

## Head of Engagement and Communities (including Night Out)

## Role Description

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Salary grade: |  | E |
| Reference number: |  | HEC |
| Team: |  | Arts |
| Reporting to: |  | Deputy Director of Equalities and Partnerships |
| Line managing: |  | Relationship Manager (Communities & Engagement), Relationship Manager (Night Out), Arts Development Enabler, and Team Coordinator |
| Location: |  | This role can be based at any one of the Arts Council of Wales offices in Cardiff, Colwyn Bay or Carmarthen |
| Travel: |  | Frequent |

### The Arts Council of Wales

Arts Council of Wales is an independent charity, established by Royal Charter in 1994. It is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body whose members are appointed by the Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government provides the majority of our funding. We also distribute funding from the National Lottery and raise additional money for the arts where we can from a variety of public and private sector sources.

We’re ambitious for the arts in Wales. Our vision is of a creative Wales where the arts are central to the life and well-being of the nation, making our country an exciting and vibrant place to live, work and visit. The success of our vision depends on the imagination and creativity of our artists, the quality of their work and the efforts that are made to reach out to and inspire audiences. We work to create the environment in which ambitious, enterprising artists can grow and flourish, whereas many people as possible enjoy and take part in the arts.

### Our values

As a public body we’re expected to uphold the highest standards of accountability and openness. We also value creativity and innovation. Our staff often work together in groups and teams to achieve our programmes of work. We place particular emphasis on flexible, collaborative working and support our staff to nurture and develop these skills.

### About this role

The Head of Community and Engagement is a strategic leadership role requiring deep expertise in community development, cultural participation, and inclusive engagement excellence. You'll be an established practitioner with extensive experience in building authentic community partnerships and creating resilient, diverse engagement ecosystems across Wales’s dynamic cultural landscape. Drawing on your specialist knowledge and proven track record, you'll drive our ambitious vision for transforming how arts and culture connect with communities through comprehensive strategic frameworks that position cultural engagement as fundamental to Wales’s social and creative infrastructure.

As an expert in community mobilisation, participatory cultural practice, partnership development, and strategic engagement programming, you'll leverage your extensive professional experience to champion pathways that connect diverse Welsh communities with cultural opportunities while strengthening the accessibility and relevance of Wales’s cultural ecosystem. Your role demands sophisticated understanding of community dynamics, enabling you to negotiate complex partnerships across community organisations, cultural institutions, and civic bodies while identifying participation barriers, developing innovative engagement models, and creating sustainable frameworks that support thriving, inclusive cultural communities.

You'll apply your specialist expertise to address critical challenges facing community cultural participation, develop innovative engagement frameworks, and create sustainable strategic approaches that support a flourishing, democratically engaged cultural sector. Your comprehensive knowledge of best practices will be essential as you lead transformative initiatives—supporting excellence in community-led cultural creation, expanding access to high-quality cultural experiences, and establishing robust pathways for historically excluded communities to participate as creators, decision-makers, and cultural leaders.

Reporting to the Deputy Director Equalities and Partnerships, you'll mentor Relationship Managers and Enablers while establishing Wales’s community engagement practice as a model for national and international cultural development. Throughout all strategic initiatives, you'll integrate our key cross-cutting themes: promoting the Welsh language, addressing climate challenges, and advancing diversity and inclusion at a strategic level, ensuring these principles inform all community engagement policies, partnerships, and programming decisions, requiring sophisticated expertise in managing and negotiating complex, multi-faceted community development programmes. This visible role requires active engagement across Wales' communities and strategic connections beyond—representing the Council and creating pathways for cultural excellence rooted in authentic community partnership.

### Principal responsibilities

#### Leadership and Strategy

As part of your role, you will:

* Lead on the creation and implementation of community engagement strategy that contributes to the Arts Council overall long-term strategy as member of the management board.,
* Lead strategies to engage with diverse communities by supporting well-placed organisations already embedded in these communities
* Manage and inspire Relationship Managers, Enablers and Team Coordinators to deliver the Art’s Council strategy, focusing on community engagement approaches and implementing Strategic Equality Objectives.
* Create frameworks positioning communities as active co-creators of Wales’s cultural landscape
* Develop place-based initiatives with venues, community organisations, and local stakeholders
* Manage MYF organisations, lottery grant assessment and development teams engaged in Community and Engagement work
* Convene and chair sector group meetings and funding panels for investment programmes, including assessing applications related to community engagement and participatory arts Transform impact measurement by combining data with community stories to inform decision-making
* Develop initiatives addressing historic inequities in arts access and participation
* Foster inclusive practice within Wales’s diverse communities and arts organisations

