

Ref: DBITA



Chief Executive

Job Information Pack



aberdeenperformingarts.com

Welcome

From the Chair



Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive.

Aberdeen Performing Arts is a dynamic cultural hub at the heart of creative, community and civic life in Aberdeen and the North East. We are passionate about improving life chances through the arts, promoting wellbeing, championing creative diversity, nurturing the next generation of talent and creating, curating and presenting work on our stages that is relevant, thought provoking and life affirming. We are immensely proud of the values led, people-centred culture that has driven our success over the last few years.

We are one of Scotland's largest and most ambitious cultural organisations running three beautiful venues: His Majesty's Theatre, the Music Hall and The Lemon Tree, three place-making festivals: Granite Noir, True North and Light the Blue, and a team of creative change makers. Our trading arm runs our two popular café bars, Coda and The Terrace.

We are looking for an exceptional individual to build on the considerable achievements of our current Chief Executive. Our next Chief Executive will be an experienced, inspiring leader, with proven artistic, strategic and commercial vision. You will be a confident ambassador, communicator, and collaborator, excited at the prospect of working with the Board and the Team, building on our strong foundations, to create a spark and set up Aberdeen Performing Arts to thrive.

It is an exciting time for Aberdeen Performing Arts and for the arts in the North East with plenty challenges ahead but a strong foundation and track record to build on for the right person to create the next chapter in our story.

I look forward to receiving your application.

Craig Pike, Chair, Board of Directors
Aberdeen Performing Arts ■ ■ ■

“Jobs like this don't come up very often. This is an amazing opportunity to take a great team, an engaged Board and invested partners from 2023 and beyond to deliver our shared ambitions for the arts in all our lives.”

Jane Spiers, Chief Executive,
Aberdeen Performing Arts ■ ■ ■

Our Story

We are a multi-award winning independent arts charity, a cultural hub for the North East. 2023 is our 20th birthday!

We are a team of creatives, programmers, producers, curators, change makers and collaborators at the heart of the North East's artistic community. We are proud to be a voice for artists and creatives in the North East, with a shared ambition to put the arts at the heart of community and city renewal.

We present, commission and produce mostly performing arts, theatre and music across all genres. We also programme dance, comedy, spoken word, literature and digital art.

We are privileged to run three stunning city centre venues which give us a fantastic opportunity to develop a single coherent artistic vision across all three venues and seven stages.

Our venues are places where people, groups, artists and organisations gather to connect, to be inspired, share stories, learn and enjoy the arts.

Each of our venues has a unique personality and identity. One of our strengths is the sheer diversity of our programming and our ability to take artists and audiences on a journey from large-scale productions at His Majesty's Theatre, to intimate, experimental and alternative performances at the Lemon Tree.

We stage 800+ shows a year, attract audiences of 400,000+ and run three festivals: Granite Noir book festival, True North music festival and Light the Blue, our youth arts festival. We provide employment and talent development opportunities for artists and creatives, we commission new work and our change makers run a year-round creative engagement programme in our venues and across the North East.

While the majority of our audiences come from the region, we attract visitors from around the world to our signature events and festivals.

We are one of the biggest and most successful cultural organisations in Scotland.



SIX



HIS MAJESTY'S
THEATRE

MUSIC
HALL

LEMON
TREE

Producing and Presenting

Coming up on our stages in 2023: *Girl from the North Country*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Matthew Bourne's Romeo and Juliet*, DMA's, Johannes Radebe, Dawn French, BBC SSO, Tide Lines, Skylights, Mark Beaumont and Sophie Duker.

Our producing and commissioning programme is driven by place-making and providing a voice, employment and talent development opportunities for artists and creatives.

In 2022 we brought the city centre to life with the Wonderland festival, commissioning 22 installations, exhibitions, performances and more, celebrating Aberdeen and the pride in our city, and enjoyed by 120,000 visitors across the weekend.

In 2023 we are excited to be co-producing *Dracula: Mina's Reckoning*, with National Theatre of Scotland, our annual festive production at the Lemon Tree for 7 and unders is Barrowland Ballet's *The Gift*, *Time Machine* by Robert Powell and Louise Wilde is our first digital art commission of the year. We have commissioned *Play Our Way Forward* an art exhibition to engage audiences in the climate conversation, and singer-songwriter commissions as part of our Jam for Climate Justice night.

