

Head of Visitor Experience

Science Projects, the charity that operates the Observatory
Science Centre at Herstmonceux is looking for a new
Head of Visitor Experience



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About Us

Science Projects is a UK science education charity with a 30-year history of bringing science to communities.

We operate the Observatory Science Centre (OSC) at Herstmonceux in East Sussex and have a design and build studio in Hampshire which creates interactive science exhibits for museums and science centres all over the world.



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Our Future

We're delighted that the Observatory Science Centre's (OSC) lease has recently been renewed, securing stability and continuity for the long-term future of OSC. This ensures our home will continue to inspire and educate for many years to come.

We are now working to enhance the visitor experience, plan for new and updated exhibits, raise new investment for the buildings, grounds and exhibits, and offer the community new opportunities to explore the wonders of science through hands-on discovery and engaging experiments. Our website is also getting a glow-up! We're redesigning it to be more fun, fresh, and intuitive for everyone.



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The Observatory Science Centre at Herstmonceux

“What an absolute gem! If you want hands on fun, where children and adults alike can touch, push, wind, press, feel, see, hear - then this is the place!”

Recent Tripadvisor Review of the Observatory
Science Centre



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What else do we do?

Established design / build studio and workshop in Hampshire— delivering educational, interactive STEM installations to science centres and museums all over the world.



Vilvite Science Centre, Norway



Experimentarium, Copenhagen



Purpose of the Role

The Head of Visitor Experience is responsible for shaping, delivering, and continuously improving the visitor journey at the OSC. This role combines strategic leadership of the front-of-house team with operational responsibilities as the senior Duty Manager.

Leadership & Strategy

- Develop and implement the visitor experience strategy in line with the OSC's mission and vision.
- Lead and motivate the Visitor Experience team (staff and volunteers), ensuring excellent customer service standards.
- Use visitor feedback, evaluation tools, and audience data to drive improvements in service and programming.
- Collaborate with colleagues across education, events, and marketing to align the visitor offer with institutional goals.



Purpose of the Role

Operational Management

- Act as the senior Duty Manager, overseeing the OSC's safe and efficient daily operations, including opening/closing procedures.
- Monitor visitor flow, capacity, health & safety compliance, and emergency procedures.
- Manage onsite response to incidents, providing calm and effective leadership in emergencies.
- Coordinate scheduling, rotas, and staff deployment to ensure adequate coverage and high standards of welcome.

Visitor Services & Engagement

- Ensure the OSC is accessible and welcoming to all audiences, in line with best practice in inclusivity and equality.
- Resolve visitor complaints, enquiries, and feedback professionally, embedding a culture of proactive customer service.
- Develop training and professional development opportunities for front-line staff in areas including accessibility, safeguarding, and science communication.



Purpose of the Role

Financial & Resource Management

- Contribute to the development of budgets related to visitor services, including staffing, retail, and ticketing.
- Monitor performance indicators (visitor satisfaction, dwell times, membership/conversion rates) to optimize visitor engagement and revenue opportunities and report to the CEO/FD.



Desirable Experience and Qualifications

- Experience of strategically leading visitor operations, ideally within science centres, museums, heritage, or the visitor attraction sector.
- Demonstrated leadership of cross-functional teams, including staff and volunteers, overseeing front-line functions and public engagement projects.
- Proven track record of developing strategy for and delivering excellent customer service and experience improvements, with knowledge of audience development and commercial strategy.
- Strong financial acumen, experience with budget management, and data-driven performance improvement.
- Significant knowledge of safeguarding and a clean DBS.
- Educated to degree level or with equivalent professional experience.



Key Skills and Personal Attributes

- Inspirational leadership and the ability to develop and motivate teams in a customer-facing environment.
- Excellent communication and stakeholder management skills, both written and verbal.
- High resilience, positive outlook, and flexibility in handling operational challenges, including calm problem-solving under pressure.
- Strong IT skills.
- Passionate and committed to delivering outstanding visitor experiences, with empathy for a wide range of visitor needs and interests.
- Strategic thinker with vision for long-term audience and operational growth.
- Collaborative, adaptable, and highly organised; able to balance multiple priorities and department interests.
- Approachable but professional, creating a welcoming environment for visitors and staff alike.



Conditions

Location: *The Observatory Science Centre (OSC), Herstmonceux, East Sussex.*

Contract: *Permanent*

Responsible to: *CEO*

Working Pattern: *Full-time. This role requires flexibility, as regular evening, weekend, and holiday shifts will form part of the Duty Manager rota.*

Salary: *Dependent on skills and experience.*



Application Process

Interested candidates should submit a CV, covering letter, and reference contact details to hina@science-projects.org by 5pm, Friday 31st October 2025.

Informal enquiries are welcome and should be submitted to hina@science-projects.org.

As part of the selection process, shortlisted candidates will be asked to prepare a short 10-minute presentation. This will help us understand how you think strategically, communicate ideas, and approach practical challenges. Full details will be provided to shortlisted candidates.

Science Projects is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.

