

Job Title: Visitor Experience Manager	
Reporting to: Head of Visitor Experience	
Department: Visitor Experience	Location: Waddesdon Manor

Waddesdon is an historic house and garden open to the public. Created by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild from 1874, it is home to the Rothschild Collection. Waddesdon's collections are exceptionally rich in fine and decorative arts of the 18th century, assembled by three generations of the Rothschild family. Since 1957 the Manor has been owned by the National Trust and today it is managed by a charitable trust, The Rothschild Foundation, under the chairmanship of Lord Rothschild.

Waddesdon welcomes over 350,000 visitors to the property each year and we offer a programme of changing exhibitions, talks and tours, family activities and public events. Visitors are both National Trust members and paying visitors, and the income from our shops, restaurants, events and filming helps support opening the Manor to the public, our education programme and the care of the buildings, collections and gardens.

Application Process

In order to be considered for this role, please submit your CV along with a covering letter explaining how your experience and skills match those outlined in the role profile. Please email these to application@waddesdon.org.uk

We encourage all applicants to visit Waddesdon Manor over the Christmas period to get a feel for the business and to understand in what capacity the role of Visitor Experience Manager functions. In your cover letter, please outline your experience of visiting the house, including open feedback about what we do well and any suggestions on how we can improve or provide alternatives to the operation. We also encourage a visit to Waddesdon as some of the interview questions will be based around the operation.

We are able to provide two complementary tickets for yourself and a guest to visit Waddesdon over the Christmas period, as well as being able to reimburse expenses for travelling over 25 miles. Please contact application@waddesdon.org.uk for more details on arranging this.

Overall Purpose:

The Visitor Experience Manager (VEM) is an integral part of the management team responsible for the oversight of a seamless House visit and visitor engagement programme during varied opening hours throughout the year to ensure that every aspect of the experience is taken into account. With extensive management experience in a visitor facing environment, the VEM will act as an ambassador for our visitors across the property, embedding their needs and expectations at the heart of the visitor experience

With oversight of the house-based visitor operation and shouldering direct responsibility for the seamless visitor engagement programme throughout the year, they will enable a broad range of audiences to have an outstanding and inspirational visit through the consistent quality of our welcome and the stories we tell.

The VEM will play an important role in the growth and development of the Visitor Experience department, championing excellence in operational delivery, recruitment, training, customer best practice, and engagement initiatives. Using their knowledge and understanding of best practice within the sector, they will play an integral part in developing the Visitor Experience strategy and helping to future proof department objectives and delivery of KPIs.

Working Wednesday to Sunday throughout the year, they will be experienced in supporting and delivering a large daily visitor operation and ensuring the best use of staffing and resource across the property.

Primary Responsibilities:

Operational Management

House Based Operation

- Have oversight of the House based visitor operation, supporting the AVEM to ensure;
 - the consistency of visit for all guests
 - presentation standards are exemplary throughout and meet brand guidelines
 - compliance throughout the operation
 - engagement of staff and volunteers with the purpose of their roles and environment
 - visitor feedback is recorded and reviewed, escalating where appropriate
- Create operational House planning document, updating regularly following operational changes
- Look strategically to future proof the house-based visitor operation, regularly benchmarking against other sector leading properties, and implementing change management where necessary
- Actively support AVEM in operational delivery of house opening and tours programme
- Act as a Fire Warden for the property during opening hours

- Act as a point of escalation for the AVEM and team, confidently responding to any in-person visitor feedback or complaints, resolving any issues raised and escalating with suggestions for improvement to the HVE for review where necessary

Tours and Walks Operation

- Responsible for the oversight and daily operational delivery of the public tours and walks programme non-House based, ensuring it is consistently delivered to a high standard and sufficiently resourced with staff and volunteers
- Act as a central point of contact and liaising between teams and departments to ensure spaces and resources are efficiently managed in a timely manner, in particular: Group Bookings Coordinator, Collections Administrator, and Head of Private Events
- Operational responsibility for the visitor journey and experience, staffing resources and programming at the Wedding Cake/Dairy site, as well as any satellite exhibition spaces
- Conduct informative briefings for staff and volunteer teams ahead of tours and walks
- In collaboration with the AVEM provide motivational and supportive line management and provide resources to guide and volunteer teams, encouraging them to embed the needs and expectations of visitors at the heart of the operation
- In collaboration with relevant colleagues & departments, create agreed scripts and guidance for delivery of walks and tours programme by guiding teams
- Create risk assessments and method statements, pertinent to the operational delivery of the engagement programme
- Prepare ticketing set-up for house-based activity and paid for tours in a timely manner
- Regularly attend scheduled tours and walks to monitor the consistency and quality of the visitor offer, implementing any necessary improvements
- Train to be a guide, covering staff/volunteer shortfalls to ensure consistency in the visitor offer
- Where necessary, support out of hours exclusive access tours, sharing this responsibility amongst the VE management team
- Grow and develop the public programme, with particular reference to accessible and income generating programming
- Work closely with the HVE and VEM, as well as colleagues from the Box Office, Volunteering, Collections, Gardens, Marketing and Events departments to ensure the holistic delivery of excellent visitor care and engagement
- Contribute to the planning and delivery of programming and exhibitions, ensuring all operational aspects are considered and advocating for the needs of visitors
- Work closely with the Collections department to update interpretation materials to ensure that they remain current, relevant and engaging
- Work collaboratively with the AVEM in relations to all house-based tours, supporting them to ensure the smooth running of the operation and efficient management of

