

ATHLONE ARTS & TOURISM CULTURAL OFFICER

Particulars of Role and Recruitment

BACKGROUND

Athlone Arts & Tourism operates Athlone Castle, Luan Gallery and Abbey Road Artists' Studios. These sites are of major significance to the heritage and cultural landscape of Athlone and in the emerging tourist region of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. **Athlone Arts & Tourism is seeking to appoint** a permanent Cultural Officer for Athlone Castle. Details and particulars of the post are set out hereunder:

THE ROLE

A Cultural Officer is required to work under the management of Athlone Arts & Tourism and will be primarily located at Athlone Castle.

You must have experience of working and tour-guiding in a museum, heritage site, visitor attraction or similar environment, be enthusiastic about heritage and tourism and demonstrate a basic knowledge of the history of Athlone Castle and surrounding facilities.

The successful candidate will be able to multi-task, work front of house, deliver tours, supervise and train staff and volunteers as appropriate and be able to handle pressure and work to tight deadlines in a busy customer service focused attraction.

The successful candidate will be required to work under management and undertake a range of duties relating to the day-to-day visitor services operational activities of Athlone Castle including; delivery and supervision of front of house/customer services, tour guiding, ticketing, cash receipting and banking, group and event bookings, retail/café sales, merchandising and stock taking, sales generation, marketing and research, administration, reporting, programming, co-ordination and delivery of events and appropriate day-to-day staff and volunteer supervision as maybe directed by management.

(a) Job Title: Athlone Arts & Tourism Cultural Officer

(b) €24,840 pa

(c) Contract: Full-time permanent position with 6 months probationary period

(d) Responsible To: Athlone Arts & Tourism Ltd.

(e) Reporting To: Management of Athlone Arts & Tourism Ltd.

KEY JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

The successful candidate will be required to work closely with management and undertake a range of duties relating to the day-to-day visitor services operational activities of Athlone Castle including;

- **Customer Services:** ensuring a warm welcome and providing onsite orientation information to all visitors. Working closely with management to create a top-class customer focussed attraction.
- **Reception/ticketing/bookings:** responsible for the smooth daily bookings and receipting of admissions and responses to queries.
- **Cash handling and till operations:** Operating and supervising the till and cash handling, receipting and recording processes. Creating new products/adjustments to the till system as required and coordinating banking arrangements as required by management.
- **Tour guiding duties:** coordinating and delivering guided tours including costumed guiding and engaging with and interpreting the castle story to visitors. Working with management and the castle team on the pre-planning of group tours. Reviewing and creating new tour content for existing and emerging visitor segments and delivering staff and volunteer tour guide training as required.
- **Café and gift shop** –responsible for the smooth daily operations, stocking, cleanliness and presentation of the café and gift shop at Athlone Castle Visitor centre as directed by management.
- **Bookings:** operating the booking system and overseeing the group bookings process, managing customer accounts, involvement in creditor set-up and payment follow-up. Regular reporting to management will be required.
- **Staffing & Volunteer Supervision:** supervising the daily duties of the castle team and volunteers and reporting to management on customer feedback, personnel performance, special requirements and policy changes.
- **Events:** assisting management and other staff members in the delivery, promotion and manning of a varied calendar of events and activities at Athlone Castle.
- **Museum Collection:** working with management, the castle team and caretaking staff to ensure the safe keeping and ongoing conservation of the museum collection, working with management on the development of collections policies and content for publications.
- Monitoring the castle facilities, grounds and public areas to ensure they are clean and functional and advising maintenance staff and management on issues as they arise.
- **Venue representation** –representing the castle at events and conferences etc. as required
- **General:**
 - The ability to provide First Aid is necessary (training will be provided)
 - Child protection awareness and identifying potential risks is necessary (training will be provided)
 - Involvement in advertising, promoting and research is required
 - Venue opening/closing responsibilities may occur
 - Report on all castle related matters to management

- To carry out such instructions as may be given by management in relation to the performance of duties.
- The successful candidate will be required to have a flexible approach to work, and be adaptable to carry out duties and cover for other castle-based team members as directed by management
- Other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the management and board of Athlone Arts and Tourism in relation to the employment as Cultural Officer at Athlone Castle.

The above duties outline the main functions and responsibilities of the post of Cultural Officer and may be subject to review in the future.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

- The Cultural Officer will be employed on the basis of a permanent full-time contract with an initial probationary period of 6 months and will be subject to one month's notice in writing on either side and depending on continuing finance being available.
- Duty at weekends and evenings will be an integral part of the working week i.e. the position has a 37.5hour over 7 days responsibility (Monday to Sunday inclusive).
- The salary for the post is **€24,840pa** and remuneration shall be paid fortnightly in arrears.
- The Cultural Officer will be required to work primarily during the opening hours of Athlone Castle. The hours of work will include weekends and may include evenings and will be impacted upon by seasonal considerations and company events. The successful applicant must have the flexibility to work hours in line with these seasonal and operational considerations of the site.
- Physical demands of the role include standing, walking, delivering guided tours, and carrying files, objects and merchandise.
- Rostered days and hours including start and finish times will be determined by management.
- Applicants must hold a current clean Category B driving licence and have the use of a car.
- Applicants must be flexible with both their time and approach to work and be comfortable carrying out a variety of tasks.