We are proud to receive funding from Aberdeen City Council recognising our contribution to city life and we are a Creative Scotland Regularly Funded Organisation.



aberdeenperformingarts.com/brochures/





Our Change Makers

Our team of Creative Change Makers ensure all voices are heard and all stories told. We have three Change Makers: for youth arts, inclusion and relevance and for climate action, led by our Head of Creative Engagement.

We believe in the power of the arts to unlock potential and change lives. Diversity, relevance and making sure that our activities and projects are welcoming and open to everyone, really matters to us.

In 2022, we facilitated the first Rise Up festival in partnership with We Are Here Scotland, to celebrate the contribution of Black and People of colour creatives, we supported the Aberdeen Mela, we ran cabarets led by LGBTQ and drag artists with Sanctuary Queer Arts, and organised events for Afghan and Ukrainian asylum seekers in partnership with GREC.

In 2023 we are working with young people with additional and complex needs at Orchard Brae school as part of Light the Blue festival, we are curating a programme of events in

response to Climate Week North-East and we are bringing older people together to share stories and write memoirs.

We produce a youth arts festival across the city with arts and youth groups. We run a youth theatre with over 100 young people. Our music making programme from Musical Mischief to Beats and Rhymes hip hop workshops, is for all ages. We have a 100-strong adult community choir.

We run talent programmes for the next generation of creatives in the North East: masterclasses, work placements, vocational training, mentoring, industry days. We participated in the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries Programme addressing barriers to working in the arts for people from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

In 2022 we were shortlisted for the LIVE UK Awards recognizing our work in improving diversity and inclusion within our programme and workforce.



Hospitality, Conference and Events

Growing our conference and events business is part of our drive to increase earned income and reduce our reliance on public subsidy. The income we generate helps our charity to make a difference to individuals, communities and the city through the arts.

We continue to push the bar and develop our spaces, most recently with the launch of The Terrace our stunning new Café Bar at His Majesty's Theatre which combines a relaxed and informal place to gather for drinks or dining, with the most outstanding view of Union Terrace Gardens and the city around us.

Our in-house hospitality operation also runs busy bars across our three venues, and Coda Café at the Music Hall, serving pre-show and interval refreshments, informal day-time lunches, coffee and cakes, as well as our conference and events business.

In 2022 we welcomed Aberdeen Art Fair, the National Whisky Festival, North East Scotland College graduations and a national audience in-person and virtually to the Scottish Trade Union Conference over three days.

All of our hospitality and events business adds so much value and is a pleasure to deliver, bringing new partnerships and new audiences to our venues and to the city.



The Aberdeen Performing Arts Way

Our Vision

Placing creativity and culture at the heart of inclusive transformational change in the North East.

Our Mission

Creating a Spark: we take our inspiration from the sparkle in the granite to shine bright in the North East.

The Aberdeen Performing Arts Way is “how we do business around here”. We all sign up to the Aberdeen Performing Arts Way and we commit to embodying our values, behaviours, rights and responsibilities.

reSilience
oPtimism
loyAlty
cuRiosity
teamworK



A year in the life...

People

1,200,000+

visitors through our doors
and to our events

350,000+

paying attenders

20+

venues & festivals
supported
(tickets sold for)

