



Head of Convention Bureau Recruitment Pack



Message from the Chief Executive



Chris Foy
Chief Executive
VisitAberdeenshire

Thank you for taking an interest in this vacancy. I hope you find the contents of this pack informative and that you will be sufficiently motivated to apply.

Firstly, let me set some context with some background on the role of VisitAberdeenshire. We are an award-winning destination organisation with a brief to develop and promote the tourism offer in North-east Scotland. The ambition is high. In August 2022 we published '[Destination Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, a Framework for Growth 2022-2030](#)' setting out the best prospects for tourism growth and priorities to underpin them.

We want the North-east to be Scotland's leading visitor destination, with more people staying longer and spending more.

Due to an organisational restructure, we have a vacancy for a senior leadership role to head the Aberdeen Convention Bureau.

This is a critical role. The work of this team is critical to the success of fulfilling the Aberdeen city-region's potential for hosting brilliant business events since the opening of P&J Live in 2019. Aberdeen now has one of the finest meeting places in Europe alongside a range of heritage venues, incredible hotel stock, and a delegate experience that is unique on these islands. The importance of business events to the region is reflected in the [new tourism strategy for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire](#). The convention bureau's role is at the heart of positioning Aberdeen as a destination of choice, supporting our bid Ambassadors within industry and academia, and co-ordinating the range of practical activity that helps Team Aberdeen to compete, and win.

Despite the disruption of the pandemic, longer lead times for business events means that the pipeline is building, and maintaining momentum is critical. Not only do we need a strong leader to take this mission forward, but we also need a great collaborator with the capacity to build excellent working relationships with our partners, particularly those at P&J Live, University of Aberdeen and Robert Gordon University.

Contents

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|----|-------------------------------|
| 1 | The Tourism Industry | 7 | Person Specification |
| 2 | About Us | 8 | Employment Package |
| 3 | Organisation Structure | 9 | Application Process |
| 4 | Purpose, Vision & Values | 10 | Selection |
| 5 | Job Description | 11 | Working at VisitAberdeenshire |



Business Events Industry

Scotland excels at delivering brilliant business events. From small meetings of minds to colossal conventions, our reputation travels far and wide. This sector forms a valuable part of the tourism industry, with visitor spend per head far exceeding that from leisure visitors while delivering volume that supports our tourism infrastructure from hotels to restaurants, and from venues to experiences. And it doesn't stop there. The legacy from hosting thought leaders in our city can enhance research, bolster academic reputation, and lead to further investment in the region, as well as return visits to enjoy more of what is on offer beyond the convention hall.

Aberdeen operates in a highly competitive environment, with cities across the UK, Europe and beyond vying to attract associations and corporations to their doors. Our strengths lie in subject matters where professional research and industry expertise as well as a track record of hosting in Aberdeen, including health and life sciences, culture, and of course energy, environmental and sustainability. At a practical level we benefit from a compact location, quality of facilities and the warmth of our welcome.

PRE-PANDEMIC, DIRECT
TOURISM EXPENDITURE **IN THE**
NORTH-EAST CONTRIBUTED
OVER **£730 MILLION** TO THE
LOCAL ECONOMY EVERY YEAR,
SUPPORTING ALMOST **18,500**
JOBS ACROSS NEARLY **1,400**
DIVERSE BUSINESSES.



About Us

VisitAberdeenshire is the recognised destination organisation and lead body for tourism serving Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

VisitAberdeenshire is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee; transparent, accountable to its stakeholders and reinvesting any trading surplus in the destination tourism offer.

VisitAberdeenshire is open and inclusive in its approach, inviting all those with an interest in tourism to be part of their activities and communications network. It is engaged with all parts of the industry and across the region. Where it is of clear value, VisitAberdeenshire will work productively with neighbouring destinations and other industry sectors.

There is a corporate Board of Directors who provide counsel and governance to VisitAberdeenshire. Board Members include our three main funders Opportunity North East, Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council, alongside several senior professionals from the region.



Organisation Structure

The company and senior leadership team is structured into three core areas, working alongside the Business Services and Insights & Evaluation departments.

All activity undertaken by VisitAberdeenshire is informed by customer, market and industry insight. In support of these disciplines the organisation has established a flexible, knowledgeable and professional [team](#).

- **Aberdeen Convention Bureau.**
The bureau promotes the region to conference and event planners in the UK and overseas to ensure the region is a first-choice destination for business events.
- **Marketing & Communications**
The Marketing team helps grow the visitor economy through destination marketing, campaign and PR activities to continually raise awareness of – and drive visits to – Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire in targeted markets.
- **Tourism Development**
The Tourism Development team provides advice and support to help tourism businesses develop skills and products to meet demand from an ever-changing market, and promotes trade ready products to industry buyers in the UK and overseas.
- **Insights and Evaluation**
The Insights and Evaluation team curates and shares insights to inform business decision-making and strives to demonstrate the value and impact of our activity through tracking, measurement and reporting.
- **Business Services**
The Business Services team supports the employees, volunteers, Board of Directors and business with all aspects of human resources, finance, facilities, health & safety and maintains good corporate governance for the organisation.