Full terms and conditions will be provided with contract at time of appointment.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Character

Candidates must be of good character.

2. Health

Candidates shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

3. Essential Education/Experience etc.

Each candidate must have:

- A high standard of education.
- A minimum of one years' relevant work experience in a visitor attraction, heritage site or museum to enable effective and efficient role fulfilment.
- A minimum of two years' relevant work experience in front of house and customer service in a busy environment.
- A minimum of two years cash handling experience in a busy environment.
- A minimum of 6 months tour guiding experience in a visitor attraction, heritage site, gallery or museum.
- A good level of proficiency in Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel and Outlook.
- The ability to manage and grow visitor bookings online, over the phone and by direct contact with potential customers, operators and others from the tourism sector.
- A good basic knowledge of the history of Athlone Castle.
- An excellent standard and comprehension of key principals of customer service.
- Good time management, organisational, interpersonal and communication skills.
- Fluency in English and excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- A current clean Category B driving licence and have the use of a car.
- The capacity to contribute to and work well as part of a team.
- Be honest, dedicated and hard working.

4. Desirable Education/Experience etc.

- A third level qualification in History, Cultural & Heritage Studies, Tourism, Marketing or a related field.
- An understanding of the opportunities afforded by social media for tourism marketing and development.
- A good basic knowledge of the tourism amenities in Athlone and the region.
- Conversational skills/fluency in additional languages.

RECRUITMENT

- Selection shall be by means of a competition based on an interview conducted by a board on behalf of Athlone Arts & Tourism Ltd.
- Short listing will be applied where necessary on the basis of the information on qualifications and relevant experience supplied by candidates in their application.
- Interviews will be held in late April/early May 2019.

- The onus is on all applicants to make themselves available for any obligatory test(s) or interviews on the date(s) specified by Athlone Arts and Tourism and to make whatever arrangements are necessary to ensure that they receive communications sent to them at the address/email specified on their application.
- Athlone Arts and Tourism will not be responsible for any expense, including travelling expenses, candidates may incur in connection with their candidature.
- Candidates shall undergo such medical examinations as Athlone Arts and Tourism considers necessary. Medical Examiners will be nominated by Athlone Arts and Tourism. Candidates will be required to pay the fee for any general medical examination or, unless determined otherwise, the fee for any examination by a medical specialist or for any special test and on receipt of bill, Athlone Arts and Tourism will re-imburse the candidate. Candidates must comply, at their own expense, with such remedial requirements as Athlone Arts and Tourism consider necessary.
- Athlone Arts and Tourism shall require a person to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of not more than one month (must be available to start in early/mid May 2019) and if they fail to take up the appointment within such period or such longer period as the company in its absolute discretion may determine, the company shall not appoint them.
- Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test when and where required by Athlone Arts and Tourism, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the company requires in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.
- A panel may be formed on the basis of such interviews. Candidates whose names are on a panel and who satisfy that they possess the qualifications declared for the post and that they are otherwise suitable for appointment may, within the life of the panel, be appointed as appropriate vacancies arise. The life of the panel shall be 12 months.
- Appointment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory Garda Vetting, references and a medical examination.
- **Basis for Processing your Personal Information:** the basis for processing your personal data is to progress your application for the position you have applied for with Athlone Arts and Tourism under the Terms of the Employment (Information) Act 1994 and Athlone Arts and Tourism recruitment policies and procedures.
- Personal data sought for the purpose of recruitment will include your name, your contact details including email address and mobile phone number, particulars of education, details regarding your record of employment and confirmation of if you require an employment permit /visa/ or work authorisation.
- **Sharing of Information:** outside of the relevant recruitment team, the information provided in your application will only be shared for progressing the competition for which you have applied for, with a designated short-listing and / or interview board.

- If, following the competition, you are offered a position or placed on a panel, the information provided in your application will be used to form your Personal File.
- **Storage period:** your application will be retained for one year from the date a panel for this position is formed. Applications which are unsuccessful at interview stage will be retained for one year. Applications that are not progressed to interview stage will be destroyed post competition.
- If you do not furnish the personal data requested, Athlone Arts and Tourism will not be able to progress your application for the competition for which you are applying.
- Applications will be treated in strict confidence.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Please ensure that you provide a valid postal address, email address and a contact telephone number on your cover letter.

Applicants to send **3 x copies of a current Curriculum Vitae and cover letter** (including 2 named references), outlining their specific experience as it relates to the role description no later than **1pm on Friday 26th April 2019 to;**

The Company Secretary,
Athlone Arts & Tourism,
c/o Luan Gallery,
Elliot Road,
Athlone,
Co. Westmeath.

Applications sent by post should be posted in sufficient time to ensure delivery by this deadline. Allegations of loss or delay will not be considered unless supported by a Certificate of Posting. The cost of postage must be borne by the applicant.

Please note an email confirmation of receipt of application will be sent. Shortlisted candidates must be available to attend interview which will be held in end of April/early May to commence immediately.

Please note canvassing will disqualify.