

STORYHOUSE



Head of Creative
Communities
(Maternity Cover)
Recruitment Pack

Antigone, 2021, Mark
McNulty



Storyhouse, 2017, Becci Lane

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Welcome from the CEO

Storyhouse is one of the UK's largest arts centres and a leading cultural charity. It serves as an independent creative hub incorporating two theatres, a boutique cinema, and the city's central library – all under one roof. Storyhouse is home to a year-round programme of in-house and visiting performances. It also runs the UK's most successful regional open-air theatre in Chester's Grosvenor Park, alongside the popular Moonlight Flicks. Beyond its programming, Storyhouse is deeply rooted in the community through its Creative Communities initiative – a bold and inclusive programme of engagement. Storyhouse Creative Communities works year-round with diverse groups including young people, isolated older adults, and those with lived experience of homelessness, poverty, or displacement. These initiatives ensure that creativity, culture, and a sense of belonging are accessible to all.

Storyhouse plays an important part of cultural life in Chester and continues to be a beacon of inspiration for many other cities and towns for the role it has played in social and economic regeneration, its successful and unique integration of world-class theatre, cinema, and library facilities, as well as its bold, exciting, diverse, and award-winning programming.

It is also a great place to work. We offer a flexible and supportive working environment, value experience as well as skills and qualifications, and work to ensure everyone in the organisation is aware of our equality and diversity commitments. We want to support all staff to fulfil their potential and enjoy a happy and healthy workplace.

We hope you decide to join us,
Annabel





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 every summer.



This House is Your House

We've become vital part of the region's cultural landscape and a place of safety and support for the community - 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.



Our Strategy...

In 2023 Storyhouse entered an exciting new phase in our evolution launching a new strategic plan to deliver outstanding cultural experiences 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.

Storyhouse Studio is a vibrant, creative space at the heart of Chester's cultural scene. As part of the wider Storyhouse family, the studio is dedicated to nurturing emerging talent, hosting workshops and community-led events. It's a place where innovation, inclusion, and artistic exploration come together to tell new stories and amplify diverse voices.





Creative Communities Programme

Our Aims:

Increase engagement with participants who do not currently engage with Storyhouse through a diverse programme of creative engagement and through Storyhouse Local, our long-term community partnership programme

Increase the diversity of participants engaging with Storyhouse

Develop two additional spaces:

- a. A permanent dedicated space for young people
- b. An outdoor alternative learning provision

Create a streamlined engagement structure for participants to progress at Storyhouse into artists, staff or volunteers

Our work with Children and Young People includes:

Schools and Education - Including schools partnerships, one-off workshops, festivals, wrap-around production workshops and events and projects in schools to ensure that we are providing a range of ways for schools and education settings to engage with us in ways that are meaningful to the curriculum and their creative learning.

Young Creatives - Taking place both in Storyhouse and our local community, we provide a range of creative projects and programmes including Youth Theatre, Young Company (SYC) and various holiday activities whilst continuing to diversify and broaden the art-forms for young people to explore.

Skills and Training - With a focus on working with young people who face barriers to employment or education, this strand of work provides opportunities for young people to develop their leadership skills and practical work experience.



Creative Communities Programme

Our work with Communities includes:

Storyhouse festivals – co-created and community-led, these festivals bring people together to tell stories, provide safe spaces and raise awareness.

Community groups – who use our spaces to bring people together. From book clubs to language conversation, mental health support and bereavement, we provide a home to many groups and people in the area.

We also take part in a range of Chester festivals and events from refugee week to the Festival of Ideas, we want to be part of and support what else is going on across our city.

Storyhouse Local

Underpinning all of our engagement with participants of all ages, Storyhouse Local priorities working in partnership with three key areas of Cheshire West and Chester:

- Lache
- Blacon
- Winsford

Through this programme, we deliver long-term projects with young people, adults and community groups as well as bring productions, events and festivals to these areas. Working in partnership with charities and organisations in these areas, we want to bring Storyhouse out of our building and into communities.

