

OUR HINTERLANDS INDEPENDENT CHAIR FREELANCE ROLE

ARCADE


Image by Jemison Photographer

OVERVIEW

The Consortium of the Our Hinterlands Creative People & Places are seeking an experienced and dynamic cultural leader to become the programme's first Independent Chair. This is a paid role.

Our Hinterlands (OH) is a new partnership, funded by Arts Council England's flagship Creative People and Places project programme. Our Hinterlands' aim is to make a sustainable and profound difference to the cultural life of the communities living in the former Selby District of North Yorkshire, working with the rural communities in and around Selby, Sherburn and Tadcaster.


Image by Kirkpatrick Photography

The Independent Chair will support the OH Consortium in delivering rigorous governance and oversight to the programme. They will also support the Programme Director, most notably in embedding community voice and agency in the leadership and decision-making structure.

This is a rare opportunity to support a new, place-based programme where local people are central.

Fee
We expect the time commitment to be 6-8 days per year, at a fee of £450 per day, plus travel expenses.

Recruitment Dates:

Mandatory pre application conversations:
30 minutes online/phone, between Monday 11 January 2027 - Tuesday 26 January 2027.

Deadline for short written applications:
Thursday 4th February 2027

In person interviews in Selby:
Wednesday 17th February 2027

Ideal start: March/April 2027

Initial term: 2 years



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ABOUT THE ROLE

The Chair's principal responsibilities include:

- Utilising the contribution of the expertise and knowledge of consortium partners in meetings, ensuring fair representation, good communication and consistent documentation.
- Leading the consortium's commitment to transparency and accountability, including reporting requirements and supported by a Conflict of Interests Policy to manage any potential or perceived conflicts of interests.
- Leading the consortium's visibility and accountability, including at the Open Forums and through public communication about the OH programme.
- Leading consortium reviews and open discussions with partners about the OH programme.
- Acting as a Critical Friend to the Programme Director, supporting them in the leadership of the programme, particularly in relation to working with the consortium and the Community Panel, and the framework for decision-making.

Strong candidates for this role will demonstrate that they have the skills to work collaboratively and manage the consortium, ensuring governance is fulfilled and that decisions are made in the best interests of the community members in the former Selby District. They will be skilled at relating to people and be ambitious for what can be achieved by Our Hinterlands CPP.



JOB DESCRIPTION

1. **Leadership**

- Be responsible for chairing the quarterly consortium meetings. These typically last 2 hours.
- Work with the Programme Director to set the consortium meeting agenda items and matters for discussion.
- Chair the consortium in line with agreed Ways of Working and ensure all members have an opportunity to be fully heard.
- Support the Consortium to build a shared vision, values and mission that brings strategic oversight to the programme.
- Enable and oversee the processes of decision-making, conflict resolution and actual or perceived conflicts of interest where they may arise.
- Act as an independent focal point for discussion including leading consortium self-review.
- Supporting the Programme Director in a non-line management capacity, to ensure that community decision-making is embedded across the OH programme.

2. **Governance**

- Ensure robust and efficient governance of Our Hinterlands CPP in line with the funding agreement between Arts Council England and the lead organisation.
- Support all Consortium Partners to ensure that the flow of information and decision-making is maintained and that the Consortium works within its Partnership Agreement and Conflicts of Interest policy.
- Advocate for the 'community voice' and ensure Our Hinterlands actively involves local communities in decision-making at all levels.
- Monitor risk management process and ensure appropriate mitigations are in place.
- Help in assuring a fair and objective process for any applications for membership of the Consortium, as and when the need arises.
- Exercise delegated authority, as approved by the Consortium, between meetings, to ensure that urgent matters are dealt with promptly.



JOB DESCRIPTION

3. Community Engagement

The Chair will support the Consortium to relate openly and transparently with the community, such as;

- Open Forum meetings, where the wider community are updated on the progress of Our Hinterlands. It is proposed that these are held on the same day as consortium meetings, facilitating attendance by Consortium Partners.
- Taking opportunities to engage with the programme by attending events, meeting participants and / or producing reflections on the programme (such as vlogs, thought-pieces.)

