



Community Arts Practitioner Job Description

Overview

Action Transport Theatre (ATT) has received special funding from the Westminster Foundation to support COVID recovery in Ellesmere Port. ATT are therefore looking to employ an experienced **Community Arts Practitioner** to develop and lead a range of engagement opportunities which meets the needs of children, young people and families.

The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic ranges across lost educational opportunities, lack of emotional wellbeing, mental health challenges and feelings of social isolation. There is also the very specific impact of a sense of loss of agency and control that many children and young people have experienced.

Many children, young people and families in the most deprived communities in Ellesmere Port need emotional support and pathways into the creative and expressive arts which aids recovery; promoting well-being and reducing social isolation.

The Community Arts Practitioner by establishing strong community links will facilitate community engagement, building responsive solutions to these challenges. They will build new opportunities and contribute to a new programme of activity which ATT will build on from 2021.

Ellesmere Port

Ellesmere Port is a diverse industrial town containing within it, more areas of high deprivation than other more affluent areas. In our most deprived wards, which we focus on supporting, over a third of children will be in receipt of free school meals with low academic achievement at secondary level and in these areas 100 % of families are in the bottom 40% most economically deprived in the country. These areas experience high levels of multiple deprivation across most socio-economic indicators. Ellesmere Port is however a town with a strong sense of community and also a town which is undergoing a period of significant social and infrastructural change. Working with these communities is a unique opportunity.

Community Arts Practitioner Role

The Community Arts Practitioner is a new role and will deliver a high-quality, accessible programme of activity which engages some of the most socially isolated individuals in Ellesmere Port, working in youth and community settings to reach those most in need.

Whilst drama work may be one of the core disciplines, we are interested in working with an artist who is able to respond imaginatively and sensitively to each setting, co creating artistic outputs, using a variety of art forms and creative starting points to build trust and develop creative activities which enrich participants lives.

Given the impact of COVID-19 and the fact that children, young people and families from areas of economic and social deprivation are likely to have experienced more hardship, we see this role as critical in providing safe spaces for creative expression.

The Community Arts Practitioner will be instrumental in forming strong links and community partnerships in order to engage local children, young people and families. This will include the following;

- For Futures Housing (Social Housing Association)
- Ellesmere Port Library
- Health Box – Social Prescribing Team
- Cheshire Young Carers
- Social Services
- Trinity Community Church
- Community Centres in Westminster, Central and Grange, Wolverham and Little Sutton wards

Activities developed by the Community Arts Practitioner will include work which achieves the following;

- empowers children and young people to use their voice and creates spaces for them to be heard
- increases and improves constructive social contact
- reduces anxiety and increases confidence
- improves family time spent together
- encourages play and engagement between parents and children
- demonstrates the value of creative activity
- Contributes to a socially engaged body of work which can be shared as part of the re-opening of the newly refurbished Whitby Hall in 2021

The Community Arts Practitioner will signpost to other agencies and organisations which support local children, young people and families, whilst promoting the work of ATT and the new theatre building opening in 2021.

Terms and Conditions

Hours of Working: The hours of work will be 35 hours per week. Evening and weekend work will be required

Contract: 12 Months Fixed Term (with a possibility of extending)

Annual Salary: £25,000

Responsibilities include:

Strategic

- Setting a clear delivery plan and programme with measurable outcomes, supported by ATT Artistic Director and Producer
- Building strong new partnerships whilst strengthening existing ones This will be with a range of local partners to design and deliver activities, including statutory and voluntary organisations.
- Building relationships with community leaders and community centres in the most deprived areas of Ellesmere Port where activity will be based
- Establishing links with local schools including secondary schools, special schools and PRUS, designing activity accordingly.
- Connecting the outreach programme to the wider work of Action Transport Theatre in order for us to continue to build opportunities for local children, young people and families, in light of the capital programme
- Connecting the programme to the work of Community Artist, Caroline Wright, employed by Cheshire West and Chester Council to create a new socially engaged programme of work in Ellesmere Port
- Ensuring robust monitoring and evaluation measures are in place

Artistic

- Facilitating and delivering a varied and accessible engagement programme across all age ranges and including for years 16+ who are not in education, employment or training
- Creating activities for and with local children, young people and families which meet the objectives of the programme
- Creating opportunities to develop and share work where appropriate, including site specific work and creative work which respond to place in an imaginative way
- Utilising digital means to both create and share work where appropriate, which empowers young people to use tools available to them
- Signposting new opportunities for participants, connected to other organisations and programmes, including education pathways
- Contributing to a body of work which can be shared as part of the opening of Whitby Hall, in September 2021

Operational

- Co-ordinating the outreach programme, supported by the Company Producer and supported by a project assistant /pastoral worker
- Ensuring the safeguarding and pastoral care of all young people involved in activities
- Ensuring the effective monitoring and evaluation of the outreach programme
- Liaising with ATT Communications Manager to ensure effective comms and recruitment
- Identifying, promoting and delivering training opportunities for young people
- General administration including registers, data collection and any budget monitoring
- Safeguarding

Sustainability and Development

- Facilitating the engagement of young people in influencing and planning for ATT where possible
- Advocating for diversity, social inclusion and young people's voices in theatre including in relation to the capital programme and wider work of ATT
- Ensuring ATT's work is as accessible and inclusive as possible
- Ensuring that the equality and diversity policy underpins all programmes of work
- Ensuring that Health and Safety policy underpins all programmes, including in relation to any social distancing measures and online safeguarding
- Representing the views and ideas of young people at meetings with ATT and relevant networks

Person Specification

Essential

Knowledge, skills and experience

- At least 3 years professional experience of leading and delivering socially engaged theatre and/or arts-based projects and activities with children, young people and families in community settings
- Demonstrable track record in working with children, young people and families from a range of backgrounds to co-create artistic outcomes
- Strong track record in working with communities, and interest in working in Ellesmere Port
- An understanding of children and young people's rights
- Up to date knowledge of legal requirements relating to working with children and young people
- Excellent IT skills
- Experience of managing project budgets
- Excellent organisational and project management skills including the ability to manage multiple priorities
- Able to act on their own initiative whilst remaining a flexible team member
- Experience of leading evaluation processes.

Personal Qualities

- Has a passion for the arts and the benefits they can bring to children, young people and families
- Ability to work with a range of art forms
- Excellent communication, interpersonal and presentation skills
- Ability to learn quickly and work under pressure
- Ability to work independently with limited supervision
- High motivation, a good team player with a flexible approach to work
- Ability to maintain a consistent rapport with young people demonstrating a warm and approachable style with good listening skills
- A sense of humour
- An ability to empathise with young people whilst keeping a professional distance
- An understanding of diversity and equality and best practice around inclusivity

Desirable

Knowledge, skills and experience

- Knowledge of how to use digital tools in engagement practices
- Experience of marketing and audience development
- Experience of using Microsoft Teams
- An up to date knowledge of the arts regionally, nationally and internationally
- Experience of taking young people through Arts Award assessments

General

- The Community Arts Practitioner will be expected to work in line with the current management values, ethos and objectives of ATT

To apply

If you would like to apply for this role, please complete ATT's Application Form and Equal Opportunities Form and return by email to our General Manager, Karen Parry karen@actiontransporttheatre.org.

The deadline for applications is **Monday 14th September** Interviews will be held on **Tuesday 29th September** with a start date as soon as possible after appointment.
