

CHISWICK HOUSE & GARDENS TRUST

CHGT Visitor Experience Assistant (Seasonal)

Job Reference	VEA24
Responsible to:	Visitor Experience and Retail Manager
Working with:	Duty Manager, Visitor Experience Assistants, Volunteers, Events Team
Contract:	Casual, until 27 th October.
Salary:	£13.15 per hour (London Living Wage) / £14.65 after 6pm

Role Summary

Our Visitor Experience Assistants are the face of Chiswick House and Gardens Trust (CHGT). They will create a welcoming and safe environment for visitors, delivering admissions, membership, retail, events, and visitor experience to an exceptional standard. Working across Chiswick House and the Kitchen Garden, you will work alongside colleagues and volunteers to bring our site to life for everyone, every day.

The Organisation

Chiswick House and Gardens Trust (CHGT) cares for 65-acre Grade-I registered gardens, a 2-acre Kitchen Garden and 1,800 trees, surrounding a 300-year-old Grade-I listed historic house, in the London Borough of Hounslow in the heart of west London. Our gardens are free to visit and open every day, welcoming more than 825,000 visitors annually and playing a vital role in our community.

As a charity, every year we need to raise 75% of our running costs to keep our gates open free of charge 365 days a year, to maintain and conserve our gardens and provide our learning, community, and volunteer programme. The income from our live events provides an essential and vital contribution to these costs. Our live events also bring together our local communities, stimulate the local economy through increased footfall, support local business and job creation.

What you'll be doing

Visitor Experience

- Proactively welcome and engage all visitors to Chiswick House & Gardens. Provide a warm welcome which makes a lasting positive impression, representing CHGT to the highest standard.
- Engage and support visitors with activities and opportunities across the site, for example joining a guided tour, or sampling produce in the Kitchen Garden.
- Drive the commercial activity of CHGT by selling tickets, membership, and retail products to visitors, creating a seamless transaction in all areas, contributing to meeting commercial targets.
- Work with colleagues from other areas of the organisation (particularly volunteers, the Gardens team, and the Events team) to support the effective promotion and smooth running of events, public programmes, and other activities.
- Maintain knowledge of the stories of Chiswick House & Gardens, to offer information about the site and collection, answer questions, and make sure each visitor has an enjoyable and memorable visit.

Ticketing and Retail

- Ensure that all Visitor Welcome and Sales areas are presented to the highest standard.
- Operate ticketing & retail systems competently and confidently, handling card payments and processing pre-booked tickets.
- Understand and play an active role in meeting and exceeding commercial targets, including any fundraising campaigns, donations, and Gift Aid, encouraging visitors to support our charitable aims.
- Ensure that all stock and equipment are handled securely at all times, and in line with agreed procedures. Notify the Duty Manager of any discrepancies or breakages.

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Events/Filming

- Providing Event/Filming support as and when required, across tours, weddings, and commercial bookings: monitoring security and conservation procedures, and providing a warm welcome to clients.
- Responding flexibly to event and client requirements as appropriate. Support the events team with visitor welcome, registration, and wayfinding.

Teamwork and Collaboration

- Report feedback from the team, visitors, and volunteers to the Visitor Experience and Retail Manager, and Duty Manager, on the improvement of the visitor facing operation at Chiswick House and Gardens.
- Work collaboratively and flexibly with colleagues and volunteers in the delivery of memorable experiences for all visitors.
- Participate in training to develop personally and professionally within the role, and to ensure that CHGT's Quality Standards are achieved and maintained.

Health and Safety

- Possess a confident understanding of relevant security, health and safety procedures including evacuation and location of emergency equipment.
- Work securely to care for the historic collection while ensuring the safety of all visitors, staff and the building and collections themselves.
- Carry out cleaning and housekeeping tasks as required to maintain a safe and presentable environment, including some conservation cleaning of the historic House.
- Maintain knowledge of site regulations and advise visitors as necessary upon arrival.

Spotlight Talks

- There will be an opportunity to develop your own short talks or choose from a bank of existing talks to deliver to the public, focusing on the collection, people, and history of Chiswick House & Gardens.

Additional Responsibilities (optional)

We have the opportunity for VEAs to train as an ad-hoc Duty Manager. Responsibilities of this role include:

- Keyholder
- Troubleshooting any technological, team or visitor related issue.
- Supervision of the Visitor Experience Assistants and Volunteers
- Supervision of events, such as filming, weddings, or group tours.
- Increased rates of pay are available for Duty Manager shifts (£14.65p/h / £16.15ph after 6pm).

Information

The core hours of work for this role will be 9:45am – 15:45pm Thursday to Sunday between May and October. Opening hours and venues vary with the seasons. Working patterns are flexible, for example weekend only shifts are available.

All shifts will become available via your online rota and will be allocated considering a fair share of hours for everyone.

Contracts are on a casual basis, with hours varying across the week. We are also able to offer a three day (16.5 hours) per week contract from 20th May – 29th September. Please express in your supporting statement which contract type(s) you are interested in, and if you are interested in training as a Duty Manager.

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Who we are looking for:

- Exceptional customer care skills.
- Ability to work effectively in small teams, quickly building positive working relationships.
- Can-do attitude and personal drive, with willingness to exceed visitor expectations.
- Flexible, positive attitude and ability to work on own initiative, adaptive to change.
- Good presentation, communication, listening and interpersonal skills.
- An organised approach with attention to detail.
- Good general IT skills.
- Respect for equality of opportunity, diversity, and inclusion with practical ideas for their implementation within the scope of the post.

Desirable Criteria

- Previous experience in working in a customer service and/or retail position in a public facing environment.
- Experience of working in a comparable environment (museum/heritage or attraction based).
- Experience of Ticketing and Retail systems.
- Conversant in other languages (including BSL).
- Experience of working corporate and/or high-profile events.

How to apply:

Application is by CV (no more than 2 pages) and a supporting statement (no more than 1 page) outlining the reasons for your interest in the post and why you believe yourself to be suitable. Please send your application to info@chgt.org.uk with the subject line VEAApril24.

Deadline: Closing date for applications midnight Sunday 21st April.

Interviews: Interviews take place week commencing 22nd April, with training starting week commencing 6th May.

Not sure you meet 100% of our qualifications? If you believe that you could excel in this role, we encourage you to apply. We are dedicated to considering a broad array of candidates, including those with diverse work experiences and backgrounds. Whether you're new to arts and culture administration, returning to work after a gap in employment, simply looking to transition, or taking the next step in your career path, we will be glad to have you on our radar. Please use your cover letter to tell us about your interest in the arts and culture space and what you hope to bring to this role.