

FESTIVAL VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME INFORMATION PACK 2024



•PLEASANCE•



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INTRODUCTION

Join us for an unforgettable summer at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival!

The Pleasance Festival Volunteer Programme provides a platform for people of all backgrounds and ages to hone their skills in the creative industries by playing a key role in the daily operation of the Pleasance's Fringe venues, at the centre of the largest arts festival in the world.

Volunteers are crucial to the daily operations at Pleasance's three venues containing 33 performance spaces. Could you be one of them?

Roles are available in **Technical**, **Guest**, **Industry** and **Marketing** departments; each role involves genuine responsibilities with support from team members already working in the industry.

The Programme runs from the end of July to the end of August, with most joining for the full duration:

Technical Department

Thursday 25th July - Thursday 29th August

Guest, Industry + Marketing Department

Friday 26th July - Thursday 29th August

We have a huge respect for our volunteers at the Fringe and strive to ensure that as well as learning lots, you also have a lot of fun.

The fast-paced festival offers a challenging and rewarding experience in a uniquely creative environment - with a range of benefits such as free accommodation, events and workshops, skills development and more.

We hope you'll join us!



WHAT VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE



Subsistence

Subsistence to reimburse legitimate out-of-pocket living expenses. This is paid in two parts - 50% in the middle of August, 50% at the end of the programme.



Accommodation

A private room in a shared flat within close proximity to the venue at no cost to yourself.



Pleasance Pass

Providing FREE access to the full Pleasance programme and discounts at various restaurants, cafes and bars throughout Edinburgh.



Training

Access to training opportunities and information sessions.



Uniform

Including t-shirts and a hoodie.



References

List Pleasance as a referee for any CV or reference requests.



Networking

Exclusive workshops and networking opportunities, as well as wellbeing and social events.

VOLUNTEER CRITERIA

Equal Opportunities

At the Pleasance Theatre Trust we want our team to reflect wider society and welcome applications from all sections of the community – particularly anyone currently underrepresented in the creative industries.

We welcome applications from everyone, regardless of backgrounds or social group. If you would like to have an informal discussion about any role available or anything in this pack before you submit your application please [contact jobs@pleasance.co.uk](mailto:contact.jobs@pleasance.co.uk).

You can also email or phone to talk to us about your access needs. Our access menu on the website details what we can provide but it is not exhaustive. We discuss access with candidates at each step of the application process, so first we would discuss access for the application, then go from there.

What we require from applicants

To join the volunteer programme, you should:

- Be available for the duration of the programme:
 - **Technical Department:** Thursday 25th July –Thursday 29th August
 - **Guest, Industry + Marketing Departments:** Friday 26th July – Thursday 29th August
- Have flexibility to work different shift patterns on different days, over a 6 day week.
- Be 18+ on your first day of volunteering.
- Have the right to work in the UK (or can apply for the right to work).
- Be able to arrange your own travel to/from Edinburgh on the dates noted above.

What we look for in applicants

We're not necessarily looking for any previous experience in your chosen role, however you should be able to demonstrate:

- A personal reason for taking part – such as developing skills, meeting new people, growing in confidence or having new experiences.
- An ability to interact with others – such as with teammates, artists or the general public.
- A willingness to work as both a team and individually.
- An ability to remain motivated, particularly in a fast paced environment.
- Any additional skills or experiences you feel may support you in the role. Successful applications are most often ones which clearly and concisely communicate these points, as well as those who show a passion for the arts.

Part Festival Opportunities

Opportunities may also be available for volunteers unable to commit to the full programme. Part Festival volunteers should ideally commit to two weeks or to regular shift times over a longer duration, although alternative working structures will be considered. Applications will open for this in late Spring.

International Volunteers

If you do not have the right to work in the UK, you may still be able to volunteer by securing a visa. You would be responsible for your own applications, including any fees. We recommend you fully research your visa options before applying to the programme, however typical options include:

Charity Worker (Temporary Worker) Visa

This gives you the right to work for the Pleasance during the programme. This application requires a certificate of sponsorship from the Pleasance, which will be provided if you are offered a place on the volunteer programme. Please note a very limited number of certificates are available.