Other Useful Information

- The Independent Chair will be voted in by the existing Consortium Partners.
- The Independent Chair will be in post for an initial 2 year term with an option to extend to up to three terms, subject to reselection by the Consortium Partners
- The Consortium Partners will have the right to remove the Independent Chair if not meeting role requirements, at any time if voted for by a majority of the consortium partners.
- This is not a Trustee role, and the Chair is not accountable to Companies House or the Charity Commission.
- For information about Arts Council's England Creative People and Places Programme please go to - https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/creative-people-and-places-0



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Required Skills

1. Commitment to the values of Our Hinterlands and the Creative People and Places programme.
2. A deep understanding of and commitment to the role of community voice in decision-making and leadership.
3. Professional, enthusiastic, dependable, conscientious.
4. Ability to work effectively as part of a team.
5. Leadership and people management skills including the skills to guide through facilitative and supportive methods.
6. Ability to encourage the expression of ideas and discussions.

Desirable Skills

1. Knowledge of the challenges and opportunities facing the community and arts sectors.
2. Knowledge of the local and regional political and policy landscape relevant to the Our Hinterlands programme
3. Previous experience at Board level or as a Trustee.
4. Working or volunteering in the Cultural sector.
5. Successfully chairing meetings/committees.
6. Managing change and implementing new ways of working.



HOW TO APPLY


Image by Kirkpatrick Photography

If you have any questions, please email info@hello-arcade.com

HOW TO APPLY

Firstly, please book an appointment to have a 30-minute conversation with the Programme Director. This is a mandatory part of our recruitment process for this role.

Appointments can be booked on Google Calendar through this link. The available dates and times are listed below:

- Monday 11 January 2027, 9.30am - 12pm
- Thursday 14 January 2027, 9.30am - 12pm
- Tuesday 19 January 2027, 3.30pm - 5.30pm
- Wednesday 20 January 2027, 3.30pm - 5.30pm
- Monday 25 January 2027, 3.30pm - 5.30pm
- Tuesday 26 January 2027, 9.30am - 12pm

If you would like to arrange an alternative time, or need assistance booking an appointment, please contact info@hello-arcade.com.

We will then ask for the following:

- Your CV, including contact details for two referees.
- An expression of interest stating why you would like the role and what experiences and skills you feel you can offer, no more than 2 pages of A4.

If you have access requirements and need to submit your application in an alternative format, please contact us at info@hello-arcade.com and we will be happy to support this.

Deadline for applications – Thursday 4 February 2027
Please send your application to info@hello-arcade.com with the subject line OH Independent Chair Application.

In person interviews will be held on **Wednesday 17 February 2027**, at Community House in Selby. If you can't make it, we will find another mutually convenient time. Please also tell us about any access needs we can meet to support your interview process.

More about Our Hinterlands

OH is a Creative People and Places programme for the rural communities around the market towns of Selby, Tadcaster, and Sherburn-in-Elmet and the surrounding villages of North Yorkshire. It responds to Arts Council England's ambition that people everywhere should have the chance to shape, experience and lead high-quality cultural activity where they live.
Building on the success of the Now Then! Place Partnership programme, Our Hinterlands CPP (OH) is the next stage in building a lasting cultural life for the district. It invests in community decision-making, local leadership and inclusive practice, so the cultural change generated reflects the identities, aspirations and creativity of the people who live in the region, and it welcomes everyone in.

OH will celebrate the identity of the region as a whole, knitting together a rich tapestry of communities across this largely rural area. The market towns provide anchor points which are fed by the dynamics of the countryside that lie in between. The programming and audience development policies prioritises inclusion, access and thoughtful hosting, brings people together in new ways, to have new experiences and to see their places afresh, and is ambitious for the sensations of awe and wonder that it evokes.

OH will deliver increased participation that brings communities together and strengthens the local cultural ecosystem. By growing audiences for local activity OH will create opportunities for artists, producers and community leaders to work together to build a skills and knowledge base, and to celebrate the region’s identity. The hosting of creative experiences will stimulate the communities’ cultural future. Excellence will be embedded in all our processes, from the care invested in hosting events, to the thoughtfulness of our community discussions, to the skills of the creatives that we commission.

