

SICK!

SICK! PRODUCTIONS BOARD RECRUITMENT PACK



“We like to think that we’re beyond taboos, that nothing is off bounds any more. But, when it comes to the health of our bodies and minds and the universal, inescapable experience of death, we’re still pretty tight-lipped. In attempting to break the silence and confront the unspoken – often with humour and imagination – SICK! Festival has a vital role to play.”

The Guardian ** review SICK! Festival 2019**



INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee of SICK! Productions.

This pack introduces SICK! and the work that we do. It outlines the role of our Trustees and the key experiences, skills and backgrounds that we are looking for as we look to recruit at least four Trustees over the next 12 months.

We are really excited by the opportunity to bring new voices to our organisation and are particularly keen to recruit trustees from a wide range of backgrounds including individuals from under-represented groups and those with lived experience of the issues that we address, so that we have a board that reflects our whole community.

We also very much welcome people who have no previous governance experience to join our Board of Trustees and will offer training to build relevant skills and understanding.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity, please do not hesitate to get in touch and we look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Helen Medland".

Helen Medland, CEO and Artistic Director

ABOUT SICK! PRODUCTIONS

SICK! Productions (also known as SICK! Festival) is a Manchester based, diversity-led arts organisation which shines a light on the complexities of mental and physical health. We give voice to the experiences of diverse and often marginalised communities by presenting an outstanding international arts programme, which encourages participants, audiences and partners to learn from and talk about difficult and challenging issues, so often hidden from public view.

Rooted in the local community while operating internationally, we commission powerful and engaging work by international, national and GM based artists, who make their work with, and alongside, local communities with lived experience, health professionals, charities and researchers.

Our activities include a biennial international festival which takes place across Manchester, an innovative cross-artform commissioning programme which brings artists together with local communities with lived experience, the health sector, community groups/charities and researchers and a growing year round programme of community engagement in local Manchester neighbourhoods.

We are a small charity, with 5 core staff members and have an office at Manchester Science Park. We receive core funding from Arts Council England through their National Portfolio programme and attract funding from a wide range of sources, including extensive international funding. While, like most arts organisations in the UK, we have had considerable challenges due to the Covid 19 crisis, we are in a solid financial position and have ambitious plans to develop our organisation over the next 3 years. In the current and post Covid environment the themes that we address - such as physical and mental health, disability, gender, death, inequality, politics and protest – are ever more important and relevant.

OUR VISION AND VALUES

Staff and Trustees recently produced a new 3-year business plan in which we outlined both a 2023 and 2030 vision for SICK!:

By 2023 SICK! will become an organisation rooted in the fabric of Greater Manchester, delivering our international Festival and year-round programmes that reach wide and diverse audiences across Greater Manchester, nationally and internationally.

By 2030 we want our arts programmes to be changing the global conversation about sickness, health and society.

Our values are:

Relevant:

SICK! Festival is for everyone. Producing art that addresses issues of direct importance to people's lives, the festival draws a diverse audience, many new to the arts, attracted by the sense that 'this IS for me – and about me'.

Collaborative:

SICK! works in partnership. We engage with communities, artists and partner organisations at the earliest stage of programme development. Building understanding and trust allows us to ensure a diversity of voices are heard.

Inclusive:

SICK! breaks down barriers that limit people's engagement with arts and culture, taking work into local neighbourhoods, deploying accessible artworks in venues and public spaces that are accessible to all.

Courageous:

SICK! confronts challenging themes with boldness, sensitivity and optimism. We embrace a diversity of audiences, participants and artists proactively contributing to the development, creation and presentation of our programme.

Quality:

SICK! commissions and presents work by outstanding artists of international calibre and the most promising early career artists. We believe that outstanding work connects powerfully and authentically with people's lives.

WHAT WE DO

SICK! FESTIVAL

SICK! delivers a biennial festival in Greater Manchester, in cultural venues, community spaces, public realm and online. SICK! Festival 2019's central theme was '*What is the value of a life?*', looking at disability, end of life and young people's mental health.

The festival featured commissions, exhibitions, performances, public realm projects, workshops and symposia. We presented a range of international artists including Mats Staub and Lara Thoms, national companies including Paraorchestra and Candoco Dance Company and regional and local artists including Amy Vreeke and Laurence Clark.