1,3m

website visitors

107,000

social media followers

4,000+

conference delegates

274

employees

3,770

tickets donated
to charity

79,996

ice creams sold

Programme

858

performances

5

festivals

37

commissions

47

artists supported
through talent
programme

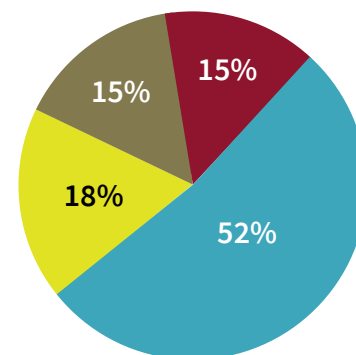
60+

accessible
performances

4,500

creative learning
participations

Finance



- Ticket sales
- Trading income
- Other income
- Public funding

£11m+

annual turnover

£5.8m

ticket sales

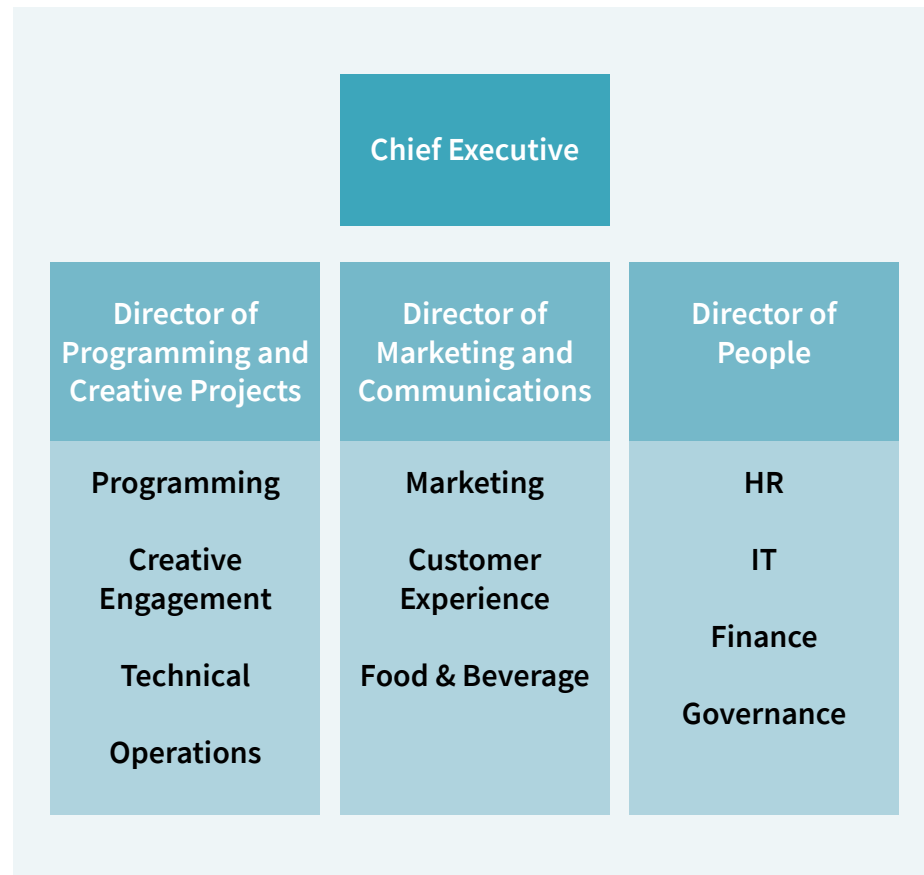
Statistics Feb 2022 - Jan 2023

www.aberdeenperformingarts.com/our-story

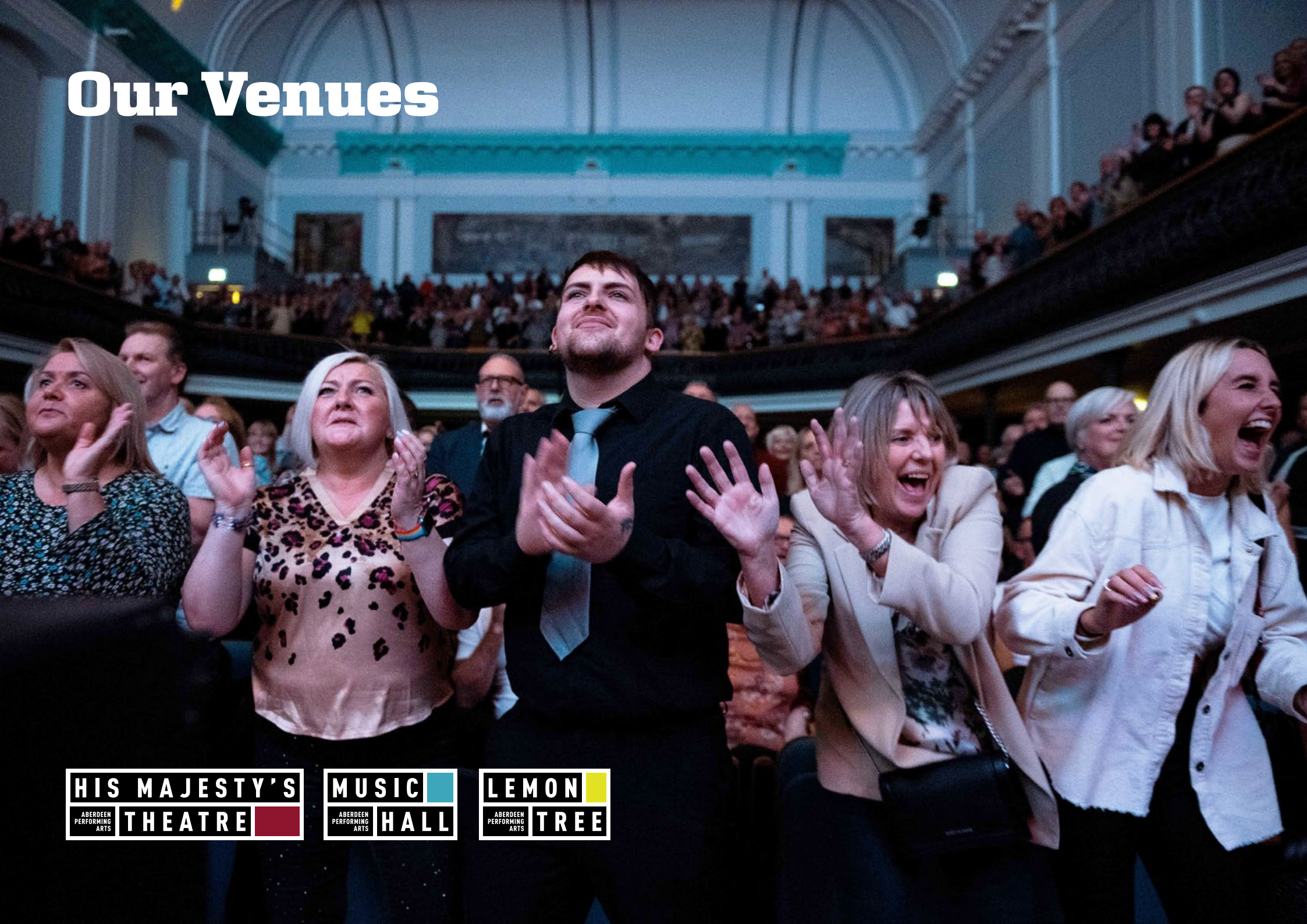
Our People

Team Aberdeen Performing Arts consists of around 270 loyal, dedicated and hardworking people. Between us we have years of experience and bundles of new ideas, which means we never stand still.

We are a Real Living Wage employer, recognising the importance of our people and our commitment to fair work.



Our Venues



HIS MAJESTY'S
ABERDEEN PERFORMING ARTS
THEATRE

MUSIC
ABERDEEN PERFORMING ARTS
HALL

LEMON
ABERDEEN PERFORMING ARTS
TREE

His Majesty's Theatre

His Majesty's Theatre was built in 1906, a beautiful proscenium arch theatre, designed by Frank Matcham, the foremost theatre architect of the Victorian era. It is one of only two His Majesty's Theatres in the world. It is built from Kemnay white granite from the local quarry and has an exquisite copper dome. It is beautifully situated overlooking the newly renovated Union Terrace Gardens.

His Majesty's Theatre is a fully equipped producing and receiving theatre with a full-size studio and rehearsal space and an auditorium with a capacity of 1470.



