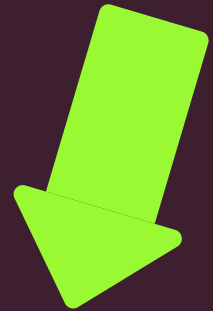


**Marketplace
Arts**

FENLAND & WEST SUFFOLK

CREATIVE DIRECTOR & CEO



**Deadline
31st August
Apply now**

Marketplace Arts

Dear applicant,

Marketplace Arts is looking for an ambitious, **inspiring and creatively curious Creative Director & CEO to lead our organisation into its next chapter.**

This is a rare opportunity to take the creative and strategic lead of an established, community-led arts organisation with the freedom, ambition and potential to shape what comes next.

For more than 10 years, our **Arts Council England Creative People and Places (CPP) programme** has challenged the ways in which culture is created, experienced and shared. Working across seven market towns in Fenland and West Suffolk — Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Chatteris, March, Whittlesey and Wisbech — we put communities at the heart of our work, working alongside artists, partners and local people to create ambitious, high-quality cultural experiences in places where access to the arts has historically been limited.

From helping communities see their hometowns with new eyes through **Light Up the Town**, to reimagining public space through **Lumini** in Newmarket and **Legends of Lime Avenue** in Wisbech, taking creativity on the road with the **Art Road Trip** through Mildenhall, and creating a loyal following for our **Centre Stage** photographic exhibition, no two years at Marketplace Arts look the same. We are an organisation that is not afraid to experiment — commissioning festivals, installations, storytelling, exhibitions and parades, and finding new ways for communities to shape the cultural life of their own places.

Our CPP programme is established and funded through to 2029, and as Creative Director & CEO you will join a national network of 46 Creative People and Places programmes. But this role is about more than leading an established programme. Marketplace Arts is also an emerging arts charity, and we are excited about what that could mean for our future.

As CEO, you will help shape the development of the organisation as a whole — bringing together its creative ambition, charitable purpose, partnerships and future sustainability. You will provide strategic leadership, lead fundraising and partnership development, inspire our staff team and be a visible advocate for the organisation, its communities and the power of culture to make a difference.

We are looking for someone who will bring vision, energy and imagination to Marketplace Arts. Someone who can inspire staff, communities, artists and partners to think boldly about what is possible; who is comfortable challenging convention; and who understands that great cultural work starts by listening to people and giving them the opportunity to shape what happens next.

You will be joining an organisation with strong foundations, an established reputation and a wealth of creative potential — but with no predetermined answer about where the next chapter should take us. We want our new Creative Director & CEO to help us imagine it.

Marketplace Arts



This is an opportunity to make a lasting contribution to the cultural life of Fenland and West Suffolk: a region that is culturally under-served, but rich in creativity, appetite and talent. Marketplace Arts has already demonstrated what can happen when communities are trusted to lead. We are now looking for a leader who can build on that legacy, think differently about what comes next and help us create something bold, distinctive and lasting.

If you are excited by the opportunity to lead with creativity, think differently and put community voice at the heart of an ambitious organisation, we would love to hear from you.

The Creative Director & CEO will report directly to the Marketplace Arts Consortium in all matters relating to the CPP programme and to the Board of Trustees in relation to the Charity. The role is line managed by the Chair of the Board and has direct line management responsibility for the Programme Manager & Creative Producers. The Creative Director & CEO will also be the organisation's lead contact for its relationship with Arts Council England.

Thank you for your interest in leading Marketplace Arts, we look forward to receiving your application.

Katherine Nightingale

Chair of the Marketplace Arts Board

Stephanie Peachey

Independent Chair of the Marketplace Arts Creative People & Places Consortium

Creative Director & CEO

Marketplace Arts Recruitment Pack, August 2026

Marketplace Arts is looking for an ambitious and inspiring Creative Director & CEO to lead our work into its next chapter. This is a unique opportunity to shape the creative and strategic vision of a well-established Arts Council England funded Creative People and Places (CPP) programme, working with communities, artists and partners across Fenland and West Suffolk to put community voice at the heart of everything we do.