Standard Visitor Visa

This gives you the right to visit the UK as a Standard Visitor for tourism, business, study (courses up to 6 months) and other permitted activities including volunteering for a charity for up to 30 days. You can usually stay in the UK for up to 6 months. You might be able to apply to stay for longer in certain circumstances, for example to get medical treatment. This application does not require a certificate of sponsorship from the Pleasance but we can provide a letter of invitation.

Youth Mobility Scheme Visa

This gives you the right to work in the UK for up to 2 years, if you meet the eligibility criteria. This application does not require a certificate of sponsorship from the Pleasance and can be made independently of the programme.

UK Ancestry Visa

This gives you the right to work in the UK for up to 5 years, if you meet the eligibility criteria. This application does not require a certificate of sponsorship from the Pleasance and can be made independently of the programme.

Work Experience Opportunities

A dedicated work experience programme is available to under 18 year olds based in or around Edinburgh. Please [email jobs@pleasance.co.uk](mailto:email.jobs@pleasance.co.uk) for more information.

*"I've never learned so much
and met so many wonderful
people in only one month"*

**Iain
Venue Crew**



APPLICATION GUIDE

Application Timeline

The application timeline for the 2024 Volunteer Programme is as follows:

- **February 2024:** Applications open.
- **March 2024 onward:** On an ongoing basis, applications are reviewed, shortlisted and candidates invited to interview. Applications are typically reviewed within 4 weeks of applying.
- **March - April 2024:** First round online interviews take place and candidates notified of the outcome.
- **May 2024:** Applications open for Part Festival roles depending on outcome of first recruitment block.
- **May - July 2024:** Second round of online interviews take place and candidates notified of the outcome, until all vacancies are filled.

Unfortunately, as we're a small team, we'll only be in touch if we're able to offer you an interview. We'll do our best to let shortlisted candidates know the outcome 1 to 3 weeks following the interview.

Deadline

There is no fixed deadline for applications!

Interviews continue until all vacancies are filled but we do encourage everyone to apply as early as possible to increase the chance of being shortlisted. We may still need vacancies filled right up to and during the Festival.

Current vacancies are listed at
pleasance.co.uk/festival-volunteer-programme

Making an Application

To apply for the programme, you can make one of the following applications:

Online, in Writing:

Complete the Pleasance Volunteer Application Form, available here:

pleasance.co.uk/festival-volunteer-programme

Audio

An audio version of this document and the application form is available to download using the link above. An audio application can be made by emailing an .MP3 audio file of you answering the questions in the application form. Audio should be clear and easy to hear and understand. To submit an audio application, email the file to jobs@pleasance.co.uk with the subject "2024 Volunteer Programme Application - [Your Name]". If the file is large please use a file sharing site such as wettransfer.com

Video

A video application can be made by emailing a .MP4 or .MOV video file of you answering the questions in the application form. There is no dress code for video applications. To submit a video application email the file to jobs@pleasance.co.uk with the subject "2024 Volunteer Programme Application - [Your Name]". If the file is large please use a file sharing site such as wettransfer.com, or upload a private video to a hosting site such as YouTube, Google Drive or Dropbox and send the link for viewing.

You can also submit a CV with your application in DOC or PDF format if you wish, which can give further context to the information you give in your application. This is optional and applications without a CV will be considered equally.

Application Process

The process has two stages:

1. An application
2. Interviews for shortlisted candidates

How we assess your application

- Each application is assessed by a member of the team you're applying to - typically a manager with knowledge of the role's requirements. Your application will be assessed for how closely you meet the role's requirements. Please refer to [What we look for in applicants](#) and specific [Role description](#) sections in this pack.
- The assessor will determine a shortlist of candidates for interview.
- If your first choice role is not currently available, your application may be passed to the assessor of your second or third choice role. The application will then be assessed independently and without reference to the original assessor.
- You will be contacted by email if you are shortlisted for an interview, which will take place online using Zoom.

"The most complete experience you can get of life, entertainment and work at the Fringe."