The Role

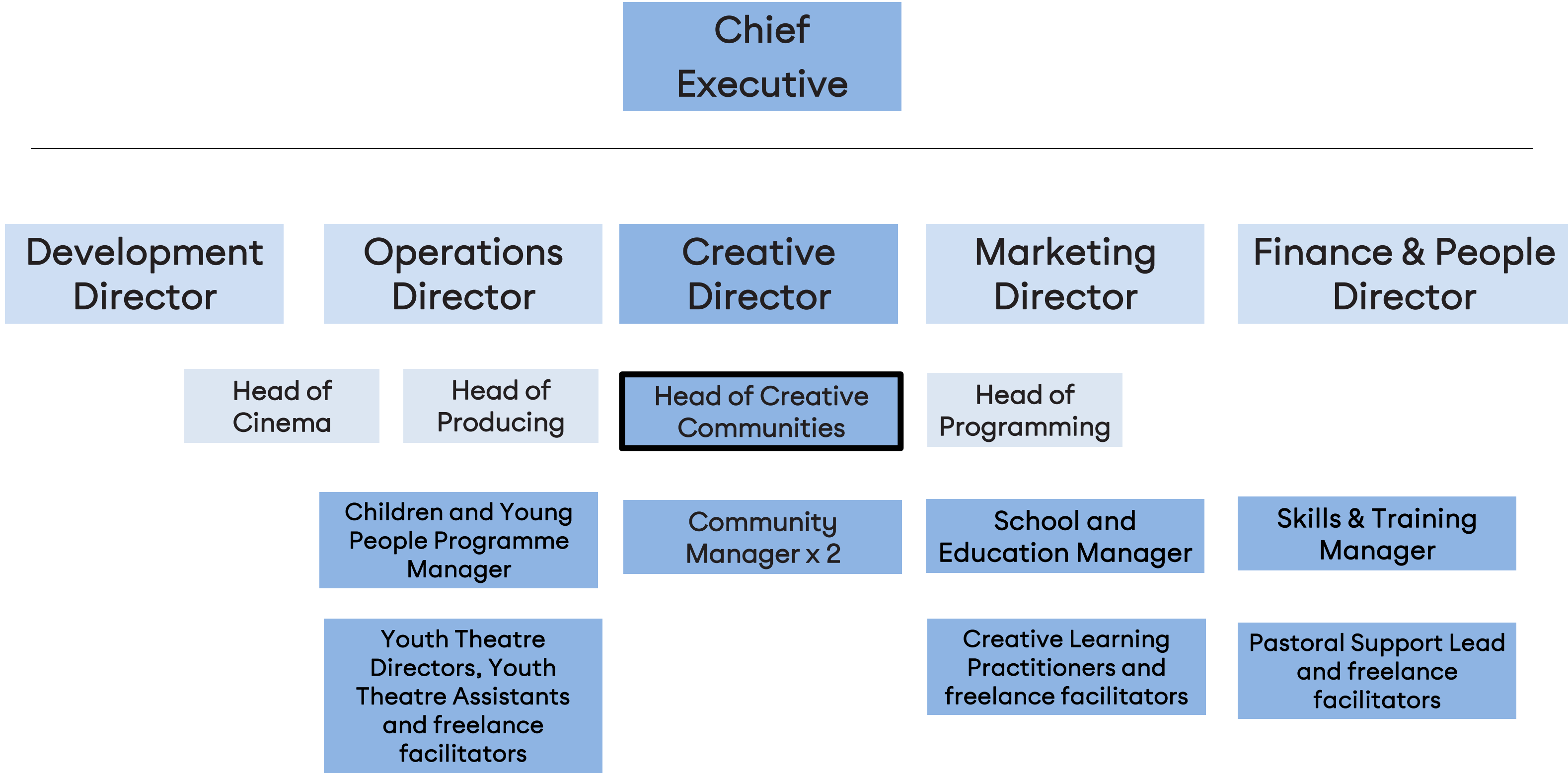
As our Head of Creative Communities, you will be responsible for overseeing the strategic development and delivery of all of Storyhouse programmes and activities for children and young people under the age of 26, our community-led festivals, community groups and our growing programme of creative engagement activities for the wider community, including older people and the learning disabled community.

You will be managing a team of staff working both onsite and offsite in our key strategic areas to give access to culture and creativity to everyone, and you will be experienced in co-creation with young people and communities.

Responsible to the Creative Director, you will lead a creative and inclusive programme of activity for people of all ages.