Creative People and Places

Marketplace Arts is a cultural community development programme with a difference - no two years look the same. We are looking for an ambitious and inspiring Creative Director & CEO, who will inspire both the staff team and communities around them to think big and lead our organisation into its next chapter, whatever that may look like. This is a rare opportunity to shape the creative and strategic vision of a well-established Arts Council England Creative People and Places (CPP) programme, working with communities, artists and partners across Fenland and West Suffolk to truly make a difference to people's lives in a culturally under-served region.

The Creative Director & CEO will report directly to the Marketplace Arts Consortium in all matters relating to the CPP programme and the Board of Trustees on the Charity. They will be line managed by the Chair of the Board. The role has direct line management responsibility for the Programme Manager & Creative Producers and is the organisation's lead contact for the relationship with Arts Council England.

Job Title:	Creative Director & CEO
Contract:	Full Time, Permanent
Location:	Hybrid working from home and March Town Hall, Cambridgeshire, with regular travel across Fenland, West Suffolk and the wider East of England
Salary:	£42,000 - £45,000 (dependent on experience) per annum
Reports to:	Chair, Marketplace Arts Board of Trustees

Key Duties & Responsibilities

- Drive the creative and strategic vision for Marketplace Arts
- Drive the Creative People and Places (CPP) programme, providing strong and visible leadership
- Champion community engagement and empowerment – placing community voice at the heart of the organisation that supports and showcases artistic excellence and ambition
- Lead on fundraising for Marketplace Arts
- Maintain and build existing partnerships as well as develop new ones, in Fenland, West Suffolk and beyond that will support the sustainability of the organisation
- Recruit all staff and ensure that every person working for Marketplace Arts has the support and tools they need to succeed

Creative Leadership

- Produce and then lead on the delivery of all Marketplace Arts business plans, reviewing and developing strategies with particular reference to the Creative People and Places programme values of Arts Council England, meeting key agreed and required outcomes for arts delivery, collaborative partnerships, engagement, communications, and audience development
- Lead on the design and development of the Marketplace Arts programme, with strategic and operational responsibility for delivery with a range of community partners, the Consortium and Board of Trustees of the Charity
- Identify and implement opportunities for development with communities and artists with a focus on co-creation

- Act as a mentor for all artists and community members, to encourage and support their best work to a high degree of quality and ambition
- Be a catalyst to drive all creative activities forward, attracting community engagement and facilitating community co-production
- Be the lead contact for the relationship with Arts Council England

Marketplace Arts, Creative People & Places Programme Specific Duties

- Represent Marketplace Arts in the national CPP peer learning network, by actively engaging in it, and sharing learning with the Team and the Consortium
- Oversee and develop the programme's evaluation and monitoring framework with the external evaluator, ensuring appropriate data is being collected, recorded, and shared effectively
- Ensure learning from the programme is shared with Consortium partners, trustees and wider stakeholders, and that the learning informs the overall ongoing development of the CPP programme
- Prepare reports for the Consortium and Marketplace Arts trustees and lead on preparing the necessary quarterly monitoring required by Arts Council England and other funders
- Work with the Independent Consortium Chair to ensure appropriate and effective governance of the programme
- Attend Consortium Meetings, representing Marketplace Arts as lead partner, to provide in-depth reporting and recommendations

Governance & Management

- Work with the Chair of the Board of Trustees to prepare agendas for all board meetings, prepare CEO reports and all other quarterly reporting to ensure the effective management and governance of the charity
- Support all sub-committees of the board (including Finance & Risk) to understand and effectively identify and mitigate any risks, issues of concern or opportunities for organisational development as required
- Ensure compliance by all partners with necessary legislation and policies to ensure safety, compliance and equality of access
- Report directly to the Marketplace Arts Board of Trustees and be line managed by the Chair of the Board. Hold direct line management responsibility for the Programme Manager & Creative Producers
- Work with Vero HR to ensure all HR processes, including staff reviews, contracting and effective management of the team, are conducted to the highest standard and promote dignity at work, respect for all and an inclusive working culture
- Adhere to and implement policies in the areas of equity (diversity, equal opportunities, anti-ableism), environmental action, health & safety, safeguarding, and data confidentiality

Finance & Fundraising

- Provide strategic financial management and planning for the charity, including setting the annual budget and producing all necessary financial reports
- Work with Fordham Finance on all issues related to day-to-day financial processes, payroll and reporting
- Ensure all resources support activities that build audiences, sustainability and ambition for the Charity
- Take the lead on major fundraising activities, developing personal relationships with significant donors, writing funding applications and developing a strategy for partnership and sponsorship opportunities
- Develop the infrastructure required for income generation (pricing, ticketing, donations strategies) and/or sponsorship, where identified
- Work with the Consortium and Board of Trustees to develop and begin to implement a long-term investment strategy for the Marketplace Arts vision

