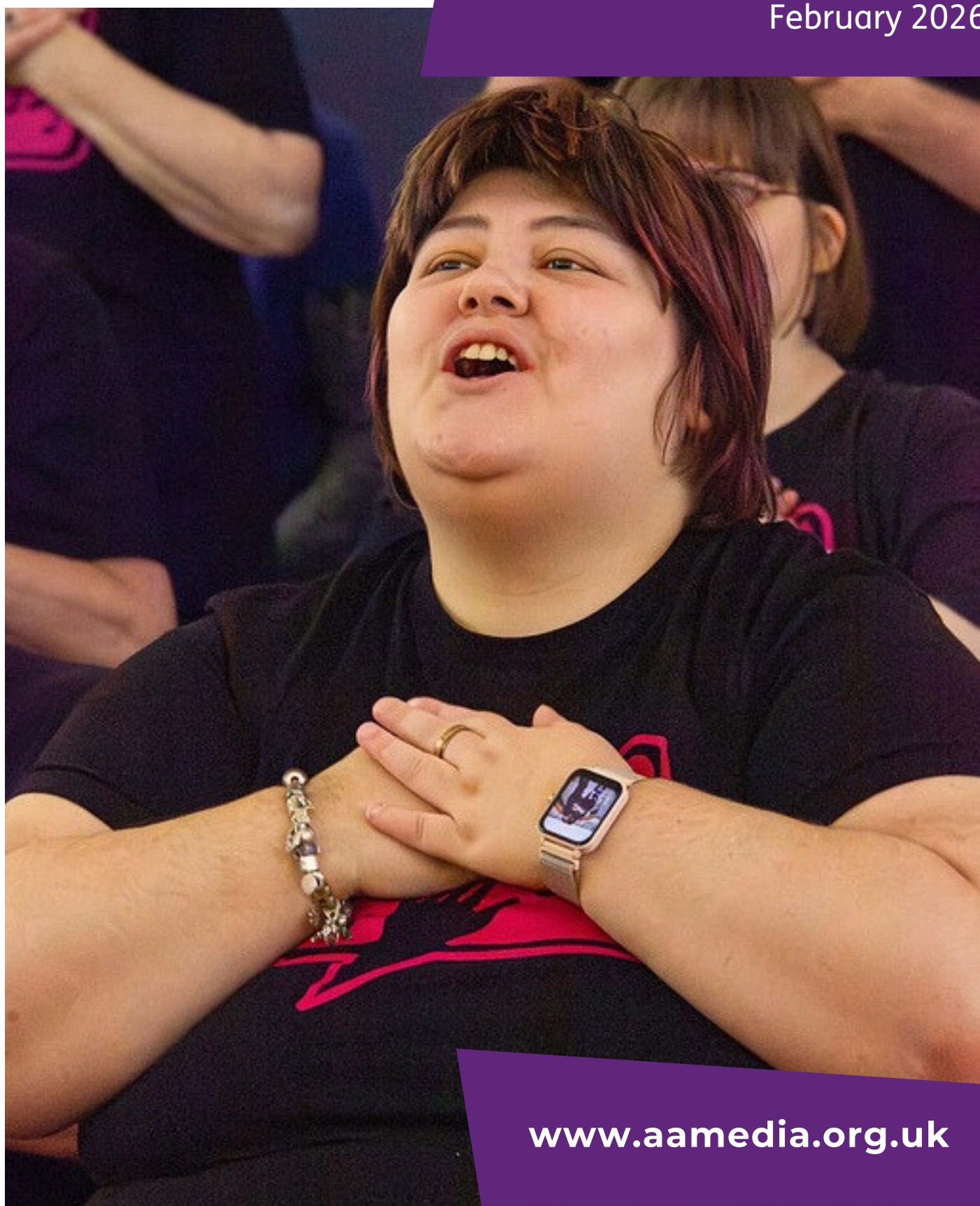




Recruitment Executive Director

Candidate Pack
February 2026



www.aamedia.org.uk

Welcome from Accessible Arts & Media's Board of Trustees

Hello, and thank you for your interest in joining [Accessible Arts & Media](#).

Accessible Arts & Media (AAM) is a brilliant organisation, delivering over 500 creative learning and wellbeing sessions a year.