Purpose, Vision & Values

Our purpose is to help drive demand to visit Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire, and support businesses to develop and meet that demand.

Our vision is to be the leading destination organisation in Scotland increasingly recognised for growing the visitor economy through bold and dynamic initiatives.

Our values are:

- Collaborative. We work in partnership, internally and externally to work towards our company vision.
 - Cross team working.
 - Working with industry.
 - Value and listen to counsel from key stakeholders and Board of Directors.
- Ambitious. We are creative, forward-thinkers and passionate about what we do.
 - Be curious and question the status quo.
 - Feel empowered to bring ideas to the table.
 - Pursue bold and dynamic ways to inspire and engage with colleagues and industry.
- Responsible. We take an environmentally responsible and insights driven approach, operate inclusively and are respectful of others.
 - Understand insight and customers' needs in all decision making.
 - Strive to source and buy local to support wider sustainability and net zero ambitions of the region.
 - Celebrate and support colleagues to create a one team approach.
- Empathetic. We listen and respond to the needs of others.
 - Be friendly, approachable and open to listening to colleagues and industry partners.
 - Demonstrate flexibility to our colleagues and stakeholders.
 - Approach challenges with a positive perspective.

Role Profile - Job Description

Role Purpose

To lead VisitAberdeenshire's Business Events agenda.

This role is designed to add significant value to Aberdeen's competitive position in the business events area, leading the Aberdeen Convention Bureau (ACB) leading to an uplift in meetings and conventions held in the city.

Job title • Head of Convention Bureau

Location • VisitAberdeenshire office

Reporting to • Chief Executive

Salary • circa £45,000 per annum

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

The Head of Convention Bureau will be expected to deliver:

Business Event promotion

- Create and manage destination awareness activity aimed at targeted business audiences, nationally and internationally.
- Determine destination marketing material requirements and work with VisitAberdeenshire colleagues to deliver social media campaigns and PR as required.
- Lead the Aberdeen Ambassador Programme with academic institutions (Inc. Robert Gordon University, University of Aberdeen, James Hutton Institute), and industry leaders
- Produce and lead competitive bid documents for the destination. Inputting destination narrative to P&J Live bids.
- Work with Aberdeen City and Shire Hotels Association and venues to secure room allocations for prioritised conference and event bids.
- Manage the VisitAberdeenshire support service offered to all conference organisers in terms of identifying venues and providing impartial advice and support.

Research and bid delivery

- Work in close partnership with P&J Live on bid development activities, abiding by an agreed delineation of roles to ensure that the service delivered by ACB adds value.
- Oversee proactive bid options outside of P&J Live research spectrum, supporting other venues across the region.

Line Management and Budget Responsibility

- Effectively lead and manage the Convention Bureau team, ensuring that objectives are set, monitored, and delivered upon. (Including holding monthly support meetings and annual appraisals).
- Provide day-to-day management, support, and guidance to the Convention Bureau team members.
- Develop and deliver a clear action plan and budget for the Convention Bureau team with the CEO in line with agreed priority themes and operating environment.
- Work with Chief Executive to agree targets for outputs and outcomes from VisitAberdeenshire's work in this area.
- Evaluate and report on outcomes from VisitAberdeenshire's work, using internal and external resources to monitor and measure the impact of activity.
- Overall responsibility and accountability for the departmental budgets, ensuring that procurement policy and procedures are followed, including reporting.
- Oversee supplier contracts agreed by the Convention Bureau team.

The post holder will also be expected to:

- Act in accordance with any and all company processes, including quality, health, safety and environmental.
- Take a proactive stance to achieving set objectives with a solutions-led approach to overcome the unexpected.
- Takes responsibility and ownership for own performance, development and behaviour, learns from successes and failures and setting high expectations.
- Play an active part in the development of the VisitAberdeenshire team, including coaching and mentoring team members appropriately to support their continued development.
- Maintain high levels of communication and dialogue with internal colleagues, external partners, and stakeholders.
- Manage time and resources effectively, prioritising efforts according to organisation goals.
- Undertake any other duties that may be required in order to ensure the smooth running of the organisation including deputising for the Chief Executive as required.
- Act upon defined areas of the business plan, as agreed with the Chief Executive
- Work with the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team to devise the organisation's annual activity plan
- Produce quarterly reports for the Board of Directors and Chief Executive, as well as ad-hoc performance reports as requested
- Deputise for the Chief Executive at meetings as required and agreed.

