

CULTUREWORD

Chief Executive

Person Specification

Post Title: Chief Executive of Cultureword

Responsible to: Board of Directors

Summary of role:

On a day-to-day basis, the CEO provides strategic, artistic, and operational leadership for Cultureword—supporting staff and freelancers, overseeing programmes and finances, maintaining compliance, and acting as a visible ambassador with partners, funders, and communities. Month to month, they work closely with the Board to review strategy and performance, secure and manage funding, ensure high-quality delivery of artistic programmes, and strengthen the organisation’s sustainability, governance, and social impact.

1. Qualifications and Professional Development

Essential

- A degree or equivalent professional experience in arts management, cultural leadership, creative writing, humanities, or a related field
- Evidence of ongoing professional development relevant to leadership, governance, fundraising, or the cultural sector

Desirable

- Fundraising or financial management certification or training

2. Strategic Leadership and Governance Experience

Essential

- Significant leadership experience within the arts, cultural, charity, or not-for-profit sector
- Proven experience of working with, and reporting to, a Board of Directors or Trustees
- Demonstrable ability to contribute to, and implement, organisational strategy and long-term vision such as Business Plans
- Strong understanding of governance, compliance, and relevant legislation affecting charities and cultural organisations

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Desirable

- Experience of leading an organisation through periods of growth or change
- Experience working in roles which include Arts Council England engagement or engagement with equivalent funding organisations

3. Financial Management and Fundraising

Essential

- Proven experience of ensuring sound and solvent financial management, including budgeting, forecasting, and financial reporting
- Demonstrable success in identifying, developing, and managing fundraising and a good understanding of arts funding streams
- Experience of providing accurate and timely financial and management information to a Board including overseeing production of budgets, cash flows and yearly accounts.

Desirable

- Track record of securing funding from statutory bodies, trusts, foundations, and private sponsors
- Experience of developing new income streams linked to arts and creativity, creative writing, social justice & the arts, for example arts-focused Global Majority/LGBT+ initiatives

4. Artistic and Programme Leadership

Essential

- Strong understanding of, and commitment to, creative writing as an art form
- Experience of overseeing or supporting the delivery of high-quality artistic programmes
- Ability to ensure artistic excellence while balancing operational, financial, and strategic priorities
- Experience of programme planning, delivery, and evaluation

Desirable

- Direct experience of delivering creative writing programmes
- Experience of working with underrepresented communities and socially engaged arts practice

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5. Advocacy, Ambassadorship, and External Relations

Essential

- Ability to act as a compelling ambassador and advocate for the organisation and its creative writing programmes
- Demonstrable community engagement and interpersonal skills including experience of building trusted relationships with communities, participants, artists, and stakeholders, with strong interpersonal (“people”) skills and a commitment to inclusive, respectful, and collaborative ways of working.
- Strong relationship-building skills with funders, sponsors, partners, and stakeholders
- Confidence representing the organisation publicly and promoting its mission

Desirable

- Established networks within the arts, funding, or cultural policy sectors
- Experience advocating for diversity, equity, and inclusion within the cultural sector

6. Management and Operational Skills

Essential

- Proven experience of line-managing staff and freelancers, including performance management and appraisals, motivating and inspiring staff, and setting priorities
- Ability to maintain effective management practices, HR policies, and employment procedures
- Strong organisational skills, with the ability to ensure the smooth day-to-day operation of an organisation
- Experience coordinating multiple projects and priorities simultaneously

Desirable

- Experience of building and managing new teams
- Experience of organisational systems development and improvement

7. Personal Attributes

Essential

- Strategic, proactive, and solutions-focused leadership style
- High level of integrity, accountability, and professionalism

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- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Commitment to collaborative working and shared responsibility
- Willingness and ability to be office-based a minimum of two days per week and attend quarterly performance appraisals

Desirable

- Passion for mentoring and developing staff
- Strong alignment with the organisation's values, including creative empowerment and working with underrepresented voices.