To deliver your role you will:

* Implement an ambitious strategic vision for community engagement and cultural democracy
* Identify areas of highest need, especially communities facing socio-economic disadvantage
* Build sector visibility as an advocate for community-led arts engagement
* Develop strategic partnerships across sectors
* Use data tools effectively to track impact and identify trends
* Contribute to a positive working culture, responding to change and promoting inclusive practice
* Reflect the Nolan Principles of Public Life and the Arts Council's values

#### Key Relationships

The Head of Community and Engagement will build and maintain senior relationships with internal staff and external stakeholders in this sector. This will include supporting the development of programmes of work within the Arts Council's strategies and advising on community engagement and related matters. These relationships will include:

* Arts Council Wales colleagues at all levels, Local Authorities and Welsh Government departments
* Disability arts initiatives and access-focused organisations
* Community leaders and cross-sector partners (health, education, social justice)
* Welsh language organisations and networks
* Equality-focused organisations representing diverse communities
* Arts organisations and practitioners committed to community engagement

#### Strategic Leadership & Vision

* Develop transformative strategies for community engagement across Wales
* Create innovative frameworks for community-led arts that shift traditional power dynamics
* Design partnerships enhancing access for communities experiencing barriers to participation
* Target initiatives toward communities in areas of high deprivation
* Guide place-based arts interventions that resonate with local identity
* Lead on public art strategy development and implementation across communities
* Ensure alignment between specific sector needs and budget allocation

#### Cultural Democracy

* Champion models positioning communities as active co-creators of Wales’s cultural landscape
* Create more equitable systems that influence decision-making in arts funding and programming to prioritise diverse voices and underrepresented communities
* Create sustainable models for community influence in decision-making
* Build cross-sector partnerships positioning arts as essential to community development
* Develop innovative evaluation methodologies capturing community impact

#### Night Out Scheme Strategic Direction

* Provide strategic oversight for the Night Out scheme
* Support the scheme's evolution as a vehicle for community-shaped cultural experiences
* Ensure Night Out contributes to community empowerment and cultural democracy
* Advocate for Welsh language programming

#### Partnerships and Advocacy

* Build strategic sector relationships across Wales and beyond
* Represent ACW at key events including forums and networking
* Develop relationships with funders, collectors, and cultural institutions

#### Resource Management and Professional Development

* Oversee funding initiatives related to engagement and communities programming in Wales
* Develop innovative approaches to supporting diverse arts practices across Wales
* Ensure alignment between specific sector needs and budget allocation
* Approval of purchase orders within delegated authority
* Manage and monitor assigned budgets, seeking partnership funding opportunities

Corporate compliance – adheres to those policies that protect the Arts Council and its staff against potential exposure to reportable risks and incidents. These include Anti-Fraud, General Data Protection Regulations, Welsh Language Standards, Wellbeing of Future Generations and Cyber Security/ICT use. (Staff responsibilities are defined in the relevant Arts Council policies.)

Additional duties – any reasonable duties consistent with the above.

### Knowledge, experience and attributes

We want to attract to our organisation people who have an interest in the arts, a commitment to the principles of open and accountable public service, and the flair to work with a diverse range of customers. We believe in setting the highest standards in all aspects of our work. Every member of staff is therefore an ambassador for the company, and we expect everyone to respect and uphold our reputation.

We aspire to be an innovative, forward-looking organisation. We look to our staff to work collaboratively with each other to ensure that we’re efficient, effective and useful.

We take for granted that our staff will be competent in their management of routine administration and that they’ll have developed good organisational skills. So, we’re particularly interested in staff who have the ability to work imaginatively and flexibly to tackle the challenges that they’ll face – staff who have the initiative and drive to thrive in a busy work environment and who derive satisfaction from achieving ambitious and stretching targets.