Since its opening it has welcomed national and international touring companies, West End and Broadway renowned artists and Scottish and home grown talent.

The very first show on stage when it opened in 1906 was *Sweet Red Riding Hood*, billed as an 'operatic pantomime' and pantos have been an annual tradition ever since. His Majesty's Theatre is where most young Aberdonians get their first experience of theatre.



The Music Hall

The Music Hall is our concert hall in the North East of Scotland, one of Scotland's oldest and most historic halls. It sits at the heart of the city on Union Street, built by two generations of city architects, Archibald Simpson who built the assembly rooms in 1822 and James Matthews who added the concert hall in 1855.

The auditorium is renowned for its wonderful, warm acoustic and has a capacity of 1300 seated and 1500 standing. The range of artists and performers who have taken to the stage over the years is truly astounding – David Bowie, Led Zeppelin, Blondie, Billy Connolly,

the Halle, Paul Robeson and Charles Dickens. Winston Churchill, Sir Alex Ferguson and Mikhail Gorbachov were given the keys to the city on stage at the Music Hall. Everyone in Aberdeen and the North East has a story to tell about the Music Hall. It really is a national treasure.

The Music Hall re-opened in 2019 after a £10M restoration and redevelopment project that added two new studios, Tutti and Big Sky, both with a capacity of 100, a new café bar Coda, new foyer and box office, office accommodation and general upgrade.



