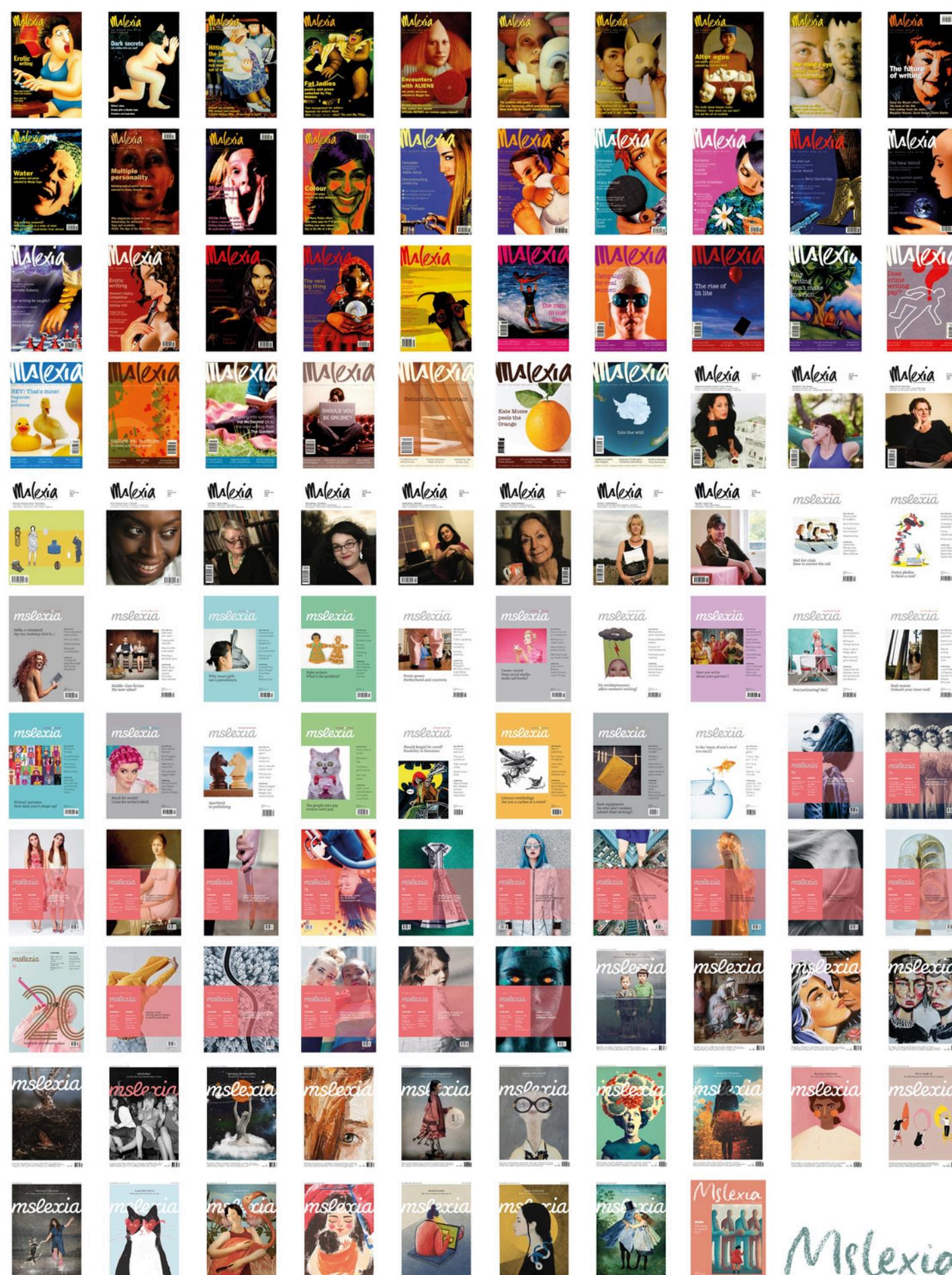




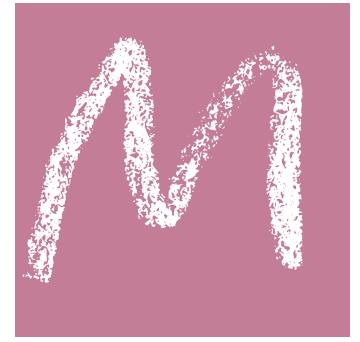
Candidate Pack

Chief Executive Officer

Newcastle upon Tyne



Mslexia



Message from the Board

Dear potential candidate,

Thank you for your interest in Mslexia, creators of the best-selling quarterly magazine for women who write.

