

STORYHOUSE

so  
incredible.

Development  
Director  
Recruitment  
Pack

Antigone, 2021, Mark  
McNulty



Storyhouse, 2017, Becci Lane

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# Introduction from the CEO

Thank you for considering applying to join Storyhouse as our new Development Director.

This is a pivotal role in our future growth—supporting the expansion of our fundraising, partnerships, philanthropic relationships, and the overall impact we have as a major charity serving Chester, the wider borough, and beyond.

I am thrilled at the opportunity to bring in fresh, expert leadership in development and fundraising to our senior team. Storyhouse has established itself as one of the UK's leading and largest arts centres. As a local anchor institution, also home to the city's main library, we play a key role in the area's cultural and civic life—driving economic vitality, social inclusion, and ensuring access to the arts for all.

But there is so much more we can achieve. Storyhouse is still a young organisation, not yet eight years old, with significant potential to further develop. As Development Director, you will be at the heart of this—leading on strategy to grow philanthropic income, corporate partnerships, trusts and foundations support, and individual giving. Your leadership will help us diversify and strengthen our income streams to secure the long-term sustainability and reach of our work.

With over 800,000 visits per year, we are ambitious to deepen our relationships with donors and partners who share our vision. We are committed to ensuring that our programmes and spaces are accessible and relevant to all communities, and that our supporters are fully engaged in the transformational impact of their contributions.

This is your opportunity as an experienced development leader to shape and deliver a bold fundraising strategy, playing a crucial role in ensuring Storyhouse continues to thrive. As part of the senior leadership team, you will have influence over all aspects of our operations, strategic planning, finances, and governance.





Chester Disability Pride Parade, 2023, Mark McNulty

# Our Story

You can find a bit about who we are on our [website](#), discover more about our innovative home and how it came to be in [this case study](#) by Arts Council England, or read about our renowned library in this [blog](#) by the DCMS's library team.

Above all, Storyhouse is a creative community. As a diverse cultural organisation, our home is one of the country's most successful cultural buildings housing a cinema, theatres and a library. Last year we welcomed 800,000+ people through our doors. We are both a community hub and combined arts producer.

Our library attracts international recognition, known for its seamless integration, and boasts the longest opening hours of any UK public library.

In 2023-24, we supported 5,768 young people to connect and create, ran 180 free rhyme-time sessions, created 423 magical performances indoors and outdoors, sold 108,298 theatre tickets and hosted a total of 1,618 cinema screenings.

Visits are roughly split into thirds between event attendances, library users, and wider participation. We enjoyed the support of over 14k volunteer hours and 1,328 different individuals were involved in making and supporting our work.

Grosvenor Park Open Air Theatre, which we founded in 2010, is the UK's largest regional open-air theatre, welcoming over 25,000 people every summer.



# This House is Your House

We've become a vital part of the region's cultural landscape and a place of safety and support for our communities - especially for young people, giving them a space where they can reimagine their place in the world.

Over 40 community groups use us as a base for creative activity each month, including LGBTQIA+ and disability groups, refugee integration activities, mental health support sessions, and groups combatting social exclusion by age.

We work extensively with young people and provide a range of different programmes, from youth theatre and our young company, to young leaders, young programmers, and our many schools and education programmes. Throughout our work we collaborate with local partners throughout to ensure we are reaching the people that would usually have the least opportunity to participate.

Across everything we do, we work to give people the power to build their own creative communities through inspiring stories and shared creative experiences: [this house is your house](#).

As we blend theatre, library, restaurant and cinema services, we share inspiring stories and stage creative events which empower people to nurture their creativity and bring together communities. Through our work, we hope to build a more connected, inclusive and creative community network.

The more open we are to the true and rich diversity of our communities, the more vividly we fulfil our purpose. More engagement from more of our communities will make more of Storyhouse.

We are committed to creating a team which is representative of our communities and to bringing together those with a variety of skills and experiences to help shape what we do and how we work.



