

## Festival Stage Manager

### Job Description & Person Specification

May 2026

Word Up North is a Yorkshire-based literature development organisation with a mission to raise up voices, stories and writers in the north of England. Our work fosters a love of reading, writing and creativity within individuals and communities, and uses the power of the written and spoken word to create positive change. We are proud to be a registered charity and an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

Since 1973 our organisation has produced the **Ilkley Literature Festival**. It is the longest-running literature festival in the north and second oldest in the UK. Each autumn our events feature authors, poets and artists from across the UK, attracting more than 13,000 people over 17 days.

**Type of contract:**

Freelance

**Salary:**

£14.20 per hour

**Holidays:**

N/A

**Responsible to:**

Event Manager

**Hours of work:**

Shifts as required during the Ilkley Literature Festival

Evening hours fall between 5pm – 10pm

Weekend hours fall between 9am – 10pm

**Dates:**

The 2026 Festival runs from Friday 2 – Sunday 18 October

**Location:**

Venues around Ilkley town centre

## Purpose of the Role

To support the 2026 festival, we are seeking experienced Stage Managers to be part of our team and deliver events in a range of venues across Ilkley. These take place on weekday evenings and weekends.

Word Up North Ltd  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Offices, Fairfax House  
38 The Grove, Ilkley, LS29 9EE  
Tel: 01943 601210 | email: [info@wordupnorth.org.uk](mailto:info@wordupnorth.org.uk)  
[www.wordupnorth.org.uk](http://www.wordupnorth.org.uk) | [www.ilkleylitfest.org.uk](http://www.ilkleylitfest.org.uk)

Each venue has a dedicated team which includes an event manager, venue technician, stage manager, box office assistant and a group of volunteers. Working together they produce high quality, welcoming and accessible events for authors and audiences alike.

## Tasks & Responsibilities

These will include, but not be limited to:

### Stage Management

- Working with the venue technician to ensure staging is set as needed for each event:
  - Setting up staging in accordance with health & safety guidelines
  - Setting up stage furniture – tables, chairs, lectern
  - Arranging stage dressing and backdrops as needed
- Where needed, work with the Venue Technician to source equipment
- Remaining in the wings during events in case of any on-stage issues, e.g. sound or lighting failure
- Liaise with Venue Technician/Event Manager as needed on any other event related duties/activities
- Support the Event Manager in case of emergency evacuation

### Dressing Room / BOH Management

- Ensure dressing rooms and other back of house areas are clean and tidy before and after each event / day
- Monitor refreshments, ensuring there are drinks and snacks available

### Author Liaison

- Responsible for author and interviewer liaison during events, from greeting on arrival until they leave the venue
- Work with the Venue Technician to ensure sound checks take place in a timely manner
- Ensure authors and interviewers are offered food and refreshments
- Work as part of the event team to ensure authors get to stage on time and leave safely at the end of events
- Take authors to the book signing area post event and look after them whilst they sign
- Arrange departure travel or book restaurants as needed

### General

- This role requires the ability to lift and handle light event equipment e.g. tables and chairs, event boxes and signage
- Awareness of equality, inclusion and accessibility for live events

## Person specification

### Essential skills and experience

- Experience of stage management in theatre / arts or working as a runner (this can include music events, festivals, films, amateur, Uni or student events)
- Experience running live events for paying audiences / customers
- Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to think and plan ahead
- Excellent people and communication skills with high standards of courtesy
- Excellent attention to detail
- Understanding of basic technical equipment used in live events
- Ability to think on your feet and adapt to unforeseen situations
- Excellent time-management
- Understanding of health & safety procedures

### Essential personal qualities

- Confident and organised
- A welcoming and pleasant manner, able to interact with the wide range of authors appearing at the festival
- Able to use initiative to overcome unexpected issues and solve problems
- Able to adapt to rapidly changing priorities
- Able to sustain a high level of energy and concentration

### Desirable skills, experience and personal qualities

- Experience working in similar arts and culture festivals / events
- Current First Aid Certificate
- Current DBS Certificate

### Location

You will be working in festival venues around Ilkley, West Yorkshire. You will need to be able to get to and from Ilkley easily, including after events in the evenings.

### To Apply

Please complete the application form [HERE](#).

If you have any questions or queries about this role, or the application form, please contact us via [recruitment@wordupnorth.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@wordupnorth.org.uk)

## **Diversity, Equality & Inclusion**

We are committed to developing and retaining a workforce that is representative of the diverse communities that we serve. We're striving to build an inclusive workplace culture where all employees feel valued, and our rich diversity is celebrated by everyone. We encourage people from all sections of our community to apply for jobs with us.