

Down To Earth is one of the 39 projects initiated by Arts Council England's national Creative People and Places (CPP) programme.

Wigan borough is known for its industrial past. But the landscape of peatlands, coalfields, and brownfield sites, which have natural resources that have been exploited since Roman times and fuelled the industrial revolution, are now a complex ecosystem of diverse wetlands and woodlands, offering inspiration, refuge, and engagement. Led by residents, Down To Earth will re-invigorate and re-purpose this post-industrial terrain by cultivating and nurturing world-class arts across the borough.

Drawing on the extraordinary natural assets of the Wigan Borough, Down to Earth (DTE) will focus on our trusted and green spaces as sites for cultural engagement. DTE will invite our community to shape, create and grow local, national and international work across the borough that happens within minutes, rather than hours, of our homes, parks, schools and best-loved spaces.

During community consultations, both a love for green spaces and the borough's well-known 'down to earth' attitude came across as very important to local people – giving the programme its name. Down To Earth will cultivate the people of Wigan's sense of humour, love of fun to create joyful experiences together.

The Down To Earth consortium members are Arts At The Mill CIC (t/a The Old Courts, lead) and including Wigan Athletic Community Trust, Groundwork, Wigan Council, Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Everything Human Rights.

We want to:

1. Meet people's cultural needs and appetites, no matter their starting point
2. Take people on a journey from observer, to participant, to shaper & advocate
3. Build and develop new audiences for culture, that support the long-term sustainability of culture in Wigan

Through 4 strands:

- Stepping Stones: co-created deeply engaging work
- Paths of Discovery: local, light touch & easy to access interventions
- Moments of Joy: large-scale collective celebration
- Legacy: long-term development opportunities

About You

As an exceptional creative leader and an enabler of others, you strive to provide equal access to world-class arts and culture for all and advocate widely for how creativity can transform lives.

You believe in the strength of true collaboration and the sharing of power with people so that arts and culture provision is shaped by the communities it is here to serve. You are curious, believing that there is much to be learned from local residents, organisations and active evaluation, and pride yourself on being a flexible, responsive leader who is excited to listen, respond and implement learnings to develop a programme that is completely unique to our diverse people and places.

You provide strong, ambitious, and thoughtful leadership needed to deliver Down To Earth whilst championing cultural sustainability and instigating long-term change - leaving a cultural legacy for future generations.

The ideal candidate would describe themselves as:

- A highly motivated, organised individual who is able to think strategically, effectively manage budgets over £1m, develop income & identify new opportunities.
- A leader excited to build a team, develop its talent and foster a supportive and positive team culture that enables colleagues to thrive.
- A comfortable communicator, able to operate and influence at a strategic senior level whilst being able to seamlessly build deep and lasting relationships with communities. With funders, you will be experienced in monitoring and reporting, developing meaningful and long-lasting relationships.

How & Who the role works with

The CPP Project Director will lead Wigan Borough's Creative People and Places project team. This includes a Programme Manager, Admin/Marketing Officer and Community Connector(s).

The CPP Project Director will report regularly to the Down To Earth Consortium, funders, and will be line managed by the Managing Director at Arts At The Mill CIC.

About the Role

The purpose of the job is to lead the delivery of all aspects of the CPP Programme, supported by the CPP delivery team, in achieving the objectives of the CPP Funding Agreement from Arts Council England.

Principle duties and responsibilities

1. **Lead the development and implementation Down To Earth's three-year business plan**, reviewing and refreshing the plan on an annual basis.
2. **Be visible, transparent, clear and committing of power, resources and responsibility to communities to both shape and lead this work**, developing Down To Earth 'with' and not 'for' communities by co-commissioning new work at a grassroots level; co-designing new and better ways for community voice to sit at the heart of our work; and working together with residents, organisations and artists to unearth shared priorities.
3. **Drive and deliver an inspirational programme of creative activity** which amplifies, compliments and involves the existing cultural infrastructure and meets the objectives of the CPP programme.
4. **Recruit and line manage the Project Team** including Programme Manager, Admin/Marketing Officer, and Community Connector(s), providing positive, motivating and strong leadership so that all team members are fully aware of and working towards the CPP objectives.
5. **Advocate for the value of arts and culture** by representing Down To Earth at local, national and international levels, contributing to building a public profile for the Down To Earth programme and developing partnerships that support the sustainability of the programme.
6. **Oversee the effective management of financial resources**; managing programme budgets, commissioning, and ensuring efficiency and value for money.
7. **Lead on further fundraising**, identifying, and securing necessary match funding, aligned with Down To Earth's business plan.
8. **Create a framework for commissioning** and have overall responsibility and management of contracts.
9. **Maintain sound programme administration**, providing timely progress and management reports to the lead partner and consortium to inform effective decision making, and to funders to fulfil all reporting conditions.
10. **Monitor performance of the programme**, working closely with external evaluators to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of Down To Earth, to share learning widely, and to react in response to new intelligence.
11. **Ensure all programme activity complies with necessary policies** and procedures and current legislation including (but not restricted to) Equality, Health and Safety, Safeguarding, GDPR/Data Protection, and insurances.
12. **Explore ways to reduce Down To Earth's carbon footprint**, creating a strategy for engaging communities, artists, change-makers and technical professionals whilst being exceedingly mindful of environmental impacts of the programme.

