

Job Opportunity: Curator

Employer: esea contemporary

Location: Manchester, UK; hybrid working considered

Salary: £30,000 - £35,000 depending on experience

Benefits: 3% employer pension contribution, Employee Assistance Programme, flexible working

Contract: 12 months with possibility of extension

Hours: Full-time; condensed or part-time hours considered subject to negotiation. Some on-site evening and weekend working will be required.

Reporting to: Director and COO

Application deadline: 28th March, 2024, noon GMT

Interview dates: We are interviewing for this post on a rolling basis and expect interviews to be completed by 5th April. We may close the vacancy early if we find the right candidate, therefore we would advise interested parties to make their applications as soon as possible.

Contact: hr@eseacontemporary.org

Job purpose:

esea contemporary is seeking a highly motivated Curator to develop and deliver exhibitions and public programmes, as well as to support the Director in conceiving artistic direction and curatorial frameworks for new initiatives and special projects. This also includes tasks such as research, curating artist residencies, managing commissions and publications, and strengthening the organisation's professional and community networks. The ideal candidate will have a minimum of five years of experience in a similar role within the visual arts sector. They should demonstrate a genuine passion for collaborating with artists and communities, as well as for curating art exhibitions and projects in a meaningful way. This role is designed for experienced curators with outstanding networks, vision, and practical skills who are looking for a new platform to realise their innovative ideas in an exciting and international work environment. The Curator will also be responsible for the day-to-day management, delivery, and administration of all programme-related activities, reporting to the Director and COO, and working with the gallery team on project management, fundraising, and communications.

Key responsibilities:

- Work closely with the Director to develop and deliver high-quality art exhibitions and public programmes.
- Liaise with artists, studios, galleries, transportation companies, and art production companies to ensure timely project realisation.
- Set and manage exhibition budgets, maintain financial records, and monitor programme-related risks. Report to the COO to stay within budget and deadlines.
- Curate and project manage exhibitions, residencies, and commissions.

- Contribute to the development of content for public programmes to enhance access to esea contemporary's exhibitions.
- Plan and coordinate curatorial research, content, artwork lists, and interpretation for exhibitions and programs.
- Develop exhibition texts, oversee production of communication materials, and manage publications.
- Project manage exhibition installation, production, and transportation.
- Collaborate across the esea contemporary team to develop and deliver talks, screenings, and special events.
- Coordinate exhibition previews and contribute to archival documentation of the programme.
- Provide accurate and timely information for contracting with artists, suppliers, and contractors.
- Undertake research and review programme expectations with colleagues.
- Identify funding opportunities, prepare funding applications, and support fundraising efforts.
- Represent the gallery at external meetings and events and maintain positive relationships with stakeholders.

General duties:

- Ensure the esea contemporary galleries and communal space are cared for to maximise public benefit.
- Support the development and implementation of policies and strategies related to research, acquisitions and disposal, storage and documentation, digitisation and access.
- Keep track of exhibition production and knowledge-making process within the institution; contribute regularly to esea contemporary's online platforms and social media.
- Produce regular reports and updates as required for meetings, committees, and funding efforts.
- Build and strengthen local and global networks for programme development and partnership building; actively participate in cultural and art events in Manchester and beyond for research and professional developments.

Essential experience, knowledge and skills:

- Minimum five years of work experience in a similar role within visual and performing arts.
- A post-graduate degree in curatorial studies, cultural studies, cultural management, or similar.
- Demonstrated interest in international contemporary art and discourse.

- Proficiency in audio/video and computer technology, with a proven ability to manage the production and installation of a variety of artworks.
- Strong problem-solving and analytical skills, evidenced by the successful resolution of challenges and the ability to prepare and present reports effectively.
- Excellent communication skills, maintaining productive relationships with artists, guest curators, colleagues, stakeholders, and partners across various platforms.
- Comprehensive understanding of institutional care issues, including storage, environmental conditions, and conservation challenges.
- Experience with documentation, digitisation, and accreditation standards, with a track record of delivering documentation projects.
- Demonstrable project management experience, including the successful delivery of curatorial projects.
- Excellent organisation and planning skills, with the ability to manage self and others effectively to prioritise tasks.
- Strong commitment to equality and diversity, with an understanding of how this commitment applies to the role.
- Valid permit to work in the UK.

Desirable:

- Lived experience of East and Southeast Asian heritage. Knowledge of Greater Manchester.
- Proficient with Adobe Creative Suite, Sketchup, Webflow, and other design or communication software.
- Previous work experience in art institutions, non-profit galleries, biennials, or other similar organisations with an international background.
- Familiarity with digital programming, including the curation of virtual exhibitions and public programmes.
- Strong fundraising and networking skills within the non-profit sector.

How to apply:

Please submit a CV and expression of interest, which should be no more than 2 sides of A4. Your submission should outline how you meet the person specification and how your experience relates to the job description.

Additionally, please submit a one-page curatorial proposal for a three-month Art Laboratory project at esea contemporary. Describe how you would activate our site to engage artists, creatives, and thinkers in non-exhibition, process-driven activities aimed at sharing experiences and knowledge. You can choose a theme, specific methods, or communities to focus on. We're not seeking a polished proposal; instead, we're interested in seeing evidence

of your comprehension of our mission and programme, as well as how you could potentially take a leading role in shaping them. If you haven't visited us, you can find relevant information on our website, in press reviews, and on social media. Your proposal should showcase your working method, professional networks (which could be highlighted through your proposed artist list), creative thinking, and practical skills (for example, providing a budget breakdown to demonstrate your understanding of managing programme income and expenditures). There's no specific format required, but please keep it within one A4 page.

Applications should be clearly marked 'Curator' and sent via email along with a completed Equality Monitoring and Further Information form (available to download from our website) for the attention of Sally Cook to: **hr@eseacontemporary.org**

We are seeking a special candidate for this pivotal role with esea contemporary. Because of this, we are taking a flexible approach to recruitment and we are open to discussing different modes of working, whether that might be hybrid or working fewer hours. If you are applying for this post but feel that a full time, Manchester-based role wouldn't work for you, please outline in your expression of interest how you would envision making the role work on a practical level.

esea contemporary is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all sections of the community. All information is treated as strictly confidential in compliance with the Data Protection Act. esea contemporary is also a Disability Confident Committed employer. If you are Deaf or disabled (and indicate this in your application) and meet the essential criteria for the role, we will guarantee you an interview.

About esea contemporary

esea contemporary is the UK's only non-profit art centre specialising in presenting and platforming artists and art practices that identify with and are informed by East and Southeast Asian (ESEA) cultural backgrounds.

esea contemporary is situated in an award-winning building in the heart of Manchester, home to one of the largest East Asian populations in the UK. Since its inauguration as a community-oriented visual arts festival in 1986, esea contemporary – previously named Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art – has continuously evolved to establish itself as a dynamic and engaging space for cross-cultural exchanges in the British art scene, as well as in a global context.

esea contemporary aims to increase the visibility of contemporary art practices from the East and Southeast Asian communities and their diasporas. It is a site for forward-thinking art programmes that beyond exhibitions also include commissions, research, residencies, publishing, and a wide range of vibrant public events. esea contemporary values creativity, compassion, interconnectedness, and collectivity in implementing its mission.