Suman
Venue Crew

- Interviews are conducted by 1 or 2 interviewers who have knowledge of the role's requirements and will assess your interview with a mixture of comments and scores for how closely they think you meet the requirements of the role.

Due to the volume of applications received, we can only contact successful applicants. Unfortunately, we can't provide feedback or notify unsuccessful applicants.

The Interview

Interviews are offered in two formats, depending on your preference and timing of your application. All interview formats are treated equally. If you need any adjustments for your interview please let us know and we can discuss this with you ahead of time.

Online

- Interviews take place on Zoom and candidates are required to have a Zoom account, which can be created for free at: zoom.us
- You will be assigned a 20 minute one-to-one interview slot.
- During the interview you will be asked a series of set questions.
- If you prefer you may keep your camera off during the interview .
- Please test your sound, microphone, and camera prior to the interview.
- In the event of technical difficulties, your interview will continue by phone.
- There is no dress code.
- Further info, including the set questions and a video presentation, will be sent by email in advance.

Phone

- Interviews may take place by phone on request and follow the same format as online interviews. Please request this when invited to interview.

If your application is successful

- You will receive an offer by email, confirming the role, dates, subsistence and other relevant information.
- You will be invited to discuss our access menu and any access requirements you have so we can agree together what adjustments can be made.
- You are welcome to ask any further questions prior to accepting the offer.
- After you accept your offer, you will be sent any relevant pre-arrival information and you should make travel arrangements if required.

Help

If you require help with your application you may contact us by:

Email: jobs@pleasance.co.uk

Phone: +44 (0)207 619 6868

We aim to reply to all enquiries within 7 days.



PROGRAMME TIMELINE

Arrival

Thursday 25th + Friday 26th July

- Thursday 25th July: Technical team arrive, with a training day on Friday 26th July
- Friday 26th July: Guest, Industry and Marketing teams arrive
- Evening of Friday 26th July: Welcome meeting followed by small social event

The Get In

Saturday 27th – Tuesday 30th July

- During the Get-In, all team members make final preparations for the venues opening.
- Technical rehearsals from Sunday 28th July – Tuesday 30th July
- Guest, industry and marketing teams help set up public areas – such as distributing posters and creating marketing displays. They also undergo departmental training during this time.
- These days are crucial to the build and can be long, full on and physical, with a lot of information to take in, but are carefully planned, led and supported by management and supervisor teams.

The Festival

Wednesday 31st July – Monday 26th August

- All venues are open to the public daily during the festival period. Performances take place from around 10am to midnight. Approximately 200 performances take place each day.
- Volunteers work as part of a rota during the festival period, with one full day off rota every 7. Shift times differ daily and are a mixture of daytime and evening shifts. Adequate breaks are provided for rest and enjoying the festival. Role specific shift patterns are discussed at the interview.
- Optional staff social events and workshops take place during the festival.

The Get Out

Tuesday 27th – Wednesday 28th August

- During the “Get-Out”, the venues close to the general public and all team members help pack up temporary infrastructure. This is like the “Get-In”, but in reverse.
- The Get-Out concludes and a final night dinner and party is on the evening of Wednesday 28th August

Departure

Thursday 29th August

Volunteers leave on Thursday 29th August. Accommodation check-out is by 10am.

ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

Technical	Guest Services	Marketing	Industry Services
Venue Crew Venue Crew Lead	Box Office Operator Front of House Assistant	Street Team Digital Content Creator	Arts Industry Officer Press Officer

Venue Crew

Department: Technical

Team: Technical

About the team

The Technical team operates across 23 performance spaces ranging from 42 to 750 seats in size in two venues, the Courtyard and Dome. Each performance space has a dedicated crew of 3 – 8 crew members. A team of professional technicians is assigned to support the voluntary team in each performance space. Each team is responsible for providing first class support to their space's performing companies, ensuring that performances start on time throughout the day and maintaining Pleasance's reputation for outstanding levels of company care.

