

Recruitment Pack

Trustees / Board Members



Processions, 2018 (image credit: Michelle Chalkley)

Bedford Creative Arts is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and a Registered Charity.

Our Registered Charity No. is 1119555. Company Limited by Guarantee 5305188.

What we do

Bedford Creative Arts (BCA) creates transformative experiences and new possibilities through high quality contemporary art for everyone, centred on the values of full engagement, inclusion and inspiration.

We believe great art can enhance and transform people's lives. We innovate to produce original, imaginative, extraordinary, adventurous and often provocative art works and encounters in every day and unconventional places.



Clubhouse, 2017 (image credit: Cat Lane)

We commission and enable art that directly engages the public through collaboration with exceptional artists. We also work intensively in the education sector locally to inspire young people and schools to engage with culture.

We work primarily in Bedfordshire and the South East, however our work has national significance and profile.

In the last three years we have worked with 245 artists, commissioning over 90 of them to create 26 new works, which have been seen by over 122,500 people.

We are a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) of Arts Council England and our programme theme for the next four years will look at 'future communities'. Through this, we want to work with a range of artists to explore how our communities can evolve into a new and uncertain future.

We have been funded by a range of local and national funders including recently Royal Opera House Bridge, The Health Lottery, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, The Harpur Trust, and the Education Improvement Strategy Group (EISG).

Our Values

Engage – Our work seeks to engage a wide range of communities in the act of making art

Include – Our work seeks to include people from all walks of life

Inspire – Our work seeks to inspire people and communities towards a transformation, a change, a new and better place, a new meaning

Strands to our work

Commissioning

We commission artists to create new work with, in, and for communities. This is done through a variety of artforms including visual art, contemporary dance, theatre and music. We focus on tackling social engagement through the arts by working closely with communities to co-commission work that uses high quality participation. We often work with those who don't normally engage with the arts.

We tackle issues of importance and seek a wide audience for our work – often nationally and increasingly internationally.

We seek to work in partnership to maximise value in our work, including working recently with Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, the Higgins Museum, Bedford Library, The Place theatre, the University of Bedfordshire, Full House Theatre, Royal Opera House Bridge, the music services and beyond.

Recent projects have worked with local refugees, those living in deprived wards of Bedford and the LGBTQ community. Artists we have worked with include Demitrios Kargotis, Jennifer Allen (aka Quilla Constance), Kemi Onabule, Julie Myers, Maria Anastassiou, Chris Dobrowolski, Sadie Hennessy, Theatre Témoins and Mike Stubbs (formally FACT, Liverpool).

You can browse our previous projects at our website: www.bedfordcreativearts.org.uk

Some of our recent projects have toured nationally featuring in locations such as within Artichoke's 'Processions' project in Central London, London's South Bank Centre, Goldsmiths and Birmingham universities, and our work has been selected to be part of a national TV advertising campaign by The Health Lottery.



Beauchamp imagined futures day, 2017 (image credit: Cat Lane)

Education

We are recognised regionally as specialists in cultural education, especially brokering partnerships between cultural providers and schools.

Our flagship project, The Culture Challenge, provides an online directory and CPD programme that supports school engagement with culture and has operated in Bedford Borough, Central Beds, Milton Keynes and Luton.

We initiate and deliver a range of projects, particularly through our work with local cultural education partnerships (LCEPs) and constantly seek to find ways to encourage pupils and teachers to engage with the wealth of cultural activity in their local area.

Talent Development

We support artists, arts practitioners and leaders to develop their skills and experiences to ensure that creative talent continues to thrive in the local area and in practices where we have expertise such as education and social engagement.

We run the i-Create Artist Studios facility on Midland Road, Bedford, on behalf of the local authority to provide artists with workspace and mentoring.

We support artists we work with through a range of opportunities that develop their skills and profile and consistently focus on opportunities to develop young people in the arts such as through Arts Award & Artsmark as well as encouraging debate and discourse through events and symposiums.



Tomorrow's Great Pageant 2019 (image credit: Andy Wilsher)

Future direction

In November 2018 we welcomed a new Director to the organisation, Elaine Midgley.

We are currently embarking on a review of our Business Plan to align it with the opportunities that can be found in our industry and the locality today.

