



Unicorn Preservation Society

Job Description

Job Title: Operations Manager

Location: Dundee City Centre

Line Manager: Chief Executive Officer

Job Family: Operations

Working Hours: Full-time including some evenings and weekends

Annual Leave: 34 Days inclusive of public holidays and closures (Christmas and New Year)

Contract Length: Until end May 2026. Contracts may be extended beyond this, subject to funding.

Grade: 4

Salary: £35,000.00 per annum plus £1,500 Duty Manager allowance

Introduction

Launched in 1824, HMS Unicorn is the third oldest ship in the world still afloat and Scotland's only surviving wooden warship. Now an Accredited Museum in Dundee's City Quay, visitors can explore four decks that offer a unique glimpse into 19th century naval life.

Our mission is to deliver a world-class museum experience while safeguarding HMS Unicorn's future and making our collections accessible to all. We aim to inspire visitors and staff alike, providing lifelong learning and engagement opportunities for our local communities and beyond.

The Unicorn Preservation Society has recently secured nearly £1 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to advance Project Safe Haven - our ambitious conservation initiative to relocate HMS Unicorn to Dundee's East Graving Dock. This critical move will ensure the long-term preservation of this irreplaceable maritime treasure while creating a purpose-built visitor centre that will transform Dundee's historic waterfront and enhance community engagement. This role represents an exciting opportunity to join our team at a pivotal moment in HMS Unicorn's 200-year history.

Main Purpose of Role

The Operations Manager holds overall responsibility for the operational management of HMS Unicorn and the shore-based office in Dundee City Centre. This includes management of visitor services, facilities maintenance, health and safety compliance, and supervision of the Duty Manager system. The role will be central to implementing operational procedures to support the organisation's growth through Project Safe Haven.



As the guardian of the physical vessel, the Operations Manager will work closely with the Project Safe Haven team to ensure the development of facilities in the new location, while maintaining the integrity and visitor experience of the existing ship. They will collaborate closely with the Heritage & Learning Manager to deliver excellent visitor experiences.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Operational Management

- Manage all day-to-day operations of HMS Unicorn and the shore-based office, ensuring the smooth running of the organisation
- Serve as the guardian of the physical vessel, ensuring its proper maintenance and preservation
- Maintain and develop the operations manual, procedures, and policies in collaboration with the senior management team
- Monitor and report on operational Key Performance Indicator and budgets to the Chief Executive Officer
- Contribute to conversations on how Project Safe Haven works will affect HMS Unicorn and the visitor experience
- Work with the PSH team to ensure the development of facilities in the new location
- Support the integration of operational aspects for Project Safe Haven

Staff Management

- Line manage Visitor Experience Assistants and the Ship's Keeper (While Visitor Experience staff will report to the Operations Manager for administrative purposes, some aspects of their work such as guided tours, knowledge of the ship, and content delivery will be the responsibility of the Heritage & Learning Manager)
- Manage staff scheduling, rotas, and absence management for operational staff
- Oversee the Duty Manager system, including creating and managing the rota, ensuring proper training for all Duty Managers, and participating in the Duty Manager rota
- Oversee training and development of operational staff

Health, Safety and Security

- Manage health and safety compliance and risk assessments, ensuring a safe environment for staff, volunteers, and visitors
- With the CEO and colleagues, contribute to the development and maintenance of emergency plans for the rescue and recovery of museum collections in the event of an incident such as fire, flood, and infestation
- With the senior management team, oversee security systems and procedures to protect the ship and collections



- Liaise with Dundee Licensing Board to ensure licensing is in place for all public and private events
- Oversee regular maintenance of safety equipment including lifejackets and maritime safety equipment to recognised standards
- Ensure routine safety checks are conducted and properly documented according to maritime and museum requirements

Maintenance and Facilities

- Supervise maintenance programmes and contractor relationships, developing maintenance schedules with the Ship's Keeper

Financial Management

- Manage operational budgets effectively, ensuring cost-effective operations while maintaining quality standards
- Oversee cash handling and financial reconciliation procedures
- Oversee retail operations, stock management, and visitor services (in consultation with the senior management team) to enhance revenue generation

Cross-Team Collaboration

- With the Heritage & Learning Manager and the Marketing & Communications Officer, contribute to marketing and online communications to promote visitor engagement
- Any other duties as directed by the CEO and commensurate with the grade

General Duties

- Adhere to HMS Unicorn's policies and procedures including health and safety, security, and fire regulations
- Represent HMS Unicorn professionally to visitors, stakeholders and partners
- Participate in team meetings and staff development activities as required
- Undertake training and development as required for the role and maintain professional knowledge and skills

PERSON SPECIFICATION

This section details the attributes, skills, knowledge, qualifications and competencies which are required in order to undertake the full remit of this post.

Essential Criteria

- Experience in operations management or related area



The Unicorn Preservation Society is a charity registered in Scotland, registration number SC002771 and is a company limited by guarantee, registration number SC046145.

