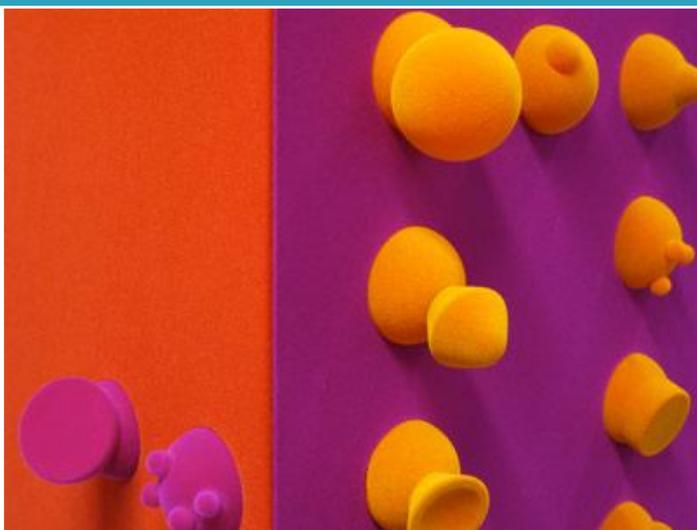


Bank
St Arts

2010

Volunteer Handbook



Bank Street Arts
Information for Volunteers

Bank St Arts

This volunteer handbook sets out the BSA Volunteer Policy along with some useful and practical information regarding your role in the Centre. If you wish to see a copy of the original policy please see your line manager.

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1. WELCOME TO BANK STREET

Thanks for becoming a volunteer at Bank Street Arts!

We rely on people like you in order to keep the galleries and Centre open to the public five days a week. In return we'll offer you opportunities and experience in a dynamic and creative Arts Centre, dedicated to supporting cutting edge artistic practice in an inclusive environment. We require a commitment of at least one day per week and you should realistically be able to commit for at least six months.

Upon commencing as a volunteer at Bank Street, our normal practice is to ask you to begin by working one day a week as a Gallery Assistant - this is a good initiation to the Centre and allows you to get to know staff, studio holders, resident artists as well as involving you in a range of activities from customer service to assisting with galley maintenance and the setting up of exhibitions. You should also familiarise yourself with the current activities of the Centre so you are able to pass on information and enhance the experience of visitors. Once you've mastered the basics you'll be in a great position to adapt your role to suit your personal interests. (If you are interested in offering particular skills or would prefer to help out in other ways then please feel free to discuss this at the earliest opportunity).

The most important thing is that you enjoy your time at BSA and develop skills that will benefit you in the future. Thanks again for your support.

John Clark
Creative Director

Gareth Crockett
Operations Manager

Jen Pears
Centre Supervisor

2. ABOUT BSA

Bank Street Arts is a new Arts Centre in Sheffield City Centre at a formative stage of development. We aim to provide a home, venue and setting for a wide range of creative individuals and organisations. One of the key elements of our work will be the focus on collaborative cross media projects.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We are unfunded. We have chosen to generate our core income from our own activities rather than operating at the mercy of external funders. This means we are free to make our own decisions and choose our own destiny rather than being at the behest of generic targets set by external bodies. But this freedom comes at a



price. We are unable to fund the salaries that many other galleries can cover. But with every problem there is a solution; with every solution an opportunity. We believe that those who are willing to give their time now will reap the benefits in the future. As a result, Bank Street Arts relies on volunteers for admin support, gallery invigilation, maintenance duties and programme delivery.

STRUCTURE

We have recently been awarded charitable status so we can now widen the scope of our activities and more easily raise funds on our own terms. We have also established a membership programme, open to anyone with an interest in Bank Street Arts. This ensures that the local community has a voice in appointing new trustees and influencing the direction of BSA. In the meantime we have installed an experienced Board of Trustees. For an up-to-date list of trustees go to:

www.charity-commission.gov.uk

DEVELOPMENT

After a considerable amount of upgrading the centre comprises office and studio space, galleries, project spaces, cafe and display areas, an education space and a shared jewellery workshop. Our events programme includes contemporary art installations, poetry readings, live art, experimental music performance, exhibitions and discussions. Those using the centre include jewellers, visual artists, illustrators, designers, poets, publishers, photographers, architects, theatre companies and a host of other individuals from printmakers to book binders. The gallery spaces are available both to rent and as part of a curated programme of exhibitions and events. It is intended that the exhibitions in the galleries reflect the diversity of those in residence.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our charitable aims are:

- To operate a public exhibition programme supported by a variety of recreational facilities such as workshops, shared spaces, galleries and education sessions
- To provide subsidised studios and offices for artists and community-based creative organisations
- To provide public access to a listed building
- To provide people with employment opportunities and work experience.