We have been driving the development of a new strategic body for Bedford, the Bedford Cultural Partnership, and see ourselves as leaders in ensuring the arts is used as a tool for successful place-making in the areas we operate.

We are seeking to develop our Board of Trustees to guide this process and ensure that BCA develops a robust and ambitious plan that will see us into a long-term future, recognising BCA nationally as a best practice organisation in socially engaged art and cultural education.

Our staff team

BCA is a small team of nine people, led by the Director.

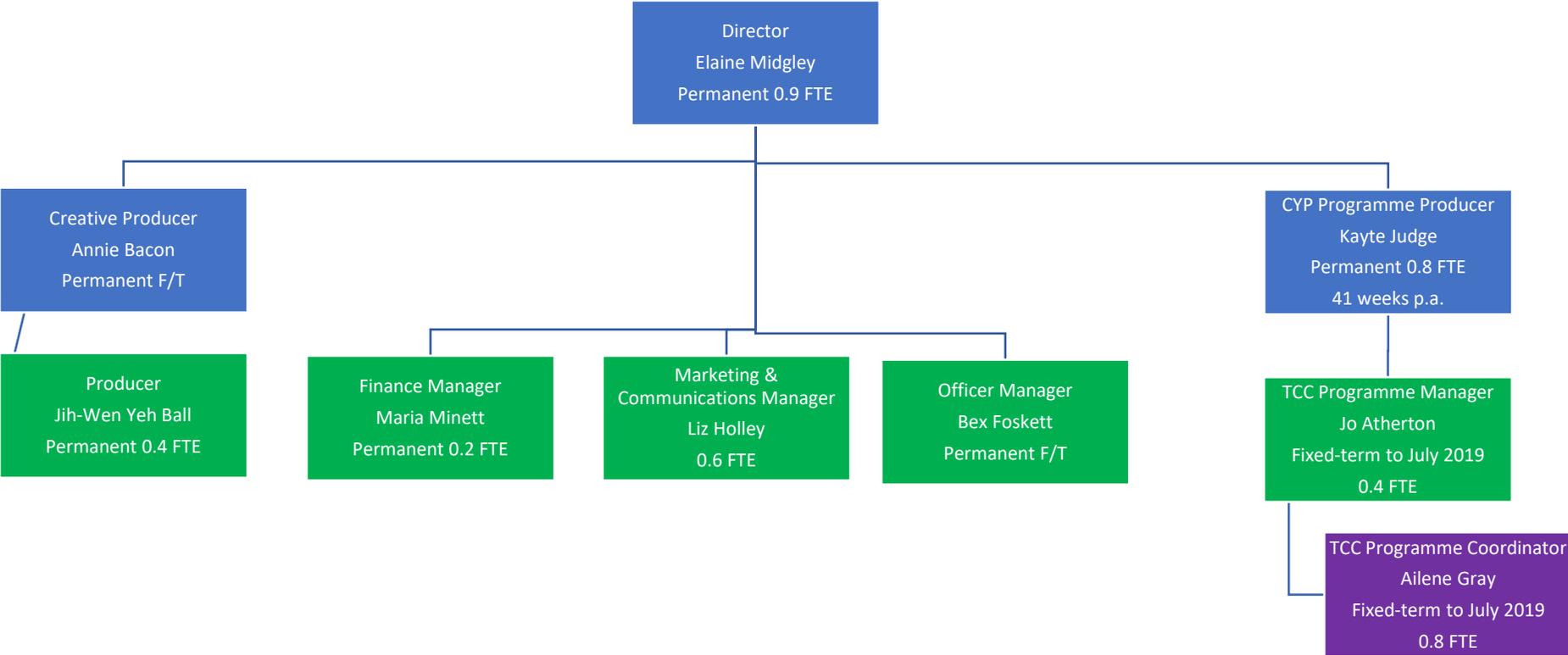
We have two lead producers who run our commissions programme and education work, and a team of mostly part-time producers, managers and support staff that deliver our year-round programme of project work.

An organisation chart is below.