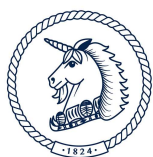
- Experience of leading and managing staff teams
- Experience of facilities management
- Experience of customer service management
- Experience of health and safety compliance
- Understanding of risk assessment and management
- Excellent leadership and people management skills
- Strong organisational and time management skills
- Problem-solving abilities and decision-making skills
- IT literate with proficiency in MS Office applications
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal
- Ability to manage multiple priorities and meet deadlines
- Self-motivated and proactive approach
- Resilient and adaptable to change
- Committed to delivering excellent visitor experiences
- Ability to remain calm under pressure
- Creative approach to problem-solving

Desirable Criteria

- 3 years' experience in operations management or related area
- Financial literacy and budget management
- Experience of working in the heritage, culture or tourism sector
- Understanding of historic ship conservation challenges
- Knowledge of health and safety regulations in a heritage context
- Experience of project management
- Experience working with volunteers
- Knowledge of retail operations
- Experience developing operational procedures
- Understanding of maritime heritage
- Experience of working with historic structures
- Passion for heritage and its preservation
- IOSH or NEBOSH qualification
- First Aid qualification
- Membership of relevant professional body

Essential Criteria – requirements without which a candidate would not be able to undertake the full remit of the role. Applicants who do not clearly demonstrate in their application that they possess the essential requirements will normally be rejected at the shortlisting stage.

Desirable Criteria – requirements which would be useful for the candidate to hold. When shortlisting, these criteria will be considered when more than one applicant meets the essential requirements.



Working Arrangements

The role includes participation in the Duty Manager system, acting as the senior officer in charge of HMS Unicorn during scheduled duty periods, with the following responsibilities:

- Most senior person onboard in absence of CEO
- Makes senior level decisions in relation to onboard activities
- Operational oversight of HMS Unicorn
- Health and safety compliance
- Emergency response coordination (including potential callouts for emergencies)
- Security management
- Visitor experience oversight
- Conflict resolution
- Complaint handling
- Key holder responsibilities
- On duty/on call for a 24-hour period

The post holder will work regular office hours, but will occasionally be required to work on evenings and weekends.

Access Information

HMS Unicorn is currently not fully physically accessible for all users, and there are therefore physical requirements that come with this role on board a wooden, historic ship.

- HMS Unicorn is accessed via an entry gangway which can rise up to a 50-degree angle at high tide and dip to a 50cm drop at low tide.
- The different decks on board HMS Unicorn are only accessible via ladderways.
- For a full description of access aboard HMS Unicorn, please refer to our access guide available on request.

Career Development and Fair Work

At the Unicorn Preservation Society, we are committed to supporting the professional growth and development of our staff. While we recognise that as a small organisation advancement opportunities may be limited, we have a duty to support our team members to be their best and to prepare them for future career growth. We create clear progression pathways, support skills development, and empower staff to achieve their professional potential, whether within UPS or as they move on to broader opportunities in the heritage sector.

As a Fair Work employer, we adhere to key principles that ensure an equitable and supportive workplace:



- **Voice:** We ensure staff have opportunities to contribute to organisational decisions
- **Security:** We provide appropriate job security and consistency of hours where possible
- **Opportunity:** We support skills development and career progression
- **Respect:** We foster a workplace culture of dignity and respect
- **Fulfilment:** We create meaningful work environments

UPS is committed to ensuring all staff receive at minimum the Real Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation. Our salary structure reflects both Museums Association recommendations (adjusted for regional context) and competitive positioning within the Scottish independent museum sector. We believe fair pay is essential to maintain staff wellbeing, reduce turnover, enhance engagement, and uphold our reputation as a responsible employer.

Through our formal grading structure, we provide clear pathways for progression and professional development, with regular reviews to support your growth and career aspirations.

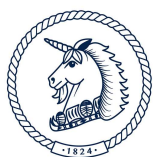
Equal Opportunities

The Unicorn Preservation Society is a Disability Confident Committed employer and operates a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for people living with a disability who fulfil the essential criteria in the job specification. If you would like to be considered under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, please let us know as part of your application.

HMS Unicorn is committed to the principles of Fair Work and paying the real Living Wage to all our employees. We believe that fair work practices lead to better outcomes for individuals and organisations, contributing to a more successful economy and inclusive society. As an employer, we are dedicated to providing appropriate channels for effective workers' voice, investing in workforce development, opposing inappropriate use of zero-hours contracts, and offering flexible working from day one of employment where possible.

Our commitment to fair work extends to addressing workplace inequalities, including pay and employment gaps. We strive to create a workplace where all staff are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their background or personal characteristics.

All staff and volunteers working with UPS must undergo Disclosure and PVG checks.



How to Apply

We encourage applicants to apply by submitting:

- A CV and covering letter explaining how you meet the requirements of the role

Please submit informal enquiries and applications to: recruitment@hmsunicorn.org.uk

- Application deadline: **Wednesday 14 May 2025 at 10:00**
- Interview date: **Wednesday 28 May 2025 TBC** at Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce

Applicants will be asked to give a presentation (around 10 minutes/5 slides) on the topic, "**How would you ensure smooth daily operations and excellent visitor experience at HMS Unicorn?**"

This could include:

- Your approach to managing daily visitor operations in a historic vessel museum
- Systems for maintaining site safety and security in a maritime heritage setting
- Strategies for managing staff rotas, volunteer coordination, and visitor flow
- Procedures for addressing maintenance issues and operational challenges

The presentation will be followed by a competency-based interview.

