



Commercial Officer

Part time – fixed term contract with possibility of extension

Candidate Information Pack

Updated January 2025



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Introduction

We are seeking a motivated and enthusiastic Commercial Officer to join our team at the London Museum of Water & Steam. This is an exciting new role - we are looking for someone with the business acumen and an enterprising spirit to significantly enhance the income from our catering, retail and event hire spaces. The postholder will be a key figure in the collective effort to deliver our bold vision for the future. You'll be involved in all aspects of the commercial development including merchandising, product range selection, promotion and customer care. Working closely with the Museum Director, you'll generate an exciting, sustainable commercial model that embraces innovation, creativity and supports wider museum objectives. As befits a role of this nature, there is potential for the postholder to earn an additional bonus if ambitious annual targets are met.

Hannah Harte
Museum Director

About the London Museum of Water & Steam

The London Museum of Water & Steam is an outstanding independent Museum based in an historic site - a Georgian water pumping station in Brentford, West London. We tell the story of a city's mission for clean water and the innovative steam pumping methods used to distribute it to millions.

We're a Museum with ambition. We can have big impact on some of the most important issues today. We are centred on water, a critical commodity that needs our voice, and the future of energy as a current conundrum that the whole planet needs to solve. In this context, we want to broaden our historical stories, anchoring them in the present and demonstrating their relevance to the future. We make our history accessible to a wide range of people from families with small children to specialist enthusiasts and everyone in between, inviting them to join our community and share our story. Our Museum is special and we want to spread the word. We want to extend our reach, engaging with more people and more diverse groups and preserve our collection and site for future generations.

The Museum is a charity and a membership organisation with an energetic and enthusiastic team of trustees leading the way. The site was saved from demolition by volunteers in the 1970s. We are home to a unique collection which tells the story of water from Thames to tap, including some of the largest pumping engines in the world. The pumping station has been an important part of West London since 1838 and this continues today. We are still a majority volunteer organisation with over 65 volunteers and just 12 staff members who look after 24,500 visitors per year, including over 4500 primary school pupils.

The Team

The London Museum of Water & Steam is a small, focused team. The postholder will report to the Museum Director. The successful candidate will also work particularly closely with the Front of House Officer and the Marketing Officer.

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A small group of Duty Managers report to the Front of House Officer but also directly support the activities led by the Commercial Officer. We also have freelance team members supporting funded projects and our learning offer. The majority part time core staff team work alongside a dedicated team of volunteers and liaise closely with our Museum Trustees.

The Museum's Collections

The Museum is home to the world's largest collection of stationary steam engines, including four rotative and five Cornish Beam engines. We also have a steam fire engine, a waterworks railway with two locomotives and an archive packed with content to develop stories and realise creative commercial products.

We want to look after our collections and inspire our visitors and community with their ingenuity and relevance today. We want to help people access the collections and connect them to their own lives in a way that helps to achieve positive impact for people and the planet. We want to work with our volunteers to enable the archive to be accessible and inform our interpretation and the stories we share in a deeper way. We're maintaining the running of our engines in the most sustainable way possible so we can continue to showcase them in a way that excites and engages our audiences and stakeholders.

Responsibilities

- Working with Director to create month by month realistic income and cost budgets for the shop, café and event hire operation. Successfully achieve and analyse these financial targets, contributing to a regular review of all processes and procedures.
- Thinking commercially about upselling across all the different areas of responsibility and delivering a gold standard of customer satisfaction across all initiatives.
- Working with the Director and wider team to generate innovative new commercial income streams.
- Act as a Weekend Manager at the Museum on a rota basis.
- Adhere to all departmental processes and procedures for managing the business, for example: the raising of invoices, logs, trackers, etc and maintaining necessary records.
- As a member of the Core Museum Team, provide clear and consistent leadership to relevant staff and volunteers and act in a front of house/duty manager role where required.

CAFÉ

- Ensure the café consistently delivers on all agreed commercial targets and work to understand, monitor and achieve agreed gross margins on the food and beverages sold through the café.
- Create a seasonal and general café offer that gains great visitor feedback and promote the café as a visitor destination. Maintain a welcoming ambience and comfortable environment for customers within the cafe area.
- Plan and execute great merchandising and visual impact in the café, ensuring that this works with the shop and admissions activity.

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- Ensure the café maintains compliance with all food safety and other relevant regulations so that the café achieves and maintains a Food Hygiene Rating of 5.
- Ensure that all relevant training in health and safety, food hygiene and allergens is undertaken and up to date.
- Capitalise on other catering spaces e.g. seasonal outdoor sales such as ice cream
- Ensure that staff engaged in commercial activities have the confidence and skills to deliver excellent customer service and upsell successfully.

SHOP

- Working with the Director to develop a strategy that drives up retail sales and which fully integrates with the overall vision for the museum. Formally review the effectiveness of the strategy every 6 months, maximising all revenue and cost saving opportunities.
- Maintaining the visual appearance, evaluation of the merchandise positioning, stock rotation and themed promotions, achieving agreed gross margins and identifying and implementing new and increased revenue opportunities.
- Support the Front of House Officer where necessary with stock ordering, analysis of sales, 6 monthly stock takes.
- Working with the Marketing Officer to ensure the website and other social media outlets used by the museum are updated with details of café and shop promotions and marketed to the public.
- Explore and develop e-commerce opportunities.

