

BRIDPORT ARTSCENTRE

Bridport Arts Centre

DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT PACK

WELCOME FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Hello and thank you for your interest in this role with Bridport Arts Centre

This is an exciting time for Bridport Arts Centre (BAC). We are celebrating our 50th birthday and, while we are reflecting on our achievements of the last 50 years, we also look forward to the next half century. We are delighted to have been successful in securing Arts Council England funding for a further three years as a national portfolio organisation, our financial position is sound, we have a highly engaged board of trustees, a friendly and committed core team, a talented pool of freelance technical staff and creative practitioners from all fields, and loyal volunteers. And we are based in a culturally vibrant town in the beautiful county of Dorset where culture and creativity are valued and championed at every turn. Committed to inclusivity across our organisation, our priority is to ensure our programme and activity reaches and involves our whole community, particularly those that are currently underrepresented.

Our current Director, Mick Smith, is standing down after three eventful years. Mick has steered the organisation through the pandemic, established a stable operating model and overseen our successful Arts Council application. We are now looking for an ambitious and energetic new leader who will drive forward our plans for the next chapter, working with the community in Bridport and our partners locally, nationally and internationally to build an exciting future for the Arts Centre, and for the wider cultural sector in Bridport.

We are keen to hear from candidates with a broad range of experience so if you are interested in the opportunity but not sure if it's right for you - or if you are right for us – we would encourage you to have a confidential chat with Hazel Province, who is supporting the Board in this recruitment. Details are in the 'how to apply' section.



Barry Lovejoy, Chair



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



**WE HOPE THIS PACK GIVES YOU ALL
THE INFORMATION YOU NEED**

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ABOUT US

We approach the 50th birthday of Bridport Arts Centre with a lot to celebrate.

Our creative programme continues to grow and diversify. From our 194-seat theatre and other spaces in Bridport we present a year-round programme of theatre, dance, music, spoken word, comedy, film and event cinema and we have a long track record of bringing national and internationally recognised artists and touring exhibitions to the Allsop gallery, which is one of the largest gallery spaces in Dorset. We produce nationally renowned festivals, including From Page to Screen which is the UK's only festival of adaptations from books to film and, since 1973, we have been running the Bridport Prize, a prestigious international creative writing competition, attracting almost 14,000 entries from 104 countries in 2021. Our BACStage youth theatre has been running since 2009 and we hold a range of creative workshops and classes for our local community residents and groups.

We sustained our impact throughout the pandemic, engaging around 26,000 people through online exhibitions, film festivals, competitions, commissioned work and video podcasts and we continue to host digital events to complement our live events programme.

In 2020 we completed on the sale of our Grade II listed building, a converted Wesleyan Methodist Chapel located in the heart of Bridport, agreeing a 10-year peppercorn lease with its new owner which secures its continued position as our main theatre and gallery venue, while freeing up valuable funds to invest directly into our creative programme.

And we are delighted to have been successful in securing Arts Council England funding for a further three years (2023 – 2026) as a national portfolio organisation.

Bridport Arts Centre is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

“The work of Bridport Arts Centre is very much at the heart of our community, and a vital element of the year round calendar in ‘Dorset’s Eventful Town’. The Town Council’s annual funding reflects our strong support for its wonderful cultural offer, delivered through events in the iconic and historic Arts Centre building, outreach activity elsewhere in the town, and partnership initiatives with the Town Council and other community organisations.”

Will Austin – Town Clerk, Bridport Town Council

OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

In May 2023 we begin a 12-month long celebration of our 50th birthday.

Our anniversary programme will extend beyond the boundaries of our main venue and we will be presenting work in unexpected spaces around Bridport. Our plans include a project to explore recently uncovered archive material, in partnership with the Dorset History Centre, and we are creating a new social archive capturing the stories from our founders and supporters as well as those created over the next 50 years. We will present a large scale play co-produced with some of our local community groups, our visual arts programme includes an exhibition related to the developing archive and From Page to Screen 2023 is being curated by double academy award winning screen writer, Sir Christopher Hampton and guests include theatre and film director, Sir Richard Eyre.