MIKK MURRAY - INSTALLATION

Our original objectives were more focused on our creative ambitions and they continue to be just as relevant today as they were when we began. These are:

- Provision of good quality, affordable studio space for creative practitioners
- Opportunities for anyone interested in contemporary art, craft and writing to participate and get involved
- Building used as a central hub for creative practice in Sheffield

- The promotion of hybrid arts, in particular collaboration between diverse practitioners
- Reach a wider audience for contemporary art, craft and writing through collaboration with popular festivals and events

Up-to-date information is available on our website – www.bankstreetarts.com and through our social networking profiles on Facebook and Twitter.

3. GALLERY ASSISTANT ROLE

*“The key to the role is to combine **friendliness, professionalism** and **vigilance** at all times and to have an **eye for detail**.” John Clark, Creative Director.*

All members of staff, whether volunteers or directors, will be asked to act as Gallery Assistants at some point during their time at Bank Street, so it is important to be clear about what the role entails. It is easier to sum up what the job is not than to list everything that is expected, so we'll begin there. Bank Street Arts is a thriving, working Arts Centre with over 70 people working in the building and up to 14 spaces open to the public in different ways. Being a gallery assistant at Bank Street is not a

passive role where you can sit and read or work at a computer all day - our Gallery Assistants are the public face of Bank Street Arts and responsible for everything 'front of house'. You are the first and last person that all visitors see during their time spent in the centre. We're committed to making BSA a place where all members of the community feel welcome and appreciated so you are a vital factor in ensuring that this happens.



Firstly, you need to be aware what we mean by 'front of house' at Bank Street. Effectively, it is everything in

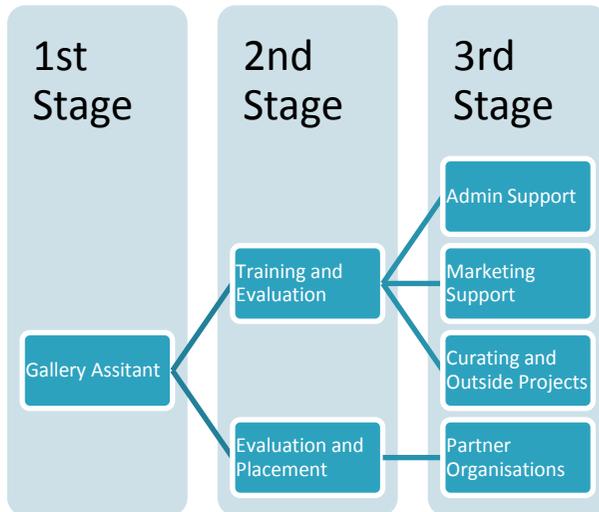
the public domain. It may mean that you are actually invigilating in the main entrance gallery and that is certainly a key part of the role but we expect Gallery Assistants to be responsible for all the public areas and this begins outside the building from putting out signs to clearing up any litter; to opening and closing up and being responsible for security; to putting out and maintaining any advertising in the galleries; to ensuring nothing is laid around, that coats and bags are put away, that lights are on and working, and all AV equipment is set up and functioning, that there is no litter, mess or stray cups in the galleries and that everything looks as immaculate as it can in a fast changing, dynamic environment; to moving beyond the galleries into communal areas and ensuring they are clean, clear and tidy of mess; to ensuring the Education Space is set up each day and has been cleaned along with all tables in the café/meeting areas; to ensuring loos are clean and have paper and

towels; to ensuring nothing is left in corridors or on stairwells creating a hazard or fire risk: and all of this in a centre in which exhibitions change every week and we still have much work to do to the fabric of the building. These aforementioned tasks are all the responsibility of the Gallery Assistant; and this is before and in addition to your role as public interface.