Community leadership sits at the heart of the programme. Decision-making is shared through the Community Connectors, Community Panel, Emerging Producers, Village Hosts and regular Open Door forums, giving local people visible and significant influence over commissioning, artist selection, programming and evaluation. A consortium of strategic partners combines local knowledge with artistic expertise and national reach, building capacity across the district and stronger connections between communities, artists and public services.

Audience development is approached as a long-term process of building trust before numbers. The first phase focuses on listening, conversation and relationship-building, through community conversations, creative pilot projects, and locally hosted events. This process will build the foundations for greater ambition for more ambitious commissions and public programmes in the following years. The priorities throughout are a welcoming first experience of culture, fewer practical barriers, and activity that speaks to people's own identities and places, and work that is of a distinctive quality that it encourages them to come back.

Across this funded period up to March 2029, Our Hinterlands will generate over 22,000 attendances through community commissions, artist residencies, workshops, everyday creative activity, online programming and participatory events. The programme will also strengthen volunteering pathways, support freelance artists, and open routes for local people into cultural leadership. Success will be measured not only in attendance, but in community connection, trust leading to action, confidence to initiate and experiment, and shared understanding of what creative excellence can be.

The evaluation of Now Then! Has provided a useful starting point: high levels of enjoyment, curiosity, community connection and artistic ambition, alongside clear opportunities to improve marketing, visitor experience, programme balance and community decision-making. Our Hinterlands builds directly on this learning, with the added strength of a Community Panel steering the programming strategy and then reflecting on the outcomes of their decision making. A thorough evaluation framework will be overseen by the leadership and consortium, ensuring that insight from audiences, artists and partners continues to shape local delivery and then feeds into the wider Creative People and Places network.

Inclusion, environmental responsibility and fair practice run through the whole programme. We will keep access free or low-cost wherever possible, remove barriers through accessible design and targeted support, commission a diverse range of artists, and continue developing more sustainable approaches to production and touring, building on the tools already established through Now Then! and ARCADE's National Portfolio Organisation programme.

About Our Hinterlands Consortium
Consortium lead ARCADE are based in North Yorkshire and have worked extensively in Tadcaster over the last 18 months. ARCADE have an extensive, national network of specialists, including artists of all genres, high-level heritage experts, music producers, international arts programmers and co-creation & engagement producers. ARCADE'S successful practice is rooted in using active listening & engagement to embed the needs and aspirations of local people into their programme.

Consortium partner North Yorkshire Council will connect OH to its public services, embedding cultural provision across sectors and fulfilling the unitary authority's commitment in its new Cultural Strategy, to provide a 'rounded and healthy life' for residents. North Yorkshire Council will continue to facilitate partnerships with local community organisations, educational institutions, and arts bodies, as consortium or delivery partners for OH.

Consortium partner, Tadcaster and Rural CIC run The Barn, a former North Yorkshire Council building, supporting community well-being for residents of Tadcaster and its neighbouring villages through a dynamic range of programs and initiatives, from youth clubs and holiday programs to adult education, a food bank and community events. Its facilities, which include a skatepark and a Multi-Use Games Area, ensure access to recreational activities for young people, supporting physical activity and social engagement. The Barn provides a safe, inclusive environment for people to come together and a physical representation of OH values and role models the nurturing of a new generation of community leaders.

Consortium partner, Up For Yorkshire (U4Y) is a community anchor organisation and infrastructure organisation, enabling the voluntary and community sector to grow and flourish. U4Y run three community buildings in Selby and surrounding villages, delivering a wide range of employability, wellbeing and community support services, responding to over 40,000 enquiries per year with a particular focus on the most vulnerable and isolated community members. Examples of U4Y's direct provision include: Provision of information, advice and guidance to individuals, groups and organisations; Employability support programmes; Selby Community Fridge; Community Transport scheme; Our Zero Selby - community climate change programme; Digital inclusion; Community Health and Wellbeing Worker programme.

U4Y understanding of building a case for support for hidden communities of interest will shape relationship building for OH and delivery of evaluation models which capture local input.