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ELLIE MICHAELIDES: FROM HEAD MEDIATOR TO LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR AT SCIENCE GALLERY MELBOURNE

Ellie Michaelides, Science Gallery Melbourne's own Learning and Engagement Coordinator, tells us of her journey so far through Science Gallery.

WHO?

- ▶ Ellie Michaelides, Learning and Engagement Coordinator
- ▶ Science Gallery Melbourne (SGM)



Ellie (on the right) working at the BLOOD exhibition at Science Gallery Melbourne in 2018.

WHAT?

Equipped with a love of art, science and chit-chatting with people, Ellie found herself naturally drawn to science communication. Before her Science Gallery days, she studied as a zoologist and later worked at a PR company as a science communicator. Just as she was finishing up work with them, an opportunity came along to work with Science Gallery Melbourne. Eager for a new challenge, Ellie decided to apply and soon became the Head Mediator for SGM's first exhibition, BLOOD: Attract & Repel in 2017.

As Head Mediator, Ellie's role primarily involved managing the Mediator team as well as mediating on the floor herself. She fondly recalls *You Beaut* by the Hotham Street Ladies - a giant uterus mural set in a toilet installation, as one of her favourite pieces to mediate. The piece came complete with heaps of "menstrual" blood, that was actually made of cake icing and lollies. Ellie loved to break down the taboo of menstruation with visitors as their initial disgust swayed to curiosity when they learnt more about the menstrual blood's true nature. Through mediating the piece, Ellie helped visitors gain an understanding and awareness surrounding polycystic ovarian syndrome and endometriosis, two conditions associated with menstruation.

After BLOOD, Ellie progressed into a new role as Science Engagement Coordinator for the PERFECTION exhibition in 2018. In this role she continued to manage the Mediator team, but additionally took on programming public events for the gallery and managing the new youth advisory committee, Sci Curious. In 2019, Ellie's role evolved once again. She is currently the Learning and Engagement Coordinator at Science Gallery Melbourne, with her focus now shifting towards the development of engagement programs for university students, as well as maintaining oversight of her previous responsibilities.

When she's not at the gallery, Ellie keeps up with pottery classes and gardening. Keeping true to her zoological roots, she also dedicates a day each week working as the Engagement Manager for the nature connection charity, *Remember the Wild*.

WHAT THEY SAID?

*"I feel as though I've found my home at Science Gallery!
The people, the programs, the ideas we're exploring -
it's such an exciting initiative to be involved with."*

*"I'd love to see more movement between the individual
[Science Gallery locations] particularly to be able to offer
Mediators exchange roles and opportunities across the
network. In Australia, we're pretty far away from the rest of
the Network partners, so for us it would be especially great
for our Mediators to be able to head to galleries on the
other side of the world to see how things are done there."*

- Ellie Michaelides

WHAT WERE THE BENEFITS AND IMPACTS?

- ▶ Career advancement
- ▶ Inspiring Career Choice
- ▶ Employee Engagement
- ▶ Communication skill development



You Beaut by the Hotham Street Ladies, BLOOD: Attract & Repel 2018

LINKS

Read more about Remember the Wild:

<https://www.rememberthewild.org.au/>

Science Gallery Melbourne's BLOOD: Attract & Repel exhibition:

<https://melbourne.sciencegallery.com/blood/melbourne/>

Sources: Interview with Ellie Michaelides in 2019

Compiled by: Ciara O'Flynn, Science Gallery International in 2019

Activity date: 2017 -