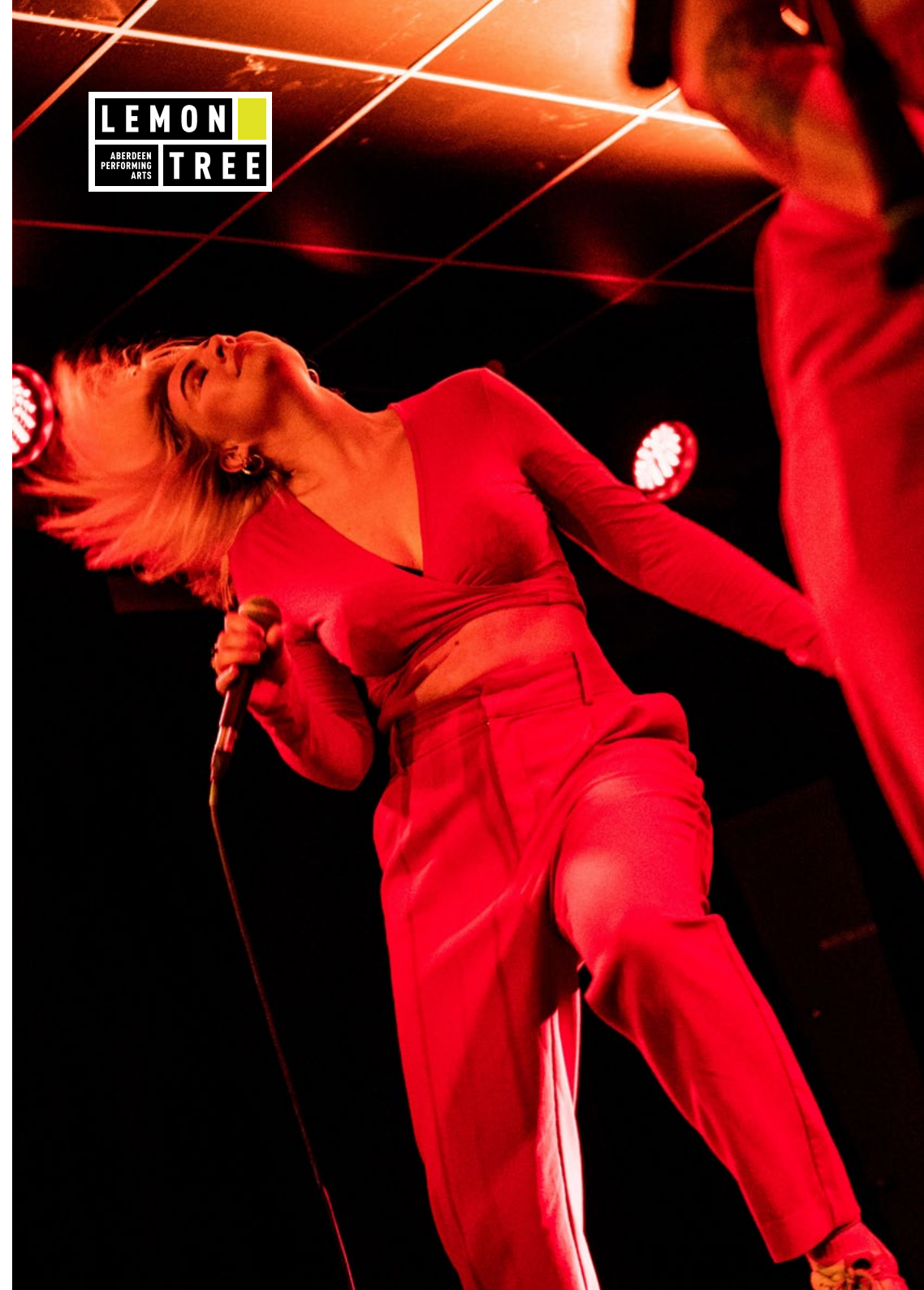
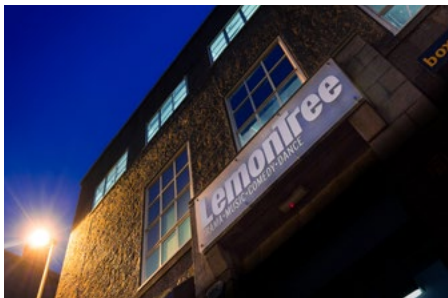
The Lemon Tree

The Lemon Tree began life as St Katherine's Club, built in the 1930s by the Young Woman's Christian Organisation as a community centre for women. In the 1990's it became the base for the Alternative Arts Festival. With this move, the Lemon Tree was born, when Aberdeen Performing Arts took over the lease in April 2008, the Lemon Tree entered a new and exciting chapter in its history, and is about to again as we have recently commissioned a feasibility study to explore options to upgrade and expand.