Profiles of our staff and current Board Members can be found at:

<https://bedfordcreativearts.org.uk/our-team/>

BCA Staff Structure



Our Board of Trustees

BCA is a charity governed by a Board of Trustees. The trustees are legally responsible for ensuring that the charity complies with all relevant laws and regulations such as those from the Charities Commission and Companies House. They ensure it is run effectively and in accordance with its mission and strategy.

Trustees are the ‘guardians of purpose’ - making sure that all decisions put the needs of the charity’s beneficiaries first.

They safeguard the charity’s assets – both physical assets, including property, and intangible ones, such as its reputation. They make sure these are used well and that the charity is run sustainably and safeguarded against risk.

They also act as ambassadors for the charity, championing its work and its interests.

Trustees delegate the day-to-day running of the organisation to the staff, led by the Director. They have a critical role in giving support to the Director and by challenging – in a supportive way – to help them manage effectively.

Our Board has a maximum of 10 trustees and we currently have 4 vacancies that we are looking to fill by 2020.

Our Governance Aims

It is our aim that our Board is:

Diverse – reflecting the communities in which we work and our desire to ensure that true diversity is embedded and represented across our work. Trustees will be proactively selected partly due to the way they represent our beneficiaries.

Balanced with skill – Board members are expected to bring a key skill or expertise to the Board table that enables our governance to be balanced and informed. Board members are asked to be open and willing to share their skills and knowledge.

Engaged in fundraising – fundraising is a key requirement of any charity and our Board are key to ensuring its success through their own giving, their networking, their knowledge and advocacy.

Full of enthusiasm – Board members choose to join our Board because of a passion and enthusiasm for our work and an interest in giving something back to society. This should be evidenced by committed members engaging fully in all aspects of the role of trustee and the work of the charity.

The Role of a Trustee

Trustees are invited to serve a three-year term, after which they can stand to be re-elected for a further three years. After six years they must stand down for at least one year (in accordance with our Articles of Association) before they can stand for re-election again.

The key roles of all trustees are to:

- champion the work of Bedford Creative Arts;
- give clear overall strategic direction;
- set the charity's vision, mission, policy and goals;
- support the charity's fundraising by either giving financially or encouraging others to give to, and support, the work of the charity;
- ensure decisions made by BCA are reviewed carefully, considering all risks and opportunities;
- review and approve BCA's financial reports and performance including its audited annual accounts;
- ensure that the charity has robust policies and procedures in place to run the company in line with all applicable laws and best practice;
- ensure BCA is financially resilient and able to grow;
- appoint the Director and regularly review their performance;
- to participate in the recruitment of new trustees as vacancies arise;
- take a keen interest in, and attend, the work of the charity to appraise its quality and to be a visible advocate for its work.

What we are looking for in all our Trustees

All trustees should be able to demonstrate the following skills, experience, knowledge and qualities:

- passion for the arts and the work of BCA;
- an ability to be strategic;
- an understanding of the general environment BCA works in;
- a good understanding of the legal roles & responsibilities of a charity trustee;
- willingness to share their knowledge, networks, contacts and skills with the staff and Board of BCA for its work;
- good communication skills;
- a commitment to equality and diversity;
- willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the role;
- sound independent judgment;
- an ability to think creatively;

- good at making sense of documents and asking questions to ensure the right decisions are made;
- willingness to speak their mind;
- ability to work as a member of a team;
- tact and diplomacy – able to provide a critical voice without either causing offence or failing to tackle importance issues;
- impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences;
- we also advocate adherence to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Trustees must also comply with the eligibility criteria for a trustee in England & Wales, as clarified on the government website (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/trustee-board-people-and-skills#check-prospective-trustees-are-eligible>)

What new skills are we looking for at the present time?

We feel that we would particularly benefit from inviting people onto our Board who have one or some of the following skills and experience:

- **PR & marketing** – we seek to raise our national profile and engage in more sophisticated digital marketing methods.
- **Formal education sector** – we work with schools and want to hear the voice of someone with experience of working with, or in, the formal education sector on our Board, helping us understand the needs of schools.
- **Fundraising** – more than 50% of our income comes from fundraising. We are always looking for ways to increase our fundraising opportunities and raise funds through more diverse means such as the corporate sector and individuals.
- **Finance** – we need to keep a strict eye on our finances to ensure that we can continue to develop and grow even when our funding profile changes. An expert in analysing and interpreting financial information would help us to understand this.
- **Local knowledge** – most of our trustees are not currently very local to Bedford. As the majority of our work originates in the Bedfordshire area, we seek some trustees who know the area and its issues and communities well.
- **Artistic practice** – we would appreciate an artistic practitioner, someone from a commissioning background or someone who has worked in the artistic areas that we use such as socially-engaged practice and participatory arts.

