



Head of Finance & Operations

Application Pack

October 2025

About us

Arts Emergency is a mentoring charity and support network. Since 2013, we have worked to address the inequalities in the creative and cultural sectors. Founded in Hackney by two friends, activist Neil Griffiths and comedian Josie Long, we now support over 2,200 brilliant young people across the UK. We provide guidance so they can chart their own course. We create connections to help them get ahead.

Our vision

The future is a place where young people face no closed doors to creativity and the creative industries.

Our mission

We open doors by connecting young people to each other and to creative professionals within communities of care based on shared values, interests, and practice. Through the transformative power of this mutual support, young people are empowered to live out their creative ambitions.

Our core beliefs

In 2011, when Neil and Josie first dreamed up the project that would become Arts Emergency, they wrote (on a tablecloth) the core statements of belief and intention for the national movement they would go on to build. This became our founding manifesto. Ten years later, inspired by this manifesto and their own experiences in the arts, our Youth Collective created their own. You can read both manifestos [on our website](#).

Both manifestos are powerful guiding forces in everything we do. In the words of our Youth Collective, *"we are far more powerful when we come together. Share resources. Pay it forward"*.

Who we support

We currently support over 2,200+ young people aged 16-25 who encounter systemic barriers to achieving their creative ambitions.

Among our young people:

- 78% are from a lower socioeconomic background
- 70% are from an ethnic minority background
- 17% have a disability or special educational need

Importantly, 61% have intersecting identities that compound the challenges they experience within the sector.

Our young people live in 115 local authorities across London, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, and wider England.

We recruit young people through a network of 57 long-standing referral partnerships with schools, colleges, local authority services, and community organisations working in areas of deprivation.

“Arts Emergency has done more for me than I ever thought possible, it has opened doors I thought were closed. It has given me hope.”

- DEJI, YOUNG TALENT

What we do

Arts Emergency empowers, connects and develops under-resourced young people to be their best, most aspirational selves through 1:1 mentoring and up to ten-years' worth of tailored assistance, real-life opportunities, connection to our Network - thousands of cultural professionals - and peer support.

Our three main programme strands are:

- **Mentoring:** Through a year-long mentoring relationship with a trained volunteer who is experienced in their creative area of interest, young people aged 16-18 receive information, advice, and guidance that supports them to make decisions and take steps toward their creative ambitions as they move beyond compulsory education.
- **Young Community:** Every young person who takes part in our programmes becomes a member of our Young Community, a national community of 2,200+ young people aged 16-25 from underrepresented backgrounds, with shared creative interests and practices. Through bringing people together in person and online, our Young Community programme fosters authentic connections.
- **Youth Collective:** A representative group of 12 young people who provide leadership for the Young Community, ensuring that young people's views and voices are at the heart of everything we do.

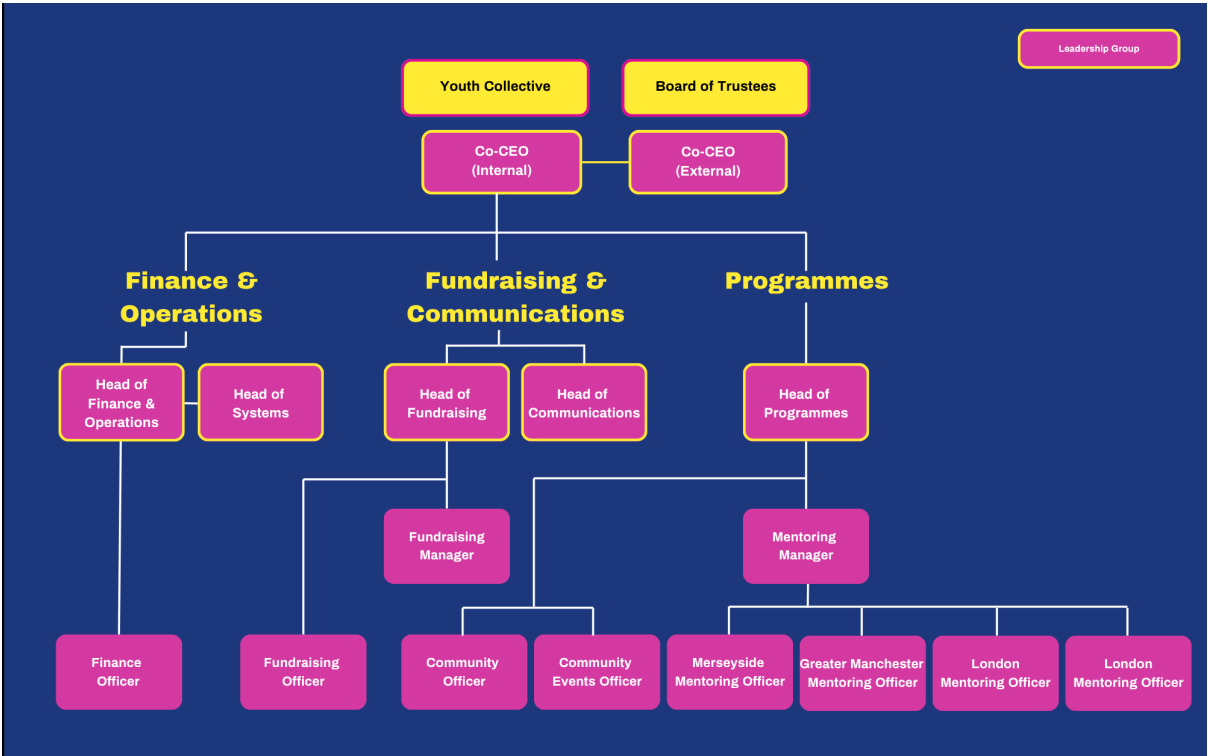
This is an exciting time to join Arts Emergency and help shape the future of a growing, mission-driven organisation.

