Kielder Observatory Astronomical Society
Job Description

1. Post Title
Support Astronomer and Science Communicator

2. Location
Kielder Observatory, Black Fell, Off Shilling Pot, Northumberland, NE48 1ER

3. Relevant to this Post

- Annual commuting costs contribution
- Timekeeping policy (flexible working)
- Permanent contract
- Night-working hours

4. Organisation Relationships
Post holder will report to the Director of Astronomy and Science Communication

Salary: £28,000 per annum (pro rata for part-time positions)

5. Description of Role
The *Support Astronomer and Science Communicator* support the delivery of Kielder Observatory's public engagement programme, helping to inspire visitors through astronomy, science communication and outstanding customer experiences.

The role is designed as a developmental position for individuals seeking to build their experience in astronomy communication, event delivery and observatory operations.

6. Primary Duties

Events

- Presenting astronomy and science content to public audiences

- Assisting with observatory tours and visitor experiences
- Supporting telescope observing sessions
- Welcoming and assisting guests throughout their visit
- Assisting with guest check-in and departure procedures
- Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of visitors
- Helping maintain a clean, safe and professional environment
- Supporting the day-to-day care of telescopes and equipment
- Contributing ideas and content towards existing and future events
- Undertaking administrative tasks associated with event delivery
- Represent KOAS at external events and venues where required
- Work across all KOAS sites

Observatory Operations

- Support the Duty Manager in the delivery of events
- Follow operational procedures and organisational policies
- Assist with routine site checks and preparation
- Support volunteers and help create a welcoming environment
- Escalate operational concerns to the Duty Manager
- Participate in staff training and continuous professional development

The postholder will not normally act as Duty Manager and will not hold primary responsibility for operational decision-making, cash reconciliation, event cancellation decisions, volunteer management or health and safety leadership.

7. General Duties and Responsibilities:

Communications
Employees will actively participate in team meetings, formal and informal, use communications channels respectfully, be responsive to requests from other members of the team, and liaise with managers, trustees and stakeholders as appropriate.

Information Management
Employees will adhere to information management requirements re the gathering and analysis of data.

Confidentiality
All members of staff are required to undertake that they will not divulge to anyone personal and/or confidential information to which they may have access during the course of their work.

Equality and Diversity
KOAS is committed to giving everyone an equal chance to live, learn, and work free from discrimination and prejudice. Employees are required to abide by this principle and KOAS

policies.

Sustainability and Ethical Practice
KOAS is committed to becoming carbon neutral and to ensuring the highest standards of ethical practice. Employees are required to demonstrate support for these principles.

Appraisal and Personal Development
Employees have a responsibility to commit to the appraisal process and to their own personal and professional development.

Financial Management
Employees have a responsibility to be familiar with KOAS's Financial Procedures and to adhere to them.

Health and Safety
Employees have a responsibility to be familiar with KOAS's Health and Safety Handbook and to adhere to all procedures contained within it.

Quality Assurance
Employees have a duty to contribute to continuous improvement in all aspects of the Organisation.

8. Development Pathway and Readiness Indicators

The Support Astronomer & Science Communicator role is designed to support professional development towards an Astronomer & Science Communicator position.

Achievement of these readiness indicators does not guarantee progression or promotion. They are used to inform supervision and appraisal discussions and to assess suitability for future Astronomer & Science Communicator vacancies. Progression will be subject to organisational need, vacancy availability, budget approval, satisfactory performance, and the organisation's recruitment process in place at the time.

Readiness indicators include:

- Delivering engaging, audience-centred public talks and experiences with increasing confidence and independence.
- Demonstrating a sound understanding of astronomy and science communication appropriate to the role.
- Operating observatory equipment safely, competently and with increasing independence.
- Providing an excellent visitor experience while representing the charity professionally with visitors, partners and stakeholders.
- Demonstrating professionalism, teamwork, reliability and sound judgement.

- Following health and safety procedures and contributing to the safe operation of observatory events.
- Taking increasing ownership of event delivery, problem solving and wider organisational responsibilities.
- Showing initiative, a willingness to learn and a commitment to supporting the charity's objectives.

KIELDER OBSERVATORY

	Essential	Desirable	Method of Assessment
Qualification	• Passion for astronomy demonstrated through either educational background or personal pursuits	• Postgraduate degree • Degree in relevant subject and/or significant experience in astronomy or science communication	Application Interview References
Skills and Knowledge	• Knowledge of basic astronomy • Fluent and confident presentation skills • Great written and verbal communication skills • A high level of practical and organisational skills • A degree of computer literacy in basic software • Valid driving licence	• Specialisation in, e.g., astrophysics, astrophotography • Risk management awareness • Health and Safety awareness	Application Interview References
Characteristics	• Team player • Enthusiastic • Flexible • Attention to detail • A high degree of self-motivation and discipline • Commitment to ongoing CPD • Ability to work in a changing and flexible organisation • Ability to assess situations, act on own initiative and justify decision-making • Ability to build rapport with people from all backgrounds,		Application Interview References

	of all abilities, and of all ages		