We created online content through our SICK! Digital programme including a series of 12 podcasts by Smug Roberts, linked to Festival 2019 themes and featuring key partners. We also delivered a major radio project with Hunt and Darton and commissioned a film by local artist Jackie Hagan.

Projects were delivered with Manchester Royal Infirmary, Transport for Greater Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Manchester, LGBT Foundation, Reform Radio, 42nd Street, RAPAR and Peshkar alongside The Lowry, The Whitworth, Contact, Z Arts and NIAMOS.

"It was an incredible time for me, being involved in the festival and attending events also. Every event, every email, every contact with the team, was held with such care and sensitivity. I can't recommend it enough. May it grow and grow!"

Audience Feedback, SICK! Festival 2019

WHAT WE DO

SICK! COMMISSIONS

SICK! commissions innovative cross-artform work, bringing artists together with local communities with lived experience, the health sector, community groups/charities and researchers. We create high impact/profile works, with strong legacy in GM and beyond. Our commissioning model attracts considerable international support, including DutchCulture, Finnish Institute, Government of Flanders, Dutch Performing Arts and Pro Helvetia (Switzerland). Our commissions are regularly exported to other international festivals.

Recent commissions have included:

Death and Birth in my Life, Mats Staub

Digital video installation at Whitworth

Working in partnership with the Critical Care Unit at Manchester Royal Infirmary, acclaimed Swiss-German Artist Mats Staub presented personal experiences of birth and death from the perspective of people personally and professionally involved in end-of-life care. The work has toured extensively since the festival and the voices of the Manchester individuals have already been presented at Munich, Frankfurt, Basel, Salzburg and South Africa (Makhanda).

Graphic Encounters, Various Artists

Public space installation

Funded by the Finnish Institute and Manchester Metropolitan University, Graphic Encounters brought together leading female comics artists from Finland and UK with women experiencing health problems related to social inequalities in Manchester. The work was presented in 150 Transport for Greater Manchester Metrolink poster sites across Manchester City Region.

WHAT WE DO

SICK! COMMISSIONS continued

Amy Vreeke - The Year My Vagina Tried to Kill Me

Manchester-based early career theatre maker and stand-up comic, created a new work drawing on her experiences of endometriosis, and the voicelessness of women within clinical narratives and diagnosis. Since its premiere at SICK! Festival the piece has been toured to 9 venues and has been used as an educational resource in schools

Samara Hersch – Body of Knowledge

A co-commission with Performance Space Australia, this new performance work explored the way that teenagers talk about their bodies, with teenage performers from Manchester and Amsterdam calling audience members live to talk about their experiences

FUTURE COMMISSIONS

In 2020-21 we are delivering a major commissioning programme funded by DutchCulture and supported by the Dutch Embassy in the UK.

The MINDSCAPES programme will commission six Dutch artists across multiple artforms to work with local communities in Manchester to explore how physical surroundings affect mental health. The commissions will be presented in an international showcase and public engagement programme in April 2021.

WHAT WE DO

SICK! COMMUNITY

In 2019, SICK! committed to working in the Moston and Harpurhey neighbourhoods of Manchester for 10 years to make real difference in the community. We are investing in communities and local artists and delivering year-round community-based projects, bringing international calibre artists and companies to co-create work with communities.

Our key objectives for this work are to: improve the quality and experience of the local environment and contribute to local community pride; and build bridges between communities.

Local people will participate in regular creative activity, sharing experiences and work with international, national and local artists. Projects will connect with the history of the neighbourhood and the personal and social histories of people from a range of communities, complementing other creative community activity. Programmes will be driven by our Creative Director and Creative Producer who will be embedded in the community, with a local office base.

SICK! DIGITAL

SICK! Digital is our online platform, which showcases our work and presents new commissions and projects. It has a range of content including podcasts, performances, interview and creative projects. Most recently, we have commissioned 4ofUs, a digital chat show, presented by Lucy Burke, (D4D and Manchester Metropolitan University) and Smug Roberts (Actor, Comedian and Broadcaster) which tells the stories of those in the frontline of the Covid crisis, exploring critical issues such as disability, end of life, health inequalities, personal relationships, diversity and faith.
<http://www.sickfestival.com/sick-digital/>.

THE ROLE OF OUR TRUSTEES

The SICK! Productions Board of Trustees meets quarterly, usually at Manchester Science Park, with meetings taking place early evening. Due to Covid restrictions we are currently meeting online.

