

Youth / Performance Co-ordinator Role description

Housmans: 60 years of books and activism is a youth-led oral history project which will tell the incredible story of **Housmans Bookshop**, one of the leading progressive, radical bookshops in the UK. Peace House, the building Housmans is based in, has provided space for grassroots movements for peace and social change since 1959.

We are seeking a **Youth / Performance Co-ordinator** to promote the engagement of young people in the project as volunteers and performers. Core responsibilities will include supporting young volunteers to research and record the history of Housmans (alongside the Project Manager) and leading on a site-specific theatre performance with verbatim elements to be performed by young volunteers in the bookshop in autumn 2020.

Freelance role. Fee: £11,700: 104 days at £112.50 a day.

Timescale: March – December 2020, with May-September anticipated to be the most intensive period of work.

Background information:

Housmans: 60 years of books and activism will involve young people, aged between 18-25, as volunteers. They will carry out research, conduct **oral history interviews**, collect and digitise an **archive** dedicated to the fascinating building at 5 Caledonian Road and the diverse group of organisations and individuals that have passed through its doors since 1959. With the support and direction of the Youth / Performance Co-ordinator they will write and perform **site-specific theatre** based on the stories they have uncovered. Housmans bookshop will host these performances, a sound installation and several discussion events based around its fascinating history.

In 1959, Peace House was officially opened by veteran peace activists, including Vera Brittain, at 5 Caledonian Road. Meanwhile, the anti-nuclear movement was bursting onto the scene, with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, (CND) and the Committee of 100 emerging in the same period. Over the following 60 years, the flow of books, ideas and people through the building reflects how grassroots politics in the UK has changed over time. Apart from the bookshops' many customers, the building has sheltered a diverse crowd: peace activists seeking to ban the bomb or support conscientious objectors refusing to take part in war, activists from the Gay Liberation Front who started the first helpline for LGBT people (now known as Switchboard) and dogged environmental campaigners who defended themselves against MacDonalds in the UK's longest ever libel trial, to name just a few examples.

Role Description:

Recruitment:

- Inspire young people (aged 18-25) to join the project through targeted outreach.
- Recruit the target numbers of volunteers.

Co-ordination

- While developing the performance, be the main point of contact for the project's young participants. Consult them, communicate with them between activities, book them onto sessions, keep them updated and motivated.
- Ensure compliance at all times with project venue's policies and practices.
- Petty cash handling: paying young people's expenses, buying refreshments and workshop materials, delivering receipts to On the Record in a timely fashion, keeping spending within agreed budgets.
- Assist with the project's collection phase, under the supervision of the Project Manager.
- Prepare and co-ordinate 8 workshops held with young people at New River College, Westminster Kingsway College and other venues as part of exploring and beginning to interpret the heritage of Peace House (timings tbc).

Performance:

- Lead productive, engaging, safe and enjoyable interpretation workshops & rehearsals that are suitable for young people from diverse backgrounds.
- Support participants to make creative decisions.
- Identify the training needs of the young volunteers and lead on the heritage interpretation training (including booking freelancers), with input from the project manager, towards the production of a site-specific youth-led performance – to be performed in Housmans bookshop and potentially beyond.
- Work with the sound artist who will lead on the sound installation to ensure the performance and sound aspects work well together.
- Direct a high-quality performance work that is inclusive, relevant and artistically exciting.

General:

- Empower the young people as much as possible to take ownership of the project but also to fill in gaps as needed.
- Engage a wide range of young people and community groups with sensitivity and professionalism – particularly with young people who may present challenging behaviour.
- Promote the project, including by making publicity materials and encouraging young people to write blog posts and social media updates about their learning.
- Attend monthly supervision sessions with the Project Manager
- Help On the Record prepare reports on the progress of the project
- Ensure monitoring and evaluation forms are filled in and delivered to On the Record in a timely manner.
- Establish a framework of delivery for all project events and workshops in collaboration with the rest of the project team.
- Ensure that procedures to monitor attendance and support needs of individual members are followed.
- Consult young people on the project at all stages in its development and ensure the project remains youth-led and accessible to young people.
- Facilitate a project reflection session with young participants as part of the project's evaluation.

Person Specification

Essential criteria

- At least 3 years experience of youth work and/or facilitation of performance-based projects with young people
- Confident at facilitating groups of young people from a broad range of ages and backgrounds
- An excellent role model to young people.
- Understanding of safeguarding best practice
- A strong artistic vision evidenced through an impressive portfolio of performance
- Able to direct a site-specific performance piece with young people
- Experience of creating social media content
- An enthusiasm for heritage
- Willingness to work flexibly and fit around the availability of young people and community partners
- Ability to work well as part of a team
- Strong administrative skills
- Outstanding verbal and written communication skills

Desirable criteria

- Experience of working with LGBTQIA / BAME / youth -led groups
- Understanding of the history of left-wing politics and social movements in the UK since 1959
- Experience of working with/delivering a broad range of performance forms.
- Up to date with local, national and international developments in youth theatre and/or other performance forms
- Experience of oral history projects and / or of using oral histories to inspire theatre.

To apply please send to info@on-the-record.org.uk the following:

1. A CV

2. Complete **answers to the questions** referring to the role description and person specification carefully. Please include web links to any relevant examples of previous work:

* Tell us what you find most exciting about this role. (200 words or less)

* Describe your past experience working in theatre and/or other forms of performance, citing specific examples, and how your experience is applicable to this role? (500 words or less)

* Describe how in your previous work you have empowered and supported young people to participate in a project over a sustained period of time (500 words or less)

* Explain your approach to devising a site-specific performance with young people inspired by oral history interviews and archive research. (500 words or less)

* Please give the full names, email addresses and phone numbers of at least two people who can act as referees, explaining their connection to your work. One of them should have known you in a professional capacity for at least 2 years.

*The successful applicant will complete an enhanced DBS check.

Closing date for applications: midnight on Thursday 13 February.

Interviews for shortlisted candidates will be held on Monday 24 February, in London. Please state now if you are unable to attend on that date. The interview panel is likely to include Rosa Schling (Project Manager and Co-Director of On the Record), Laura Mitchison (Co-Director of On the Record) and Tania Aubeelack (Volunteer).