



BROOK AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM ENGAGEMENT & COLLECTIONS MANAGER

Brook Agricultural Museum is seeking an Engagement and Collections Manager (0.6 FTE, one year contract). The role could also be split into two posts:

- 1) Community Engagement Manager (0.4 FTE, one year contract) and
- 2) Collections Officer (0.2 FTE, one year contract)

The Trustees would welcome applications for either of the above roles or for the combined role, depending on your skills, experience and interests.

APPLICATION PACK

Combined role of Engagement & Collections Manager:

Salary: £30,000 per annum pro rata (£18,000)

Hours: 22 hours per week (0.6 FTE) for one year

Or alternative split roles of

1) Community Engagement Manager

Salary: £30,000 per annum pro rata (£12,000).

Hours: 15 hours per week (0.4 FTE) for one year

2) Collections Officer (0.2 FTE, one year contract)

Salary: £30,000 per annum pro rata (£6,000).

Hours: Average of 7.5 hours per week (0.2 FTE) for one year

General Terms:

Location: Agricultural Museum, Brook, Ashford, TN25 5PE and opportunity for home working

Reporting to: Trustees

Key relationships: Trustees, Postholders, Volunteers, and Consultants contributing to the project funded by the National Heritage Lottery Fund

Annual leave: 20 days (pro rata)

Please ensure that you make it clear in your application whether you are applying for the combined role (Engagement and Collections Manager) or one of the split roles (Community Engagement Manager or Collections Officer). If applying for the combined role please also indicate whether you would be prepared to accept one of the split roles if it was offered to you.

Brook Agricultural Museum

The Wye Rural Museum Trust was established in 1996 to take ownership and running of the agricultural museum, known as the Brook Agricultural Museum. The Museum is housed in a Grade I listed 14th century barn (No: 1233070) and Grade II listed oast house (No: 1232975). Historic England describe the barn as one “*of the finest medieval Kentish barns*” and the oast house has a rare inner circle kiln construction and drying and cooling floors. A third range of buildings houses a community/ education room and small office/ exhibition space. They surround a large area of grass, creating a courtyard, also cared for by the Trust.

Wye College established the collection at Brook in 1948 and then added to it over subsequent decades. It comprises old agricultural equipment and implements, some relating to hop production, and mainly of Kentish origin. They are housed in the Barn and Oast House. Further details can be found at www.agriculturalmuseumbrook.org.uk/explore/collections

The Heritage Lottery Fund (as it was known at the time) supported the restoration of the Barn and subsequent fit out of a community/ education room and toilet. In 2005 a Local Heritage Initiative grant paid for audio and video recordings of local craftspeople and the creation of a series of booklets about them. The Covid-19 pandemic forced the temporary closure of the Museum but it has since reopened on its previous pattern of two afternoons a week from May to September, stewarded by volunteers. It received c. 400 independent and group visits per annum prior to the pandemic. An annual calendar of events includes a Memorial Lecture in partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University and one or two special weekend events. The Trust is led by a group of experienced and well networked individuals who are supported by loyal volunteers, an administrator (2 hours a week) and curator (3 hours a week).

New National Lottery Heritage Fund project

The 12 month project, ‘*Securing the future of The Brook Museum – engaging new audiences*’ is an £80,000 project (including the salary costs of this post) which aims to

- Improve collections and conservation management to secure the future of the Trust’s heritage assets and make them more accessible (including through digitisation)
- Understand the potential for engaging with a broader range of audiences from the local community and Kent to make the museum more inclusive
- Identify how the visitor experience can be improved
- Recruit, induct and train a more diverse group of volunteers to a broader range of volunteer roles
- Explore how a set of open sheds can contribute to the Museum’s future sustainability
- Identify and work with local organisations who can support the Trustees achieving these aims
- Pilot and evaluate new approaches to marketing the museum
- Develop a strategic fundraising plan to support the Museum’s resilience

- Identify how the Museum can be more environmentally sustainable and contribute to reaching net zero.

Role description

The Trustees of Wye Rural Museum Trust are EITHER seeking one Engagement and Collections Manager to lead on the delivery of the project as a whole OR a job split in which a Community Engagement Manager leads on audience development and the delivery of the project as a whole, and a separate Collections Officer delivers the more specialist requirements related to the care and digitisation of the museum's collections.