For over 40 years, we've supported York residents who face additional barriers with activities and performance opportunities that develop skills, confidence and community. In 2025, after over 30 years in the role of Creative Director, our inspirational co-founder Rose Kent retired. This has created an opportunity to reflect and review our operating model, with the aim of ensuring a bright, sustainable future for AAM and the people we support.

We're looking for a strategic and ambitious change leader to support the charity through a critical transformation phase. We're offering the role initially on a fixed-term 18-month period, with potential to extend.

We're well networked and connected in the learning disability, cultural and mental wellbeing sectors in York. And we have a strong track record in building effective partnerships to achieve the best outcomes for the people we support. We have a small but mighty team with clear development potential and a deep understanding of and commitment to our work.

Within this context, our new Executive Director will be responsible for leading a review of our operating model while maintaining effective day-to-day operations. You'll be equally comfortable developing a five-year vision and making sure invoices are paid on time. And you'll be a natural collaborator and advocate, with the ability to inspire, mentor and develop a small team.

In our new Executive Director, we seek a leader with drive and determination. You should have experience of working within small cultural charities and leading on organisational change. Your commitment to accessibility, inclusion and the power of creativity will be crucial, and will help us build a more innovative and impactful organisation. You'll understand that our organisational resilience underpins our creative delivery and vice versa.

Thank you for your interest in joining us and helping us take AAM to the next level. We look forward to receiving your application.



Lucy Galliard
Chair, on behalf of the Board of Trustees

Before you start...

We hope this pack gives you all the information you need. There's a lot of information we want to share with you, so we've split this document into the following sections:

<u>Accessible Arts & Media</u>	4
<u>The Role: Executive Director</u>	5
<u>What Success Looks Like</u>	8
<u>About You: Person Specification</u>	9
<u>How to Apply</u>	13
<u>What We're Offering</u>	14
<u>Accessibility</u>	15



Credit: Jemma Mickleburgh

Accessible Arts & Media

Accessible Arts & Media has been running arts and creative media learning projects in and around York since 1982. We believe that everyone can learn, everyone can be creative and everyone can play a part in their local community. They just need the right support, and that's where we come in.

A lot of different people take part in our projects. From disabled adults and young people to older people with dementia and people with mental ill-health. We also work with schools, community groups and local businesses.

The people who take part in our sessions often face difficulty with everyday activities and can end up feeling isolated and cut off. Taking part in our projects helps them:

- Learn new skills that they can transfer to other parts of their lives, including education, training and employment
- Explore and connect with the world around them in a safe, supportive, fun environment
- Learn to work and communicate with other people, making new friends along the way
- Grow the confidence to have more of a say in the things that matter to them
- Contribute to their local community through workshops and performances
- Take control of their wellbeing
- Feel happy, connected, creative and valued

We want to see an inclusive society, where everyone gets the chance to shine. We're helping to make that happen in York.

Last year we...



Engaged **560** people in creative learning and wellbeing activities



Worked with **46** partners across the education, cultural, voluntary, health, social care and business sectors.



Delivered **558** creative learning and wellbeing sessions



Created **806** hours of paid employment for freelance artists



Were supported by **43** fabulous volunteers



Credit: Jemma Mickleburgh

The Role: Executive Director

The Executive Director will have responsibility for:

Organisational Change and Strategic Development:

- Conducting a review of AAM's operating model, engaging staff, trustees, participants and key stakeholders throughout
- Evaluating what's working well and what needs to change to ensure sustainability and increased impact
- Maintaining a proactive approach to and awareness of changes and opportunities in the external environment
- Working closely with Programme Managers and Development Manager to identify and test new approaches to income generation, including commissioning, fundraising and commercial opportunities
- To support staff to play an active role in building and maintaining strategic partnerships with a broad range of relevant networks and stakeholders
- Developing a new business plan with the Board of Trustees, staff and key stakeholders

Leadership & Advocacy

- Providing steady, hands-on leadership during a period of change, ensuring service quality, staff wellbeing and stakeholder confidence
- Raising AAM's profile, promoting and advocating our work and continually seeking opportunities to further our aims
- Building and maintaining positive relationships with all stakeholders, including participants, volunteers, staff, artists, funders and partners
- Fostering a culture of learning and innovation

People and Culture:

