



Guest Festival Programmer commission

Wigtown Book Festival 25th Anniversary

Fee: £22,000 for 8 months, fulltime, freelance

Expenses: £1,000

Location: Wigtown, remote working.

The 25th Wigtown Book Festival takes place in late September 2023 and we are looking for a Guest Festival Programmer to design and deliver an outstanding 10-day event to mark the occasion. The Festival, which takes place in Scotland's National Book Town, has grown to become one of the best-loved events in the country's arts and cultural calendar. What makes the role so special and exciting is that Wigtown is much more than a straightforward book festival. Books are just the beginning. It's an innovative, quirky and characterful celebration of literature, stories and storytelling in many forms. In addition to a multitude of guest speakers there is music, performance, art and much more. The Festival also has deep community roots and is a celebration of Galloway and its rich literary culture.

We anticipate that the Guest Festival Programmer will work remotely. We require them to visit Wigtown for two to three days at least once a month between March and the end of August and then to be situated in Wigtown for the whole of September until completion of the Festival on 1st October.

Reporting to: Chair of the Wigtown Festival Company board, supported by the board programming and events subgroup.

Start Date: 1st March 2023

End Date: 31st October 2023

Role Description

Founded in 1999, the 10-day Wigtown Book Festival is now one of the UK's best loved literary events and in 2022 delivered more than 200 events and activities for all, including music, theatre, food and the visual arts.

Our mission is 'to produce the UK's most vibrant book festival and develop the literary and cultural wealth of Scotland's National Book Town and its region. In doing so, we will also deliver social and economic benefits for the people of our region.'

The Festival has grown from the development of Wigtown as Scotland's National Book Town and is a central part of the success of the regeneration of Wigtown as a vibrant and welcoming community and travel destination.

Wigtown Festival Company is looking for an experienced literary programmer with an ambitious and creative track record to lead the programming of the 25th Wigtown Book Festival in 2023. The successful applicant will be responsible for the curation of the 25th Wigtown Festival programme, working with the existing team, and will be the public face of the Festival from 1st September – 1st October 2023. The successful applicant will be able to recognise, respect and build upon the 25-year



history of the Wigtown Book Festival and of Wigtown's designation as Scotland's National Book Town, whilst bringing fresh perspectives and thinking to the 25th anniversary programme.

We encourage applications from a diverse range of candidates and understand the value that people from diverse backgrounds can bring to our organisation. If you are disabled or have any specific access requirements, we will aim to meet these needs.

Main Responsibilities

- Adhere to the following timeline of key dates to deliver a programme of events for the 25th Anniversary Wigtown Book Festival:
 - Agreement of Festival shape, duration and themes – end April 2023.
 - Confirmation of any strands and/or programming partnerships - end May 2023.
 - Confirmation of Festival Marketing plan – end May 2023.
 - Confirmation of event content including confirmed performer bookings for circa 200 events (actual number to be agreed in consultation with the sub-group) – start of July 2023 (with all details necessary for programme and listings text).
 - Delivery of Programme Launch for w/c 7th August 2023.
- Research, curate, plan and deliver a high-quality programme of events working with publishers, artists, agents, partners, funders and community organisations, ensuring that the programme represents and cherishes the history and identity of the local community and brings the world to Wigtown to celebrate its 25th anniversary.
- Ensure that the programme delivered is within budget.
- Ensure that appropriate Chairs for each event are booked and confirmed by the start of w/c 14th August 2023 and work with the Wigtown Festival team to ensure books and chairing information are provided at least 4 weeks in advance of their event/s.
- Liaise with the wider Wigtown Festival team to ensure enough venue space is available for the programmed events and to ensure that every event is booked into an appropriate space and time slot.
- Work with the wider Wigtown Festival team to ensure they have all the information required to contract and to make timely travel and accommodation arrangements for visiting authors and Chairs, such that they can also confirm details with authors within a suitable time frame.
- Work with the Wigtown Festival team, and external freelancers as required, to lead the development of digital and print versions of the Festival programme and marketing materials for the Festival launch.
- Work with the Festival's media, PR and social media team to develop and deliver a communications strategy to promote the event at a regional, Scottish, UK and international level. This will involve ensuring that PR and communications are built into the Festival planning process from the start.
- During the Festival, be the public face of the 25th Wigtown Festival from programme launch until the completion of the Festival, including:
 - Being the main figure for any press or publicity interviews to explain, promote and drive excitement for the 25th Wigtown Festival programme;
 - Welcome authors, particularly but not exclusively, any high-profile bookings to the Festival, making sure they are comfortable, orientated and confident about their engagement with the Wigtown Book Festival;
 - Liaise with any other local organisations commissioned to put on events during the Festival to make sure they are included in the programme.
- Support Board members, the Operational Director and the Artistic and Strategic Director with fundraising and development as required.



- Work with the rest of the Festival team on impact and evaluation reporting and creating reports for funders as required

Person Specification

Proven track record of programming literary events and festivals, particularly with care and consideration to their particular local context, community and history.

Evidenced experience of developing and delivering high quality, engaging events.

Evidence of established, trusted professional relationships and networks across the literary sector including a broad range of authors, publishers and agents.

A calm and articulate communicator, able to interact effectively with the full range of Wigtown Festival partners and stakeholders, who embrace working collaboratively and supportively within a small team and a wider community.

A strong understanding of and commitment to the role of Book Festivals in delivering social, economic and developmental benefits to their host communities

An effective planner experienced in anticipating and circumnavigating the challenges that arise when programming a Book Festival, who reacts quickly and calmly, responding creatively to solve problems.

Evidenced experience of managing budgets.

Evidenced experience of overseeing the development and the delivery of physical and digital marketing materials.

Evidence of effective management of multiple priorities and deadlines, with excellent organisational skills, self-direction and motivation.

A passion for books, literature, arts and culture, a commitment to and belief in the role of Book Festivals and with a particular excitement and ambition for the 25th Wigtown Book Festival.

How to apply

Please send a 2-page C.V. with an accompanying covering letter to anne@wigtownbookfestival.com.

The covering letter should respond to the opportunity brief and provide details of:

1. Why you are interested in this opportunity.
2. What you can bring to the role.

Closing Date Sunday 4th December 2022 at midnight.

Shortlisting and interview process

- Candidates being asked to interview will be informed by 16th December 2022.
- 1st round interviews will be held by zoom w/c 16th January 2023.
- 2nd round interviews will be held in Wigtown w/c 30th January 2023.