Founded by author and passionate advocate of women's writing, Debbie Taylor, Mslexia has for over 25 years been supporting women to express themselves and get their writing noticed. Now we are looking to appoint our first ever CEO as we look to drive our charity forward into the next chapter of our story.

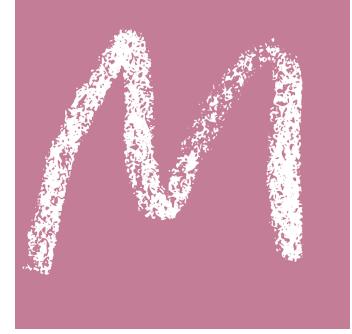
We are incredibly proud of the achievements of our organisation, our team and the thousands of women who access our support. Our offer is wide-ranging and far-reaching. But we know we have so much more to do and that's why we are looking to bring someone into our team who will lead our charity, support our trustees with our next strategy, build our resources and enable us to do more of what we do best.

With this in mind, we are excited to reach out to potential candidates who share our passion and align with our values as we look to our future. We want to attract candidates who have experience of leading purpose-driven organisations and have proven skills and experience relating to areas such as partnership and community development, engaging in new business opportunities, fundraising, financial leadership, governance and quality management.

We are seeking an inspiring, values-driven leader who will bring vision, energy and compassion in what will be an exciting era for us as we build on our achievements. Working closely with our dedicated and talented team, our new Chief Executive will also bring strong team leadership experience, harnessing the skills of each of our team members, supporting their expertise.

If this sounds like you, please read on. We'd love to hear from you.

About the role



Salary: £52,000

Base: Newcastle upon Tyne

Contract: 35 hours per week, permanent

Benefits: Workplace pension scheme
25 days annual leave plus bank holidays
Flexible working
Family-friendly policies
City-centre location

The UK's best-loved writing magazine is seeking a CEO to spearhead its mission to help women express themselves in writing, and get their texts noticed: in print, online and in performance.

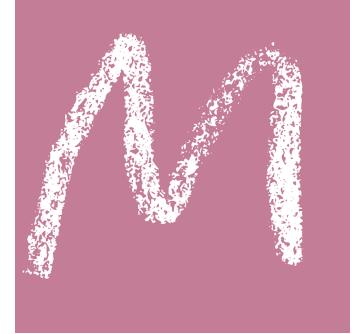
This is a new post, at the head of a lively team of eight talented and enthusiastic women – many of whom are also writers, thus providing a seamless connection with Mslexia's 50,000+ readers and followers. We have increased our activities recently to include a new online course series, two annual book publications, and a much-expanded events programme. We now need a CEO to manage our multiple operations and guide the next phase of our development.

More specifically, the duties and responsibilities of the CEO include:

- Acting as the leader of the organisation both internally and externally, representing Mslexia locally, regionally and nationally.
- Working with trustees to develop and deliver on our strategy.
- Managing and developing our finances and future funding plans.
- Leading and inspiring the team, supporting them to deliver the best possible level of service to all who access our support.



About us



Mslexia Publications Limited is a national publishing and outreach charity based in Newcastle upon Tyne. The launch of the magazine in 1999 added a new word to the language. 'Mslexia' is a portmanteau word that means women's writing (ms: woman, lexia: words).

Since its launch the company has expanded its activities to include print and ebooks, writing competitions, literary events and writing courses.

Though kickstarted with Arts Council and National Lottery funding, Mslexia has been financially self-sufficient for over 20 years and flourishes on its income from subscriptions, competition entry fees, tickets sales and advertising revenue.

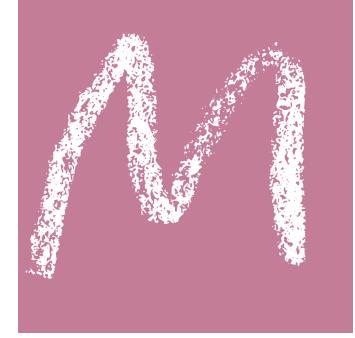
Mslexia now has direct links to over 50,000 women writers via its publications, online 'Salon' community, and social media. These are interactive relationships that inform everything we do – and include 25 detailed surveys exploring women's creative lives, their social and economic circumstances, what helps and hinders their publication.