See some of the results of our work in our [Impact Report 2024](#).

Our team

The Arts Emergency team is a group of passionate and dedicated staff and trustees who bring together a wealth of experience from the charity and cultural sectors.

Meet our team



Commitment to equality and diversity

Arts Emergency is a grassroots movement that is entirely and authentically powered by people. We believe that lasting social change can only happen when we all come together.

Our programmes serve young people who are under-represented in the creative and cultural industries, including people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities.

Arts Emergency is committed to taking steps to be reflective of the young people we serve, and being a welcoming and inclusive organisation. We therefore particularly encourage applications from candidates who are likely to be underrepresented in the UK's cultural workforce. This includes people of colour, disabled people, LGBTQIA+ people, and other equity deserving groups. When we recruit we will always: show the salary, pay a living wage, and won't demand a degree as an essential criteria (unless a specific qualification is required for a role).

“Our future cultural landscape is in danger of being populated exclusively by the children of the wealthy and well-connected. I love Arts Emergency because it works to bridge this gap. To create the opportunities that have been taken away.”

- JULIE HESMONDHALGH, ACTOR

We are committed to the employment and development of disabled people. We guarantee to interview anyone who identifies as disabled and whose application meets the person specification for a post. To be invited to interview, you must show in your application that you meet the person

specification for the role. If you tell us that you have access requirements or any requests to make you comfortable, we can make reasonable adjustments to the interview process, and, if you join us, to your work arrangements.

Head of Finance & Operations

- **Permanent**
- **Full time, 35 hours per week**
- **£42,000 per annum pro rata, plus 3% pension contribution**
- **This role can be home or office-based**
- **Arts Emergency operates a 35-hour week, we will consider compressed or annualised hours.**

About the role

You will be joining Arts Emergency at an exciting time. Having grown five-fold since 2015, we are poised to expand our award winning work nationally and aim to support up to 3,000 young people by 2028. We are cementing our position as a leading and trusted service provider and support network for aspiring artists and thinkers and we are seeking an experienced and motivated new colleague to join our Leadership Group and achieve this with us.

You will help guide the organisation towards its goals and to ensure that it is operating effectively and efficiently by focusing on strategic development in the operational areas and by collaborating closely with colleagues and external partners.

Key Tasks

Day to Day

- Provide line management for the Head of Systems, Finance Officer and future team roles
- Strategic oversight of operations including development and monitoring of plans, internal people policies, financial and operational risk management and general legislative compliance
- Develop and maintain our digital accounting system, tracking income and expenses, supporting the team to manage restricted grants through internal reporting
- Manage the Finance Officer to ensure verification and payment of invoices, contractors and payroll on schedule
- Develop and monitor organisational budgets and produce forecasts, risk assessments and management reports for the Leadership Group and Board
- Monitor financial trends
- Develop and maintain efficient administrative systems across the organisation, including oversight of our Salesforce database and a range of support contractors
- Ensure Arts Emergency's Policies and Procedures are up to date, fit for purpose and adhered to
- Act as liaison between the team and HR service provider and develop long term plans for effective HR management as the organisation grows
- Act as data lead for the organisation, ensuring the organisation's privacy policy is robust, enforced and reviewed regularly according to best practice
- Act as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer and work alongside our Head of Programmes (Designated Safeguarding Officer), Mentoring Manager

(Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer) and Safeguarding Trustee to protect young people and refer on and follow up where safeguarding issues or welfare needs arise (training will be provided)

- Prepare agendas and delegate minute taking for Trustee meetings

Future Planning & Strategy

- Work with the rest of the Leadership Group to develop Arts Emergency's overall strategy and business planning, and contribute to the planning process
- Lead on development of innovative organisational solutions and ways of working to support the strategic aims of the charity
- Monitor financial and other performance indicators - report regularly to the team and Board
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to identify strategic opportunities for growth
- Identify potential financial and operational risks and work with the Leadership Group and Board on contingency plans
- Work with the Head Systems and external agencies to organise, develop and maintain the core database system
- Identify and implement innovative organisational solutions and ways of working to support the strategic aims of the charity

Leadership Group

- Advocate for effective systems and processes, ensuring best practice is the goal for everything the organisation does
- Act as Company Secretary and supervise compliance and annual audits in accordance with statutory requirements