staff and volunteer resources, whilst ensuring scope for the AVEM to be involved in the planning and delivery of the wider tours programme

People Management

- Line manage the Assistant Visitor Experience Manager (AVEM), providing operational guidance, supporting their growth in post and prioritizing personal development opportunities
- Support & coach the AVEM in managing House based staff (Experience, Operations and Welcome Assistants) and volunteer (House Host) teams
- Consistently provide authoritative and motivational line management for guides and volunteers (Specialist Guides, Garden Guides, Wedding Cake Guides, Visitor Insights volunteers and Hosts & Eythrope Guides and Hosts) teams acting as a friendly and approachable point of contact & where appropriate sharing this responsibility with the AVEM
- Provide motivational and supporting line management for Visitor Insights volunteers and supporting HVE to analyse audiences and the visitor journey
- Create homogenous House team of staff and volunteers, striving to deliver a culture of excellence, whilst adopting a 'one team' approach
- Develop a culture of "exceptional service, every time, for everyone" throughout the team and be a role model of best practice
- Motivate teams to be inspired by, engage with, and safely manage historic surroundings - demonstrating a particular interest in the house, its history and collections
- Alongside the AVEM oversee the implementation of staffing plans to ensure all aspects of the visitor operation are sufficiently resourced and align with agreed budgets
- Working with the AVEM, lead on recruiting talented and enthusiastic people, develop and coach them, driving strong performance through setting clear objectives and giving regular feedback and reviews
- Work closely with the Head of Visitor Experience, Head of Volunteering and AVEM to expand and develop a year-round integrated Visitor Experience volunteering programme – developing a strategy to grow the volunteer offer and adopt sector best practice
- Support the VE management team in performance managing shared permanent staffing teams
- In collaboration with the AVEM deliver inspiring induction and training programmes for Visitor Experience House based teams, enabling proactive staff development and ensuring that a culture of continuous improvement is in place
- In collaboration with the AVEM, develop role specific induction and training materials, continuously assessing their impact as the season progresses and updating where necessary

- Act as VE lead on planning annual best practice visitor care training for staff and volunteer teams
- Provide regular role specific training for staff and volunteer teams, including; collection and exhibition updates, security, access awareness, fire evacuation, collection care, inspecting and using ladders, and disaster management

Developing Best Practice

- Working closely with the HVE, contribute to the Visitor Experience departmental strategy
- Use experience to look holistically at house-based operation, providing a strategy for implementing best practice:
 - Efficient use of staffing resources to ensure compliance obligations are consistently met whilst maximising budgets
 - Professional development of staff team members, providing opportunities to maximise skills and experience, train further in role specific areas and opportunities to progress within the department
 - Build on the development of house-based volunteer roles, expanding the visitor engagement focus and attracting and retaining diverse volunteer
 - Ensure scope for AVEM to be involved in all of the above strategic planning
- Work collaboratively with the HVE, Group Bookings Coordinator and Marketing team to understand our audiences and to develop tours and walks aligning with visitor and group preferences
- Use experience to further develop visitor engagement programming, providing a strategy for implementing industry leading tours and experiences:
 - Research and identify audience preferences
 - Looking broadly, research and identify sector leading experiences
 - Working with the Collections and Private Events departments, take an holistic approach to developing a guide recruitment and training programme
 - Further develop existing tours programming, recruiting, training and monitoring the performance of guides/volunteers
 - Support the delivery of grounds based accessible tours and programming i.e. garden and buggy led tours
- Working closely with the HVE and Volunteering department, recruit, train and support talented and enthusiastic staff and volunteers who will deliver our public tours and walks programme and expand and develop a year-round integrated Visitor Experience volunteering offer
- Work collaboratively with the HVE, Group Bookings Coordinator and Marketing team to understand our audiences and to develop tours and walks aligning with visitor and group preferences

Budgetary & Risk Management

- Working with the Head of Visitor Experience, you will manage relevant departmental staffing and operational budgets and contribute to the financial planning process
- Management of the house-based staffing budgets as agreed with HVE
- Champion access for all, ensuring that all visitor offers meet best practice guidance for accessibility and supporting the AVEM in developing and delivering visitor facing access initiatives
- Working closely with the Health and Safety Manager to proactively ensure that all health and safety procedures are consistently adhered to across the site and sufficient training is delivered to FOH teams
- Create departmental risk assessments and method statements, ensuring they are regularly reviewed
- Support in the delivery of emergency and evacuation training for Visitor Experience and other teams where appropriate