Mslexia punches well above its weight for an organisation with eight full and part-time staff. Competition judges have include Hilary Mantel, Cressida Cowell and Carol Ann Duffy. Current magazine columnists include Linda France, Sophie Herxheimer, Julie Vuong and Emily Randall-Jones.

We are busy, innovative, inclusive, and passionate about what we do – and excited to welcome a new senior member of the team.



Why we exist



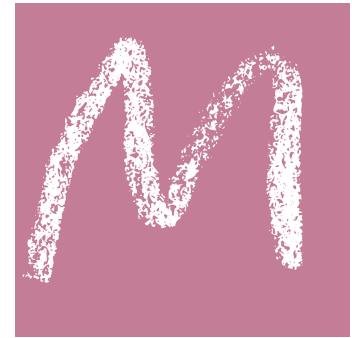
Mslexia supports women writers by addressing gender inequality in literature with original research, advocacy, education, publication, inspiration and community development. What started as a 60-page print magazine in 1999, produced by a three-woman team, has become a respected writer-support charity employing a team of eight, delivering a range of services to an estimated audience of 50,000 women writers.

'Mslexia' literally means 'women's words', but the association with the word dyslexia is intentional – because 'mslexia' is also intended to suggest the disparity between women's well-documented superiority in linguistic skills from birth and their actual achievements as published authors. Though girls speak, read and write earlier than boys, and women far outnumber men on literature and creative writing courses, women writers back in 1999 were far less likely to submit their manuscripts, to be published, to win literary prizes, and to be at the helm in publishing companies. Though there has been some progress in women's confidence and chances of publication in recent years, lack of time is still a major challenge, along with ageism in publishing and the repression of women's writing on social media.

In the launch edition of Mslexia magazine, we identified three main causes of 'mslexia': namely women writers' lack of time, lack of confidence, and sexism in the literary world. This clear analysis, which we have supported with robust data and original research for over two decades, has exerted a firm, friendly and consistent pressure on literary organisations, gatekeepers, and the media, to challenge their assumptions about the abilities and potential of women writers, and modify their dealings with them.

Since 2011, we have conducted 25 detailed surveys of women writers, each involving between 1,500 and 5,000 respondents, that have fleshed out a picture of often thwarted and underappreciated female literary talent. This research has highlighted additional factors – such as age, disability, maternity, race, class, sexual identity, mental and physical health status – that operate as potent intersectional challenges for the majority of women writers.

Why we exist



Our deep understanding of the overlapping factors that contribute to gender inequality in literature have led to the development of a ‘whole writer’ model at Mslexia, for providing information and services for women. The magazine’s contents and events include material on confidence, creativity, rejection, discrimination, procrastination and time management, as well as information on literary craft, career and opportunities. Mslexia was the first literary organisation to offer free counselling, childcare facilities and disability helper accommodation to participants at its events. The value of our ‘whole writer’ approach, which was unique to Mslexia for decades, is now gradually being embraced by other literary organisations.

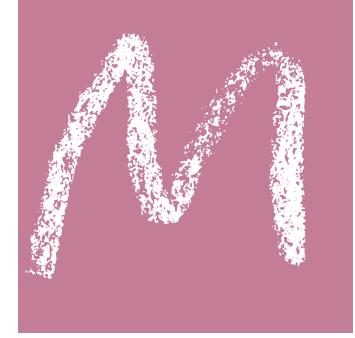
Putting it into Words

Here's just one comment from many recent letters to the magazine: "I've just finished reading my first copy of Mslexia and felt good. I wondered why. I think it's because the magazine really wants its readers to succeed. It doesn't patronise but offers accessible opportunities."

In our 2023 readership survey we asked the 2,000 participants to provide three words that described what Mslexia meant to them. Their responses were turned by the survey programme into the Word Cloud below.



Job Description



Job Title: Chief Executive Officer
Responsible to: Board of Trustees

Main Responsibilities of the Post:

Strategy and Leadership

Mslexia's strategy is to develop and market commercial products and services that both support women writers and generate sustainable income for the organisation. To achieve this the CEO will need to:

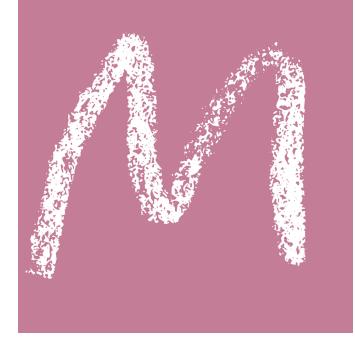
- Working collaboratively with the team, develop a strategy which delivers the charitable aims and builds organisation sustainability.
- Write business plans and ensure implementation according to timetables agreed with the board.
- Be responsible for the advancement and welfare of individual team members, including appraisals, training, health & safety.
- Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to all the company's policies and processes.
- Oversee and implement the organisation's statutory obligations.

