

Peterborough Presents Independent Consortium Chair Recruitment pack

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In brief:

Peterborough Presents is a socially engaged arts programme that is rooted in the community and works beyond traditional models of creativity and community engagement. We are an Arts Council England Creative People and Places programme with a back catalogue of exemplar projects such as [RAD](#), [Allama Iqbal Project](#) and [Eye Lantern Parade](#) and films such as [Millfield of Dreams](#) and [Unreasonable](#). Over the last 12 years we have been demonstrating how community leadership, creative engagement and inspirational arts can come together to affect change.

We are looking for an exceptional individual who can fulfil the role of independent chair for our consortium as we embark on Phase 4 of our programme (2026-29).

This is rare opportunity and an excellent time to join Peterborough Presents Consortium. We have secured a £840,000 grant funding from Arts Council England to help us deliver against our mission and values over the next 3 years. We have a clear and ambitious Business Plan which sets out some of our most important ambitions. It ensures that we don't stand still but continue to expand and evolve, both growing and sustaining our engagement.

We are looking for someone to lead our consortium, a strong champion with a commitment to culture, creativity and community. We're looking for someone who has demonstrable experience of chairing strategic partnerships and a solid understanding of effective governance. You will have experience of community, arts or non-profit settings and be an excellent communicator and facilitator.

As Chair, you will lead quarterly consortium meetings and occasional additional meetings, as well as provide support to our Director. You will be both our critical friend and a strong ambassador for Peterborough Presents. This is a voluntary role spanning 3 years.

More about Peterborough Presents

Our **vision** is:

Creativity is firmly embedded in Peterborough's DNA, creating an exceptional and thriving cultural offer, one that is inclusive, adventurous, and shaped by the rich diversity of the people who live here.

Our **mission** is: To work with communities and artists across Peterborough to create "great art" — work that is fun, accessible, diverse and deeply relevant to the histories and experiences of local residents.

Our **aims** are to:

- Involve more people in art and culture, especially those who engage the least
- Inspire pride in place
- Grow and diversify creative community leadership
- Further develop PP's action-research approach
- Play our part in strengthening the city's cultural offer

Our **values** are:

- We **recognise** and **celebrate** the skills and knowledge within our communities (an asset based approach)
- We take the time to **listen** and **respond** to the communities we work with
- Our programmes are built on **trust** and **respect** for participants
- We are **exciting** and **not bound by traditional models of creativity or community engagement**

At Peterborough Presents, it is important to create art that is meaningful and relevant to people; that speaks of their lives, their histories and their experiences. Not bound by these factors, but using them as a starting point to tell engaging and amazing stories.

PP Team member

Background and context:

As one of 45 Creative People and Places programmes funded by Arts Council England we recently secured our ACE grant funding for 2026-29. ACE's CPP programme funds arts and culture projects in the bottom 33% engaged places in arts and culture, according to the Active Lives survey.

The central aims and objectives of the fund are as follows:

1. Engage more people from eligible places in a wide range of arts and cultural experiences as audiences and/or participants

2. Empower communities to lead and shape local cultural provision.
3. Excellence and relevance in both the engagement process and the creative and cultural experiences on offer
4. Encourage partnerships between publicly funded, amateur, voluntary, community and commercial sectors, as well as collaboration across various cultural institutions.
5. Take an Action Research approach to community engagement in arts, creativity, and culture; learn what works best and share that learning.

Peterborough Presents was founded in 2014 and is a well-established and much respected part of the CPP network. We have a track record of data-led, asset-based and inclusive practice, focusing on community decision making panels to help co-commission bespoke creative programmes for target communities. PP's **commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion** is central to the quality, relevance and integrity of our work. We see EDI not as an add-on, but as a condition for meaningful artistic practice and genuine community engagement.

Peterborough Presents Consortium:

As part of our funding agreement we are governed by a consortium of brilliant partners; [Nene Park Trust](#), [Metal](#), [Peterborough Council for Voluntary Services](#), [Peterborough City Council](#), [Creative Lives](#), [Eastern Angles](#) and [Cross Keys Homes](#). Nene Park Trust are our host organisation. The consortium model brings together expertise but also acts as a vehicle through which PP can share it's learning of working with communities to challenge traditional forms of creative engagement.

Collective responsibilities of the Consortium:

- To ensure that the agreed programme is delivered within budget and in accordance with the aims and core principles in the Business Plan.

- To model and advocate for effective collaboration and partnership in the development, administration and management of cultural activities, and in their cultural practice within Peterborough.

The Consortium welcomes a workshop approach to meetings, in addition to the governance requirements. This aligns well with the action-research principles of CPP.

