

Creative Producer/Festival Director, Writing West Midlands

Job Description:

Job Title:	Creative Producer/Festival Director
Job Terms:	Permanent (following 10-month probation)
Responsible To:	Chief Executive
Hours:	3 days/week (hours are flexible including some evenings and weekends – time off in lieu will be given)
Office Base:	Birmingham, UK
Salary:	£28 - £30,000 pro rata dependent on experience
Start/Finish Date:	(ideally) Late November 2019

Context:

[Writing West Midlands](#) is the literature development agency for the West Midlands region of England. We support the writing industry regionally and nationally by offering training and development opportunities for adult writers, by encouraging children and young people to engage with creative writing and by running public literature events. We are a partner in a long-term Creative Europe project.

We run the annual [Birmingham Literature Festival](#), the Room 204 Writer Development Scheme, the National Writers' Conference and twenty Spark Young Writers groups, as well as many additional projects. Writing West Midlands is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and part of a national network of literature development agencies.

Our *Festivals & Events* programme includes the Birmingham Literature Festival and year-round events and activities. This work is undertaken to fulfil our mission to encourage creative writing and creative writers in the region by supporting talent, art-form, audience and market development, engaging with young people and promoting regional, national and international development of creative writing.

The Birmingham Literature Festival is one of Writing West Midlands' key projects. Through over twenty iterations since 1999, it has become a festival that provides spaces for writers, performers, readers and audiences to share great writing and challenging ideas. It listens intently to the city and the region and brings voices from across the country and beyond to create a celebration of contemporary literature.

Purpose of Post:

The Creative Producer/Festival Director will be responsible for the programming and production of our *Festivals & Events* programmes, including the annual Birmingham Literature Festival and year-round events and activities. This work will include, but not be limited to:

- Working with writers, performers, publishers, agents, funders and creative organisations to programme the annual Birmingham Literature Festival (typically 40

– 50 events and activities).

- Working with writers, performers, publishers, agents, funders and creative organisations to programme an annual programme of year-round events and other creative activities (up to 5 events and 1-2 projects per year).
- Negotiating and securing partnership and other agreements to enable the hosting of the Birmingham Literature Festival and other events and activities in suitable venues.
- Leading on the management of the Birmingham Literature Festival and other events and activities, including financial management, production, artistic liaison, venue liaison and presentation.
- Monitoring and actively seeking to reduce the environmental impact of Writing West Midlands' festivals and events.
- Supporting the Chief Executive in engaging potential sponsors and other funders to part-fund the Birmingham Literature Festival.
- Supporting the Learning & Participation Manager in programming events and activities as part of our Creative Europe programme and delivery of aspects of Writing West Midlands' young writers programme.
- Supporting the PR & Communications Manager in generating ticket sales for events and activities, in evaluation and monitoring and in other aspects of Writing West Midlands' PR & Communications work.
- Supporting other colleagues in management of Writing West Midlands volunteer and internship programme, provision of reporting data and provision of reports to Writing West Midlands' sub-committees and Board of Trustees.
- Managing the Writing West Midlands Artistic Policy Sub-Committee.
- Any other duties that might be required from time to time.

Person Specification:

The successful applicant will have a passion for supporting and showcasing contemporary literature in all its forms and making it accessible to a broad audience. They will be a voracious reader and have an interest in the wider world of the arts. They will have some experience of working with writers and the publishing, literature development and performance sectors. They will have an appetite for new ways of working and the imagination to work with artforms alongside literature. They will have a proven track-record or are able to demonstrate the potential for creating a fascinating programme of events and activities that celebrate the depth and diversity of creative writing.

The role will demand being flexible, resourceful, working well under pressure and

supporting and engaging others. Negotiation skills and the ability to manage work with many partners on a regional, national and international scale are important. Being able to manage budgets is a given, as is having excellent communication and planning skills. Understanding what is necessary to make an event or activity work is also necessary. There may be a need to manage freelance staff and the role will necessitate working closely with the Chief Executive and other colleagues. An appreciation of the creative writing ecology of the West Midlands and beyond would be desirable.

Desired/Essential Qualities and Attributes:

Knowledge:

	Essential	Desirable
Awareness of contemporary literature from the UK and beyond	Y	
Awareness of the contemporary arts in the UK		Y
Understanding of publishing industry	Y	
Understanding of performance industry		Y
Understanding of funded arts sector		Y
Awareness of the creative writing sector in the West Midlands		Y
Awareness of the arts sector in the West Midlands		Y

Work Skills:

	Essential	Desirable
Event / festival programming skills	Y	
Planning and event management skills	Y	
Negotiation and partnership working skills	Y	
Budgeting and financial management skills	Y	
Managing freelance staff		Y
Copywriting		Y

General Skills/Attributes:

	Essential	Desirable
High level written and spoken communication skills	Y	
Office and similar IT skills	Y	
Timekeeping and work-load management	Y	
Decision-making	Y	
Devising work systems	Y	

Experience:

	Essential	Desirable
Programming/managing literature events	Y	
Programming/managing literature festivals		Y
Working with writers	Y	
Working with venues	Y	
Working with publishers/agents		Y
Project management	Y	

Working in the funded arts sector		Y
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Education & Qualifications:

	Essential	Desirable
Degree in Relevant Subject		Y

How to Apply:

Please send by e-mail a **covering letter** outlining your suitability for the position and a **CV** in the first instance, to:

Jonathan Davidson, Chief Executive, [Writing West Midlands](http://writingwestmidlands.org)

jonathan@writingwestmidlands.org

Deadline for Applications is **5pm Thursday 17th October 2019**.

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted by **Tuesday 22nd October 2019 by email**. Those shortlisted may be asked to prepare a short presentation or/and undertake a task as part of the interview process and will be invited for interview in Birmingham on **Thursday 31st October 2019**. If a second interview is required, this will take place on **Thursday 7th November 2019**.

Although it is not a requirement, we encourage anyone considering applying to attend some of this year's [Birmingham Literature Festival](http://writingwestmidlands.org): 3-13 October.

We would be obliged if all applicants completed the attached monitoring form. This will not form part of the selection process but will provide us with useful data.

We are committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and applications from individuals are encouraged regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.

Writing West Midlands regrets that in the event of a large volume of applications we may not be able to contact non-shortlisted applicants or offer individual feedback.

Writing West Midlands
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 Gibb Street
 Birmingham
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