JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title** Interpretation Manager

**Reports to** Director

**Term** Full-time, permanent

**Salary Range** £38,000-40,000

**About the Food Museum**

The Food Museum connects people with where food comes from and the impact of our food choices: past, present and future. We use our collections, buildings, landscape and programmes to explore our main themes: Grow, Make, Eat.

We work with a wide range of partners to produce inclusive and diverse programming which speaks to 21st-century audiences. We want everyone to see themselves reflected in the work we do. We aim to be relevant, challenging and sustainable.

We care for 17 historic buildings set in 84 acres of countryside, in the heart of Stowmarket, Suffolk. The museum is a charity supporting the community and we undertake a wide range of social projects and programmes. We seek to maintain high professional standards in the presentation and protection of our collection, buildings and site and continually improve our practice.

**Purpose of the Job**

The Interpretation Manager will be responsible for overseeing the Collections and Learning teams to develop and deliver a varied and focused public programme, with direct line management responsibility for three staff and overall management of a wider team of 15.

The Interpretation Manager will lead on the delivery of two new permanent exhibitions at the Food Museum, building on the work that has already been done during the development stage of our National Lottery Heritage Fund-supported project. They will work with staff, an external exhibition designer and the architectural team to procure and project manage the new exhibitions. They will undertake content and object research, grow partnerships, write text, commission AV and champion accessible and inclusive design.

**About The Kitchen Project**

The role is funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of The Kitchen Project, a multi-year programme of activities and capital works. The project will deliver 5 years of exciting and engaging collaborative programmes of activities and exhibitions, including creating new opportunities for volunteering. It will transform the presentation of a series of buildings on the museum’s large 84-acre site. This includes re-erecting a historic Victorian factory space, the Grade II\* Queen Anne House Abbot’s Hall and Grade II\* Medieval Barn. For more information, visit the Projects section of our website.

**Who are we looking for?**

We are looking for an experienced museum professional who is committed to the Food Museum’s mission and has the imagination and initiative to create engaging and challenging interpretation. You will need a good general knowledge of history, ideally including food history. You’ll have a solid understanding of research, including how to interrogate and use historical sources. You will write cogently and accessibly. You will be an organised person who thrives on getting into the detail, but who also is effective at driving forward change. The job involves managing and motivating teams, so good people skills, collaboration and the ability to deliver supportive challenge are important, as is – given the size of our organisation – a willingness to get hands-on with practical tasks.

**What will the job involve?**

1. Main duties:
2. Contribute as a key member of the museum’s senior leadership team. Own the Collections & Learning KPIs and produce reports on progress.
3. Provide leadership to the Collections and Learning team, with direct line management responsibility for the Collections Manager, Learning Manager and **Volunteer** Coordinator. Ensure that the teams have a common understanding of purpose and work effectively together.
4. Project manage, shape and deliver two new permanent exhibitions which will open in 2027. The first (The Factory) will explore industrial food production. The second (The House) will be about food in a domestic setting, including how food shapes and reflects identity.
5. Shape and oversee the museum’s public programme of exhibitions and activities on site and online.
6. Work closely with the Director to manage and report on the finances of the project and manage departmental budgets.
7. Support with fundraising towards the museum’s plans.
8. Champion evaluation within the organisation. Collect and use data to inform decision-making.
9. Build partnerships and relationships outside the museum. Act as an ambassador for the museum. Look for opportunities to work with others to deliver activities and help the museum to be an open and welcoming place.
10. Recruit and manage volunteers, working creatively to provide opportunities to engage others with the work of the museum.
11. Respond responsibly in the event of an emergency or incident, taking charge as the most senior member of staff where appropriate.
12. **Key relationships will be with the Director, Finance Officer and Operations Manager and with direct reports: the Collections Manager, the Learning Manager and the Volunteer Coordinator.**
13. **This job information cannot be all encompassing. It is inevitable over time that the emphasis of the job will change without changing the general character of the job or the level of duties and responsibilities entailed. This information may be periodically reviewed, revised and updated in consultation with the post holder to reflect appropriate changes.**
14. Staff must be aware of and abide by the museum's policies. All staff must work in such a manner as to ensure their own safety and the safety of others – including members of the public – and report to their manager any hazards, dangerous occurrences or dangerous equipment they see, and any accident they are involved in or that they witness.
15. The post holder will be expected to travel occasionally in the UK.

