IKON

Gallery Assistant

Job Description

Deadline for application: Tuesday 3 February 2026, midday

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Job Description

Post:	Gallery Assistant
Reports to:	Audiences & Front of House Coordinator
Salary:	£12.21 per hour
Contract:	Part-time over 3 days (core hours 17 a week), fixed-term, 24-month long contract
Location:	Ikon Gallery, 1 Oozells Square, Birmingham, B1 2HS

About Ikon

Ikon is an internationally acclaimed art gallery in central Birmingham, offering free entry to all. Founded in 1965 as an artists-led alternative space, it has evolved into one of the most internationalist artistic programmes in Europe, combining established with emerging artists. Housed in a renovated neo-gothic school building, Ikon is an educational charity for the promotion of visual art of international significance, playing a key role in the cultural life of the West Midlands region.

Ikon's main galleries welcome about 200,000 engagements every year, with many more engaging with off-site projects, national and international collaborations and online. Off-site programmes include artist residencies at HMP Grendon, HMP Springhill and HMP Birmingham, sharing the core belief that art can be a force for good in carceral settings. Ikon Slow Boat, hosts the gallery's Youth Programme (IYP) and Ikon Creative Health explores explores the dynamic intersections of art, health and wellbeing.

In recent years Ikon has exhibited the work of Donald Locke (2025), Seulgi Lee (2025), Htein Lin (2025), Mathab Hussain (2025), Jesse Jones (2024), Dion Kitson (2024), Exodus Crooks (2024), Mali Morris (2023), Melati Suryodarmo (2023). Group exhibitions include Thread the Loom (2025), Friends in Love and War (2024-25), Start the Press! (2024) and Horror in the Modernist Block (2022-23).

Ikon is an equal opportunities organisation and welcomes applications from all sectors of the community. In its management structure and as an employer, Ikon is pledged to ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of age, race, gender, disability, marital status or sexual orientation. We actively seek applications from the widest range of applicants.

Gallery Assistant – Job Description

Overview

We are seeking a proactive and reliable individual with a strong interest in contemporary visual arts to join Ikon's Front of House team. The successful candidate will be well-organised, punctual, and detail-oriented, with excellent communication skills and a commitment to delivering an outstanding visitor experience.

Operating in line with Ikon's policies and control measures, you will provide a warm, informative welcome to all visitors, support exhibition invigilation, and assist with a range of administrative and operational tasks. This includes visitor surveys, data entry, maintaining exhibition security, answering queries, promoting memberships, and undertaking reception and shop duties. You will also support the delivery of events, including set-up, take-down, ticketing, and guiding visitors through the building.

Hours & Working Pattern

- Three days per week, including regular weekends and occasional evenings
- Core hours: 17 per week, with opportunities for overtime
- Set shift pattern

Key Competencies

We are looking for individuals who:

- Are responsible, reliable, and calm under pressure
- Respond dynamically to varying visitor numbers and needs
- Communicate effectively with a wide range of people
- Contribute positively to team efforts to deliver an excellent visitor experience
- Demonstrate strong administrative skills and attention to detail
- Are highly vigilant and proactive in maintaining safety and security
- Have a passion for contemporary art and a willingness to research exhibitions to enhance visitor engagement

Main Responsibilities

Visitor Experience & Invigilation

- Provide a friendly, informative welcome and engage with visitors in galleries and at reception
- Answer questions about Ikon's exhibitions, events, and wider programme
- Prepare galleries for opening and ensure exhibits are displayed and functioning correctly
- Research exhibitions and deliver Spotlight Tours or group tours as required

- Conduct visitor surveys to gather audience insights

Health & Safety

- Monitor visitor safety and wellbeing within the gallery
- Ensure security of artworks and report any issues promptly
- Act as first point of contact for incidents, escalating as needed
- Follow security procedures and assist with invigilator cover when required
- Maintain signing-in systems and access fobs
- Respond proactively to emergencies and minimise risks

Reception & Retail

- Manage reception and telephone enquiries efficiently
- Keep visitor information points and reception areas tidy and well-stocked
- Welcome and brief pre-booked groups on health and safety
- Operate ticketing systems for events and brief visitors on arrival
- Undertake shop duties, including processing transactions via Shopify
- Promote memberships, donations, and Gift Aid
- Record and collate visitor data

Teamwork & Administration

- Attend meetings to share observations and suggestions
- Stay informed about Ikon's programme to assist visitors
- Support inductions and training for new colleagues
- Adhere to Ikon's dress code and professional standards
- Maintain productive relationships with colleagues and managers

Professional Development

- Undertake training provided by Ikon
- Participate in development meetings and reviews
- Identify opportunities for learning and growth

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Experience	Customer service or visitor-facing role	Experience in arts or cultural sector
Skills	Strong communication and organisational skills	Ability to deliver tours or talks
Knowledge	Interest in contemporary visual arts	Familiarity with ticketing or retail systems
Personal Qualities	Reliable, calm under pressure, team player	Creative approach to visitor engagement
Other	Flexible to work weekends / evenings	First aid training

How to Apply

Please send the following to office@ikon-gallery.org by **Tuesday 3 February 2026, Midday** (BST) with the subject line 'Gallery Assistant Application'

- A completed application form
- A complete Equal Opportunities Monitoring form

Interviews will take place on **Wednesday 11 February 2026** at Ikon Gallery.
Start date is week commencing 16 March 2026.

Note
Applicants must be able to provide evidence of their right to work in the UK.

Ikon requires all staff to obtain a Government Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, in accordance with Ikon's Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy. You will be required to provide the necessary documentation for the DBS check to be carried out. Ikon will cover the cost of obtaining the DBS check and reserves the right to request additional checks at any time in the future.