Responsibilities include

- To welcome and support performing companies.
- To oversee the performance space, including powering equipment up and down at the beginning and end of the day (training provided).
- To maintain the daily schedule, including quick turn-around times between performances.
- To assist with admitting and seating audiences.
- To operate lighting or sound equipment during performances (training provided).
- To problem solve, troubleshoot and think on your feet.

Things to know

- You will be dedicated to a single performance space or work across 2 spaces for the duration of the Programme.
- You will work in close proximity to the same artists and team members each day.
- You will regularly interact with the general public.
- You will work a daily changing rota in the Festival (after Get-In), with 1 full day off rota every 7.
- You will be supported by Technical Supervisors and/or Venue Managers.

Ways the role may benefit you

- Technical skills including lighting and sound operation.
- Relationship management skills.
- Customer service skills.
- Insight into the working practices of a range of performing companies.



Venue Crew Lead

Department: Technical

Team: Technical

Each of our smaller performance spaces has a Venue Crew Lead as part of its Venue Crew. After undertaking additional training, they become a designated point of contact in the performance space for performing companies and the Area Management team. They help maintain clear lines of communication with companies, filter information to and from their fellow volunteers and help organise the performance space so it runs effectively.

Additional Training

- As a Venue Crew Lead you will join the Volunteer Programme early on Sunday 21st July for 3 days of additional training.
- This will give enhanced training in sound, lighting and venue management. It is designed to give you skills and confidence to take on this additional remit.
- Following this you will join your fellow volunteers for the rest of the Programme.

Things to know

- You may be interested in this role if you are looking to gain further experience to support you in the future in larger performance spaces or more senior technical roles.
- A strong interest in the Fringe or live productions is essential but direct experience is not a requirement.
- You will have strong communication skills and ideally basic administration skills.
- You must be available for the extended dates noted above to undertake this role.

Expressing an interest

- You should express an interest in a Venue Crew Lead role in your application for Venue Crew.
- There are a limited number of Venue Crew Lead vacancies available.
- Your application can be successful for the role of Venue Crew even if it is not for Venue Crew Lead.



Box Office Operator

Department: Guest Services

Team: Box Office

About the team

The Box Office team sells tickets to the general public for over 250 productions taking place at the Pleasance during the festival. This large team works from various sales points across two venues – the Pleasance Courtyard and Dome. This includes indoor counters, outdoor counters, over the phone and roving on-the-spot sales – using a ticketing system at each. Box Office Operators work in groups of 2 to 6 volunteers. The team maintains Pleasance’s reputation for excellent customer service, answering general questions and providing recommendations to shows.

Responsibilities Include

- To be friendly and welcoming to audiences.
- To sell tickets using a ticketing system.
- To answer customer questions.
- To provide show recommendations.

Things to know

- You will continually interact with the general public in a busy environment.
- You require attention to detail to effectively use the ticketing system.
- You will occasionally manage challenging situations, such as refund requests.
- You will work at a different sales point and with different team members on each shift.
- You will work a daily changing rota in the Festival (after Get-In), with 1 full day off rota every 7.
- You will be supported by Supervisors and/or Managers.

Ways the role may benefit you

- Customer service skills.
- Building confidence by interacting with people of all backgrounds and ages.
- Learning about shows and what audiences are interested in.
- Diplomacy skills.
- Building friendships and close working relationships.



Front of House Assistant

Department: Guest Services

Team: Front of House

About the team

The Front of House team welcomes audiences to over 200 performances every day. This large team manages queues, checks tickets and helps seat the audience. They provide support to performance spaces ranging from 42 to 750 seats in size, with effective queue management, helping performances start on time. Front of House Assistants generally work in groups of 2 to 6 volunteers, but occasionally individually. The team maintains Pleasance's reputation for excellent customer service, answering general questions from audiences and giving information.

Responsibilities Include

- To be friendly and welcoming to audiences.
- To manage queues by making audiences wait in a set location before the performance.
- To check mobile and printed tickets using a digital ticket system.
- To assist audiences whilst entering, exiting and throughout the performance.