An appointee taking on both roles will need a passion for public engagement and experience of collections management; in the event of the role being split they will need to have experience and skills in the relevant area. The person(s) appointed will need excellent networking and interpersonal skills.

Main duties and responsibilities:

Community Engagement

- Lead the delivery of the Project, in consultation with the Trustees
- Keep the project on schedule and budget while delivering high quality community engagement activities
- Identify, and consult with the local community to better understand who they are and barriers to engaging with the museum
- Develop and hold events with residents of the village and wider community, and pilot activities and workshops to build an audience and test new ideas
- Identify and test potential interpretation themes and stories to engage the local community
- Develop new volunteer roles e.g. in marketing, learning, maintenance, and evaluation to increase and diversify volunteers
- Develop a new volunteer handbook and other resources to support a sustainable volunteering programme
- Recruit, induct and train volunteers as part of succession planning to support the museum's resilience

Collections care, display and engagement

- Lead on a collections audit, identifying which items are the most significant and where conservation expertise is required
- Seek support through the Rural Museums Network and/or professional advice on conservation and storage where required
- Update the Museum's collections and conservation policies

- Identify items which should be deaccessioned
- Identify a suitable web-based collections management database for the museum
- Develop and deliver new volunteer roles and volunteer projects to assist with the
 - Digitisation of the collection
 - Transfer of information on to a new database
 - The updating of records with richer content and images
 - The Organisation and cleaning of objects
- Ensure that the outcomes of the digitalisation project are sustainable through succession planning, handbooks and procedures.
- To make recommendations to the Trustees on insurance, environmental conditions and other collections management issues as a result of the above work
- To support the Trustees in preparing for accreditation
- To represent the collection to the public, giving onsite and virtual talks to groups, schools and interns.

General (to be allocated between the two roles if they are split)

- Support the Trustees with data collection and progress reports for the National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Oversee and contribute to the upgrading of the museum's website to improve accessibility and levels of engagement
- Use social media, the museum's website and local press to promote the project, volunteering, and activities and acknowledge the support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Lottery Players
- Support the Trustees by updating policies and the Museum's Forward Plan at the end of the project

Criteria for Appointment

Essential

(Items marked "C" are essential for the combined Engagement and Collections Manager role or the Collections Officer role, but not for the Community Engagement Manager role. Items marked "E" are essential for the combined Engagement and Collections Manager role or the Community Engagement Manager role but not for the Collections Officer role.)

- A relevant degree or equivalent experience
- Minimum of three years' experience in collections management practice (C)
- Demonstrable understanding and experience of using collections management systems (C)
- Demonstrable experience of engaging communities with museums / historic visitor attractions and of partnership working (E)
- Experience of recruiting, inducting, training and managing volunteers (E)
- Interest in the Brook Museum's collections

- Good social media and IT skills (websites, facebook, twitter etc)
- Excellent organisational and administrative skills and ability to manage own workload
- Excellent oral and written communication skills with the ability to communicate with individuals from a range of backgrounds

Desirable:

- Experience of creating and posting content for social media and websites
- Experience of evaluation

The Museum hopes to be able to extend the Engagement element of the contract but this will be dependent on the outcomes of this project, and opportunities during it to raise self-generated income and secure grants.

How to apply

- Please send a CV and covering letter explaining your interest in, and relevant experience for this post. Please also indicate when you would be available to start work (notice periods etc) if appointed.
- Email these to: brookagriculturalmuseum@gmail.com with the subject line “Job Application: Engagement and Collections Manager”
- Deadline for receipt of applications: 12 pm on Wednesday 13 July 2022.

The candidates who appear from their application to best meet the essential criteria will be invited to interview. It is therefore essential your cover letter provides a full, but concise description of the nature, extent and level of experience and responsibility you have held. Please ensure that you make it clear in your letter whether you are applying for the combined role or one of the split roles (Community Engagement Manager or Collections Officer). If applying for the combined role please also indicate whether you would be prepared to accept one of the split roles if it was offered to you.

It is intended that the interviews for shortlisted applicants will be held in the week commencing 25 July 2022.