- Line managing staff (currently the Programme Manager and Finance Administrator) and managing relationships with key freelance contractors e.g. Development Manager
- Recruiting, developing and motivating a skilled workforce that embodies AAM's values and person-centred approach
- Creating an inclusive, collaborative, safe and supportive working environment, where employee wellbeing is central
- Creating sustainable career progression pathways for staff by promoting and implementing CPD and training
- Ensuring appropriate mechanisms for listening to the views of staff, volunteers, and participants e.g. 1:1 meetings, annual appraisals, stakeholder engagement

Finance & Fundraising

- Ensuring the charity's financial health by supporting and monitoring an effective programme of income generation, fundraising and expenditure control
- Setting and monitoring the annual budget with the Board of Trustees
- Establishing, monitoring and reporting on key indicators of performance and financial health
- Building and maintaining financial reserves to an appropriate level set by the Board of Trustees
- Ensuring financial procedures and good practice are followed and overseeing all financial systems in collaboration with the Finance Administrator

Operations:

- Overseeing the organisation's technical, digital and administrative requirements, ensuring the right systems and processes are in place and used as effectively as possible
- Ensuring all policies and procedures are maintained, reviewed, implemented thoroughly, reflect best practice and meet all legal and statutory obligations
- Driving efforts to reduce our environmental impact





Governance, Legal, and Compliance

- Ensuring AAM fulfils all its legal, statutory, and regulatory responsibilities, including with the Charity Commission and Companies House
- Being the organisational lead for Health & Safety and Data Protection
- Ensuring the major risks to which the charity is exposed are reviewed regularly by the Board of Trustees and appropriate team members
- Providing regular financial, project and strategic reports to the Board, and attending Trustee sub-group meetings as required
- Building effective working relationships with all Trustees, in particular the Chair
- Serving as Company Secretary, fulfilling all duties of this position

Programme Quality and Impact

- Providing strategic oversight to AAM's evaluation and impact measurement systems, ensuring participant needs, interests and feedback inform organisational learning, programme development, monitoring and reporting.
- Developing and implementing a marketing and communications strategy to promote AAM and its activities, identifying and enlisting specialist external support as required



What Success Looks Like:

By the end of the initial 18-month period, you will have:

- Completed a comprehensive organisational review with clear, actionable recommendations endorsed by the Board
- Implemented priority changes to AAM's operating model, with measurable improvements in operational effectiveness
- Developed at least one new income stream
- Created a new business plan, with full staff, Board and stakeholder buy-in
- Established clear career progression pathways for staff
- Built organisational capacity for ongoing learning, resilience and sustainability



About You: Person Specification

Knowledge & Experience

Essential:

- Proven experience of leading successful organisational transformation in a small arts/cultural charity, balancing strategic change with operational stability and hands-on leadership across multiple areas
- Proven ability to successfully develop and deliver strategic/business plans
- Proven experience of developing and motivating staff and volunteers, creating inclusive, collaborative working environments where people feel valued and supported
- Exceptional stakeholder engagement skills
- Experience in financial management, including preparing annual budgets, achieving income targets and cost control
- Understanding of the current fundraising and economic climate
- Experience developing new income streams
- Sound knowledge of charity governance and legal obligations

- Experience writing reports for a range of stakeholders, including funders and Board of Trustees
- Experience in impact measurement and evaluation
- Sound knowledge of current trends and key issues in the arts and/or health and wellbeing sectors
- Sound knowledge of safeguarding when working with children and adults at risk

Desirable:

- Understanding of what's needed to produce outstanding, inclusive, participatory arts engagement activities with communities, including young people and adults with disabilities, those experiencing mental ill-health, and older people
- Experience in marketing and communications for a charitable organisation
- Existing networks in the learning disability, mental health or cultural sectors
- Experience working with Boards through periods of change
- Experience of driving environmental improvements in an organisation

Skills & Aptitudes

- Highly developed leadership skills with the ability to inspire confidence during periods of change
- Able to create a vision and to inspire and motivate a team to deliver it
- Highly skilled in financial management and business planning, including horizon scanning and research
- Ability to plan, prioritise and organise work and resources, including when under pressure and to deadlines
- Excellent communication, presentation and interpersonal skills with the ability to engage and influence diverse stakeholders, from participants to funders to Board members
- Proven collaborator, able to build, manage and sustain successful relationships/ partnerships
- Excellent digital and IT skills and a willingness to harness digital to improve organisational performance
- A good understanding of HR policies and procedures
- Comfortable with the full range of tasks required in leading a small charity – from strategic planning to ensuring day-to-day systems run smoothly

Credit: Jemma Mickleburgh



Personal Attributes

Hands-on and strategic in equal measure - you understand that in a small charity, effective strategy emerges from operational reality, and you're equally comfortable with both.

