPLICATION DEADLINE:** 13 October 2019, 17.00



Image: Pierre Huyghe, Les Grandes Ensembles, 2001

## INTRODUCTION

This brief is for freelance tour guides to deliver guided tours of the exhibition 24/7, to pre-booked groups from corporate clients and learning contacts.

The intention of the tours is to animate and illustrate exhibits, using an informed and engaging approach. This ground-breaking and immersive exhibition will benefit from a friendly and informative tour which supports group visitors to engage in key themes and to make personal connections to the content through facilitated conversation and focus on notable exhibits.

Tours will be booked on a sessional basis and may be programmed as part of larger events such as corporate entertainment, drinks receptions or public 'late' events in the gallery which may also feature talks, film screenings or creative activities.

## EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

The exhibition 24/7 examines our inability to switch off from our 24/7 culture, through a series of immersive works from some of today's most exciting global artists.

Over 50 multi-disciplinary works have been brought together to explore the unrelenting pressure to produce and consume around the clock. The exhibition takes visitors on a 24-hour cycle from dawn to dusk through interactive installations and interrogations. It holds a mirror up to a society where

complex systems are exerting control, causing us to sleep less and disrupting our instincts to daydream and pay attention to the world around us, and each other. Some of the works playfully suggest solutions, inviting visitors to unplug and unwind, from Japanese artist Tatsuo Miyajima's meditative isolation chamber Life Palace (tea room) to Canadian artist Catherine Richards' Shroud/Chrysalis I, where visitors can opt to be completely shrouded in a copper blanket, blocking out any electro-magnetic signals from devices such as smartphones.

Inspired by the book *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep* by New York-based art critic and essayist Jonathan Crary (Verso, 2013), it is the first time that a major multi-disciplinary exhibition has been dedicated to creative responses to this modern malaise.

Curated by Somerset House and Sarah Cook, contributors include Marcus Coates, Mat Collishaw, Douglas Coupland, Harun Farocki, Susan Hiller, Rut Blees Luxemburg, Katie Paterson, Pilvi Takala, and ten artists and designers from Somerset House Studios, including Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard and Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg, some of whom have created new work especially for the exhibition.

This inability to switch off has become one of the most important issues of our time. Since 2010 we've added a full week (37 hours) to our working year, yet 200,000 working days are now lost annually due to insufficient sleep. Britain has become a nation of night owls, with almost half of the country (48%) regularly going to bed after 11pm. Living in the glow of blue light, people in the UK now check their smartphones, if averaged over 24 hours, every 12 minutes. These shocking statistics show how critical it is to understand better this pressing subject, which is increasingly considered a public health epidemic.

## **THE COMMISSION**

We seek to appoint a minimum of two freelance tour guides with a strong track record of presentation and communication skills in gallery or other public contexts, to deliver tours of the exhibition 24/7.

Tour guides will have relevant experience in design, art and/or technology to provide insight and context to the works on exhibit.

They will devise and deliver a memorable and engaging experience for groups, supporting group visitors to engage in the themes of the exhibition as outlined in the exhibition description above.

Tour guides will be required to attend a briefing with the curator and Learning team (can be done by phone/skype), a guided walk-through the exhibition on 31 October, and submit a draft tour plan for review by the Curator/Head of Learning.

They will be available to deliver tours during the daytime or evening with suitable notice. The fixed fee per session will apply, regardless of the timing of the tour.

Tour guides will provide opportunity for groups and group visitors to offer feedback on the exhibition and will communicate that feedback to the curator/head of learning after each tour.

The intention of tours is to:

1. Support corporate group visitors to engage with the exhibition 24/7 by highlighting key themes, trends, ideas and artists.
2. Add value to group visits by guiding them through the narrative of the exhibition, by selecting key works in each section that are either very significant, or that would benefit from an introduction/further explanation.
3. Highlight the work of Somerset House Studios artists by pointing out their work and briefly contextualising it in their wider practice.
4. Provide a warm welcome and support an exceptional visitor experience for groups visiting the exhibition.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

- The exhibition is immersive, and lighting has been designed to portray different phases of the 24-hour cycle.
- Bookings are anticipated from corporate groups who wish to provide a social and informative experience for employees. There will be a need to balance information and insight with a light-hearted and interactive approach.
- Freelance tour guides will be required to work autonomously and collaboratively with gallery and event staff, and to represent Somerset House with the highest standards of visitor experience.
- We anticipate that each tour guide will bring their own expertise and knowledge base, and that they should make use of this to provide a unique and personal experience for visiting groups.
- Through the exhibition run, opportunities to deliver tours to the public and to learning groups may arise, for which similar terms and conditions will be offered.
- Freelance tour guides will be expected to be available for work during the day and during evenings. Two weeks' notice will be given to freelancers for tour bookings where possible.
- Freelance tour guides will be expected to be flexible by making reasonable adaptations their tour to meet the needs of the group (e.g. adapting the length/depth of tours to respond to audience interest).
- tour guides will be expected to provide a means of the visitors offering their feedback and responses to the exhibition both formally (feedback forms) and informally (conversations) and to share these with the learning team/curator.

## **FURTHER READING**

Book: *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep* - Jonathan Crary, Verso, 2017

Press release: 24/7 exhibition Press release: <https://www.somerset-house.org.uk/press/247>

Public What's On info: <https://www.somerset-house.org.uk/whats-on/247>

Information about Somerset House Studios:

<https://www.somerset-house.org.uk/somerset-house-studios>

## **TIMELINE**

13 October, 17.00	Deadline for applications
21 & 24 October	Interviews
31 October	Research visit to exhibition & Induction meetings with curator and Learning /Corporate events team
07 November	draft tour script submitted
11 November	Walk through tours and final sign off
18 Nov – 23 Feb	Sessional tours to be delivered. Minimum of 2 bookings per person.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

Freelancers are required to obtain and maintain in force personal Public Liability Insurance and may be asked to complete a DBS or other security checks. The individual will be personally liable for their own tax deductions and national insurance contributions and providing their own material, tools and equipment to enable them to provide the services. The freelancer should assign all intellectual property for the commission to Somerset House.

## **TO APPLY**

We require an up to date CV and a covering letter illustrating why you believe you have the correct experience for this role. Please go to [CLICK HERE](#) to apply.

Closing date for applications: Sunday 13 October, 17.00

Interviews will be held on Monday 21 and Thursday 24 October.