COMMERCIAL EVENTS & VENUE HIRE

- Deliver premium client and stakeholder experiences, ensuring all expectations are met throughout the consultation, planning and delivery of a commercial hire.
- Respond to and manage all enquiries, negotiation and delivery related to commercial hires.
- Take a proactive approach to the sale of hireable spaces to a wide range of existing and new clients and engage in sales-driven campaigns and approaches, including client liaison and in-person sales work, for example: venue tours, networking events etc.
- With reference to the Director, plan and organise events and venue hire and ensure that there is the necessary additional volunteer/freelance support, an operational plan and any new risk assessments are completed prior to the event.
- Contract negotiation and management of external contractors as needed.
- Ensure we comply with all health and safety, hygiene and allergy requirements either in house or working with external contractors.
- Act as Duty Officer and oversee delivery and staffing complement of commercial hire events.
- Act as Licence Holder for the Museum site.
- Work with the site management team to renew relevant licenses well in advance of expiry, managing any extensions to late license on behalf of clients

Team Contribution and Culture

The role is part of a small team who lead the operation and development of the Museum in association with our Volunteers and Trustees. In this respect you will be expected to:

- Work alongside and support colleagues to achieve the Museum's vision, values and objectives and be flexible in offering support to others.

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- Ensure the Museum adopts an audience-focused and socially and culturally inclusive approach to its work.
- Promote equality of opportunity in the delivery of services.
- Contribute to a positive, forward-looking, and result-orientated organisational culture.
- Adhere to our values that help us be: inclusive, fun, collaborative, entrepreneurial, & ambitious.

Person specification

We are looking for enthusiastic and proactive person who brings with them:

- At least 3 years' experience gained in a retail or hospitality environment including sales, merchandising, reconciliation, stock management and budgeting.
- Demonstrable experience of setting and managing budgets, financial literacy, and a track record in income and profit generation.
- Knowledge and experience in relevant health & safety, food safety, data protection and environmental legislation.
- Ability to understand and review monthly financial profit & loss reports.
- Experience of assessing risk and meeting relevant Health & Safety requirements.
- Food Hygiene Level 3.
- Demonstrable experience of delivering a high-quality visitor experience or an ability to demonstrate suitable transferable skills.
- Problem-solving abilities, capable of innovation, identifying opportunities and selling them to others.
- Working knowledge of client sales, planning, organising and overseeing a range of events.
- Knowledge of contract creation and negotiation.
- Excellent organisational and planning skills but having the ability to adapt and respond to changing events quickly when required to, taking a hands-on approach.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, motivating teams, showing the ability to delegate effectively.
- Self-motivated and adaptable, able to deal with an unpredictable, pressured environment with effective time-management and proven ability to prioritise workload.
- Willingness to work on some evenings and weekends and flexibility with working hours in accordance with business needs.
- A willingness to try new ideas and create possibilities, remaining up to date with current museum and cultural heritage thinking.
- Experience of working and engaging with a range of stakeholders and audiences.

Personal qualities

- Detail focused, coupled with an ability to see the bigger picture.
- Communication and presentation skills.
- A love of collections and the heritage environment.
- Excellent listening skills and approachable nature.
- Responds positively to change and new challenges.
- A keen team player, happy to work and learn alongside a team.
- Excellent organisational and time management skills.
- Good humour, enthusiasm and emotional intelligence.

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- The ability to represent the Museum as an ambassador.
- Effective negotiator, able to maximise the value obtained from suppliers and clients.

Terms of appointment

This is a part-time post: 22.5 hours (3 days) a week. We are flexible and can negotiate how the hours are allocated but it will include some weekend and evening work and is based on-site at the Museum.

Salary £27,040 pro rata (£16,224 actual salary) plus additional performance related bonus (indicative 10% pro rata, with additional incentives achievable TBD) will be awarded if targets for commercial activity are met/exceeded.

The successful candidate will be engaged as an employee on a **fix term contract for two years** in the first instance. There is a possibility of extension and even permanence if targets are met. The post holder is entitled to a pension contribution, holiday pay and other benefits.

How to apply

To apply, please submit a **CV and covering letter** succinctly outlining your reasons for applying and your experience and skills related to the role to Hannah Harte, Museum Director, at museum@waterandsteam.org.uk. Please ensure that your covering letter fully addresses the appointment criteria in the person specification.

We are an equal opportunities employer and if you have any accessibility needs please get in touch so we can make adjustments to the recruitment process.

Closing date: 23:59 Wednesday 19th February 2025

Interviews are likely to take place in the week commencing 10th March 2025, and will be on site at the Museum, TW8 0EN, for a tour of the spaces.

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information, or wish to have an informal discussion, please contact: Hannah Harte, Museum Director, at Hannah.harte@waterandsteam.org.uk