Peterborough Present's Business Plan 2026-29 was developed in collaboration with the consortium and wider community partners. You can find a plain-text copy of our exec summary here: [PP Business Plan 26-29 Exec Summary folder](#)

You can find out more about the Peterborough Presents programme by visiting: www.peterboroughpresents.org. You can see a short film from our 10-year birthday here: [Peterborough Presents 10 year anniversary](#)

Key responsibilities of the role of Chair:

Advocacy & representation

- Act as a visible and credible ambassador for Peterborough Presents within the community and the wider arts and cultural sectors.
- Help build relationships with key stakeholders, including Arts Council England, funders, artists, community groups, local authorities, and partner organisations.
- Act as representative for Peterborough Presents at public events, community meetings, and networking opportunities.

Leadership:

- Chair the quarterly meetings and away day effectively, encouraging open dialogue, diverse perspectives, and evidence-based decision-making.
- Provide clear leadership to the consortium, working with the Director to enhance effective governance and strategic direction.

- Lead by example in promoting diversity, inclusion, and accessibility across all aspects of the project – this is core to the work of PP.
- Ensure Peterborough Presents celebrates and operates in line with its mission, values, and any relevant legal or funding requirements.
- Support the development and monitoring of the programme's Business Plan and performance targets.
- Work collaboratively with Peterborough Present's Director to maintain strong oversight without encroaching on day-to-day management.

Governance:

- Ensure the Consortium operates effectively, with a strong mix of skills and community representation.
- Enable and oversee the process of decision-making, conflict resolution and actual or perceived conflicts of interest as they arise. Note that we have a clear MOU and conflicts of interests policy.
- Work with the Consortium to support succession planning and the recruitment of new associate members where necessary, ensuring that we have a diversity of voices and necessary expertise.
- Work with the Director to support the integration of PP's EDI / Sustain working group into the wider consortium
- Work with the Director to assess the effectiveness of the consortium (incl gathering feedback from consortium members)
- Work with the Consortium and Director to explore how community decision making can be embedded at all levels of the organisation
- Ensure sound financial oversight and accountability for the project's resources.

Support & accountability

- Provide support and guidance to the Director, offering constructive challenge and acting as a critical friend.
- Monitor risk management processes and ensure appropriate mitigations are in place.

- Ensure effective implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Partnership Principles
- Support the recruitment of future core and associate consortium members.

Community engagement

- Champion meaningful community participation and co-creation in project activities.
- Ensure that community voices are heard in decision-making for project activity.

Accountability:

- The Consortium Chair is accountable to the rest of the Consortium

Person specification:

Essential qualities:

- Demonstrated leadership experience in community, arts, or non-profit settings.
- Strong understanding of governance and strategic planning.
- An experienced facilitator able to guide productive meetings, and support the consortium and leadership team in taking balanced and objective decisions
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Ability to act with integrity, diplomacy, and impartiality.
- Passion for social justice and the role of the arts in community development and wellbeing
- Highly organised and able to make effective use of consortium time with ability to ensure appropriate follow-up to consortium decisions

- Able to maintain an independent perspective with no significant conflicts of interest
- Good listener who is able to draw together different perspectives and filter into clear actions
- Experience of being a trustee or committee member of a charity / CIC

Desirable Qualities:

- Experience of chairing a board / committee
- Strong understanding of Peterborough and its communities
- An understanding of the potential impact of creative engagement for communities
- Established networks in creative, cultural and community sector

Duration: Minimum 3 years

Time commitment:

Approx 8 days across each year (incl meetings, events and preparatory / debrief work). This includes 3 x 2-hour consortium meetings and a full-day planning meeting per year. Meetings are held in person and online.

You will be required to attend some of our brilliant events / activities such as the lantern parade, exhibitions or Qawalli night etc. This will ensure you have a strong understanding of the work and give the opportunity to network and create new relationships.

Remuneration:

This is an unpaid, voluntary role. We will be able to support reasonable expenses needed to support attendance at any meetings or events.

Application Process:

Please send your CV and a covering letter (of no more than 2 sides of A4 or 8 min video / audio file) stating why you would be interested in this role.

Please send this to Peterborough Presents Director, Sarah Haythornthwaite at Sarah.haythornthwaite@neneparktrust.org.uk. If you would like an informal chat about the role, please email Sarah to arrange a call.

Deadline for applications: 31st August 2026

Timeline: We aim to hold interviews and induction in mid September. Ideally, the new chair would be able to help chair the next scheduled, in-person consortium meeting on Tuesday 20th October, 3 – 5pm.

Recruitment:

We recognise that some communities are under-represented within the cultural sector and within our own organisation. We would love to hear from those who have lived experience of our target audiences.

In addition to this, as part of our commitment to addressing imbalance, we are operating a guaranteed interview scheme. Applicants who meet the essential criteria for the role and identify as one of the following groups will be guaranteed an interview:

- Global Majority (including people who identify as Black, Asian, Arab, mixed heritage or from other racially minoritised backgrounds)
- Disabled (including D/deaf, neurodivergent and people with long-term health conditions)

This forms part of our positive action approach under the Equality Act 2010. If appropriate, please include the following statement in your covering letter: “I fit the criteria for the guaranteed interview scheme, please put me forward for this if my application meets the assessment criteria.”