Providing Operational Cover for the Visitor Experience Management Team

- Deputising for the HVE in their absence
- Attend key operational meetings providing feedback to the wider Visitor Experience team on upcoming events, and chair the appropriate meetings in the Head of Visitor Experience's absence
- To provide operational coverage for the VE management team, deputising for the Visitor Operations Manager during periods where the House is closed, to provide adequate supervisory cover for all aspects of the visitor operation
- To act as a second duty manager at large events, responsible for an agreed area of the site and making necessary operational decisions
- Provide operational duty management cover in the absence of the Assistant Visitor Experience Manager

Other Duties & Responsibilities

- Act as a First Aider for Waddesdon staff, volunteers and visitors, (refresher and renewal training will be provided)
- Act as a Fire Marshall (training provided)
- To train as a "White Hat" as part of the Waddesdon Disaster Response Team, and potentially take a leadership role in the event of a major incident
- Work "front line" at busy times such as major events (Easter, Chili Fest, Christmas), or to help cover unexpected or unforeseeable staff or volunteer shortages if required
- To support some out of hours events by acting as a Duty Manager responsible for the operation of the event on the day or night as required
- Co-ordinate and participate in regular Visitor Experience staff and volunteer feedback sessions
- Develop collaborative working relationships and co-ordinate activity with colleagues

in other departments to ensure the holistic delivery of excellent visitor care

- Record any accidents or near-misses, working closely with the Health & Safety Manager
- Record and process hours for seasonal payroll
- Record volunteering hours and actively participate in the My Volunteering database
- Keep abreast of latest developments in the heritage/museum sector
- Carry out any other reasonable task as requested by the Head of Visitor Experience

Skills, Experience and Qualities

- 3-5 years' operational and line management experience in a fast-paced visitor facing role, preferably within the heritage/museum sector
- An accomplished and experienced line manager with an empowering style, and motivational skills including coaching, team development and effective communication
- Proven experience and passion for delivering a culture of exceptional visitor experience and engagement activities
- Genuine desire to work in a varied operational role, using experience to contribute to departmental strategy
- Ability to manage time effectively and efficiently, across project management and daily operations, being visible and providing support to the team, whilst progressing and implementing departmental planning
- Extensive knowledge of best practice and trends within the museum/heritage/visitor attraction sector, with experience of analysing current practices and developing and delivering operational change
- Excellent people and communication skills, building relationships with internal and external stakeholders as well as the ability to balance complex stakeholder interests
- Experience of working with and managing volunteers, understanding the different approach needed to reward, recognise and motivate volunteers
- Sound understanding of collection care/conservation strategies and techniques
- Ability to remain calm and confident under pressure, using sound operational judgement to resolve issues, with experience of coaching others to attain similar confidence
- Proven experience of managing staffing levels and rostering to deliver high levels of visitor satisfaction and meet all compliance requirements in line with agreed budgets
- Excellent written and interpersonal skills, including some public presentation or guiding experience
- Organized and efficient approach with excellent attention to detail, and demonstrable experience of coaching others to adopt the same approach
- Experience of devising and delivering in-house training
- Some experience of budgetary management and commercial awareness
- Experience of duty and incident management, leading emergency procedures in a

- public environment whilst remaining calm and confident under pressure
- Practical working knowledge of Health & Safety and security legislation and its implementation in a visitor focused environment
 - Excellent IT skills, particularly around Microsoft Office, with some use of POS and ticketing platforms
 - A keen interest in heritage, arts management and the outdoors, with a particular reference to decorative arts and historic gardens
 - Full driving license

This role will be subject to DBS clearance.

Terms & Conditions:

Contract Type: Permanent

Salary: £31,500 per year

Hours: A minimum of 37.5 hours per week, Wednesday to Sunday.
Occasional Monday, Tuesday and evening work will be required, for which time will be taken in lieu.

Benefits:

- Annual Leave: 33 days increasing to 36 days after 3 years' continuous service, 38 days after 5 years' continuous service, and 40 days after 10 years' continuous service (Bank holidays included).
- Matched company pension scheme up to 10% of salary.
- 50% Discount in Catering Takeaway outlets and 20% in the Manor Restaurant and Stables Cafe, 20% in Retail, 20% at the Five Arrows Hotel.
- Beautiful location working within the charity and heritage sector.
- Excellent wellbeing support and a focus on staff engagement and leadership development.
- Free parking.
- All the profits we make goes to the upkeep and preservation of the House & Grounds.

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Closing Date: midnight Friday 3 January 2025

Interview Date: provisional dates of 16 and 17 January 2025