Staffing structure



Role and Responsibilities

Engagement

- Oversee and implement the development, management and implementation of Creative Communities activities across Storyhouse.
- Work in-line with the Creative Communities Strategy, ensuring that all projects, programmes and partnerships support the aims of the Strategy.
- Embed co-creation with children, young people and communities in the development of all activities and ensure their voices are represented across the organisation.
- Lead on the development of our Storyhouse Local programme, working in key strategic areas of Cheshire West and Chester, progressing new partnerships, visiting organisations and key stakeholders and designing projects with the wider team that best support those communities.
- Work with the Creative Director and other artistic leads to ensure the Engagement programme works across the artistic programme.
- Manage the Creative Communities staff, ensuring they are supported in developing the knowledge and skills required to deliver to the highest standards
- Work with the Operations and Technical Teams to ensure the integration, quality and effectiveness of all Engagement programme delivery.

Role and Responsibilities (continued)

Engagement

- Embed access across all projects, reducing barriers to participation and ensuring best practice around access and inclusion across the programme.
- Be the Designated Safeguarding Lead working with the Safeguarding team, ensuring all Creative Communities activity is delivered safely and ensuring that the building is a safe welcoming space for everyone.
- Contribute to the development of Storyhouse's Artist Support programmes, including supporting freelance artists.
- Keep up-to-date with changes in local, national and international thinking on children, young people, communities, education and the arts, to ensure that Storyhouse strategies are in line with key local and national government priorities.

Fundraising

- Work with the Development team to identify sources of funding for engagement activities while working with the Fundraising Manager and Development Director to write funding applications and research future funding opportunities.

Role and Responsibilities (continued)

Relationship Management

- Lead on developing strategic relationships and partnerships with a wide variety of key stakeholders with voluntary and statutory agencies, educational bodies, youth and community organisations.
- Build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders and funders and represent Storyhouse at external meetings, networks, conferences or events relating to creative learning and engagement.

Finance

- Control and monitor budgets as set by the Creative Director and Finance Director while working within Storyhouse's agreed financial procedures.

Audience development and profile raising

- Work with the Marketing Director to develop projects and activities that support Storyhouse's audience development goals ensuring that Storyhouse's Engagement activities reach the widest possible audience, with a particular focus on those with the least opportunity to engage.

Role and Responsibilities (continued)

Monitoring and evaluation

- Set and monitor annual targets relating to Engagement activity and provide quarterly updates on progress to the Creative Director and the Board.
- Work with the Development and Engagement Administrator to develop and maintain evaluation and monitoring frameworks, ensuring they are used by the whole engagement team.
- Write funding reports detailing activities and progress against agreed outputs, and ensuring learning and successes are captured and shared.

Other

- Act in accordance with Storyhouse's policies and procedures, and undertake any training as required by Storyhouse.
- 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 Head of Creative Communities' role.

Skills & Experience

Ability to design, manage and evaluate innovative, creative engagement programmes

Existing relationships with trusts and foundations and relationship management

Knowledge of best practice in safeguarding and the potential risks faced by young people

Knowledge of progression routes for young people and adults

Knowledge of best practice in co-creation

Deep understanding of the needs of young people, particularly those from disadvantaged and marginalised backgrounds

Experience of creative engagement programme design, development and evaluation

Experience supporting participants' progression and personal development

Experience of co-creation with young people and communities

Experience managing budgets

Experience leading on safeguarding of children and young people and adults at risk

Experience working in partnership with other agencies and charities to signpost young people and adults at risk to further support

Experience writing funding applications and reporting to funders

Experience line managing a team of staff/freelancers/volunteers and developing staff

Experience working in and with underserved communities to develop long-term creative programmes

Opportunity and Staff Benefits

Title: Head of Creative Communities

Reports to: Creative Director

Salary: £41,493

Contract: Full time, Fixed Term Contract (9 Months)

View to starting the contract in August 2025

30 days annual leave per year (pro rated), including bank holidays

Birthday leave

A defined contribution pension scheme or a People's Pension scheme

Employee Assistance Programme, including Medicash

Cycle to Work and Travel to Work schemes

Flexible working requests available from day one

Hybrid working practices

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/

Applications should be submitted on or before Monday 2nd June 2025 10am.

Interviews – Friday 20th June 2025

For an informal discussion about the role or support in the application process, please contact our Head of People, Emma Hutt, at peopleteam@storyhouse.com.

No agencies please.



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