

# Vital Spark Creative Producer

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*Vital Spark - new diverse led product and global adventures for the young at art.*

The Spark Arts for Children has been awarded additional funds from Arts Council England in the next round of NPO to develop and deliver Vital Spark. The aim of Vital Spark is to shape, influence and transform the landscape of Theatre for Young Audiences developing new and diverse product for Children and Young People, enabling that work to thrive nationally and journey internationally. Through Vital Spark we will meet the needs of artists, and audiences, through a year round development and commissioning programme, with a view to addressing the national gap of diverse work for CYP. The ambition is to use the Spark Festival as a platform to create opportunities for diverse artists to share, show and rigorously discuss practice and celebrate new work that is equal to that seen around the world.

As a result, we are looking for a Creative Producer to work alongside the Spark Director to develop and deliver the programme, and find and create more diverse work for children for the Spark Festival and the children's arts sector more widely.

## Job Description

### Artist Development programme

*Each year we will facilitate opportunities to bring up to four artists/companies together, build a community of practice, participate in workshops delivered by national and international artists and participate in Go See and International exchange. We will support the artist/company's individual journey to stimulate new ideas and theatrical forms.*

- To identify artists and theatre makers to invite submissions from each year.
- To identify, recruit, liaise with and manage industry mentors and/or training opportunities and draft letters of agreement.
- To write and publish the callout through a variety of channels as appropriate.
- To ensure that there is an excellent submission rate, in quantity and quality.
- To work closely with the Director select the yearly cohort of artists and to devise a broad programme supporting their professional development.
- To scrutinise artistic ideas, choices and processes and provide feedback wherever and whenever necessary.
- To schedule festival visits, professional development sessions, training sessions, R&D.
- To identify particular projects from the artists to be put forward for the Ideas Fund.

### Ideas Fund

*Each year up to 2 artists/companies per year will be supported to research, rehearse, devise, share, showcase an idea in its early stages of development. The Festival will provide space and opportunity for the artist to share their journey with other artists, international colleagues/companies and delegates.*

- To work with the Spark Director to pick the projects to be given Ideas Funding and manage the process of moving them into production for a sharing.
- To work with artists in support of the funding applications pertaining to their R&D phase; to issue letters of support as required
- To produce the R&D –contracting other staff as required, establishing company requirements, overseeing logistics (room booking, contracting actors, booking accommodation, hiring equipment), ensuring artists have access to young people.
- To produce the annual Scratch Showcase during the festival for delegates, artists and children to come together, including generating an audience.

### **Festival and Delegate programming**

*The Spark Festival runs for 8 days in May, before and during the May bank holiday. It provides a mixed programme of theatre, dance, music, visual and digital arts performances, workshops and free activities for children aged 0-13 and their families.*

- To work closely with the Director to identify new or diverse product for the annual Spark Festival.
- To oversee negotiations, schedule, contract and liaison with presenting companies in the Festival.
- To oversee management of the logistics of the Festival delegate programme and act as host.
- To network nationally and internationally to ensure that companies, co-producers, programmers and funders are attracted to the Festival and the Vital Spark scheme.
- To support the development of UK and international partners, including managing relevant network development events.

### **Produce New Commissions to tour nationally**

*One new work will be created every two years, to play in theatre and non-theatre spaces such as libraries and school halls. The artist/company developing the work will be supported to ensure each production is ready to tour through mentoring and additional resources, in particular that of a producer.*

- To work closely with the Director to identify one piece of work to be taken to full production every two years
- To plan and develop a national tour (small-mid scale)
- To be the lead contact with venues, negotiating contracts and audience development plans
- To set up a management and creative team to produce and deliver the production and tour.

### **General**

- To set realistic project deliverables, monitoring, evaluating and reporting the process on a regular basis.
- To support a diverse team of artists with different needs, facilitating creative conversations to instil confidence and ensure success
- To liaise effectively with all the Spark team on matters relating to marketing, sales, development and finance.
- To manage allocated budgets and report on income and expenditure.
- To represent The Spark externally, building and maintaining positive relationships with partners, and advocating for the company / programme, to create and develop further opportunities for the company.
- To carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the organisation's equal opportunities policy and core values.
- Be a full team member and contribute to the life of the organisation as a whole.