The Bridport Prize enters a new chapter - in 2022, we piloted a Black Writer's Residency scheme in partnership with Dorset Museum, spearheaded by award winning author Kit de Waal, a former Bridport Prize winner and judge. The project will run again in September 2023 and offer three under-represented writers a week in Dorset to focus on their work. We will continue to run our five competition strands of poetry, short story, flash fiction, the Peggy Chapman-Andrews Award for a First Novel, and memoir.

Over the next three years we will develop our young people's programme into a year-round creative development programme for young people and, building on the learning from BACStage, in 2023 we are launching BACScreen – a development programme for the many brilliant young film makers who live and work on our doorstep in West Dorset.

With a new visual arts programme manager and a visual arts strategy focussing on innovative ambitious work we look forward to exciting times ahead for the Allsop Gallery.

The Marlow Theatre Stage



Our team

The Director is supported by a small committed and friendly staff team, including a General Manager, Technical Coordinator, Programme Managers for the Bridport Prize and Visual Arts, a Marketing Manager and Finance Officer. We have just started the recruitment process for an engagement coordinator who will spearhead our participation work. We also work with an extended team of talented and committed freelance technical staff and creative practitioners from all fields, and we are supported by loyal volunteers.

We have an engaged Board of Trustees bringing a wealth of expertise to offer strategic guidance, oversight and support to the Director and staff. Our chair and one other trustee will be coming to the end of their term later in 2023 so during this year we are continuing the expansion and diversification of our board, with the recruitment of a new Chair for 2024 and other trustees.

Our financial position

As we approach the end of our first full year of activity following the closures enforced by the pandemic, BAC remains in a sound financial position. Ticket sales have performed well against our modest targets and we benefit from the continued support of our core funders – Arts Council England, Dorset Council and Bridport Town Council.

The arts centre is currently undertaking a review of our finance systems to more efficiently integrate information and bring clarity to our reporting. This will also allow us to analyse and make better use of our audience data to underpin our marketing and strategic plans.

We have healthy reserves in excess of our reserves policy thanks to a substantial legacy, as well as the sale of the building in 2020. This allows us to think about investing in change ahead of funding applications and to pilot new initiatives.



EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Our core aim is to provide inspiration to artists and audiences through a vibrant and diverse programme of arts activities.

We are working to embed ambitious Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) practices across our public activities, internal processes, and partnerships. Our staff, volunteers, and trustees are committed to building and facilitating an array of spaces, practices and opportunities which are accessible, inclusive and relevant to the whole community of Bridport and engage a wide audience across Dorset and further afield.

We are in the process of establishing a working environment which acknowledges and supports people's intersectional lived experience of class, gender, race, sexuality, disability, and faith above and beyond reasonable adjustments as in the Equality Act 2010. We are navigating physical limitations in our current base at the Arts Centre and want to be creative and ambitious in how we respond to our community. Our new director will be instrumental in moving us forward.

The arts and the world at large are more vibrant, impactful, and authentic when many perspectives are heard and valued.

