1861 Club Venue Manager

Kansas Fairgrounds Foundation (KFF)
Hutchinson, Kansas

Position Summary

The Kansas Fairgrounds Foundation (KFF) is seeking a dynamic, organized, and hands-on **1861 Club Venue Manager** to oversee venue operations, sales, event management, food and beverage coordination, staffing, and compliance for the 1861 Club.

This full-time leadership role is responsible for year-round private event sales and operations, and directional operational management of the Club during the Kansas State Fair. This position is tasked to manage venue contracts, purchases, staffing and event operations within approved budgets and delegated authority. This position will obtain Executive Director approval for expenditures, contract changes, modifications and personnel actions outside of established limits. The Manager ensures the venue operates efficiently, profitably, and in alignment with the Foundation's mission.

This position requires a flexible schedule, including evenings and weekends, and strong collaboration with KFF leadership, vendors, contractors, and event clients. Mandatory availability for fair preparation and operation for all 10 days of the fair.

The 1861 Club operates as:

- A high-end wedding, corporate, and special event venue throughout the year
- A climate-controlled food, beverage, and entertainment venue during the Kansas State Fair

Reporting Structure

Reports directly to: Executive Director, Kansas Fairgrounds Foundation
Direct report to this position: Event and Operations Coordinator
Works closely with: KFF Staff, Board Members, Vendors, Contractors, and State Fair Personnel

Primary Responsibilities

1. Venue Sales & Client Relations

- Market and promote the 1861 Club to prospective clients through multiple platforms
- Manage all inquiries (phone, email, website, tours)
- Conduct venue tours and consultations
- Guide clients through the full sales cycle: prospecting, proposal development, contract negotiation, booking, contract execution and follow-up
- Proactively work with clients on rebookings and future events
- Develop pricing strategies and suggestions to review with and obtain approval from the Executive Director
- Negotiate, prepare and manage contracts and pricing within approved authority
- Resolve client complaints and offer solutions
- Maintain strong vendor and client relationships
- Review and approve detailed Venue Event Orders (VEOs) outlining logistics, floor plans, catering, timelines, décor, entertainment, and AV needs
- Ensure seamless communication between clients and internal teams

2. Food & Beverage Management (Kansas State Fair & Special Events)

- Order and manage venue supplies, equipment, and inventory

- Collaborate with food and beverage vendors on product selection and menu development and provide developed plan to Executive Director for approval
- Assist with pricing strategy and cost analysis to review and obtain approval from Executive Director
- Oversee and track food, beverage, and alcohol inventory
- Coordinate buy-back agreements to minimize financial loss with oversight from Executive Director
- Oversee alcohol compliance and wristband distribution
- Submit required documentation for ABC reporting
- Oversee bar operations and vendor partnerships

3. Licensing, Compliance & Inspections

- Apply for and maintain necessary permits and licenses (Temporary Alcohol License, Special Event approvals, etc.)
- Coordinate Health Department and Fire Marshal inspections
- Submit required documentation to Kansas State Fair administration
- Ensure compliance with local, state, and venue regulations in coordination

4. Financial Management & Reporting

- Track deposits and maintain contract files
- Reviews reconciliation and submits daily and final sales reports
- Track profit and loss during major events
- Submit financial documentation to accounting
- Review and approve payroll reporting and staff hour tracking

5. Staffing & Leadership

- Support recruitment of seasonal and part time staff, make and recommend hiring decisions
- Review and approve staff training materials and operational procedures
- Holds overall responsibility and resolves escalated issues
- Approve payroll documentation and submit to accounting
- Coordinate third-party vendors (bar services, catering teams, security, cleaning)
- Provide leadership and oversight during high-volume and high-pressure events
- Cover operational roles as needed (door attendant, bar support, food runner support)

6. Contractor & Vendor Coordination

- Schedule and oversee contractors for maintenance and repairs
- Coordinate with electricians, plumbers, pest control, refrigeration, and other service providers
- Monitor vendor contracts and service agreements
- Manage dumpster scheduling and facility logistics

7. Marketing & Public Relations Support

- Assist with 1861 Club marketing initiatives
- Contribute to monthly e-updates and promotional efforts
- Participate in interviews, public appearances, and tours
- Host VIP guests and assist with special visits
- Collaborate on branding, advertising, and promotional strategy to arrive at a plan for approval

Qualifications

Required

- Strong financial acumen and reporting capability
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Ability to manage multiple priorities in a fast-paced environment
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail
- Problem-solving mindset with proactive leadership approach
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office and Google Drive

Preferred

- 3+ years of experience in venue management, hospitality, event operations, or food & beverage management
- Strong sales and negotiation skills
- Experience managing staff and contractors
- Knowledge of POS systems (TOAST preferred)

Physical & Work Requirements

- Ability to lift a minimum of 40 pounds
- Ability to stand and move for extended periods during events
- Flexible work schedule including evenings and weekends
- Increased hours and operational intensity during Kansas State Fair preparation and execution

Compensation & Benefits

- Competitive salary based on experience and qualifications
- Paid vacation
- Professional development opportunities

About the Kansas Fairgrounds Foundation

The Kansas Fairgrounds Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located on the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson, Kansas. The Foundation serves as the fundraising arm for the Kansas State Fair and Fairgrounds.

The Foundation's mission is to inspire excellence and understanding of Kansas agriculture, industry, and culture through the Kansas State Fair, educational programs, and community engagement.

Revenue generated by the 1861 Club directly supports renovation, preservation, and enhancement projects across the Fairgrounds.

To Apply:

Please submit a resume, cover letter and three professional references to info@ksfgf.org by November 19, 2026. For additional information on the position please contact the Foundation office at 620-615-7388