In addition to your responsibility for the public space, you are also our public face – literally. You should always greet visitors in a friendly and approachable manner, acknowledging everyone who enters the building and in some cases encouraging them in. You need to be aware of everything that is happening in the building, what exhibitions are taking place, classes and evening events, private views, artists in residence, names of studio holders, so that you are able to handle any and all enquiries. You need to be sensitive to the requirements of visitors – those who wish to be left alone and those who want to engage in conversation. Visitors are likely to remember the way they are treated and dealt with on an interpersonal level equally as vividly if not more so than the contents of an exhibition and it is your role to enhance their experience and ensure they want to return.

Finally, Bank Street Arts is very much in its infancy and your contribution to its development, in particular in your role as Gallery Assistant, will help to define how the Centre develops. Above and beyond the list of tasks defined here, we encourage initiative in this role and hope you will feedback to us what else we need to be doing and that you will look beyond a check list of tasks in carrying out this role.

4. PROGRESSION, TRAINING & SUPERVISION



ON ARRIVAL...

The vast majority of volunteers begin their BSA lives as gallery assistants. This gives you the opportunity to see the centre functioning day-to-day and spend time contemplating how you could develop your role to better suit your needs and those of the centre. (For a job spec of the gallery assistant role please see Appendix A.) You will be given an induction covering:

- The objectives of the centre
- Your role
- Basic health and safety issues
- An orientation that covers details of studio holders , resident artists, etc.

APPRAISAL

The Centre Supervisor will inform you of the date of your first appraisal. This is an opportunity for self evaluation and for us to let you know how we feel your placement is progressing. Appraisals will normally take place once a month.

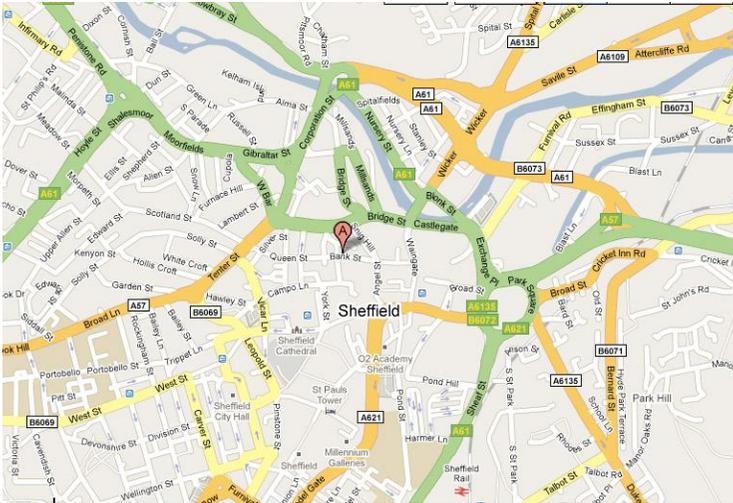
PROGRESSION AND TRAINING

Where possible, BSA management will seek to find funds to support your development within your role. But due to the unique funding structure at BSA it is often difficult to enroll staff on expensive training courses.

Following a successful evaluation you may wish to redefine your role in the centre. This can involve anything from supporting another part of the centre to managing your own project or event. In some cases, we have been able to put volunteers into placements with one of our partner organisations, when specific interest and experience is best gained elsewhere.

5.CONTACT

At present, the vast majority of our activities take place at our centre on Bank Street in the Cathedral Quarter. It's more than likely you'll already have found the centre if you've received this handbook but just in case you need to inform others or forget where we are...



Our address is:

Bank Street Arts
32-40 Bank Street
Sheffield
S1 2DS

Tel: 0114 346 30 34

Email: info@bankstreetarts.com

6.COMMUNICATION

We encourage the collaboration of all stakeholders involved at Bank Street Arts. In a 24 hour access Arts Centre this is not always easy to do but we endeavor to support the process in any way we can. At present we use:

OUR WEBSITE

The best way to access up to date information on current events, exhibitions and studio holders.