A Midsummer Night's Dream, 2023, Mark McNulty

# Our Strategy...

Storyhouse is about to enter an exciting new phase in our evolution as we look to develop our programmes, based on a new strategic plan, to deliver world class arts and meet community needs.

Our Vision:

**Here at Storyhouse, culture is owned by everyone.**

Our Mission:

**We work every day to be a creative home for our communities.**

Our Values:

**LISTEN CLOSELY.**

True empathy takes effort. So we work hard to understand different points of view.

**LOOK AROUND.**

Opportunities can be spotted by anyone, anywhere, at anytime. So we always have our eyes, ears and minds wide open.

**SPEAK UP.**

Not everyone's stories have been told. So we use our voices to amplify those that haven't been heard.

**STAND UP.**

Debate and discussion make things better for us all. So we don't shy away from a challenge.

**REACH OUT.**

Diverse perspectives solve the hardest problems and make the best decisions. So we seek them out, and invite them in.



A Midsummer Night's Dream, 2023,  
Mark McNulty



# Our Resources

Storyhouse is a medium-sized charity with approximately 140 staff and a gross revenue of over £7 million per year. The charity is financially stable, with a number of steady revenue streams, including a 30-year lease and contract for services with the local authority (Cheshire West and Chester) and NPO funding from Arts Council England for 2023 to 2026. Revenue from commercial activities is also essential to the charity's financial stability, and over 57% of its revenue is earned.

Storyhouse runs two wholly owned commercial trading subsidiaries: Storyhouse Production Company Limited - creating and staging Storyhouse Originals theatre productions - and Storyhouse Catering Company Limited - providing a range of catering, retail, cinema, receiving theatre and commercial services.

Despite our financial stability, like all other charities our resources are being eroded by rising costs caused by inflation and higher energy prices, and as a result of the continued cost of living crisis, demand for free-to-access services (such as warm spaces) is increasing.



# Our Building

The original parts of Storyhouse were constructed as an art deco Odeon cinema in 1936, and have been restored, extended and renovated into a library, two state of the art theatres, a cinema, restaurant, and two bars.

The larger theatre is an 800-seat proscenium arch stage. With state-of-the-art facilities, its auditorium spreads across three tiers: stalls, circle and gallery. This same theatre converts into a 500-seat thrust stage (with the audience wrapping around three sides of the stage). In this format, the auditorium spreads across two tiers, with intimate seating putting the audience right in amongst the action.

On top of the building sits the Garret Theatre and Bar. This 150-seat black-box theatre is a flexible, fully-equipped performance, rehearsal, or workshop space. It is designed to be full of work made by local creative companies, individuals, and community groups, as well as a space we hire to companies and individuals.

The 100-seat boutique cinema is designed to honour the original Odeon's history as a cinema in 1936. With red velvet, soft, sunken seating, it is a beautiful event space.

The library spreads right through the building, with a dedicated family-friendly area (with wet play, storytelling room, and arts and crafts) in The Den and extensive book-stocks covering the walls throughout Storyhouse offering opportunities for studying, learning, and research.



# The Role

The Development Director will be responsible for driving philanthropic and sponsorship income across the organisation, achieving ambitious fundraising targets to support Storyhouse's charitable mission and artistic programmes.

They will lead on all areas of fundraising, including public sector grants, individual giving, major donors, corporate partnerships, trusts and foundations, and legacy giving, ensuring a sustainable and diverse income base.

They will play a key role in fostering relationships with funders, donors, and stakeholders, securing investment to support Storyhouse's artistic and community ambitions.

