



SICK! PRODUCTIONS LTD HEAD OF OPERATIONS APPLICATION PACK JUNE 2022



“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





WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in the role of Head of Operations at SICK! Productions. This pack gives background about the work of SICK! and some of our plans for the future.

Although the last 15 months has presented us with a number of challenges, the charity is in a strong and robust financial position – thanks to multi-year grants from funders, our growing international partnerships and careful financial management. In the current and post Covid environment we believe that 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 partners and funders are investing in our long term vision because they understand both our current and potential impact locally, nationally and globally.

It's a very exciting time to join SICK! – we've just completed a major programme of international commissions/events in public spaces in Manchester and online in partnership with DutchCulture, Dutch Embassy and local arts partners, looking at mental health and the landscape we live in. We have embarked on a 10-year strategic community engagement programme in the Moston and Harpurhey neighbourhoods of North Manchester, including rolling out a major programme of arts and mental health work this year. We have just announced our Spring 2022 Festival and as part of this we are developing new commissioned art works with partners in South Africa, Finland, Netherlands, and Switzerland. We are also developing our programmes and business plan to 2026 and developing our three-year National Portfolio Organisation application to Arts Council England. The new postholder will play a key role in this process over the next few months, alongside staff and Trustees.

We're looking for a dynamic and inspirational individual to join us, to work closely with me and our fantastic team to help us achieve our potential and grow our impact and reach. We're looking for someone who brings experience of financial management, business planning, HR and general office management, who is also passionate about, and interested in, the areas in which SICK! operates – arts, health, diversity, community development and international work.

While we are proud of our diversity achievements in our creative programmes, recognised by ACE in our Strong Creative Case rating, we want to further diversify our workforce to be representative of all sections of society. We actively welcome candidates who are currently underrepresented in the arts including people who face discrimination as a result of racism, those who self-identify as LGBTQIA+, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those who self-identify as disabled. We know that everyone has different commitments in their work/home lives and we are open to requests for varied working hours or work patterns. These will be considered taking into account the impact on the organisation and work colleagues.

We look forward to hearing from you.

All the best

Helen Medland, CEO/Artistic Director



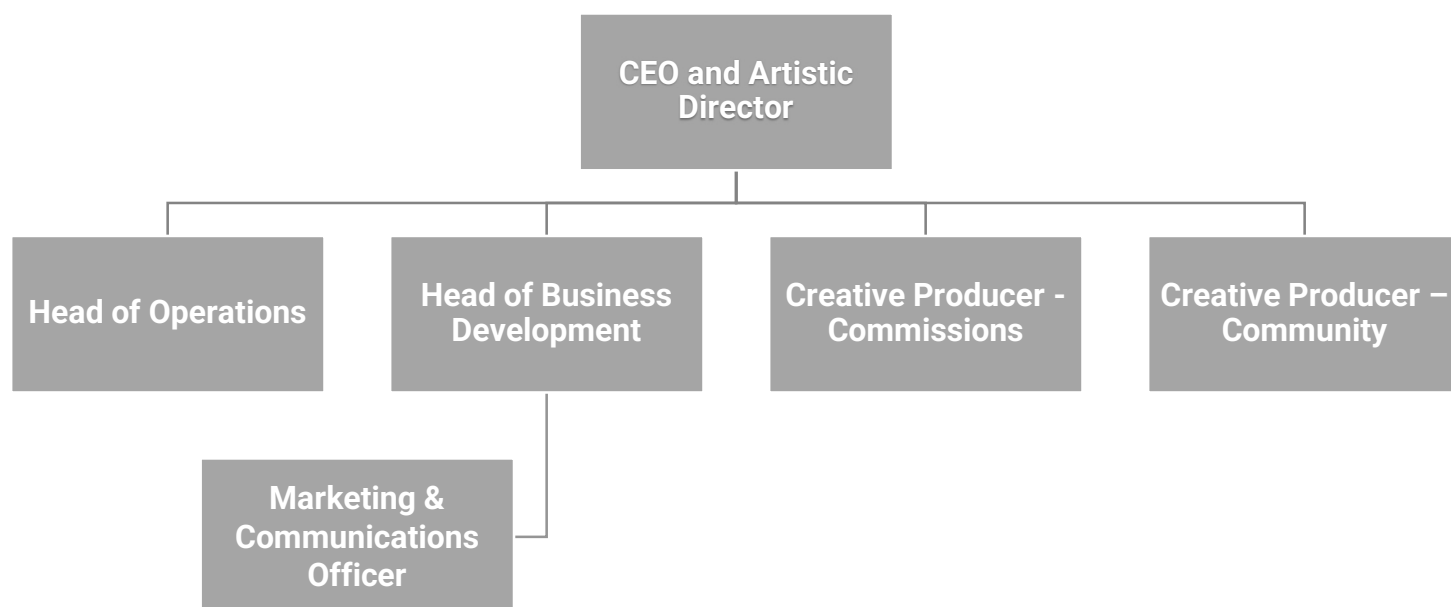
ABOUT SICK! PRODUCTIONS

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, 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.

