



Retail Operations Manager (Trading Company)

Full-time and Permanent

Salary £42,938 - £48,054 (pay award pending)

Plus generous benefits package

On site

About the role

We're excited to be recruiting for two newly created Operations Manager roles within our Trading Company, One focused on Hospitality & Events, and this one dedicated to Retail responsible for developing and leading our evolving and ambitious retail operations.

Based across four stunning, listed gallery buildings in the heart of Edinburgh, this role offers a unique opportunity to shape the future of our distinctive retail offer and delight visitors. You'll have the vision and drive to see the commercial potential of our brand, exciting exhibitions programme and amazing world-class art collection.

With a strong commercial mindset, you'll bring senior level retail experience and a keen understanding of both product and audience. You'll be a strategic thinker and hands-on leader, confident in managing your team through change, identifying opportunities, and delivering measurable results.

This is a brilliant opportunity for an experienced retail professional looking for a varied role interacting with both the strategic and operational sides of the organisation. You'll work closely with colleagues across the organisation to ensure that retail is fully integrated into the visitor experience and delivering on our strategic ambition to grow self-generated income.

You'll oversee all aspects of our retail operation from buying and merchandising to store management, warehousing, eCommerce, and licensing. From optimising product ranges and stock levels to analysing sales data and launching new commercial initiatives, your leadership will be instrumental in making sure our retail offer is as profitable, efficient, and as audience focused as possible.

Reporting to the Director of Audience & Development, you'll lead a skilled team, setting direction and tone to achieve excellent customer service and drive high performance across our retail activity. As part of a team committed to building our financial resilience, you will help recognise its importance in meeting our purpose: we make art work for everyone.

The difference you'll make

As Retail Operations Manager you will provide strategic leadership to the retail team. Your duties will include:

- Leading the development and delivery of a successful retail strategy. You'll deliver a coherent strategy encompassing buying to end sales in shop, online, books and licensing.

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- Working with colleagues to establish plans, targets, and budgets for the retail offer to achieve set profit targets.
- Alongside the Director of Audience & Development and Trading Company management colleagues, contributing to the overall Trading Company business plan including producing reports for Leadership Team and the Trading Company Board as required.
- Leading, motivating, and developing our retail team to promote collaborative ways of working to ensure that our shops, warehouse, Buying, Licensing, and eCommerce offers are appealing and aligned to our brand and audience offer.
- Promoting collaborative ways of working across the retail team to ensure alignment to meet our strategy aims and agreed profit targets.
- Overseeing operations to drive solid sales performance and maximise sales, including fully utilising the opportunities for merchandising and licencing of branded goods based on the art collection.
- Analysing performance data and implementing effective strategies, including setting product pricing, to improve the profitability of retail sales.
- Contributing to the management and monitoring of the Trading Company budget with devolved responsibility for budgets allocated to department and any relevant project activity.
- Responsibility for performing all duties in compliance with related legal/statutory, regulations, professional duties, responsibilities, and obligations in relation to retail management, including ensuring the Trading Company holds all relevant insurances and licenses relevant to retail operations.
- Ensuring compliance with relevant accounting and tax legislation is met, particularly concerning eCommerce sales as well as the exporting and importing of goods.
- Establishing key performance indicators to measure and evaluate customer satisfaction of the retail offer. You'll use the findings to champion continuous improvement to meet the Trading Company's ambitions and goals.
- Working with the Director of Audience & Development in developing, leading, and implementing new initiatives to maximise opportunity for income generation through retail sales.
- Developing and implementing process improvements which enhance operational efficiency, including overseeing inventory levels to determine the need for stock supply at each retail outlet.
- Working with Development, Marketing and Audience colleagues to develop a coherent approach to marketing and promoting retail activities, extending our offers, and building up specific audiences.
- Joining or leading organisational or commercial project teams as agreed and where there is appropriate cross over retail management.

Who we are looking for

To succeed in this role, you'll need the following range of knowledge, skills, and experience:

- A proven ability to lead and motivate a retail, ecommerce and buying team, managing commercial projects and creating the conditions for continuous improvement.
- A passion for creating exceptional customer service.
- A strong understanding and demonstrated experience of all aspects of retail operations, from buying and inventory management to customer service.
- Excellent communication, negotiation, coaching, and mentoring skills.