**Skills and Experience – what we require**

If you are unsure about any of this or would like to talk to someone about whether your experience is applicable, please get in touch.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Essential criteria – you need to have these** | | **How this will be assessed** |
|  | Understanding and commitment to the museum’s remit | Application form and interview |
|  | Good general education – strong literacy and numeracy | Application form and interview |
|  | Experience of leading and/or managing people and teams and ability to motivate and inspire others | Application form and interview |
|  | Experience of delivering interpretation in a museum or a similar cultural venue or visitor attraction. Can demonstrate that you can go beyond the obvious to tell engaging stories. | Application form and interview |
|  | Experience of exhibition project management, including procurement and control of project finances | Application form and interview |
|  | Can demonstrate a high level of attention to detail and organisation | Application form and interview |
|  | Excellent writing and presentation skills including strong proofreading ability | Application form and interview |
|  | Experience of original research and content development with high standards of accuracy and referencing | Application form and interview |
|  | Willingness to work flexibly and pragmatically, as part of a busy organisation | Application form and interview |
|  | Good computer literacy with MS Office and internet use as a minimum | Application form |
| **Desirable criteria – it would be a bonus to have these** | | |
|  | Experience in fundraising and funding bids and understanding of relevant funding streams | Application form and interview |
|  | Experience of reporting requirements for a project funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund. | Application form and interview |
|  | Experience of using the Adobe Creative Suite | Application form |
|  | Driving license | Application form |
| **Behaviours – how we expect you to act** | | |
|  | Be creative and imaginative: identify opportunities to deliver added value, be inquisitive, curious and thoughtful; be able to solve problems and think for yourself | Interview |
|  | Be effective and efficient: take responsibility for managing own work; stay focused on getting the job done; have a can-do approach; plan and think ahead and make decisions mindful of their cost and environmental impact | Interview |
|  | Be tactful and collaborative: work well and supportively with other staff, volunteers and external people | Interview |
|  | Communicate clearly: be precise and assertive – especially when dealing with difficult issues. Think about how to talk to people to get the best out of them. Listen to and respect diverse voices. | Interview |

**Additional Information**

**Terms**

* Your normal hours of work will be 37.5 per week. This would normally be Monday to Friday 09:00–17:00 (inclusive of a 30-minute unpaid break), unless otherwise agreed with your line manager.
* The successful candidate will be on probation for 6 months.
* There is a requirement on occasions to work unsocial hours or at weekends for which leave in lieu will be granted.

**Benefits**

* The annual leave allowance is 30 days per annum (inclusive of 8 public holidays) pro rata. After two years of service, holiday entitlement will rise by a day, reaching a maximum of 33 days after five years of service.
* The museum has a pension plan to which the successful candidate will be signed up.
* As a member of staff, you are entitled to free personal entry to the museum and for museum-organised ticketed events which take place on site.
* Nominated Guest Pass: You can nominate another adult (partner, parent or friend) to receive a pass to site. Any dependent children under 18 can also be issued with a free pass.
* 20% discount in the café. There is also a staff menu with reduced prices on fixed takeaway deals.
* 10% discount on shop products.
* Free tea and coffee
* Free parking in the museum’s car park

**Scoring**

We will score candidates against the criteria listed under ‘Skills and Experience’. The top-scoring candidates will be invited to interview. It is essential that your application form addresses the criteria fully. The Museum is committed to equal opportunities and welcomes applications from candidates of any and all backgrounds. As part of our commitment to diversifying the workforce, we offer guaranteed interviews to people from diverse cultural backgrounds and candidates who have hidden or physical disabilities who meet the essential criteria.

**To Apply**

1. Please apply using the museum’s application form only. We will not look at CVs or additional documents which are submitted.
2. In the personal statement section, please list the criteria under ‘essential’ and ‘desirable’ and set out how your experience relates to the things we are looking for.
3. Please label your application form with your name and submit it in either Word or as a pdf.
4. You need to complete a separate Recruitment Monitoring Form and submit it with your application. Please label this RMF and add your initials, as in ‘RMF XX’
5. Email both completed forms to [jobs@foodmuseum.org.uk](mailto:jobs@foodmuseum.org.uk)

**The closing date for receipt of applications is Sunday 21 September 2025 at midnight.**

**Interviews will take place on Thursday 25 September.**