## Person Specification

| Factor   | Requirements  | Method of Assessment         |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| <b>RELEVANT EXPERIENCE</b><br><i>Essential</i> | Working directly with artists to progress their professional work   | Application form / Interview |
|  | Working in an arts organisation in a producing role   | Application form / Interview |
|  | Track record of negotiating deals and contracts arrangements with venues and partners   | Application form / Interview |
|  | Developing relationships with diverse groups  | Application form / Interview |
|  | Working to a budget and maintaining records of spend and income.  | Application form / Interview |
| <b>KNOWLEDGE</b><br><i>Essential</i>           | Production and co-production processes at small / mid scale   | Application form / Interview |
|  | Strong existing relationships with venues and key networks  | Application form / Interview |
| <i>Desirable</i>                               | Children's theatre sector   | Application form / Interview |
| <b>SKILLS</b><br><i>Essential</i>              | Ability to create positive working relationships with a wide range of individuals, organisations and stakeholders                             | Application form / Interview |
|  | Creative and resourceful approach to devising programmes from scratch, quick to spot opportunities, connections and potential collaborations. | Application form / Interview |
|  | Strong administrator with an eye for detail   | Application form / Interview |
|  | Competent Microsoft Office skills   | Application form             |
| <b>PERSONAL QUALITIES</b><br><i>Essential</i>  | Self-starter, able to use own initiative and work flexibly in response to the capacity of the company and demands of the project              | Interview                    |
|  | Strong interest and enthusiasm for arts and culture across a variety of disciplines   | Interview                    |
|  | Strong organisational skills and able to manage multiple priorities   | Interview                    |
|  | Open minded approach to ideas and working with people from all walks of life.   | Interview                    |
|  | Interest in and commitment to making the arts accessible to children  | Interview                    |
| <i>Desirable</i>                               | BAME or disabled<br>This project is about developing BAME and disabled artists and creating more diverse work for children.                   | Interview                    |

We would suggest that in your application you demonstrate how your experience and skills relate to each aspect of the person specification.

## Contract Details

**Salary:** £26,000 - £30,000 pro rata, subject to experience

**Working hours:** Part-time 3 days per week (22 hours)

**Location:** The Spark office in Leicester

**Start Date:** April 2018 (subject to notice period)

Please note that the nature of this role requires occasional evening and weekend work to be undertaken for which time off in lieu may be taken in agreement with the Director, specifically during the Spark Festival in May.

Appointment is subject to a probationary period and satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure.

## Application information

**Closing date for applications:** 5pm on Monday 5 March

**Interviews:** Thursday 15 March

Applications should be made using The Spark Application Form. Please make sure you complete the personal statement explaining how you meet the criteria for the post. A c.v. may be included **in addition** to the personal statement.

Post applications to:

The General Manager, The Spark Arts for Children, LCB Depot, 31 Rutland Street, Leicester LE1 1RE

Or by email to [jobs@thesparkarts.co.uk](mailto:jobs@thesparkarts.co.uk)

All applications will be acknowledged by email, so please give an email contact.

***The Spark Arts for Children strives to be an equal opportunities employer, and would appreciate applicants completing the monitoring form.***

## About The Spark Arts for Children

The Spark Arts for Children is a busy children's art organisation based in the LCB Depot, in the heart of the city of Leicester's cultural quarter.

We promote a wide-ranging programme of work including an annual arts festival for children across schools and city venues, artist residencies in libraries, touring new theatre productions for children to city, county and east midland locations and venues. We also provide leadership and direction for the development of The City Classroom, Leicester's Cultural Education Partnership.

The Spark brings together exceptional national and international artists creating work for children. The festival features theatre, dance, music, poetry, puppetry and visual & digital arts. The work is often innovative and experimental and performed by companies at the forefront of their profession.

### **Our Vision**

Igniting the potential of all children through extraordinary arts experiences.

## **Our Mission**

- The Spark gives children opportunities to immerse themselves in the arts by experiencing a wide range of high quality work that inspires, empowers and educates.
- Through the presentation of an annual festival, a cultural education and community programme and through the production of our own work we offer children the space to discover their own skills, passions and potential, as audience, participants and creators of their own work.
- The Spark works to increase its impact on the creation and presentation of arts for children locally, in the UK and beyond.
- The Spark gives children opportunities to immerse themselves in the arts by experiencing a wide range of high quality work, which inspires, empowers and educates.

[www.thesparkarts.co.uk](http://www.thesparkarts.co.uk)