Our staff team currently consists of 5 permanent staff: CEO/Artistic Director, Head of Operations, Creative Producers x2 and Marketing and Communications Officer. We also have one temporary Festival Assistant role, supporting the Festival. We have a strong, diverse and supportive Board of Trustees and are planning to expand membership to at least 10 members over the next 12 months.



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 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 three years.

**SICK! Festival:**

SICK! delivers a biennial festival in Greater Manchester, in cultural venues, community spaces, public realm and online, with our 2022 Festival recently took place in May. SICK!

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,

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 – e.g. Finnish Institute, Government of Flanders, Dutch Performing Arts and Pro Helvetia. Our commissions are regularly exported to other international festivals.

SICK! Community:

In 2019, SICK! committed to working in Moston and Harpurhey for 10 years to make real difference in the community. We will invest in communities and local artists and deliver 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 Producers who will be embedded in the community, with a local office base.



ABOUT THE ROLE AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Job Title:	Head of Operations
Employer:	SICK! Productions Ltd (also known as SICK! Festival)
Responsible to:	CEO/Artistic Director
Responsible for:	Freelance staff
Contract:	Permanent
Hours:	Full time – 37.5 hours per week (some evening and weekend work is required)
Holiday Entitlement:	25 days per annum, plus Bank Holidays
Notice Period:	Two months
Probationary Period:	Six months
Salary Range:	£32 - £35k, dependent on experience
Pension:	The People's Pension Scheme, Employer contributions 3% gross salary
Location:	Working at The Sharp Project, Thorp Road, Manchester, M40 5BJ
References:	All offers of employment are subject to receipt of satisfactory references

Application Deadline: Sunday 24th July at 11:30 pm

Application Process:

Please submit the following as either PDF documents or in an alternative format if you would prefer (e.g. video):

1. CV - 2 sides A4 max
2. Completed Diversity Monitoring Form (this information will be stored anonymously and separately to your application)
3. Covering letter (1500 words max) outlining how you meet the criteria in the Person Specification, with examples from your previous work (you will have the opportunity to expand on these examples during interview)
4. Details of two professional references with current knowledge of your experience and abilities

Please send the above to info@sickfestival.com marked **Head of Operations**

Please contact the above address if you would like to discuss this opportunity with one of our team.

Shortlisted candidates will be informed on Monday 25th July

Interview: Interviews will take place on Tuesday 26th July

Task: Candidates successful at the interview stage will be invited back for a second interview on Wednesday 27th July and asked to complete a couple of tasks.

Decision: We expect to notify all candidates interviewed as to our decision on Friday 29th July.



JOB DESCRIPTION: HEAD OF OPERATIONS

MAY 2022

OVERVIEW OF POST:

The Head of Operations is accountable for developing, leading and managing the operational infrastructure of the organisation, ensuring that it provides an effective and efficient framework for the delivery of SICK!'s vision and strategic objectives. They have lead responsibility for financial management, HR and office/IT management, contributing also to the strategic business planning and governance.

RESPONSIBILITIES

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:

- Working with the CEO/Artistic Director and Head of Business Development, develop a strategic approach to budgeting and financial forecasting in line with the organisational strategy and business plan
- Ensure effective cost control and monitoring procedures are in place and are regularly reviewed to ensure financial wellbeing of the organisation
- Working with the CEO/Artistic Director and Head of Business Development, produce an annual budget, management accounts and financial reports for the organisation and board of Trustees
- Working closely with the Head of Business Development to manage financial and other information required for either applications or reports to revenue funders, statutory bodies and stakeholders, including Companies House and Charities Commission
- Record and reconcile financial activity in the appropriate accountancy software and produce a monthly report for CEO/Artistic Director
- Produce monthly cashflows
- Manage payroll, HMRC and pension functions
- Manage the processing and payment of invoices and expenses in line with agreed budgets
- Liaise with the external accountants on ensuring relevant compliance with UK financial regulations and requirements
- Work with the auditors to ensure timely preparation of the Annual Accounts and Trustees' report for Board approval