Key Competencies Include:

Leadership & Team Building • Communication • Collaboration & Partnerships • Critical Thinker

Role Profile - Person Specification

CATEGORY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Skills, knowledge, and aptitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative thinker with ability to confidently engage with businesses at high level of seniority. • Excellent demonstrable team leadership and management skills. • Excellent communication and interpersonal skills – including ability to confidently present in public. • Target driven with excellent organisational skills. • Ability to manage a broad portfolio of projects. • Ability to draft concise and informative reports in line with organisational requirements. • Excellent attention to detail in reporting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire tourism product. • Knowledge of the Associations sector. • Detailed knowledge of the Business Events / MICE market in the UK or Europe. • Knowledge of the bidding process for business events • Excellent IT skills
Qualifications and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 5 years' experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to degree level in relevant discipline or equivalent relevant work experience.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working with a range of businesses in a specific sector. • Partnership working with both public and private sector. • Experience of stakeholder management. • Experience of developing strategies. • Demonstrable experience of staff management. • Demonstrable experience of budget management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent experience of working within the MICE / Business Events sector including experience of event bidding (from client or supplier end) • Experience of working with a range of businesses across the tourism, hospitality and events sector.
Disposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to positively represent the organisation to lever the best possible agreements with partners. • Ability to work collaboratively and on own initiative. • Dynamism. Able to work under pressure and to tight timescales for delivery, prioritising as required. • Strongly motivated, reliable, and conscientious. • Confident. Ability to lead and develop a team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to encourage and develop teamwork across the workplace.
Special requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to work out-of-office hours and spend time away from home as required. • Ability to travel throughout the region, nationally and internationally as required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving license and access to own car.

Employment Package

Salary

- This role has a salary commensurate with its responsibilities and expectations.
- The salary for this role will be circa £45,000 per annum.

Additional Benefits

- Generous annual leave of 33 days per annum (full-time contract).
- Company pension scheme (4% employer contribution).
- Hybrid working opportunities.
- Employee Assistance Programme.
- Independent financial and legal advice.
- Death in service insurance.
- Health and Wellbeing Programme.
- Discounted tourism attraction entry.
- Cycle to work scheme.



Our office is based to the north of the city at Aberdeen's leading event complex, P&J Live.



Application Process

To apply for our vacancy please email a copy of your current CV with a short covering letter to Fiona Douglas, HR & Business Services Manager at jobs@visitabdn.com.

You will be initially assessed on how you demonstrate your suitability for the role across the following areas:

- Skills, Knowledge and Aptitude
- Qualifications and Training
- Experience
- Disposition

The job description and person specification should be your guide during the application process and used to demonstrate how you fit the role and key competencies. Where relevant this should be evidence based and draw on experience in previous roles.

Shortlisting will be based on candidate's ability to meet the majority of the post's key requirements and competencies. This is summarised within the job description and person specification.

Informal enquiries about the role can be made to Fiona Douglas, HR & Business Services Manager by emailing jobs@visitabdn.com in the first instance.

Selection Process - Key Dates

Key Dates	Stages
24 April 2023	Closing date for applications
By 27 April 2023	Shortlisted candidates to be invited for interview
5 May 2023	First interviews
12 May 2023	Second interviews

Selection

We use a variety of different methods within our recruitment processes which allows a very broad range of elements to be assessed.

The exact structure will be confirmed once we have decided how many candidates, we will be taking forward but it will be based on some or all of the following elements.

- **Online profiling** – done prior to attending interview through application review
- **Panel interview**
- **Interview presentation** or similar competency-based task

It is not anticipated that all candidates will be invited to the panel interview stage. Full details will be provided as we go through the recruitment process.

Pre-employment checks

Before any firm offer of employment can be made, you will be required to complete an employment health questionnaire.

In all cases, references will be checked, and evidence of qualifications will be required.

In addition, we are legally required to ensure that you are eligible to work in this country and you will be asked to provide appropriate evidence of this.



Working at VisitAberdeenshire

Employees are a business’ greatest advocates and without a group of creative, inspiring, and dedicated employees VisitAberdeenshire could not deliver its remit.

VisitAberdeenshire values the importance of its employees and their views on the organisation. Regular engagement with employees is undertaken to help identify and build upon the strengths and talents in the team. VisitAberdeenshire asks employees to take part in an annual employee engagement survey to delve deeper than the drivers of pay and job security and seek feedback on professional development, personal accomplishment, work/life balance and the ability to influence the company’s direction.

VisitAberdeenshire aims to be an employer of choice, through fostering a supportive and friendly environment where people feel valued. We strive to operate an ‘open door’ policy, offer support, guidance and opportunities for learning and development within the team.

<p>Health & Wellbeing We are committed to the health and wellbeing of all our employees. The organisation has a dedicated Health & Wellbeing Policy with numerous initiatives in place to support employees.</p>	<p>Learning & Development We are committed to continual learning and development for all team members VisitAberdeenshire empowers employees to up-skill and take ownership of their personal development.</p>	<p>Communication We are committed to open communication and employee feedback within the organisation.</p>
---	--	---

What do our employees say are the best things about working for VisitAberdeenshire?

- “I love promoting our region and feel proud to do so.”
- “The talented team around us are specialists in their field - we are great at what we do.”
- “The work we do is fast paced, exciting and rewarding. We’re at the coal face of a dynamic industry and work to best serve the stakeholders we work with.”
- “The stimulating and constructively challenging nature of the work.”
- “Collaborative and friendly culture of the team.”
- “Flexible working and organisational culture.”

Thank you for considering
VisitAberdeenshire for your
next career move.

VisitAberdeenshire is funded by:



VisitAberdeenshire

c/o P&J Live

East Burn Road

Aberdeen

AB21 9FX

T • 01224 900490

E • jobs@visitabdn.com

W • visitabdn.com/about-us/vacancies