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- Experience in leading and implementing change management initiatives.
- Strong data analysis skills and the ability to review sales data and financial statements, reporting financial numbers and matters clearly and accurately to a variety of stakeholders at all levels of the organisation.
- A systematic approach to managing the infrastructure of retail activities.
- Good analytical and problem-solving skills to support effective decision making.
- A track record in growing sales, optimising profit and developing teams in a retail management role.
- Ability to work flexibly in support of retail operations, including occasional weekend work.

It would also be great if you have:

- A related qualification in retail or business management.
- An interest in or affinity with art, art history and design.
- A good understanding of the legal, commercial and charitable frameworks of a trading subsidiary.

We are National Galleries of Scotland

Our three Edinburgh galleries are the National, Modern and Portrait. We house and look after Scotland's amazing world-class art collection – one of the finest in the world. Step inside and explore treasures from Botticelli and Titian to the very best modern art to contemporary portraits of pop culture icons. And, as you'd expect, the world's greatest collection of Scottish art, our national collection. We also have an outstanding collection of Western art from the late Middle Ages to the present day.

We're a space for thinking, dreaming, doing, and playing. Soak up the art. Meet friends in the cafés. Have a family picnic surrounded by the sculptures in the Modern grounds. Be inspired by our amazing art films. Choose your own experience. There is no one way to enjoy Scotland's national collection. We are yours to discover.

As well as displaying our art at our three Edinburgh sites, we also share it through an active programme of partnership across Scotland, the rest of the UK and abroad, as well as online.

We conserve and research our collections and we are committed to reaching the widest possible audience through our ambitious plans. Visitor numbers to our sites in Edinburgh totalled an average of 2.5m visitors a year in the years prior to the global pandemic.

What's important to us

We make art work for everyone. That's our purpose and it drives everything we do. This is an exciting time for us, as we move forward with our engaging strategic vision: Art for Scotland: Inspiration for the World.

We're putting our audience at the heart of what we do. Matching Scotland's rich collection, our expertise and creativity with the needs and wants of our visitors. Finding new ways to connect with more people and create an innovative, inclusive organisation that can meet the challenges of our ever-evolving world.

We're committed to looking at how we operate as well as how we engage our audiences. We will play our part in tackling the Climate Emergency, and we're embedding Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in the way we work. We want everyone to feel a sense of belonging and freedom to be themselves at work or at play with us.

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What's on offer for you

Our colleagues will tell you great things about working here. We aim to ensure the National Galleries of Scotland is a great place to work, where our people thrive in a culture where we are trusted, empowered, and engaged to achieve our true potential. We offer a range of benefits to promote healthy working lifestyles for all our colleagues. Details specific to this role are:

Salary

£42,938 - £48,054 (pay award pending). Starting salaries will normally be at the minimum rate depending on experience.

Hours

35 hours per week excluding a one-hour unpaid lunch break each day. Weekend work and flexibility with working schedule are essential and some early evening work may be required.

Holidays

When you first join, you'll get 36.5 days holidays per year (including public and privilege holidays). After 5 years your annual leave will increase to 41.5 days.

Where you'll be based

You will primarily be based at either the National, the Mound, Edinburgh, EH2 2EL or Belford Bridge Lodge, 70 Belford Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3DE. However, you'll work across all of our Galleries based in the heart of Edinburgh - the National, Portrait, and Modern (One and Two).

Pension

We are a [Civil Service Pension](#) employer. You get to choose if you want a defined benefit or stakeholder pension. The benefits of joining the scheme include [generous employer contributions](#) to your future pension, life assurance, and options to increase your pension. If you join the alpha Civil Service pension scheme our contribution will be 28.97% for this role.

Other benefits

Family friendly working policies, free or discounted entry to various visitor attractions, staff discount at our shops and cafés, Cycle to Work Scheme, wellbeing support and services including our Employee Assistance Programme.

The closing date for completed applications is 12 noon on Monday, 18 August 2025

Please note that the successful candidate will be subject to Basic Disclosure Scotland security clearance.