A Diverse Board

Diversity is very important to us. Bedford is an extremely culturally diverse town with much higher than average levels of demographic diversity than most other parts of England outside of London.

We seek to develop a Board that better reflects the local community and ensures that we listen to the voices of people from a range of backgrounds when we plan our work.

In particular, we would welcome applications from people who:

- Come from a minority ethnic background, especially groups that are prevalent in Bedford such as Asian/Asian British, Non-British White/Eastern European, Black/African/Caribbean/Black British;
- Women;
- Young people, under the age of 35 years;
- Are on a low income;
- Have a disability.

We will not prejudice any applicants that do not come from one of these backgrounds if they have the skills and knowledge we need to balance our Board's aims. However, we would be delighted if we could also reflect these backgrounds in our decision-making.

What is the commitment?

Trustees are expected to attend the majority of formal trustee meetings which are typically held quarterly. They will also need to make themselves available to take an active role in other governance activities such as sub-committees, networking and event attendance.

All trustees are volunteers and so are not remunerated for their time given to BCA. However, reasonable expenses for attendance at trustee meetings such as travel costs will be provided.

How to apply

1. Come and chat

If you would like to apply for the role of trustee, you are encouraged to first contact the Director of BCA, Elaine Midgley on 01234 818670 or elainem@bedfordcreativearts.org.uk for an informal discussion. We can ensure you understand the role and expectations and answer any questions you may have before making an application.

2. Make an application

If after this discussion you wish to apply, please send a CV and covering letter (no more than 2 sides of A4) outlining why you think you are suitable for the role to elainem@bedfordcreativearts.org.uk

Please ensure your CV contains:

- Personal contact details
- Details of your current employment
- Dated employment history (job titles, duties & name of employer)
- Details of your education & relevant training/qualifications
- Names of two professional referees (referees will not be approached before selection or without your permission)

Please also include a completed **Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form** and a **Board Skills Audit Form**, available separately. This helps us to ensure we are embracing diversity and to see how your skills complement those of our current Board members.

Applications will be assessed on an ongoing basis in application rounds until all vacancies are successfully filled.

Forthcoming deadlines for review are:

Fri 31st May 2019

Fri 12th July 2019

Fri 4th October 2019

Applications are assessed by the Director and two trustees, including the Chair and/or Vice Chair.

3. Attend an interview

If we feel that your application suits the needs of our Board, you will be invited to an interview at a time to suit you so that we can get to know you better. This is with the Director and at least 2 other trustees including the Chair and/or Vice-Chair.

4. Observe a Board Meeting

If we both feel that the interview has gone well and there is a good fit with the Board team, you will be invited to attend the next Board Meeting as an observer. This is a chance for you to see what being a trustee is really like, meet the rest of the team, and decide if you feel that it would suit you.

If you feel that BCA is the fit is right after that meeting, you will be elected onto the Board at the next Board Meeting and your induction process will begin including the necessary legal paperwork.

Thank you for your interest in Bedford Creative Arts

Privacy Notice

Bedford Creative Arts (BCA) complies with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 under the control of its Information Governance Policy. Your information will be stored confidentially and only be used for the purposes of selection and recruitment for the role applied for. Your information will not be transferred outside the organisation. By submitting an application, you are indicating that you are content for your details to be stored by BCA for the purposes of handling this recruitment process until such time as all appointments are made. After appointments are complete, all application information will be safely destroyed unless you give us permission to retain it in our Talent Bank for the purposes of informing you about other future opportunities which may be of interest.

Equal Opportunities

Bedford Creative Arts is an Equal Opportunities Employer which means that all applications will be judged on the candidate's individual merit and abilities in relation to the role description for the role and no applicant will be unfairly discriminated against on the basis of any protected characteristic (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) or will be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.