Yoruba Choir



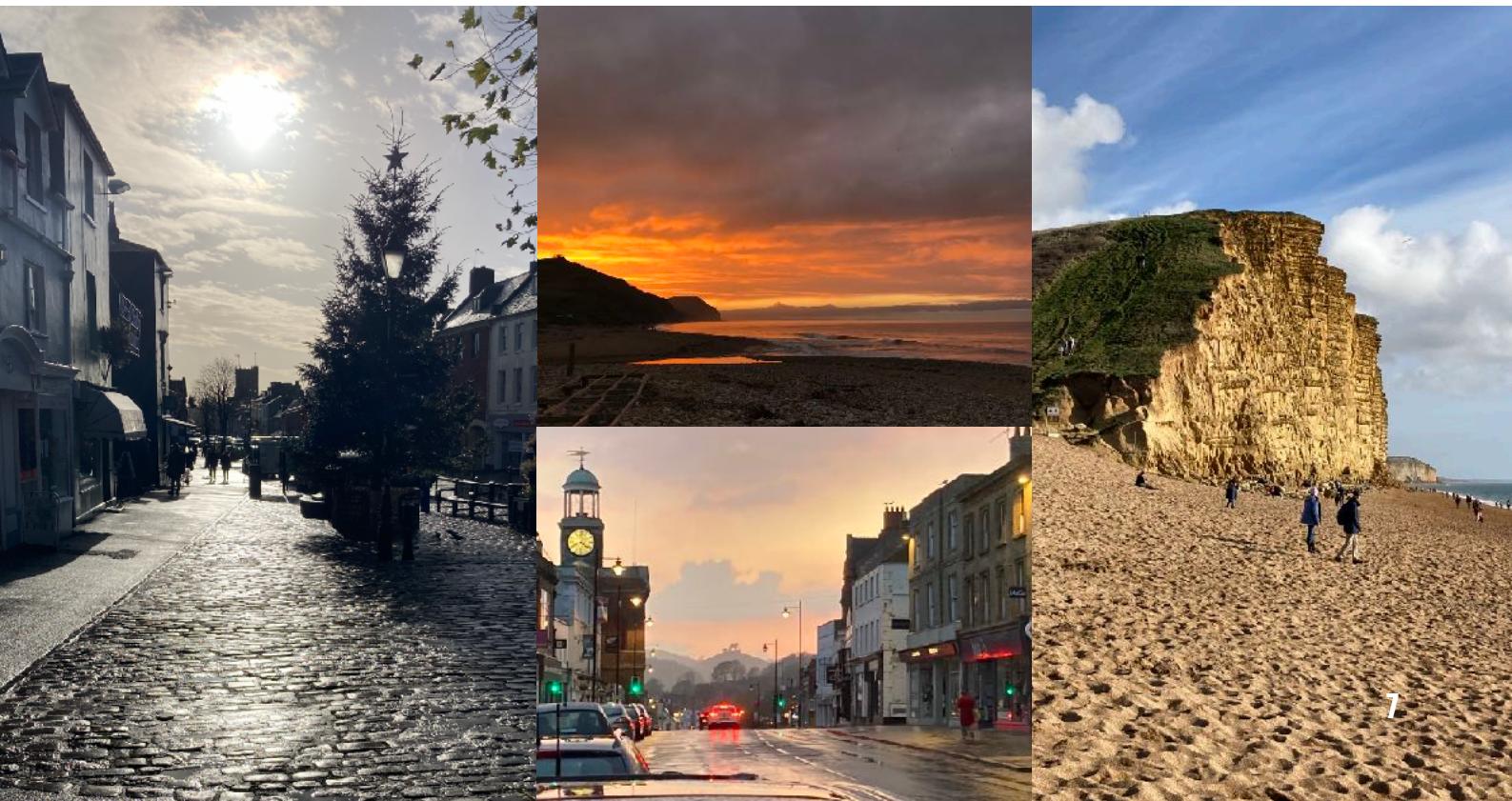
BRIDPORT AND DORSET

Bridport is a lively and vibrant market town located just one mile from the Jurassic coast and surrounded by a close network of rural and coastal communities.

The town's 13,000 residents and many annual visitors benefit from a supportive and engaged Mayor and Town Council, and the town is a hive of cultural activity with three theatre spaces, a museum, a library, a year-round programme of festivals and live events, numerous independent artists' studios and small creative businesses as well as an eclectic mix of independent shops, cafes and restaurants.

In 2018, Bridport launched its Citizens' Charter on the journey to be the UK's first 'Rights Respecting Town'. Bridport Arts Centre is also a part of the wider cultural ecosystem of Dorset, which has recently launched a new Cultural Strategy with ambitions to position culture at the heart of what makes Dorset a great place to live, work and visit.

Spearheaded by the Arts Development Company and supported by Dorset Council the sector collaborates regularly - both formally and informally - and works strategically in partnership with powerful local stakeholders to develop and deliver shared initiatives in pursuit of shared ambitions.



