

The People's History Museum Freelance Interpretation and Exhibitions Curator (or secondment opportunity)



Background

The People's History Museum (PHM) is delighted to be working closely with The Co-operative to curate an exciting and dynamic exhibition that celebrates 150 years of The Co-operative.

"The People's Business – 150 years of The Co-operative" will open to the public on Saturday 12 October 2013 in the Changing Exhibitions space (approximately 225 sq m) and run until Sunday 11 May 2014.

In 1863 the formation of the Co-operative Wholesale Society was the beginning of a business revolution. Over the following 150 years this people's business has grown to first manufacture and then to sell products and services that have supported the families and communities of Great Britain "from the cradle to the grave".

Using packaging, products, advertisements, memories and film spanning fifteen decades this exhibition explores not only the story and values behind the "caring sharing co-op" and their continuing wish to be "here for you for life" but is also a unique insight into our changing high streets and the way we shop and live.

We are looking for a Freelance Interpretation and Exhibitions Curator to work with us to further develop the concept for the exhibition and to take a lead in bringing the exhibition to life. This exhibition is an amazing opportunity to showcase the museum's collection as well as material from The Co-operative archive to highlight the story of a business that truly belongs to its members.

You will work closely with a number of staff at the Museum, including conservation, learning, marketing, visitor services and collections, but because of the nature of the work this role will also require co-ordination (or supervision) of the work of external designers, conservators, and technicians.

This freelance contract is for approximately 60 days work and runs from its appointment until 18 October 2013 to cover the exhibition opening, final tasks and post opening snagging.

The fixed fee, including all expenses, is £10,000

How to apply

To express an interest, please send your CV, an outline of your approach and covering letter to Louise Sutherland, Head of Collections and Engagement, louise.sutherland@phm.org.uk by 12 noon on Monday 18 March 2013. Hard copies can be posted to the Museum for the same deadline. Our address is People's History Museum, Left Bank, Spinningfields, Manchester, M3 3ER.

Interviews for shortlisted applications will be held Thursday 21 March, please

indicate in your covering letter if you are unable to make this date.

Informal enquiries can be directed to Louise on 0161 838 9190 prior to application, please note this is not available w/c 4 March 2013

Role and tasks

- To work with staff from PHM, The Co-operative and The National Co-operative Archive to create an informative and engaging exhibition
- To liaise with appointed 3D and graphic designers and oversee the design process
- To develop with designers a strong brand for the exhibition that reflects the values and principles of The Co-operative.
- To oversee and coordinate the development of storyboards, panels and other interpretive materials for inclusion in the exhibition
- To work closely with the Marketing Team at PHM for the promotion of the exhibition
- To support the development of associated programmes and learning activities, including previews, with staff from PHM and The Co-operative
- To bring a collaborative approach to making exhibitions, that draws upon skills and expertise from across the museum.
- Plan all aspects of the exhibition installation and co-ordinate all functions in preparation, installation and snagging.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience:

Experience

- To have been the lead in the delivery of at least 3 lively and participatory exhibitions.
- Proven experience of working with 3D and/or graphic designers.
- Proven experience developing a range of forms of interpretation for diverse audiences.

Knowledge/Skills

- Excellent communication skills and the ability to work with a wide range of internal and external contacts at all levels
- Good understanding of different learning styles, including interpretive approaches
- Previous experience of undertaking research to inform work
- Excellent administration and project management skills, creative abilities, and an eye for detail, energy, flexibility and self-motivation.
- A strong team player, with enthusiasm and energy to act proactively demonstrating initiative and tenacity in completing work.

About People's History Museum

The People's History Museum is the national museum of democracy. We are the only museum in the UK dedicated to telling the story of the development of democracy in Britain and how ordinary people have achieved extraordinary things through co-operation. We engage, inspire and inform all audiences by showing that 'there have always been ideas worth fighting for'. We have been

based in Manchester since 1994 and we work to encourage the widest range of users to explore the history and achievements of working class people in Britain.

Our new £12.5 million museum opened to critical acclaim in 2010 and we regularly receive funding for projects and events from organisations with Greater Manchester and beyond. The museum building now provides a fantastic asset for the People's History Museum, for Greater Manchester and for the UK.

There have been many successes already achieved since the museum reopened in 2010. Visitor numbers have grown from c.25,000 to c 80,000 and are continuing to rise (up 9% in 2012/13 compared to 2011/12), providing access to the heritage of the history of democracy and ordinary working people for ever-increasing and diverse audiences. An excellent programme of changing exhibitions, community exhibitions, learning programmes, public events and access to the unique object, archive and banner collection have all engaged with people in deep and meaningful ways.

About The Co-operative

The Co-operative Group is the UK's largest mutual business, owned not by private shareholders but by over seven million consumers. We are the UK's fifth biggest food retailer and a major financial services provider, operating The Co-operative Bank and The Co-operative Insurance. Among our other businesses are the number one funeral services provider, the third largest pharmacy chain and one of Britain's largest farming operations. The Group operates 4,800 retail trading outlets, employs more than 100,000 people and has an annual turnover of more than £13bn.

Like any business, we want to be a commercial success. However, even more important to us is the way that we do business, and the way that we use our profits. We believe that we should offer our customers both value and values. Which makes us a bit different.

Our members are our owners; they tell us what is important to them and we listen and act on it. It's part of our model: as a consumer co-operative, we run our business for the benefit of our members. That means our members are involved in democratic decision-making, and we re-invest in our business – sharing profits with our members. Our members also set a social and campaigning agenda that we support.

In fact - because our members wanted it - we've become pioneers in areas such as fairtrade and combating climate change. Of course, the more commercially successful we are, the more we can do to give back to the communities we serve and to influence the wider world.