Things to know

- You will continually interact with the general public in large crowds within a busy environment.
- You will occasionally manage challenging situations, such as late arrivals or sold-out shows.
- You will work at different performance spaces and with different team members on each shift.
- You will be constantly moving and working outdoors during most shifts.
- You will work a daily changing rota in the Festival (after get-In), with 1 full day off rota every 7.
- You will be supported by Front of House Supervisors and/or Manager.

Ways the role may benefit you

- Customer service skills.
- Building confidence by interacting with people of all backgrounds and ages.
- Learning about shows and what audiences are interested in.
- Diplomacy skills.
- Building friendships and close working relationships.



Arts Industry Officer

Department: Industry Services

Team: Arts Industry

About the team

The Arts Industry team provides ticketing services to industry professionals working at the festival and work closely with all performing companies at the Pleasance. This small team processes complimentary ticket requests from individuals such as producers or tour bookers and sets up deals / discounts on behalf of performing companies. They also undertake a number of administrative and general reception duties. They are the first point of contact for most questions from performing companies and build trusted relationships with them by providing excellent customer service.

Responsibilities Include

- To be friendly and welcoming to industry professionals and performing company members.
- To issue complimentary tickets and set up ticket offers using a digital ticketing system.
- To answer and redirect questions on email, phone and in-person.
- To undertake reception duties, such as managing ID passes, incoming post and lost property.

Things to know

- You will interact with busy industry professionals in a fast-paced working environment.
- You will be office based and administrative – using ticketing software and spreadsheets.
- You will occasionally manage challenging situations, such as meeting tight deadlines.
- You will work in close proximity to the same members of a small team each day.
- You will work a daily changing rota in the Festival (after get-In), with 1 full day off rota every 7.
- You will be supported by the Supervisors and/or Managers.

Ways the role may benefit you

- Insight into the professional world of the arts.
- Learn about producing through interactions with performing company members
- Customer service skills.
- Relationship management skills and diplomacy.
- Administration skills.



Press Officer

Department: Industry Services

Team: Press Office

About the team

The Press Office team provides ticketing services to journalists covering the festival and connects them with performing companies' press representatives to get the best possible press coverage. This small team are office-based at the Pleasance Dome and work across 3 main areas: ticketing, cuttings or broadcast. Each team member is responsible for one of these for the festival, but gains experience in all three. They are the first point of contact for media enquiries and build trusted relationships with both journalists and press representatives by providing excellent customer service.

Responsibilities Include

- To be friendly and welcoming to journalists, performing companies and press representatives.
- To undertake one of three main duties, but support all:
 - **Ticketing:** To issue complimentary press tickets using a digital ticketing system.
 - **Cuttings:** To archive press coverage and post this on displays throughout the sites.
 - **Broadcast:** To schedule film, photography and audio recording requests.
- To answer and redirect questions on email, phone and in-person.

Things to know

- You will interact with busy professional journalists in a fast-paced working environment.
- You will be office based and administrative - using ticketing software and spreadsheets.
- You will occasionally manage challenging situations, such as meeting tight deadlines.
- You will work in close proximity to the same members of a small team each day.
- You will work office hours during the Festival (after Get-In), with 1 full day off rota every 7.
- You will be supported by the Press Office Supervisors and/or Manager.

Ways the role may benefit you

- Insight into the professional world of the arts and journalism.
- Learn about arts PR from the professional PR agency that manages the Press Office.
- Learning about shows and what journalists are interested in.
- Relationship management skills and diplomacy.
- Administration skills.



Street Team

Department: Marketing

Team: Street Team

About the team

The Street Team promotes shows at the Pleasance by capturing the interest of potential audiences – crucially through hand-to-hand flyering and engaging conversation. This small team supports the 10 to 15 productions that the Pleasance are directly producing – seeing these shows and meeting their creative teams to better understand how best to speak about them. Team members will often work individually before regrouping as a team, taking on more group work later in the festival. Their friendly enthusiasm helps maintain the Pleasance's reputation as the Fringe's most exciting and welcoming venue.

Responsibilities Include

- To speak to audiences one-to-one about shows whilst handing out flyers.
- To create and maintain promotional displays throughout the sites.
- To distribute posters and flyers to cafés, bars and other outlets throughout Edinburgh.
- To find creative ways to capture potential audience's interest.

