

Visitor Studies Group Committee Member Opportunities

About the VSG

The Visitor Studies Group (VSG) was established in 1998 and is a Membership organisation for individuals whose role involves, uses or benefits from visitor studies. The Group aims to champion visitor studies as a force for evidence-based decision-making to encourage and create excellent visitor experiences for all audiences.

The Visitor Studies Group aims to:

- provide members with development and skills-sharing opportunities
- provide a website with information and resources to support best practice in visitor studies
- provide networking opportunities to facilitate the exchange of ideas and best practice
- deliver an annual conference with content which focuses on a theme relevant to the sector at that time
- produce a Members' newsletter to which all Members are encouraged to contribute
- award, on an annual basis, the Alison James Professional Development Bursary of £500 to a VSG Member

About the VSG Committee

The VSG is managed by a committee. The role of the committee is to:

- set the strategic direction for the Group
- oversee the annual programme of activities
- represent the Group professionally at conferences and workshops
- encourage partnership working with like-minded organisations within the UK and from overseas
- meet four times a year to ensure the needs of Members are discussed and met.

We are a friendly and collaborative bunch, with our work divided into three main areas of activity: Conference (Planning and delivery); Marketing and Communications; and Events and Networking. (Teas with VSG, informal meet-ups and more).

Committee Members are appointed for three years, have full voting rights and are allocated a portfolio of work to ensure their time is best spent and their own skills set is developed. A freelance post was created in 2012 to provide administrative support to the committee.

They are elected by the membership at the AGM, but, where necessary, can be appointed during the year by the Chair and ratified at the following AGM. It is necessary this year due to one committee member reaching the end of their term of office, and two taking maternity leave. A recent strategic review by the committee has recognised that the committee needs to grow to deliver VSG's aims and we are therefore making up to six committee member positions available in the following roles:

- Communications Lead (available November 2023-October 2024)
- Conference Support
- Networking and Events Support
- Communications Support

We welcome expressions of interest to join the committee from everyone working with audience knowledge, at all stages of their career, and from all regions of the UK and beyond.

Committee Member Benefits

Committee members receive the following benefits:

- Opportunities to network with and get to know professionals who work in evaluation and research, and others who are interested in those areas
- Opportunities to learn about audience research from colleagues from across the research landscape
- Opportunities to gain new skills or advance your practice in areas such as: planning, collaboration; event management; network development; digital communications; thought leadership; facilitation; and/or public speaking
- Opportunity to shape the Visitor Studies Group programme, such as choosing topics for discussion
- Complimentary membership and event registrations, including the annual conference
- Eligible to apply for the conference travel bursary to attend conference if not supported to do so by their employer

Time Commitment

The time commitment is generally a few hours a month (though a bit more around the conference).

The Opportunities

Communications Lead

The Communications Lead is responsible for the marketing and comms strategies and content with the support of the Freelance Administrator and the committee members responsible for Communications Support. They are expected to:

- develop and manage timelines for communications including quarterly e-newsletters and conference promotion
- compose or enable others to compose communication emails from information provided by committee members, including a quarterly e-newsletter
- ensure all communications and promotions are sent through key channels, including VSG lists and all relevant professional networks and membership organisations
- Work with the Administrator to manage our own channels including website, social media, LinkedIn, etc.

Communications Support

This role supports the Communications Lead to deliver the activities above.

The current Communications Lead is taking a year off and the Communications Lead role is available until October 2024 with a view to continuing as co-lead or moving to a different role (such as Chair, Deputy Chair, Comms co-lead, Comms Support, Conference Support or Events Support).

Conference Support

This role supports the Conference Lead to:

- Organise, coordinate and liaise with the venue and catering for the conference
- Develop the conference theme
- Call for papers, review proposals and develop the conference programme
- Conduct two key workshops for conference planning
- Deliver the conference wash up and evaluation
- Provide necessary information to Communication and Promotions

It is expected that this role commits to attending the full conference in person. We are aiming to recruit one Conference Support to join the committee.

Networking and Events Support

This role supports the Networking and Events Support Lead to:

- Develop, coordinate and lead virtual Tea with VSG (x4 a year) and VSG Reading group (x4 a year)
- Coordinate the conference drinks, including choosing and reserving the venue
- Explore other socials, including in-person events (2-3 a year in addition to conference drinks) and coordinate and organise venues
- Provide necessary information to Communication and Promotions

We are aiming to recruit two Networking and Events Support to join the committee, to achieve a range of people based both within and outwith London and the South East, to enable us to organise networking events around the UK.

Process for appointment

Please send expressions of interest in an email to the.visitor.studies.group@gmail.com by 5pm on Saturday 28th October.

In less than 200 words, please include in your e-mail:

- 1) What interests you most about joining the VSG Committee
- 2) Which roles are of interest to you

We will invite as many people as we can to have a chat with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the committee via a video call. The chat will be informal but we will ask you to talk about:

- Your relevant professional and/or academic background
- The strengths you feel you could bring to the committee
- What you are hoping to get out of being a Committee member
- Your capacity to deliver the time commitment for the role you are interested in

We will not ask you to present anything or prepare ideas for us during the chat. You will be able to ask us questions about the role.

If invited to join the committee, the role will begin immediately and go through a process of formal election at the AGM in May.

Please direct any queries regarding the roles and process of appointments to the.visitor.studies.group@gmail.com