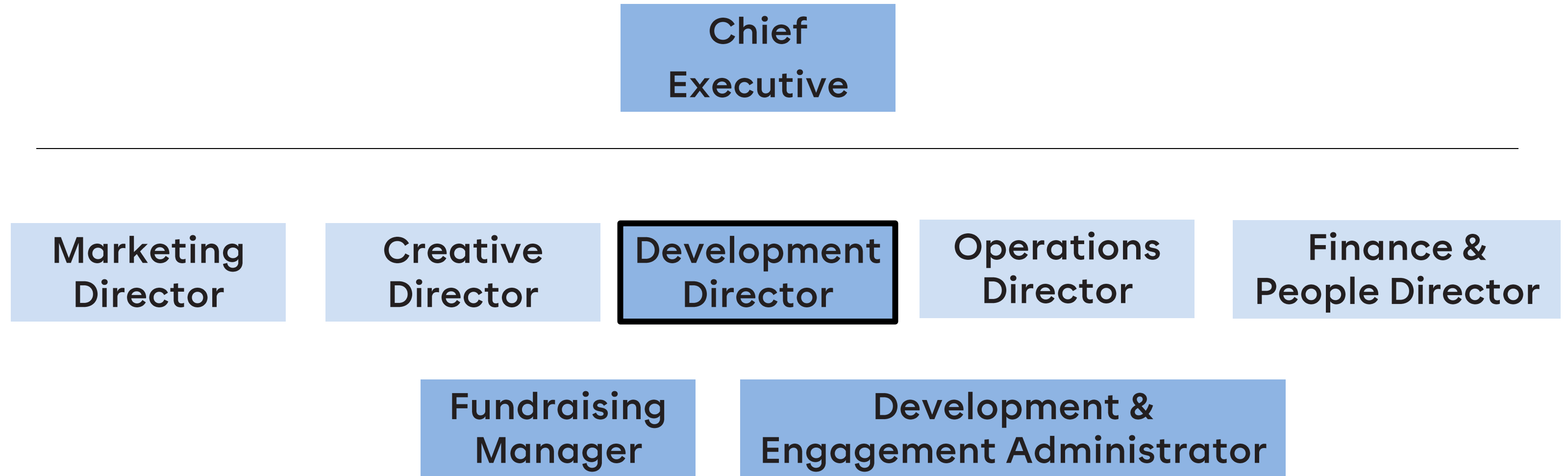
They will champion Storyhouse's commitment to access, inclusion, and participation, developing and delivering strategies to increase philanthropic engagement and support for our work.

They will be an ambassador for Storyhouse, leading on case-making, stakeholder engagement, and advocacy to strengthen our position as a vital cultural and community institution in the city and wider region.

As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Development Director will work closely with the Chief Executive on long-term strategy and business planning. They will manage a small team and an annual fundraising target of c£2m+ including core grants, with a strong focus on relationship management and innovative approaches to income generation.



# Senior Leadership structure



# Role and Responsibilities

To develop and implement a fundraising strategy that maximises income from individual donors, trusts and foundations, corporate partnerships, major donors, and legacy giving to support Storyhouse's artistic and community programmes.

To build and maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders, including donors, funders, corporate sponsors, and philanthropic networks, ensuring long-term engagement and support for Storyhouse.

To lead on major fundraising campaigns and appeals, including capital and revenue fundraising initiatives, ensuring clear objectives, strong case-making, and impactful donor stewardship.

To work with the Chief Executive and Board to cultivate and engage high-net-worth individuals and major donors, creating tailored giving opportunities to support Storyhouse's mission.

To oversee the development and management of corporate partnerships, creating sponsorship, membership and bespoke packages that align with business objectives while supporting Storyhouse's charitable work.

To develop and implement donor engagement strategies, ensuring high-quality stewardship, recognition, and retention of supporters through events, communications, and bespoke experiences.

# Role and Responsibilities (continued)

To oversee grant applications to trusts, foundations, and public funders, ensuring high-quality submissions and compelling narratives that align with funder priorities and Storyhouse's ambitions.

To collaborate with colleagues across the organisation to align fundraising activity with programming, marketing, and community engagement, ensuring a joined-up approach to income generation.

