

Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival - Volunteer Policy

Introduction

Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival (BFMAF) has taken place annually in Berwick-upon-Tweed since 2005. BFMAF's vision is to become the UK's leading festival for artists' moving image and new cinema.

Based in England's most northerly town, BFMAF is a dynamic forum where fresh artistic voices develop and audiences hungry for complex and challenging art are nurtured. Increasingly recognised for its innovative programme and critical engagement, BFMAF presents artists' work in the cinema as well as expanded formats of exhibition and performance. It seeks to empower people and provide a generous place for the exploration of ideas and new perspectives, testing the boundaries of what a festival can be.

Each year we recruit a team of enthusiastic, dedicated and friendly volunteers to help create and deliver what is the biggest annual arts event in Northumberland and without whom it simply wouldn't be possible to reach the scale and quality that we have become known for. The volunteer team are the faces of the Festival - they're ambassadors for every venue, film, installation and individual experience in the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed once the Festival begins.

Reasons to volunteer at BFMAF:

- Meet new people and make new friends
- Attend Festival screenings and events
- See previews of film and installation programme
- References and performance evaluations available on request
- Include volunteering as part of other training or projects

Recruitment

An inclusive, intergenerational approach is taken to volunteering at Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival, with applications welcomed from anyone over 16 years of age, and with no maximum age limit. Applications from Berwick and North Northumberland are particularly encouraged.

Application is made through a webform on the Festival website here: <http://www.bfmaf.org/about-us/volunteer>. Further information is available by contacting the Festival office at volunteer@bfmaf.org or by phone on 01289 303355. On completing the webform, applicants will normally be contacted within one week, by email in the first instance.

Volunteers can take part in the whole Festival or for part of it. Sessions can be scheduled around existing commitments.

The majority of volunteers perform a number of roles across the Festival. Roles include, but are not limited to:

Venue Stewards who are in attendance at all exhibition venues. Pairs of Venue Stewards look after each venue and help visitors make the most of their experience.

Maltings Stewards who are based at The Maltings and perform key duties around film screenings and events held there.

Info Desk Volunteers who are primarily based at the Maltings and Berwick train station, with occasional sessions in other locations around Berwick. They provide information to visitors about the Festival programme and the town.

Evaluation Volunteers who ask visitors to complete Festival evaluation forms.

Production Volunteers who assist the production team in setting up, maintaining and taking down signage, exhibitions and installations.

Events Volunteers who assist in the set up and smooth running of a variety of special events in different locations around Berwick

Driving Volunteers ensure that Festival filmmakers and artists arrive in and leave Berwick safely and on time.

Please see the volunteer roles information sheet for more details about the roles which volunteers perform.

Volunteer Agreements, Induction and Training and Support

Once the volunteer place is confirmed, volunteers will be issued with a volunteer agreement, setting out the commitments BFMAF makes to volunteers along with the expectations of their involvement. Volunteers are asked to sign this to confirm their participation.

Training takes place by a variety of methods. In the run up to the Festival, volunteers are sent email updates with information about the Festival programme and venues. Additionally there are information evenings held in Berwick in August and early September. There is a day of induction immediately before the Festival which includes venue tours, programme information and health and safety briefings.

Venue stewards are provided with briefing notes and venue packs before each session to ensure they have full information about the exhibition or installation they are stewarding along with any health and safety information about the venue.

Malting Stewards will receive venue and event specific briefings before their sessions.

Volunteers are supported by a Volunteer Coordinator who is available and onsite throughout the volunteer period and contactable by phone or email before this time.

The Volunteer's Voice

BFMAF will endeavour to accommodate requests for specific sessions wherever possible. Requests can be made by email or in person.

Volunteers input on their role is sought before and after the Festival through two surveys. During the Festival and immediately before it, it may not be feasible to make changes to volunteer roles. All feedback is carefully considered after the Festival and is key to planning volunteer involvement in future years.

Records

Volunteer records are stored digitally on BFMAF's server files and are accessible to a limited number of staff members with specific responsibility for the volunteer programme. Contact details (name, phone, email, postcode) are held for 2 years for the purposes of inviting volunteers to return, then deleted.

Expenses, Insurance, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities,

Out of pocket travel expenses are offered, to a limit of £15 per person on production of travel tickets or receipts. A limited supply of accommodation is available to volunteers to allow those from outwith the immediate area to be involved. Please indicate when applying whether you require accommodation.

Volunteers are covered by BFMAF insurance

Health and Safety briefings are given, both as part of the general training and in relation to specific venues.

Equal Opportunities information is collected digitally, anonymously and is not linked to volunteer records or other details. Completion of this form is optional, however it is greatly appreciated as it helps to ensure that BFMAF is involving volunteers from all sections of the community.

Concerns

Any concerns about volunteers or volunteering should first be raised with the Volunteer Coordinator who can be reached by phone (01289 303355) or email (volunteer@bfmaf.org.uk). Their mobile number will also be available to all volunteers during the Festival.

Any issues which cannot be resolved by the Volunteer Coordinator, or where volunteers would prefer not to raise them with the Volunteer Coordinator, can be raised with the Festival Manager who can also be contacted by email or phone (details will be given to volunteers on their induction).

Completion

Feedback on the volunteer experience is sought immediately after the Festival by online survey. References and performance evaluations are available on request by emailing volunteer@bfmaf.org