



Recruitment Pack – Operations Manager

Summary

Big Difference is seeking an enterprising and collaborative Operations Manager to lead the operational and venue function of the organisation.

The role will lead on venue operations at The Big Difference as well as the operational effectiveness of the Big Difference festivals (Leicester Comedy Festival and The UK Kid's Comedy Festival) and the charity's year-round projects, events and administration.

About us

Big Difference aims to improve people's lives through comedy and laughter. Since 1994 Big Difference, a registered charity, has produced the annual Leicester Comedy Festival and in 2019 launched The UK Kids' Comedy Festival. In 2023 we will celebrate thirty years of the Leicester Comedy Festival and five years of The UK Kids' Comedy Festival.

Both festivals run every year for three weeks in February and take place in over 135 venues across Leicester. Leicester Comedy Festival is the longest running comedy festival in the UK; it features stand-up, film, poetry, spoken work and comic theatre, regularly attracting some of the biggest names in comedy. The festival supports new and emerging comedians and produces community-based events, which are an important part of its remit as a charity producing festivals and events for the public benefit.

The UK Kids' Comedy Festival brings the best of live comedy for children to young audiences and their families. It features comedy shows, workshops, pop-up interactive events and storytelling.

As well as producing the annual festivals, Big Difference also produce a year-round programme of cultural events and projects and in Autumn 2021 opened our first venue, The Big Difference, in Leicester City Centre, programming a range of comedy, music and arts events.

Role Summary

Job Title: Operations Manager

Contract Type: Full Time, permanent

Reporting to: Chief Executive

Responsible for: Bar Manager/Supervisor, Bar staff, Front of House staff, venue technicians and Volunteer Coordinator

Salary: £24,239

Hours: 40 hours a week. Office hours are 10am to 6pm but flexibility will be required for regular evening, weekend and out of hours working.

Based at: The Big Difference venue and Big Difference offices in Leicester City Centre with remote working by arrangement.

Purpose of the role: To ensure the smooth operational management of The Big Difference venue as well as the Big Difference office, projects and events.

Key working relationships:

- Chief Executive
- Senior Producer
- Finance Manager
- Marketing and Development Manager
- The Big Difference bar partner and suppliers
- Promoters, comedians, musicians and artists
- Office and venue suppliers

Key responsibilities

Venue Management

- To ensure the smooth day-to-day operation and commercial sustainability of The Big Difference venue
- To create a safe and welcoming space for all users of the venue ensuring all events and performances are delivered safely and to the highest standard
- To work with the Chief Executive on maximising income and the ongoing development of the venue
- With the Chief Executive to manage the transfer of the bar operation from the bar partner to Big Difference
- To ensure the venue complies with all health and safety, fire, child protection, crime prevention and licensing regulations and any other legal obligations

- Ensure all activity in the building is properly risk assessed in advance and complies with the latest legislation and best practice
- To establish and manage the relationships with all bar suppliers, ensuring good stock management and the best value for money for the organisation
- To manage the till system and its integration into the Big Difference finance processes
- To deliver an excellent customer experience for all venue audiences
- To oversee the cleaning contract for the venue and ensure the supplier is delivering an excellent service
- To manage the upkeep and maintenance of the building
- To identify any maintenance issues and work with freelance maintenance staff and/or the landlord's agent to ensure repairs are made in a timely manner and limit any impact on the venue operations
- To manage day-to-day communications with the landlord and their agent, ensuring the Chief Executive is kept informed of any issues that arise
- To be a keyholder and attend occasional out of hour emergencies at the venue

Administration

- To ensure the smooth operation of the Big Difference office
- To ensure that the offices have adequate IT equipment, desk space, stationery stock and resources to meet the needs of the company
- To manage ensure Big Difference complies with any obligations as a tenant
- To manage the day to day IT needs of the organisation with the external IT supplier
- To act as the data protection officer for the organisation, ensuring ongoing training and compliance with GDPR and other data protection legislation
- In consultation with the Chief Executive to ensure the company has adequate insurance cover in place and this is regularly reviewed

Event Support

- Support the Senior Producer with the operation, health and safety and risk assessment of offsite events and projects
- Support the Senior Producer with the operation, health and safety and risk assessment of the annual festivals
- To provide advice and support to festival venues on operational matters

Sales and Merchandise

- With the Marketing and Development Manager to ensure a smooth ticketing process for audiences
- To manage the sale of merchandise at The Big Difference venue
- To manage the ordering, storage and audit of merchandise stock
- To develop the merchandise offer to create additional income for Big Difference

Finance

- To work with the Finance Manager on The Big Difference venue budgets
- To work with the Finance Manager to ensure the continued cash flow for the Venue
- To contribute to the annual budget forecast and cashflow projections

Management

- To recruit and performance manage The Big Difference venue staff
- To train all venue staff ensuring health and safety procedures, fire procedures and licensing obligations are understood and adhered to.
- To manage the staff rotas, making sure the venue is adequately staffed at all times
- Recruit and manage the Volunteer Coordinator for the annual festivals. This role is a short-term freelance contract recruited annually.
- Chair a regular venue planning meeting with colleagues across the Big Difference team

Other

- To manage your own administration within the role
- To adhere to all Big Difference policies and procedures
- To uphold the Big Difference values of inclusivity and equality
- To act as an advocate for the organisation
- To undertake any other duties which may reasonably be required by the Chief Executive

Person Specification

Essential

- Demonstrable experience of supervising or managing a venue, hospitality or customer experience operation
- Excellent planning and organisational skills
- Outstanding attention to detail
- A Personal Licence holder or willingness to achieve this accreditation
- Proven experience of recruitment and performance management
- Experience of supervising a team in the delivery of excellent customer service
- Proven cash handling responsibility or experience
- Experience of managing budgets
- Experience of planning and delivering events
- Good interpersonal and written communication skills and an ability to interact clearly and confidently with a diverse range of people
- Excellent problem-solving capabilities
- An awareness of legislation and best practice in the areas of Health and Safety, Hygiene, Fire Safety, Child Protection, Licensing and Customer Service
- Experience of writing and interpreting risk assessments
- A commitment to equal opportunities.
- Willingness to work flexibly and undertake additional hours as necessary
- An understanding of data protection and GDPR

Desirable

- Experience of managing stock
- Experience of managing IT requirements

- Training in: First Aid, managing people, customer service, risk assessments, fire management and health and safety
- An interest in comedy, arts and entertainment and an enthusiasm for live events
- Experience of working with volunteers

How to apply:

To apply for the role please send a short CV and Cover Letter outlining why you are excited by the role and what you might bring to the organisation, to recruitment@bigdifferencecompany.co.uk

Deadline for applications: Monday 6th December 2021

Interviews: w/c 13th December 2021