Communications, Marketing & Press

- Effectively act as public spokesperson and champion for Marketplace Arts in all public forums, reflecting the values of the charity and making the case for our work and its value

- Ensure the communications strategy for Marketplace Arts is effective and reflects its values

General

- Undertake appropriate training
- Undertake staff appraisals and participate in role and management evaluations
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the role

Person Specification

Marketplace Arts is committed to widening access to leadership roles in the arts and cultural sector. If you meet most, but not all, of the essential criteria below, we still encourage you to apply and to tell us about your relevant transferable experience in your cover letter.

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Education & Training	Degree level, or equivalent significant senior experience within the arts, cultural or creative sector	- Postgraduate qualification in arts management, business or a related field - Governance or trustee-level training
Knowledge of	- Strategic and business planning for an arts or cultural organisation - Charity governance, including working with a Board of Trustees - Arts funding, fundraising and income generation, including trusts, foundations, corporate and public funding - Financial management and budget setting for an organisation of comparable scale - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, safeguarding and health & safety legislation	- Creative People and Places priorities and learning - Arts Council England's funding and reporting requirements - Fenland and/or West Suffolk regions' infrastructure, heritage and cultural landscape - Regional and national arts and cultural networks
Relevant Experience of	- Senior leadership of an arts, cultural or creative organisation, or a comparable transferable sector - Leading fundraising activity and building relationships with major donors and funders - Line management and development of staff, including remote and dispersed teams - Working with and reporting to a Board of Trustees or equivalent governance body - Building and sustaining partnerships with community groups, local authorities and other agencies - Managing organisational budgets and financial reporting	- Direct experience of the Creative People and Places programme - Working within a multi-partner Consortium governance model - Leading community co-creation programmes in a rural context - Experience of capital projects or major venue management
Skills & Abilities	- Strong and clear strategic judgement and decision-making - Inspirational, visible leadership able to motivate staff, artists and communities - Excellent communication and advocacy skills, confident acting as a public spokesperson - Strong negotiation skills across a wide range of stakeholders, from community members to funders - Commitment to co-creation and placing community voice at the heart of decision-making - Able to prioritise and manage a varied workload under pressure	- Strong IT skills, including Microsoft Office and cloud-based tools - Confident, resilient and adaptable in a rural, multi-site working environment

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
General	• Willingness to work flexible hours, including some evenings and weekends • A current valid driving licence and use of a vehicle for business purposes • Willingness to travel regularly across Fenland, West Suffolk and the wider East of England • Commitment to Marketplace Arts' values of Bravery, Creativity, Honesty and Welcoming	• Enthusiasm for professional development and peer learning through the national CPP network

Line Management

The Creative Director & CEO reports directly to the Marketplace Arts Board of Trustees and is line managed by the Chair of the Board. The role has direct line management responsibility for the Programme Manager & Creative Producers.

This role will necessitate some working during evenings and weekends. We operate a Time Off in Lieu (TOIL) system, so that additional time worked is taken off. Business travel is reimbursed through expenses.

The post will be subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure. You will be required to provide the necessary documentation for the checks to be carried out.

How to Apply

Stage 1: Written Application

Please submit a CV (no more than two pages) and a covering letter (no more than two pages) setting out how you meet the person specification and why you are interested in leading Marketplace Arts, via the link on our website.

Stage 2: First Interview

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a first interview with a panel including Trustees and the Independent Consortium Chair. This will explore your experience, leadership approach and vision for the organisation.

Stage 3: Second Interview

Candidates progressing to a second interview may be asked to prepare a short presentation and will meet a wider panel including Consortium partners, staff representatives and Trustees, to allow for a more in-depth discussion of strategic priorities.

Recruitment Timeline

Closing date for applications	31 st August 2026
Interviews	w/c 14 th and w/c 21 st September 2026
Post holder in place	November 2026 (subject to notice period)

Marketplace Arts is an equal opportunities employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to providing an inclusive environment for all our employees. We particularly welcome applications from those currently under-represented in senior arts and cultural leadership.