Things to know

- You will continually interact with the general public, one-to-one, within a busy environment.
- You will speak confidently and enthusiastically about theatre, comedy and children's shows.
- You will occasionally manage challenging situations, such as disinterested audiences.
- You will be constantly moving and working outdoors at most times.
- You will work in close proximity to the same members of a small team each day.
- You will work a daily changing rota in the Festival (after Get-In), with 1 full day off rota every 7.
- You will be supported by the Street Team Manager.

Ways the role may benefit you

- Insight into arts marketing.
- Building confidence by interacting with people of all backgrounds and ages.
- Learning about shows and what audiences are interested in.
- Engaging with artists and performing company members.
- Building friendships and close working relationships.



Digital Content Creators

Department: Marketing

Team: Digital Content

About the team

The Digital Content team helps reach and engage new audiences for the Pleasance's programme of shows by creating videos and photography for our social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok. They spend their time finding creative ways to promote individual shows - working directly with companies as well as documenting the day-to-day of the festival. This 2 person team includes a filmmaker and photographer, who work both together and individually.

Responsibilities Include

- To capture and edit photography and video content.
- To communicate with and pitch ideas to performing companies.
- To attend and cover pre-scheduled events such as Press Launches and Galas.
- To schedule and post content on social media.

Things to know

- You will interact directly with performing company members.
- You will work to deadlines and make content that is ready to post quickly.
- You will ideally have your own equipment (smartphone or higher).
- You will work closely with the co-creator each day.
- You will work a flexible daily schedule in the Festival (after get-In), with 1 full day off every 7.
- You will be supported by the Digital Marketing Coordinator and Graphic Designer.

Ways the role may benefit you

- Insight into arts marketing.
- Creating content for use in a personal portfolio.
- Learning about shows and what online audiences engage with.
- Engaging with artists and performing company members.
- Building friendships and close working relationships.

ALUMNI

“Volunteers from the Pleasance have gone on to work in major theatrical institutions throughout the UK and across the globe.

These include **The National Theatre, The Arts Council, The RSC, Cheek by Jowl, Complicité, Punchdrunk, Kneehigh, Fuel, The Adelaide Fringe, The Melbourne Festival, The Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Oxford Playhouse, The Royal Opera House, The English National Opera, Battersea Arts Centre, The Almeida, Southwark Playhouse, The Royal Albert Hall, The Bridge Theatre, New Diorama Theatre, Festival Republic, The Gate Theatre, Ballet Rambert, The Lyceum, The Playhouse, Chichester Festival Theatre, The Edinburgh Festival Theatre, Soho Theatre, Gecko Theatre Company, The Royal Court, Really Useful Theatres, The Sydney Opera House, Stomp, The Vault Festival, Marvel Films, The BBC and Netflix.**

They have gone on to set up technical firms, scenery workshops and audio companies, work in ticketing, marketing, PR and journalism. They produce, direct, act, write and make films. Some have chosen other valuable routes, becoming solicitors, doctors, engineers and teachers. These volunteers represent a who’s who of our entire industry and beyond.

... One of those volunteers even became Director of the Pleasance!”

Anthony Alderson

Director

Pleasance Theatre Trust





THE PROGRAMME IN VOLUNTEERS' OWN WORDS

"An opportunity of a lifetime,
experiencing new theatre and comedy,
while making friends for life."

Sean, Box Office

"It was like one big "pinch me" moment"

Avril, Venue Crew

"No single line could ever express how
wonderful it was."

Olivia, Arts Industry Officer

"A month which will shape my technical
career for the foreseeable future."

Adam, Venue Crew

"I had the best summer, with the best
people and saw some of the most
creative performances"

Jessica, Street Team

"I've never been so tired in my life, I
wouldn't have it any other way!"

Christina, Front of House

"The craziest, most rewarding summer
seeing incredible shows and making
lifelong memories and friendships."

Georgie, Digital Content Creator

"An irreplaceable sense of community."

Emma, Front of House