Affinity for our work - genuine passion for inclusive arts practice and the power of creativity to transform lives.

Collaborative and facilitative - you build consensus, develop others, and create shared ownership of change.

Resilient and adaptable - comfortable with the pace and variety of work in a small charity.

Results-oriented - focused on achieving tangible outcomes for AAM and the people we support.

Committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion - with demonstrable commitment to inclusive practice and experience of embedding accessibility and person-centred approaches within organisational culture and/or service delivery.

Confident with a positive and flexible approach - able to inspire and enthuse others, including staff, partners, funders, and commissioners.

Compassionate and empathetic - understanding of the needs of the people we support and the staff, artists and volunteers who support them.

Tactful and diplomatic - with an appreciation of confidentiality when required.

Creative and innovative - able to see possibilities and opportunities.



Circumstances

Essential:

- Willingness and ability to work flexibly due to the nature and demands of the role (occasional evening and weekend work will be required; TOIL will be provided)
- Ability to attend meetings, workshops, and performances off-site, with the ability to travel regionally and occasionally nationally
- Ability to work a minimum of 1.5 days per week on-site at our office in Clifton Explore, York, with remote working options available for remaining time

Desirable:

- Access to your own vehicle or other arrangement, such as travel funded via Access to Work





Credit: Jemma Mickleburgh

How to Apply

To apply, please send a CV and your responses to the two questions below to chair@aamedia.org.uk by **5pm on Wednesday 15th April**.

1. Why do you want to work with AAM, and in this specific role?
2. How do you meet the skills and experience set out in the person specification?
Please give specific examples.

You can answer the questions in writing or you can provide a link to a video or audio clip. Written answers should be up to 500 words for question one and up to 1,000 words for question two. Video or audio clips should be no longer than 10 minutes long in total. Please upload video or audio clips to an online platform that doesn't expire (e.g. not WeTransfer).

All applications will be assessed according to the same criteria. Submitting your application in a different format will not affect your chances of being selected.

Please also complete our Equal Opportunities monitoring form by clicking [here](#).

If you have any questions, or need to submit your application in another way, please email chair@aamedia.org.uk

First round interviews are scheduled for **Tuesday 21st April**. Selected candidates would need to be available for an online or in-person interview lasting no more than one hour.

Final interviews are scheduled for **Thursday 30th April** and will take place in person in York. Selected candidates will need to be available for the full day.

What We're Offering: Terms, conditions and benefits

Annual Salary: £37-40k, pro-rata, dependent on experience

Hours: 0.6 FTE (21 hours per week). We can be somewhat flexible about how this is achieved. Occasional evening and weekend work is to be expected.

Employment type: Fixed period for 18 months, with potential to extend, and subject to successful completion of 3-month probation period.

Annual Leave: 25 days pro-rata, some of which must be taken between Christmas and New Year. Bank Holidays are in addition to this.

Place of work: A minimum of 1.5 days a week must be in the AAM office at Clifton Explore, with remote working options available by discussion for the remaining 1.5 days. Some travel will be required.

Probation and notice: Three months (one month during probation period)

Work based pension: Our pension scheme is provided by the People's Partnership. AAM contributes 5% when employees contribute a minimum of 3%.

Training and development: We offer opportunities to participate in external and internal training and access professional development opportunities. The Board is committed to supporting the Executive Director through this transition with access to external consultancy support, coaching and professional development opportunities.

Disclosure and Barring Service Check: You will be required to undertake an Enhanced check, and your employment may be subject to the outcome of this.





Accessibility

We're committed to creating an inclusive and accessible environment. As part of this commitment, we try to ensure our recruitment process is fair, transparent and accessible to all candidates.

We welcome and encourage applications from people with diverse lived experiences and backgrounds.

If you require any adjustments or accommodations during the recruitment process - such as alternative formats for application materials, additional support for interviews - or if you have specific access requirements, please don't hesitate to contact chair@aamedia.org.uk We will work with you to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to meet your needs.

You're encouraged to share any access requirements you may have for interviews in a covering note with your application.



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