NEWSLETTER

The admin team will regularly publish a newsletter with up-to-date information on exhibitions and events taking place at the centre.

FACEBOOK

We have a fan page which we use to send out invites and promotions. We also have a group page specifically for studio holders, volunteers and members to interact.

TWITTER

Similarly used for marketing purposes for events and exhibitions.

MEETINGS

Your supervisor will inform you of the date of the next volunteer meeting. They will normally take place on an evening in midweek. This will be an opportunity for you to meet other volunteers at BSA. It's also a chance to discuss projects, have your say on how things are going, or simply have a chat with some lovely people!

SOCIAL EVENTS

We have intermittently planned social events such as Bank Street lunches for studio holders, staff and volunteers. We have also organised evening drinks but our favourite haunt – the Shakespeare – closed down at the end of last year. We have learnt that these events are extremely beneficial for all parties but they require someone to take responsibility for them. If you fancy organising an event, either at Bank Street or elsewhere, let us know!

7.COMMON PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS

You'll need to use your initiative to deal with the diverse range of people and requests but some problems and issues tend to arise more than others. Here is a list of some of them and suggested solutions. If you encounter a problem and are unsure what to do then contact the Centre Supervisor.

| Problem | Solution | Contact |
|---|---|---|
| Internet connection is down | Reset the system (allow 10 secs before restarting the modem). The box is located in the corridor above studio 10. | Operations Manager – gareth@bankstreetarts.com |
| Studio Holder is locked out of room. | Ensure that you recognise the person in question. There is a spare set of keys for each studio in the office. | Centre Supervisor – jen@bankstreetarts.com |
| Artist wants to know what should be used to secure artwork to walls. | Gallery/Café walls are made of chipboard and plasterboard. They can screw directly into the wall. | Creative Director – galleries@bankstreetarts.com |
| Walls need filling | Use Mangers wall filler only. Don't use any other type as it won't sand easily. | Creative Director – galleries@bankstreetarts.com |
| People ask for change for car-parking | Explain that we get so many requests we are unable to give change. | |
| People turn up for a meeting with a studio holder but the studio holder is not around | Ask one of the admin staff to contact the studio holder. Under no circumstances should | Centre Supervisor/Admin Staff |

you give out any
personal mobile
numbers of studio
holders.

CODES FOR DOORS

Gallery Doors – '4132' before inputting code turn the knob to reset the system.

Back Studios '1963'

Front studios (1st Floor) '190Z'

Front Studios (2nd Floor) '1964'

8. EXPENSES

You are able to reclaim some expenses relating to your placement at BSA. These are:

1. Travel – bus or train tickets to a maximum of £3 per day. Due to BSA's commitment to environmental sustainability we will only fund petrol costs under special circumstances (e.g. due to a disability or lack of public transport provisions).
2. Meals – will be provided by the BSA café, when available.

All expenses will be reimbursed immediately once a completed expenses form is submitted accompanied by the original receipts/tickets.

9. POLICY COMMITMENTS

This section covers our commitment to Health & Safety, Fire Safety, Equal Opportunities and Confidentiality. You will be given induction training on these areas but you should also review the main policy documents in the BSA office.

HEALTH & SAFETY

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Studios | Due to the diverse range of activities undertaken in the Centre there is often dangerous machinery situated in the private studios. Under no circumstances should employees enter private studios without the supervisor's knowledge. |
| Lifting | On occasion you may be asked to carry equipment around the building. If you are not aware of basic lifting techniques you should tell your supervisor immediately. |
| Insurance | You are covered by the BSA employer liability insurance as a volunteer in the Centre. The certificate is displayed in the BSA office. |
| Personal Security | You should not feel at risk at any time during your time at Bank Street Arts. In the unlikely event that you are subjected to abuse of any sort you should contact your supervisor immediately. |

FIRE PROCEDURES

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Fire Alarm | The fire alarm will be tested weekly. You should make yourself aware of the day/time of the test and the location for meeting in an emergency. |
| Emergency Exits | You should be aware of all the emergency exits. Due to the nature of the building there are no exits at the rear. However, there are four doors that exit onto Bank Street. These are: (1) at the bottom of the stairs at the front of the building, (2) the main gallery entrance, (3) the entrance at gallery room 2, (4) through the ginnel, accessed through the courtyard. |

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Bank Street Arts is committed to providing equal access to its facilities and services for all members of the community. Provision is being made to provide maximum physical access to

CONFIDENTIALITY

As you may be at liberty to information protected by the Data Protection Act 1998, you will be asked to sign the BSA confidentiality statement. Your induction training will cover the main issues.