Financial Stewardship

Mslexia's financial independence has been achieved by careful stewardship of resources and judicious investment in new income streams, along with occasional external fundraising for project development. To maintain this record, the CEO will need to:

- Develop budgets and forecasts for individual projects, based on appropriate data, and monitor expenditure and achievements.
- Ensure that prompt and accurate figures are provided to keep the Board informed about the organisation's financial position.
- Explore external sources of funding – such as grants and sponsorship – that will support the expansion of Mslexia's existing work and/or enable the strategic development of new commercial or charitable projects.
- Negotiate contracts and service agreements with major suppliers, contractors and partners.

Job Description



Governance

Mslexia's activities are overseen by a board of ten trustees, all established professional women with expertise and experience relevant to the organisation's operations and mission. As the main interface between the trustees and the operational team, the CEO will need to:

- Build close relationships with the Chair and trustees to optimise the potential benefits of their expertise and support.
- Compile quarterly board papers and oversee the production of management accounts to enable informed decisions to be taken.
- Convene an annual 'awayday' for trustees and the team to reflect on the past year's learning and plan for the next 12 months.

Brand Promotion

Mslexia was awarded charitable status in 2019 in recognition of the work it does to promote gender equality in literature. This campaigning pledge, combined with high production values and a commitment to the diverse community of women writers, are the foundations of the Mslexia brand. To promote this brand, the CEO will need to:

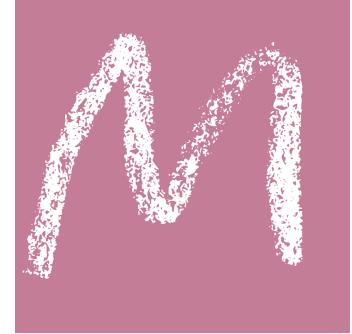
- Ensure that the brand and the way it is articulated is representative and consistent of the core purpose of Mslexia
- Develop partnerships with likeminded organisations and cultivate relationships with individual ambassadors to foster a positive brand profile and influence.
- Represent Mslexia and champion its work within networks and at events that will help raise the status and reputation of the organisation.

Human Resources & People Development

Mslexia has a talented and dedicated team with unrivaled expertise which we want to continue to harness and develop. In supporting this, the CEO will:

- Provide direct line management to the senior leadership team and ensure effective support and supervision.
- Foster a supportive and high-performing workplace culture where staff wellbeing and development are prioritised.
- Ensure compliance with employment law, HR policies, and best practice in equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Job Description



Operational & Organisational Management

Mslexia operates in a busy environment and the nature of our work means that organisation is key, working to tight deadlines. Leading such an operation means that the CEO will:

- Oversee the day-to-day running of the organisation, ensuring effective delivery across multiple workstreams and projects.
- Lead and support staff teams, embedding a culture of accountability, wellbeing, inclusivity, and professional development.
- Ensure appropriate policies, systems, and processes are in place to maintain quality and efficiency.
- Manage risk proactively and ensure the charity operates safely and sustainably, including areas such as data and cyber security.
- Driving organisational change in line with current and future strategy.

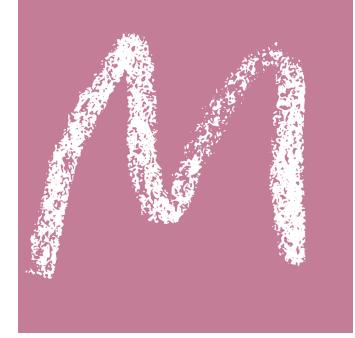
Charitable Objects

Mslexia's charitable remit involves addressing the many barriers to women's creativity and career progress as writers, which include those arising from additional protected characteristics such as race, class, age, income and disability. To fulfil this remit, the CEO will need to:

- Review and monitor Mslexia's products and services to ensure they are accessible and welcoming to the maximum number of women writers.
- Provide bursaries for writing courses and events, and sponsored entry fees for competitions, to allow low-income writers to participate.
- Maintain and expand the range of free outreach materials and services, such as newsletters, blogs, writing advice and literature information.