Person Specification

Experience	Desirable	Essential	Identified
Track record of engaging communities as decision-makers and leaders in creative projects.		X	Application /Interview
Developing and sustaining arts, cultural and/or creative initiatives and programmes that push the boundaries of artistic excellence.		X	Application /Interview
Proven ability to plan, manage and execute large-scale programmes and/or public facing events with significant budgets, on time and to budget.		X	Application /Interview
Track record of fundraising and income generation		X	Application /Interview
Experience of working in areas of low arts engagement with diverse communities		X	Application /Interview
Experience of recruiting, motivating and line-managing efficient teams		X	Application /Interview
Experience of and a commitment to robust safeguarding		X	Application /Interview
Experience of working across multiple art forms	X		Application /Interview
Managing volunteers	X		Application /Interview
Skills and Abilities	Desirable	Essential	Identified
Able to maintain effective, positive, and long-lasting working relationships with a wide variety of people, organisations, and funders		X	Application /Interview
Ability to nurture and motivate teams, motivating staff to achieve outcomes and meet targets		X	Application /Interview
Excellent time management skills		X	Application /Interview
Excellent written and verbal communication skills, negotiation, and advocacy		X	Application /Interview
Strong numeracy skills, financial management skills and able to set and analyse significant budgets		X	Application /Interview
Attention to detail and able to manage complex funding and reporting requirements		X	Application /Interview
Commitment to equal opportunities and an ability to relate to people across the community		X	Application /Interview
Good IT skills with a good working knowledge of Microsoft Office Word and Excel, and ability to learn new project management software		X	Application /Interview
Ability to work flexibly according to the requirements of the post		X	Application /Interview
Knowledge	Desirable	Essential	Identified

Good working knowledge of Wigan borough, its cultural landscape, communities, and geography	X		Application /Interview
Good working knowledge of the impact of arts and culture programmes on the environment	X		Application /Interview
Special Working Conditions	Desirable	Essential	Identified
Ability to work flexibly, including evenings, weekends and Bank Holidays		X	Application /Interview
Prepared to travel around the Wigan borough and to national CPP meetings, with a full UK driving license		X	Application /Interview

Terms & Conditions

This post is subject to Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced checks.

Salary:	£40,000-£45,000 gross per annum, depending on experience
Hours:	37.5 hours per week, excluding a daily one-hour lunch break. This role is 5 days a week; usual office hours are 10am-6pm. We offer flexible working where possible. We expect the post holder to regularly travel around the Wigan borough and to national CPP meetings, with a full UK driving license. Due to the nature of the role, evening, weekend, and bank holiday work may be required.
Overtime:	No overtime payments
Annual Leave:	33 days including bank holidays
Probation Period:	6 months, with a 3 month review
Notice Period:	3 months
Contract Period:	Fixed term until March 2025
Workplace Pension:	Arts at the Mill CIC pension scheme is provided by True Potential

Staff Benefits

- Complimentary tickets for performances at The Old Courts (subject to availability and staff ticket policy)
- Cycle to Work Scheme
- Discount on Drinks and Meals in café and Bars (subject to discount policy)

How to Apply

We are actively seeking diversity our workforce. We would love to receive applications from people who identify as working class, LGBTQIA+, deaf or disabled, care-experienced, young carers, young people of South, East and Southeast Asian heritage, African or Caribbean heritage, Gypsy, Roma or Irish Traveller heritage or Latinx heritage.

To apply, please send your CV and a cover letter to Jess Rotherham (jessr@theoldcourts.com) with the subject line APPLICATION - CPP PROJECT DIRECTOR.

Your application should not exceed four A4 pages and should include your work history, qualifications or equivalent lived experience and should refer to how your skills and experience mean that you fit the essential and/or desirable criteria for the role of CPP Project Director.

Application deadline: Midday, Wednesday 13th July.

1st and 2nd stage interviews will be held between Wednesday 20th, Tuesday 21st and Friday 22nd July. We can provide a BSL interpreter if required. If you would like support with access, please contact Head of Development Jess Rotherham by email at jessr@theoldcourts.com

We look forward to receiving your application.