THE ROLE OF DIRECTOR

OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

The Director of the Bridport Arts Centre leads on the artistic and strategic direction of the organisation, responsible for its overall reputation and business sustainability. Building positive and productive relationships with funders, partners and stakeholders in Bridport, across Dorset and beyond, we look to the Director to articulate our vision and values, creating a culture of ambition, collaboration and inclusivity. This post reports to the Board of Trustees and directly line manages the General Manager, Marketing Manager and Finance Officer, and the programme managers for Visual Arts and the Bridport Prize.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership

- Lead the organisation in line with its mission, vision and values, creating a welcoming environment in which staff, artists, trustees and volunteers can thrive and flourish.
- Act as an advocate, champion and spokesperson for the arts centre, developing and sustaining positive working relationships with artists, partners and stakeholders locally, nationally and internationally.
- Lead on the development of new programmes and income streams, continually seeking opportunities to further the aims and interests of the organisation.

Creative programme

- Develop a coherent artistic strategy, ensure that the programme is ambitious and inclusive, balancing work of national and international reputation with that of regional and emerging artists.
- Provide strategic direction and artistic leadership to the programming and delivery of all BAC's creative output across live events, visual arts, digital, and community engagement.
- Initiate and develop new creative partnerships and collaborations that will further the aims of the arts centre artistically and commercially.
- Ensure that the creative programme is planned and delivered in line with the company's EDI and Environmental policies.

Strategy and business planning

- Produce and keep under review the strategy and business plan for Bridport Arts Centre, running an effective business planning process involving staff, trustees and key stakeholders.
- Develop the business and financial model to ensure the organisation is robust and sustainable, able to respond to opportunities/challenges and deliver on its vision, mission and business plan objectives.
- Ensure our strategic planning is aligned with the expectations and direction of our key funders and stakeholders, producing reports as necessary.
- Create supporting strategies, for example marketing and communications, to ensure that senior staff are able to effectively fulfil their responsibilities in support of the overall business direction.

People and operations

- Ensure that the structure of the organisation is fit for purpose in line with its aims and financial resources, reviewing this regularly and in light of any major changes which may impact delivery.
- Act as HR lead for the organisation, taking external advice where necessary to ensure all procedures and policies are in place, correctly deployed and that the organisation is following best practice at all times.
- Develop an inclusive, collaborative, safe and supportive working culture, facilitating any necessary resources to ensure an accessible and productive working environment
- Coordinate policy development throughout the organisation within statutory and other essential legal requirements, including Health and Safety, Licensing, Equalities Act, Safeguarding, etc.
- Take ultimate responsibility for Health and Safety across the organisation, ensuring that procedures are in place and accountability is understood and accepted at all appropriate levels.
- Ensure appropriate technical requirements are in place for the effective delivery of the artistic programme.

Finance and monitoring

- Set and monitor the annual budget for the organisation
- Supported by the general manager and the finance officer, lead on the organisation's financial management, ensuring budget holders are able to deliver activities and projects within allocated budgets.
- Ensure that the board and other key stakeholders have the necessary information and analysis to enable effective monitoring and informed decision making in relation to the financial performance of the charity
- Maintain a strategic risk register for the organisation
- Take responsibility for the organisation's fundraising strategy and activity, identify and take advantage of funding opportunities relevant to BAC activities
- Establish, monitor and report on key indicators of the organisation's performance, impact and financial health
- Report to major funders as required and to allow draw down of funds.

Working with the board of trustees

- Work with the board to ensure the organisation fulfils its legal, statutory and regulatory responsibilities, including with the Charity Commission, Companies House and other statutory authorities
- Build an effective working relationship with the Chair of the Board and Trustees, supporting the Board to ensure they are able to fulfil their legal duties and make best use of their experience and expertise
- Regularly review policies and procedures to ensure best practice.
- Provide timely and accurate information and reports to ensure that Board discussions and decisions are fully informed, attending meetings and providing briefings as necessary
- Engage with and provide information to the members of the charity, to ensure they are able to act as ambassadors for the organisation.

Additional duties and responsibilities

- Act as safeguarding lead for the organisation
- Bridport Arts Centre is an equal opportunities employer. The Director is expected to discharge their responsibilities in line with, and in support of, the company's commitment to equity diversity and inclusion.



ABOUT YOU

We are looking for a great collaborator who has a passion for the arts and who loves working with and empowering people to be the best they can be. You will have a flair for strategic thinking, will be a good communicator and have a pragmatic and detailed approach to finances. You will have experience of leading in an arts/cultural environment or you may be in a senior position and be ready to take on your first leadership role.