Person Specification



Essential Experience

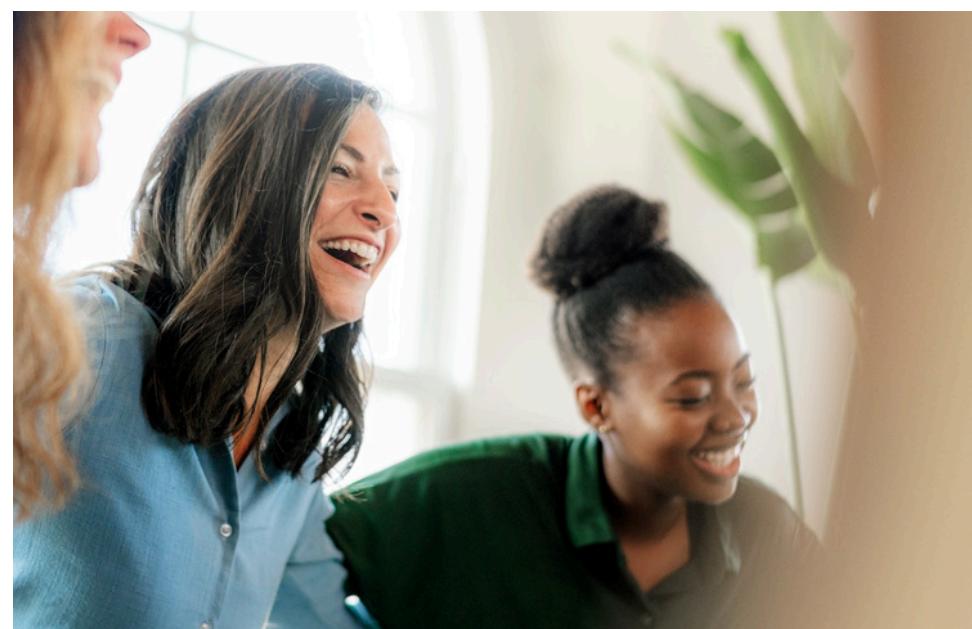
- Proven track record in a senior leadership role within the charity, public, commercial or related sector.
- Strong understanding of income generation and managing multiple income streams, including earned income, contracts, grants, partnerships, sponsorships, commercial ventures etc.
- Leading, supporting and motivating individuals and teams.
- Financial literacy, including the ability to plan, interrogate and manage budgets.
- Reporting and impact monitoring, including to a board, to funding organisations and in compiling compelling business cases / proposals.
- Record of developing KPIs and demonstrating social impact.
- Track record in project development and implementation.
- Developing and/or implementing marketing strategies.
- Knowledge in digital transformation and tech-enabled growth.
- Understanding of and commitment to equality, diversity, and environmental issues.

Desirable Experience

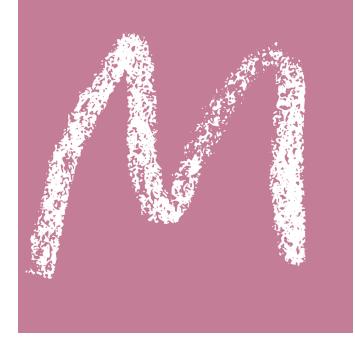
- Working in an arts context.
- Leading an organisation with hybrid streams of earned / grant income.
- Events management.
- Experience of working with a charity Board of Trustees or similar governance structure.

Essential Skills & Attributes

- Strategic thinker with the ability to translate vision into action.
- Excellent financial acumen and ability to manage risk.
- Strong communication, negotiation, and influencing skills.
- Commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, including acting as a thought leader and advocate for gender equality in literature.
- Resilient, adaptable, and able to lead change with the ability to scale operations while maintaining quality and team culture.



How to Apply



We are working with our recruitment partner, Jobs with Purpose, to recruit to this post.

To apply for this role, please email a detailed CV along with a supporting statement (the supporting statement should be no more than three sides) to David Robinson at david@jobswithpurpose.co.uk

Your supporting statement should reflect what makes you a suitable candidate, how you meet the requirements of the Person Specification and any other supporting information relevant to the role.

To arrange a confidential discussion about the role, email David with your availability or contact 07504 102302 (phone or WhatsApp)

The deadline for applications is Monday 9th February 2026 at 12noon.

We intend to hold interviews week commencing 16th February 2026.

We value every application and thank you for your time, effort and interest. All applications will be acknowledged and responded to at each stage.

If you have any questions or require support with any part of the process, feel free to get in touch with David.

Good luck!