To manage the Development team, ensuring high performance at all times and providing support and guidance for their professional development.

To manage the Development budget, ensuring fundraising activities are cost-effective and deliver a strong return on investment, reporting on progress and impact to the Chief Executive, Development Committee and Board.

To represent Storyhouse externally, advocating for the organisation and its impact within the arts and charity sectors, strengthening its reputation and influence regionally and nationally.

To provide updates and reports on fundraising performance, pipeline development, and income targets for the Chief Executive, Board, and other key stakeholders as required.

# Role and Responsibilities (continued)

Other:

To support the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team with the development, implementation and monitoring of strategic and business plans.

To act in accordance with Storyhouse's policies and procedures, and undertake any training as required by Storyhouse.

To act as a role model for other staff and contribute to the life of the organisation as a whole.

Any other duties as may be required as part of the Development Director's role.

# Skills & Experience

A proven track record in fundraising and development at a senior level within the arts, culture, heritage, or charity sector

Experience of creating and implementing successful fundraising strategies across multiple income streams, including individual giving, corporate partnerships, public funding, trusts and foundations, and major donors for revenue and capital projects

A demonstrable track record of securing significant philanthropic income, meeting or exceeding fundraising targets

Leadership and management experience, with the ability to develop and motivate a team

Experience of developing and managing relationships with high-net-worth individuals, corporate partners, and key stakeholders

Experience of managing budgets, ensuring cost-effective fundraising activities and strong return on investment

Experience of writing and submitting high-quality funding applications to trusts, foundations, and statutory funders

Experience of working with Boards, senior leadership teams, and volunteers to enhance fundraising activity

Experience of planning and delivering high-profile fundraising events or campaigns

A strong understanding of fundraising principles, best practices, and current trends in philanthropy and corporate sponsorship

Excellent relationship-building and networking skills, with the ability to engage and influence donors and stakeholders at all levels

Excellent planning and project management skills, with the ability to prioritise, meet deadlines, and manage multiple workstreams

Strong written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to craft compelling cases for support and persuasive funding proposals

Ability to develop creative, innovative approaches to income generation and donor engagement

Understanding of fundraising regulations, including GDPR and ethical considerations in philanthropy

Strong negotiation and persuasion skills, particularly in securing corporate partnerships and major gifts

Knowledge of the arts and cultural sectors in the UK, with an appreciation of the challenges and opportunities for fundraising in this context

Experience of using data to inform fundraising strategy and supporter engagement

# Opportunity and Staff Benefits

Title: Development Director

Reports to: Chief Executive

Salary: £55,000 per annum

Contract: Permanent, Full time, 40 hours per week

33 days annual leave per year, including bank holidays, increasing annually up to a maximum of 5 extra days (pro rata)

Birthday leave

A defined contribution pension scheme

Employee Assistance Programme

Cycle to Work and Travel to Work schemes

Flexible working requests available from day one, hybrid working available after completion of probationary period.

Discounted gym membership schemes

Complimentary tickets and discounts on food and drink

Company sick pay after qualifying service



# Application Process

Applicants are asked to submit a cover letter expressing interest in the role and a CV demonstrating relevant experience online at: [www.storyhouse.com/jobs/](http://www.storyhouse.com/jobs/)

Applications must be submitted by **10am on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025**. All applications will be reviewed by a panel and shortlisted candidates invited to a short online interview.

First stage interviews: Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025

A number of candidates will then be invited through to a second stage, involving a tour, informal meetings, a presentation and interview at Storyhouse:

Second stage interviews: Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2025

If you have any questions or would like an informal chat about the opportunities this critical role presents, please contact: [annabel.turpin@storyhouse.com](mailto:annabel.turpin@storyhouse.com)



Faustus That Damned Woman, 2023,  
Mark McNulty



# GDPR

## Personal Data Notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent.

The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

STORYHOUSE