In addition, this role requires the following specific knowledge, experience and attributes. Applicants will be assessed against the essential and desirable criteria set out below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Qualifications | * A degree or significant relevant experience |  |
| Knowledge | * Expertise in contemporary community engagement methodologies and participatory practice with sophisticated understanding of co-creation frameworks, community mobilisation dynamics, and strategic approaches that inform high-level decision-making across diverse cultural participation contexts and scales * Comprehensive expertise in Welsh community landscapes and strategic engagement policy implementation, including detailed knowledge of community development frameworks and proven ability to translate engagement principles into transformative cultural participation initiatives * Strategic knowledge of accessibility frameworks, inclusive design, and disability arts ecosystems, with understanding of universal access principles, adaptive programming processes, and strategic approaches that maximise cultural participation and remove systemic barriers for disabled communities * Expert knowledge of local authority structures, community development frameworks, and civic engagement models, including understanding of evolving public sector partnerships, collaborative governance approaches, and sustainable development strategies that support community-led cultural initiatives and cross-sector collaboration * Deep understanding of barriers facing underrepresented communities in arts participation, with comprehensive knowledge of structural inequalities, intersectional challenges, and intervention mechanisms * Strategic leadership in community-centred funding mechanisms and resource mobilisation, with demonstrated expertise in designing and implementing comprehensive funding strategies for community-based arts initiatives, including grant development, partnership funding, and sustainable revenue models that support long-term community cultural capacity | * Knowledge of the Welsh language context and cultural landscape |
| Skills & Experience | * Demonstrated executive leadership in community engagement and cultural participation development with extensive senior-level experience in conceptualising, scaling, and delivering transformational community-centred programmes with measurable sector-wide impact * Established expertise in developing strategic responses to community needs assessments and major social policy developments, with proven track record of translating complex community development frameworks into actionable strategic initiatives that drive inclusive cultural participation and community empowerment * Advanced capabilities in policy development and strategic project management within contemporary community engagement contexts, with documented success in designing comprehensive participation frameworks that respond to evolving community needs and drive cultural innovation across diverse demographic and geographic contexts * Sophisticated strategic partnership building within community networks nationally, with proven ability to establish and sustain complex multi-stakeholder relationships that deliver transformational outcomes across community organisations, cultural institutions, and civic bodies * Robust financial and organisational acumen specific to community-based cultural programming, with demonstrated ability to optimise resources, develop sustainable funding strategies, and drive strategic decision-making that supports innovative engagement models and community-led cultural initiatives * Proven leadership in building and developing high-performing community engagement teams, with proven mentoring expertise that cultivates talent and drives professional advancement across diverse community development and cultural participation * Strategic expertise in evaluating and developing community co-creation opportunities, with demonstrated ability to assess participatory frameworks, negotiate complex community partnership structures, and create pathways that maximise authentic community decision-making and cultural ownership * Strategic analytical capabilities and complex project management expertise with demonstrated ability to synthesise community intelligence into actionable strategic frameworks while adapting to changing community dynamics, participation patterns, and social development priorities | * Experience developing community-led arts strategies challenging traditional models * Background in cultural democracy, co-creation, or community-driven decision making * Experience with innovative evaluation methodologies capturing deeper impact * Success in securing resources for community-focused initiatives |
| Attributes | * Passionate advocate and strategic developer of community-led cultural participation across all forms, with comprehensive approach to nurturing cultural democracy across diverse community contexts * Results-driven executive with exceptional independent leadership capabilities across multiple community engagement disciplines, with proven track record of delivering complex, outcome-focused initiatives * Strategic commitment to addressing historic inequities in cultural participation, with demonstrated expertise in developing and implementing transformative approaches that create sustainable pathways for underrepresented communities * Sophisticated analytical capabilities in evaluating diverse community engagement practices and identifying strategic development opportunities, with proven ability to recognise emerging community needs, assess participatory potential, and create frameworks that support innovation and excellence across contemporary community cultural practice * Visible presence and commitment to strategic engagement across Wales, the UK and internationally, with demonstrated ability to represent organisational interests and build transformational partnerships through active participation in community events, cultural gatherings, and sector forums that advance Welsh community engagement development at the highest levels * Proven collaborative leadership capabilities in connecting diverse community stakeholders, with track record in building consensus, facilitating complex negotiations, and creating unified strategic approaches across varied community organisations, cultural institutions, and civic partners * Visionary strategic leadership in implementing long-term community engagement development aligned with cultural democracy principles, with demonstrated ability to translate complex participation frameworks into sustainable, transformative initiatives |  |
| Welsh language | * The position of Head of Engagement & Communities is Welsh essential. You will need to be able to communicate in both English and Welsh in meetings, individually and in public. We are looking for an individual who understands the culture of Wales; the diverse relationship of the people of Wales with the Welsh language and who is committed to ensuring a progressive use of Welsh linguistically and culturally within the Arts Council and the wider sector. Everyone's story with the language is different and we recognise that Welsh language confidence levels vary from person to person. We welcome applications from individuals who want to increase their confidence and those who have learnt the language fluently. |  |