We want you to flourish in the role and will provide you with any training or support you need. You will be able to demonstrate:

EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

Essential

- Experience of leadership or senior management in the cultural sector.
- The ability to think strategically and analytically, and experience of developing and implementing strategic business plans.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and a demonstrable ability to build trust-based relationships with a wide range of people both internally and externally.
- The ability to communicate fluently and persuasively, both verbally and in writing.
- Experience of creating a multidisciplinary artistic programme which successfully engages with a diverse range of audiences, or evidence that you have the transferable skills to fulfil this part of the role.
- A track record of successful income generation.
- Demonstrable success in managing budgets and controlling costs Track record of a collaborative, open approach to leadership which enables a small team to flourish.
- Commitment to the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and how these principles are embedded within an organisation.
- Ability to plan, prioritise and organise work and resources, including when under pressure and to deadlines.
- Able to create a vision and to inspire and motivate a team to deliver it.

Desirable

- Experience of working with a board of trustees.
- Experience of managing Arts Council England NPO relationships.
- Excellent digital and IT skills and a willingness to harness digital to improve organisational performance.
- Successful experience of application for public sector funding, experience of building philanthropic giving.

KNOWLEDGE

- An understanding of the current trends and key issues affecting the arts in the UK across a range of disciplines.
- Familiarity with Arts Council England's *Let's Create* strategy and a demonstrable understanding of the Investment Principles that underpins it.
- An understanding of audience development and participation – and of engaging with hard to reach or under-served communities.
- An understanding of the governance, legal and statutory requirements of running a charitable company.
- Knowledge of the funding environment in which the arts centre operates.
- A good understanding of current employment law and health and safety legislation and of related best practice in an organisational context.
- An understanding of the cultural context in a rural setting.

PERSONAL SKILLS AND QUALITIES

- Ability to enthuse and inspire others.
- A commitment to the art centre's vision and values.
- Creative and innovative.
- Committed to equity diversity and inclusion.
- Confident with a positive and flexible approach.
- Tactful and diplomatic, with an appreciation of confidentiality when required.
- Compassionate and empathetic, while remaining focused and results orientated.
- Networker and connector.
- Committed to your own personal development.

WHAT WE ARE OFFERING

Annual salary : £43,000 with employers contributory pension.

37.5 hours per week, worked flexibly due to the nature and demands of the role. Evening and weekend work is to be expected.

28 days annual leave plus bank holidays.

This is a permanent, full time contract subject to the successful completion of a six month probation period.

Notice period: Three months (one month notice during probation).

Location: Bridport Arts Centre and associated offices in Bridport. Some travel across the region will be required. Please note that due to the limited nature of public transport in Dorset, this generally requires having access to a vehicle (or other travel arrangements).

"We're pleased to offer continued regular investment to Bridport Arts Centre through the Arts Council's 2023-26 National Portfolio programme.

The much-loved arts centre is at the beating heart of Bridport's arts and culture scene, hosting a fantastic calendar of creative and cultural activities and events for audiences in Dorset. We're excited to see them continue inspiring audiences and supporting local artists in the work they do. This renewed funding helps us to achieve the vision we set out in our strategy Let's Create – so that there are more opportunities to take part in creativity, and be inspired no matter where we live"

Phil Gibby – Area Director, South West - Arts Council England



HOW TO APPLY

We are keen to hear from candidates with a broad range of experience so if you are interested in the opportunity but not sure if it's right for you - or if you are right for us – we would encourage you to have a confidential chat with Hazel Province, Chair of the Arts Development Company, who is supporting the Board with this recruitment.

hazelprovince@outlook.com

The closing date for this role will be 17th April at 9am.

Interviews will take place in Bridport between 2nd and 4th May 2023.

Apply by completing the application form on our web site at <https://www.bridport-arts.com/director-recruitment/> and returning the completed application and EDI monitoring form to dee@bridport-arts.com

Your personal data will be detached from the application for the shortlisting process.

Accessibility

If you require this or any further information in an alternative format, please email dee@Bridport-arts.com

You are encouraged to share any access requirements you may have for interviews within your application.