We ask our Trustees to:

- Be passionate about our vision and upholding our values
- Actively participate in meetings and training - we ask trustees to read and prepare for meetings and to come prepared to ask questions. Outside meetings, Trustees may use their expertise to advise on areas such as finance, fundraising, marketing, community engagement and policy development
- Take an active interest in our work - we ask trustees to come to events and performances and to meet and talk to our audiences and key partners/funders
- Be a positive advocate for SICK! Productions – this might include introducing us to potential external supporters and partners, or promoting our work to your networks
- Be curious and creative about possible opportunities and new ways of working for the company - we welcome trustees who want to bring their lived and professional experience and ideas to SICK! Productions including being a critical friend to staff

SICK! Productions is both a charity and a company limited by guarantee. Our Trustees/Directors have a number of statutory responsibilities - all new Trustees will receive support, training and mentoring, if needed, to understand these responsibilities.

THE ROLE OF OUR TRUSTEES

The statutory responsibilities of Trustees include:

- Approving the vision, mission and values of the organisation
- Ensuring that the organisation complies with its governing documents, charity and company law, any other relevant legislation or regulations (training will be provided)
- Ensuring that the organisation meets its charitable mission and objectives
- Ensuring the organisation maintains proper financial control and applies its resources exclusively in pursuit of its charitable objectives
- Giving clear strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- Overseeing risk management for all aspects of the organisation
- Approving and monitoring the implementation of internal policies, including equal opportunities, diversity, safeguarding and health and safety
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the organisation
- Protecting and managing the assets of the organisation
- Promoting the organisation and acting in its best interests

Prospective trustees may wish to read the 'Seven Principles of Public Life' also known as the 'Nolan Principles':

www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life

PROSPECTIVE TRUSTEES

We are looking to recruit at least 4 Trustees over the next 12 months. We are particularly looking for: individuals with lived experience of the issues that we address; those who live/work in the Moston and Harpurhey neighbourhoods of Manchester; at least 1 artist; those who identify as disabled; individuals from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds; individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds; and individuals aged under 30. Our Board is already gender balanced and we wish to maintain this.

We also have some priority skills/experience areas including: finance, legal, public sector/commissioning and academia.

Trustees are able to claim expenses for attending board meetings and events.

As the board grows we are looking to establish Board subcommittees to look at finance and operations and corporate/individual giving. We are also looking to establish a patrons/ambassadors group to support development and advocacy.

Our new Trustees will work alongside our current Trustees:

- Rowena Burns (Chair of Manchester Science Partnerships and Health Innovation Manchester)
- Duncan Craig (CEO, Survivors Manchester)
- Paul Ferry (Executive Chair, GB Partnerships)
- Sandeep Ranote (Executive Medical Director Mental Health & Integrated Care – WWL NHS FT; Executive Medical Lead Mental Health – Greater Manchester Health & Social Care Partnership; Visiting Professor in Mental Health – University of Salford & University of Chester)

SICK! Festival's annual accounts can be found on the Charity Commission website [via this link](#).

FURTHER INFORMATION & APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply please send a CV and an application letter of up to two pages stating why you would like to be a Trustee of SICK! Productions and what you can bring to the role. We would be pleased to accept applications in alternative formats (for example video) – please contact us if you'd like to discuss formats.

Please submit your application to: celia@sickfestival.com

Closing date: **Friday 8th January 2021**

If you would like an informal conversation, please contact:

Helen Medland, CEO/Artistic Director

helen@sickfestival.com

or:

Celia Makin-Bell, Executive Director

celia@sickfestival.com

KEY FUNDERS & SUPPORTERS



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

DutchCu | ture



FRONT PAGE CREDITS

(top – bottom, left – right)

Robert Softley, *If These Spasms Could Speak*, SICK! Festival 2014
Photo Credit: Eoin Carey

Candy Chang, *Before I Die*, SICK! Festival 2017
Photo Credit: Trevor Coe

Paraorchestra, *The Nature of Why*, SICK! Festival 2019
Photo Credit: Paul Blakemore

Jaamil Olawale Kosoko, *#negrophobia*, SICK! Festival 2017
Photo Credit: Umi Akiyoshi

SICK! Productions Ltd, a limited company by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales, whose registered office is Unit 11b, Enterprise House, Manchester Science Park, Lloyd Street North, Manchester, M15 6SE.

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