- Deputise for co-CEOs when necessary or appropriate, offering leadership and support to Arts Emergency's wider team
- Undertake any task that may be requested from time to time that may be consistent with the nature and scope of this post
- Represent Arts Emergency at events or speaking occasions and act as an ambassador for Arts Emergency at all times
- Maintain the ethos and values of the charity and positively promote the work and activities of the charity

Key Results / Objectives

Day to Day

- Operations are run effectively and efficiently
- Organisational policies are up to date, fit for purpose and regularly reviewed and we are compliant with regulatory requirements
- Value is achieved when engaging contractors and support agencies, and all our contractors are regularly reviewed and evaluated
- Invoices and expense claims are paid in a timely fashion, and financial reports and plans are developed according to schedule
- Arts Emergency's wider staff team have the support, systems and equipment to work efficiently and effectively

Future Planning & Strategy

- Budgets and plans are in place for future activity and organisational development

- Operational and financial risks are identified and managed appropriately
- Systems are in place to provide information to measure performance and support decision making by the Leadership Group and Board

Leadership Group

- A multi-year business plan is in place, communicated clearly to stakeholders and progress towards our aims is measurable and regularly reviewed
- You have played a leading role in the development of our internal culture and people work
- Budgets and financial and operational reports have been produced for internal and external stakeholders in a timely fashion and to a high standard
- Annual accounts are prepared, audited and submitted in a timely fashion

Working Conditions

This role can be home or office based, and we will consider compressed or annualised hours should the successful applicant wish. We will also consider job share applications.

Arts Emergency head office is based at Peter House, Oxford St, Manchester M1 5AN. We also have access to Spaces offices around the country which are used by all staff living outside of Manchester.

We will occasionally ask you to travel to other offices or locations for training and team or departmental away days. Travel expenses will be covered, and we'll offer remote options when necessary and ensure accessibility requirements are taken into account.

There may occasionally be evening/weekend work, we operate a time off in lieu system.

About you

You will be an inclusive and strategic leader with the ability to inspire and motivate others, and a strong understanding of charitable governance, finance and operations.

You will have experience of running an operation at a national or local level, and of working collaboratively. You will have demonstrable experience of change management, and dealing with a wide range of stakeholders including Trustees, young people, service suppliers, and financial auditors. You will always take a compassionate and proactive approach to developing plans and managing people.

You will be passionate about building and developing strong systems and teams, and will develop and implement ambitious plans for scaling our organisation by making best use of our large community of young people, volunteers and organisations across the arts, humanities and in the cultural and creative industries.

Qualifications

- Substantial experience working at a similar level in a small organisation or in a senior position within a larger organisation/team
- Professional accountancy qualification (desirable)

Skills & Abilities

- Strategic thinker, able to inspire others with ideas, and proven experience of delivering through to implementation
- Experience and passion for management of staff, leading and developing teams

- Strong financial understanding, including ability to shape and manage effective budgets and budgeting processes
- Interpersonal skills with colleagues, service users, funders, partner organisations and other stakeholders
- Written and oral communication skills, able to act as an ambassador for Arts Emergency
- Ability to present financial information clearly to a wide range of audiences
- Ability to work to high levels of accuracy and manage a variety of deadlines
- Ability to respect and understand the importance of confidentiality and safe working practices
- Ability to analyse data and implement appropriate strategies to promote improvements and raise standards
- Strong IT skills including online CMS databases

Personal Qualities

- Highly organised and proactive
- Understanding of and passion for addressing issues affecting young people, especially as it relates to our work in education and the creative and cultural industries
- Commitment to equality of opportunities and driven to make a positive impact on the world
- Dedicated to working collaboratively and compassionately with colleagues
- Commitment to maintaining up to date knowledge and practice
- Ability to self-manage and delegate appropriately
- Self-starter with initiative and a passion for developing efficient systems

Knowledge & Experience

- Experience managing and developing small passionate teams
- Experience and knowledge of strategic planning through to implementation and evaluation
- Experience of online financial management systems
- Budgeting and reporting processes
- Experience of developing financial risk management and business continuity strategy
- Experience of running operations at a national level
- Knowledge of third sector governance and wider legislative landscape

Relationships

- Able to work with a wide range of staff, funders, customers, suppliers, bank and auditors and other stakeholders
- Experience of motivating colleagues to deliver positive results

How to apply

To apply, contact Ellie on ellie.prideaux@tracerecruit.com using the subject line 'Arts Emergency' with your CV and a cover letter showcasing your experience and interest in the role.

Please also complete our [Equality and Diversity Monitoring survey here](#)*.

If you would like to have an informal discussion, or have any questions about the application process or the role, please call Ellie on 07817717380 or email ellie.prideaux@tracerecruit.com

The deadline for this role is midday on Friday 14 November 2025.

First stage interviews will take place on 20th and 21st November.

*The survey is anonymous and not linked in any way to your application. Any information you provide will be used by Arts Emergency to monitor the demographics of candidates applying for roles and make improvements in line with our diversity and inclusion ambitions. This data will be treated in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

Please see our [Privacy Policy](#) to find out more about how we handle your data.

Contact us

Arts Emergency
Spaces,
Peter House,
Oxford Street,
Manchester
M1 5AN

www.arts-emergency.org

Registered Charity Number 1152377