

ATHLONE CASTLE 2022/2023 CULTURAL ASSISTANT PANEL PARTICULARS & RECRUITMENT DETAILS

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.

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons for inclusion on a panel from which offers of fixed-term part-time and or seasonal employment may be made for the following post; **Cultural Assistant** at Athlone Castle during 2022 and or 2023 tourist season.

The Cultural Assistant position is ideally suited to third level students or recent graduates with a genuine interest in customer service, front of house duties in a visitor attraction. We are looking for candidates who are able to demonstrate an enthusiasm for delivering a top-class customer focussed service. The Cultural Assistant will be required to undertake a range of duties including; customer service, ticketing, bookings, visitor orientation and engagement, tour guiding, retail sales, administration and delivery of events and must have the ability to promote interest and engagement in Athlone and the region.

The successful candidate will be required to work at weekends and occasionally at evening events.

Selection shall be by means of a competition based on an interview conducted by a board on behalf of Athlone Arts & Tourism Ltd. **The successful candidate will have the relevant experience and qualifications as outlined in the details of the post.**

Interviews will be held in mid-September. **The closing date for receipt of applications is Monday 29th August at 5pm.**

The Role

The successful **Cultural Assistant** candidate will work to support the needs of Athlone Castle Visitor Centre.

The successful candidate will have at least completed the first year of obtaining a third level qualification in heritage/ hospitality/tourism or a related subject. The Cultural Assistant will be required to undertake a range of duties including; customer service, ticketing, processing and recording FIT, trade and group bookings, tour guiding, retail sales, administration, event coordination, outreach and education content creation and delivery and assisting Management and the Cultural Officer to deliver on the company objectives and action plans for Athlone Castle Visitor Centre.

Previous experience in a customer service capacity and cash handling is essential (hospitality/retail/tourism). Tour guiding in a visitor attraction, heritage site, museum or related environment is desirable but not essential. Applicants will bring with them previous customer service in a visitor attraction and cash handling experience, willingness to learn and a friendly, outgoing personality.

Key Job Responsibilities

- **Customer Services:** Ensuring a warm welcome and providing onsite orientation information to all visitors and assisting groups to visit, experience and exit the site. Delivering an excellent standard of customer service is an integral part of the role.
- **Reception/ticketing/Booking:** Front of house duties involving; till operations, cash handling, admissions cash receipting, dealing with bookings, dealing with customer enquiries, record taking, reporting, data collection etc.
- **Retail:** Retail duties including customer service, till operations, cash handling, merchandising, stocking, stocktaking, cleanliness and presentation of gift shop and other retail activities as directed by senior staff and management.
- **Tour Guiding:** providing on-site orientation information to visitors, conducting guided introductions, engaging with and interpreting the castle story to visitors of Athlone Castle and providing guided tours (occasionally in costume) is a core function of this position.
- Promoting Athlone and neighbouring facilities e.g. Luan Gallery, hotels, restaurants, cafés, bars, boat operators, attractions and activities is part of the role.
- **Cash handling:** operating the till and credit card terminal, cash handling, counting floats, receipting, recording, completing required cash accounting administration, ordering change in accordance with procedures and as required by management.
- **Sales:** Conducting ongoing active and sales communications as directed with new and existing customers i.e. tour operators, coach groups, special interest groups, schools, third level students, liaising with agencies and local and regional tourism trade in respect of rates, offers, events etc.
- **Customers/Suppliers:** dealing with the set-up, liaison, bookings, administration of customer and supplier accounts.
- **Administration:** duties such as gathering visitor data, conducting visitor research, issuing emails, developing databases, filing, generating reports, research and development, managing the booking system etc will be required.
- **Events:** Assisting the Cultural Officer, Management, castle team colleagues and volunteers with the planning, coordination, promotion, delivery and manning of onsite and virtual events and outreach. Events duties may also include meet and greet roles, dealing with media, guest list management, decoration, creation of social media content, invigilation, costumed guiding, visual recording etc.
- **Marketing:** Creation of content for press statements, blogs and social media and ongoing support marketing administration efforts may be required.
- **Research:** conducting visitor and trade research, processing data and generating reports on the findings.
- **Facilities cleanliness** – To assist in ensuring all facilities (reception, gift shop, museum & visitor centre spaces), grounds, toilets and public areas are clean, sanitised and functioning, conducting regular and recorded checks and assisting with the sanitising and cleaning if required and of all areas.
- Cultural Assistant must have a **flexible approach** to work and be adaptable to carry out duties in other facilities associated with Athlone Arts & Tourism as required by the Manager.

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

Conditions of Employment

The part-time Cultural Assistant will be employed to undertake a range of duties and to assist Management and the Cultural Officer to deliver on the company objectives and action plans for Athlone Castle Visitor Centre and will be subject to two weeks' notice in writing on either side and depending on continuing finance being available.

- The hours per week will be based on a roster system and will vary from season to season. Hours of work will include weekends and may include occasional evenings and will be impacted upon by seasonal considerations and company events. This will be done in accordance with the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997 and the Organisation of Working Time Regulations 2001.
- An hourly rate of €11.26 per hour Monday to Saturday and €12.38 per hour on Sunday will apply with a varied number of hours per week based on a roster system and remuneration shall be paid fortnightly in arrears
- Applicants will only be required to work on days that the castle is open to the public.
- Applicants must have the flexibility to work hours in line with the seasonal and operational considerations of the attractions/facilities.
- Physical demands of the role include standing, walking, delivering guided tours, delivering workshops and carrying objects and merchandise.
- 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

Character

Candidate(s) must be of good character.

Health

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

Essential Education/Experience

Each candidate should have:

Essential

- Experience (part-time/full-time) in a customer services role.
- Experience in a cash handling role (hospitality/ tourism/retail).
- Be at least in the process of obtaining a third level qualification in heritage/hospitality/ tourism or a related subject.
- Sufficient computer/IT competency to manage an integrated PC based booking and ticketing system and till operations in a busy environment.
- Familiarisation with cash handling procedures.
- The ability and confidence to provide guided tours of Athlone Castle – this is an integral part of the role.

- The capacity to interact effectively and in a friendly professional manner with people from a broad range of sectors and groups, including local tourism trade.
- A good basic knowledge of Athlone Castle.
- Fluency in English.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- The capacity to work on own initiative and to contribute well in a team-based environment.

Desirable Education/Experience etc.

- Tour guiding in a visitor attraction, heritage site, museum or related environment is desirable.
- A good basic knowledge of the history of Athlone Castle, Athlone and connected sites in the region.
- Good conversational skills.
- Fluency in additional languages.
- An understanding of the opportunities afforded by social media for tourism marketing and development and visitor servicing.

Age:

Candidates shall be under the age of 65 years at the date of employment. Any candidate who reaches the age of 65 years prior to employment will cease to be eligible for employment on the result of the competition.

Recruitment

- Selection shall be by means of a competition based on an interview conducted by or on behalf of Athlone Arts & Tourism Ltd.
- Short listing will be applied where necessary on the basis of information supplied by candidates.
- Interviews will be held in mid-September. **The closing date for receipt of applications is Monday 29th August at 5pm.**
- 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.
- 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 three weeks 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 maybe formed on the basis of such interviews. The life of the panel will expire in December 2023.
- Appointment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

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

Applicants to send 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 **Monday 29th August at 5pm.**

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

Or

By email to: artsadmin@westmeathcoco.ie

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 **mid-September 2022**.

Please note canvassing will disqualify.