10.COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

You should always feel welcome, safe and appreciated whilst volunteering at Bank Street Arts. If you feel that this is not the case, you should follow our complaints procedure in the following order:

- If suitable request an evaluation with your line manager – see Appendix 2 for the management hierarchy for further details. You should be able to deal with most issues by this method.
- If you feel that the issue has an immediate impact on your ability to complete your role at BSA you should consult your line manager immediately. If unavailable or you feel that this is an unsuitable course of action, you may consult any other member of staff at the same level – again see Appendix 2.
- If you feel that you would like to take the complaint further you may submit an official complaint to the Board of Trustees. Send your complaint to info@bankstreetarts.com or to the Bank Street Arts address on the contact section. The issue will then be discussed at the next Board meeting, a response formulated, and appropriate action will be taken as the Directors see fit.

APPENDIX A

GALLERY ASSISTANT ROLE

- To greet visitors and answer queries
- To act as a permanent presence in the Centre during public opening hours
- To provide information about Bank Street Arts and current exhibitions/events
- To invigilate during exhibitions
- To assist with the setting up of exhibitions and events

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:

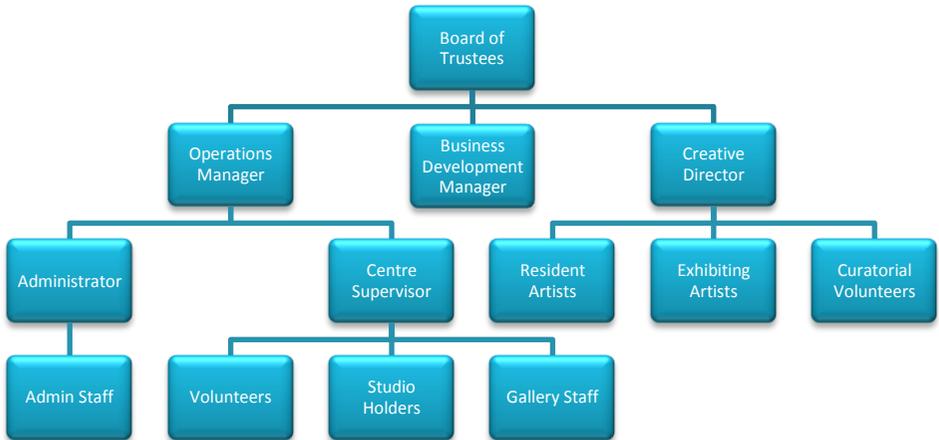
- To present a welcoming and professional image to all visitors
- To be proactive in approaching, welcoming and assisting visitors regarding the exhibitions, events and studio holders.
- To be sensitive to those visitors who do not wish to be approached
- To open and close the galleries/centre at the start and end of the day and be aware of security issues at all times
- To be based in the main 'entrance' gallery as both invigilator and 'public face' of the Centre
- To understand how BSA functions and to be able to pass on this information to visitors
- To encourage visitors to get involved
- To have a knowledge of past, current and forthcoming exhibitions and events
- To be aware of, and adhere to, all health and safety guidance in place and in particular to be aware of fire exit procedures
- To be aware of studio vacancies, current residencies and where to refer all enquiries.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- General cleaning and tidying
- Painting and decorating
- Advertising and promotion

APPENDIX B

MANAGEMENT HIERARCHY



As a volunteer you should initially make contact with the Operations Manager. In the first instance he/she will act as your supervisor.

NOTES

NOTES

Bank St Arts

This volunteer handbook sets out the BSA volunteer policy with some useful and practical information regarding your role at the Centre. If you wish to see a copy of the original policy please see your line manager.
