

Trustee Recruitment (3 Vacancies)

September 2016

1. Background

The Spark Arts for Children began as one-off project in 2003, in response to a need for live performance arts for children in the region. Over a decade later, it had delivered the largest arts festival specifically for young people in Great Britain and is now providing an innovative year-round offer for children and their families.

Evidence shows that the arts inspire, empower and educate children, playing a vital role in their development. Spark provides high quality arts that support children's development, and works with other agencies to promote arts for children in the city and region.

The festival runs annually around the May half-term and brings exceptional international and national artists to the region for a fortnight of theatre, music, dance, puppetry, poetry, visual and digital arts. All events and activities are specially developed for children in and out of school and their families. The programme takes place in arts venues, schools and neighbourhood venues. The Spark creates a sense of excitement and celebration wherever it works, and encourages children, teachers and parents to sample a range of different arts activities available.

In recent years Spark has made a significant investment in programmes of work outside the festival creating projects that further its mission. Through a year round programme of events, performances and creative interventions, Spark has devised and delivered a range of programmes developing its ambition and reach through work in schools and community spaces. Financial turnover is in the region of £500-600,000 per annum.

Spark exists to enable children to enjoy the opportunities for discovery offered by the arts as audiences, as learners and as creators of their own art. The charity has five strategic objectives:-

- To facilitate, commission or provide a high quality, diverse and innovative year-round arts programme for children in local venues (*In Your Theatre*), schools (*In Your School*) and community settings (*On Your Doorstep*) which is recognised locally, regionally and nationally.
- To organise a children's arts festival each year recognised nationally for the quality, diversity and innovation of the programme, and valued locally for its contribution to the quality of life for children.
- To advocate for children's rights to enjoy artistic opportunities as audiences, as learners and as creators of their own art.
- To develop a sustainable and innovative mixture of income streams to support the annual programme and the charity.
- To ensure that the organisation is well governed by a skilled board and has the hallmarks of an effective charity.

2. Organisational Details

The Spark Arts for Children is a company limited by guarantee (No: 5254229) and is registered as a charity (No: 1106952).

3. Trustee Duties

The Board of Trustees meets 4-6 times per year, one meeting of which is the charity's Annual General Meeting. The role of the Board is to provide strategic direction (through the periodic development and approval of a business plan) and to ensure the governance of the company (as required by Companies House) and the charity (as required by the Charity Commission).

All Trustees are volunteers and are not entitled to payment for their services. Along side their Board responsibilities, Trustees advocate on behalf of the organisation, and provide support and advice to Spark's paid staff in their area of professional expertise.

Trustees are required to:-

- Ensure Spark carries out its charitable purpose
- Ensure Spark complies with its governing documents and the law
- Act in the charity's best interest
- Manage Spark's resources responsibly
- Act with reasonable care and skill
- Ensure Spark is accountable

The Charity Commission's guide *The Essential Trustee* lays out the responsibilities of Spark's trustees and can be found at www.charitycommission.gov.uk

We also ask that trustees try to make a personal contribution to Spark each year. This may be in the form of a donation of their time in their area of expertise for a specific piece of work, a donation to an event or scheme, or fund raising for the charity.

By law, you are not allowed to be a Spark Trustee if you:-

- Are under 16 years of age.
- Are unable to provide an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service certificate (which Spark will apply for)
- Are disqualified as a company director.
- Have a conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception
- Have been declared bankrupt (or subject to sequestration in Scotland), or having a composition or arrangement (including an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA)) with your creditors.
- Have been removed as a trustee elsewhere by the Charity Commission or the court because of misconduct or mismanagement.

We are currently looking for new Trustees to bring the board up to full capacity, with the following skills and backgrounds, to compliment the existing Trustees and support the strategic direction of the charity:-

- A **financial practitioner** working in a senior position to act as the charity's Treasurer (CCAB qualification preferred).
- A local **business practitioner** or entrepreneur with good connections across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
- A qualified **head teacher** working in a KS1 or KS2 setting in Leicester, Leicestershire or Rutland.

4. Application

If you would like to join the Spark board we would be delighted to hear from you and consider your application. It is important that we get the right people as Spark trustees and the process takes a few months to complete. Spark is a fabulous organisation to be involved with and we usually get a number of people applying for our trustee vacancies. Whilst we very much appreciate the interest, the number of trustees we can have is limited and we can only appoint to the vacancies shown above.

The first step is to contact our Chairman (David Bell) at chair@thesparkarts.co.uk or on 07979 770551 who will discuss the role with you and can provide you with an initial view on your suitability.

We will then ask you to send us a letter of interest with your CV to admin@thesparkarts.co.uk or by post to The Spark Arts for Children, LCB Depot, 31 Rutland St, Leicester, LE1 1RE.

After that, you will be interviewed by two of the existing Trustees and they will present your application and their recommendation to the next meeting of the Board of Trustees. You will be informed shortly thereafter if your application has been successful.