STRATEGY, BUSINESS PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE:

- As a senior member of the Leadership team, contribute to the development and delivery of the SICK! Vision and Strategy to support the organisation to develop, grow and fulfil its mission and purpose
 - Contribute to SICK!'s Business plan and lead on SICK!'s Operational Plans, in line with SICK! Vision and Strategy, working closely with the CEO/Artistic Director and Leadership team to align priorities, capacity and resources
 - Contribute to the organisation's strategic objectives and lead on the Operational key performance indicators to ensure progress and successful outcomes are achieved and reported effectively to Board and external stakeholders (i.e. funders) as appropriate
 - Develop and maintain effective stakeholder relationships as relevant to the role and act as a positive ambassador for SICK!
 - Work closely with the CEO/Artistic Director and Leadership team to develop and manage robust governance, evaluation and monitoring plans and processes
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- Oversee the review, updating and implementation of management policies and procedures and ensure compliance with current legislation (to include but not limited to Diversity, Employment, Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety, Company and Charity Law, DDA, etc)



- Lead on Health and Safety for SICK! ensuring the appropriate systems, processes, procedures and education is fit for purpose and in place to provide a safe working environment and ways of working for staff and visitors
- Fulfil the role of Data Control Officer for SICK! and lead responsibility for GDPR/data protection
- Working with the CEO/Artistic Director and Head of Business Development, fulfil the role of Company Secretary ensuring SICK! complies with relevant legislation, reviewing Board constitution and composition
- Working with the CEO/Artistic Director, ensure regular and effective Board meetings and AGMs are scheduled, overseeing the preparation and circulation of all relevant papers and reporting requirements
- Develop SICK!'s approach on Sustainability, Ethics and Resources and work closely with the Leadership team to allocate responsibilities and activities accordingly.
- Lead a regular review of organisational practices and track improvements and/or changes identified

HR, LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT:

- Develop and lead on HR strategy, plans, policies, systems and processes in line with the organisation's vision, strategy and business plan
- Lead and manage HR activities to ensure the organisation can attract, recruit, develop, manage and retain the people, resources and capabilities needed to enable the organisation's strategic objectives and priorities.
- Lead on people development, engagement and wellbeing to sustain morale, capabilities, a healthy culture and organisational effectiveness to achieve its vision and purpose
- Co-ordinate the SICK! induction and onboarding programme for new staff and Trustees

OFFICE AND IT MANAGEMENT:

- Oversee and manage SICK!'s contracting process for artists, freelancers and external services
- Organise and schedule SICK! Team meetings
- Manage visa, travel and accommodation for Artists and CEO/Artistic Director
- Organise and oversee office cleaning and staff welfare care arrangements, eg. Tea/coffee...
- Oversee and liaise with IT outsourced support and hold IT provider to account for services
- Oversee telephone services and visitor booking (i.e. process, etc)

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS:

- At least 3-5 years' management experience in the charity sector and / or in an arts and culture environment
- Significant experience of financial management, including setting, monitoring and controlling annual and project budgets, producing management accounts and cashflows, preparing year-end annual accounts and risk management
- Understanding of the legal requirements for charities and companies, including the requirements of the Charities Commission and Companies House
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, with the ability to quickly gain credibility internally, externally and at Board level
- Experience in negotiating, developing and managing high level partnerships, across a range of sectors
- Experience in leading on HR functions such as recruitment, induction of new staff, keeping records and monitoring annual appraisal processes and ensuring all activity is compliant with current legislation.
- Financial literacy, business acumen and significant experience in managing complex budgets and restricted/unrestricted funds
- High level of integrity and professionalism with the ability to demonstrate diplomacy, trust and confidentiality and a "can-do" attitude
- Highly organised with experience of implementing operational systems and the ability to plan, organise, schedule and budget effectively
- Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to work with people of different backgrounds building strong relationships with a wide range of individual and institutional stakeholders
- Experience of devising and implementing policies and procedures, including Health & Safety; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; HR; Data Protection; Environmental and Safeguarding
- A demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and environmental sustainability
- An understanding of financial and risk management within the charitable sector
- Strong IT skills and proficiency in accounting software (Sage)

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