The Lemon Tree has two performance spaces, the Lemon Tree Lounge which has a 540 capacity, predominantly for music, and the

Lemon Tree Studio Theatre, 166 capacity, for theatre, comedy and spoken word. The Lemon Tree has built up a legendary reputation nationally and internationally for launching artists on their career, welcoming local and international artists on the same stages, and supporting homegrown talent.

It has an impressive track record for scouting new talent over the last 30 years – bands and artists like Jamie Cullum, The Cranberries, Travis, Texas, Sigur Ros, Young Fathers, LCD Sound Systems, Bloc Party, Mogwai, Public Service Broadcasting, Self Esteem and Emeli Sandé.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We drive and champion diversity through our ambitious plans and policies and in action, across all areas: the work on our stages, our creative engagement with young people and communities, recruitment and our people processes, Board representation, accessibility and communications. We are proud of the diversity across our organisation and we know that there is more work to do.

We recognise that being an “Open House” is our continuous commitment to doing more, listening more and working collaboratively to ensure we are the most diverse, inclusive and representative organisation we can be.

2022 saw us invest in a new role of Creative Change Maker – Inclusion and Relevance to help support this work, develop partnerships with organisations such as We Are Here Scotland and Sanctuary Queer Arts, as were proud to be a finalist for the LIVE Workforce Award at the LIVE Music Awards, recognising organisations working to improve diversity, inclusion and equality in the workplace and the wider music industry.

Our next Chief Executive will lead and champion this work with the support of our Board, our Leadership Team and every member of Team Aberdeen Performing Arts.





Environmental Sustainability

We are sector leading in our approach to environmental sustainability, winners of the national Scottish Environment Protection Agency VIBES award in 2019/20 in the category of Community Engagement. Our policy, Planet Aberdeen Performing Arts, sets the direction of travel and our projects, championed by our Green Team, led by our Head of Finance and Sustainability range from reducing our energy and waste emissions to community volunteering, and artist led projects.

In 2022 we partnered with Creative Carbon Scotland and The Barn to host Springboard, a series of environmental themed events and workshops for cultural organisations.

In 2022 we also added a new post to our Change Maker Team, a Creative Change Maker for Climate Action, to champion the role of the arts in tackling the climate emergency and to continue on our journey towards net zero.



Looking to the Future

Despite the challenges faced over the last three years, we worked hard to retain our team, raised funds to secure our future, hold on to our ambitious vision. We are financially stable and looking forward to a busy programme across our venues in 2023 and beyond. Our values, work ethic, adaptability and resourcefulness have seen us through these challenging times and our team is motivated and raring to go.

Our city partners all agree that culture is key to the city's future prosperity, integral to economic regeneration and community wellbeing in the North East. This is evidenced by significant investment in the cultural infrastructure in the last few years and our exciting ten-year cultural strategy for the city led by Culture Aberdeen. For our part we see creatives and the cultural sector driving change, bringing ideas and energy as agents of change, collaborators, lateral thinkers, innovators, problem solvers and risk takers.

We know we have to ensure our financial sustainability in the face of the cost-of-living crisis, diminishing public sector purse and the oil and gas transition in the North East. We have built strong foundations and partnerships and collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. Our artistic and business model is unique: three venues, three festivals, one team, one Board, one vision, and the ability to generate significant income to minimise our reliance on subsidy.

In 2019 we were named Business of the Year in the North East for our contribution to people and place, a fantastic validation of the distance travelled and a recognition of the growing significance and impact of the cultural sector in the city and region.



What You Will Do

The role

The Chief Executive reports to the Chair and Board and has responsibility for circa 270 salaried and casual staff. You will be responsible for setting and delivering the overall artistic vision and strategy, business planning, people culture, directing the activities of the Leadership Team and developing, nurturing and influencing external relationships.

- Provide inspiring and motivational leadership, nurturing a people-centred, values-led, high-achieving culture.
- Maintain and implement a clear strategic vision and mission, communicating these in a convincing and compelling way to staff, stakeholders and the public.
- Oversee, shape and deliver the artistic vision; lead the creative team and presented, curated, commissioned and produced work for all venues and festivals.
- Provide vision and direction to our creative engagement and talent development programmes.
- Progress the conversation and delivery of our commitment to equality, diversity, representation, relevance and inclusion.
- Ensure the efficient, effective and professional management of all resources, driving the business planning and budgetary process to deliver a future proofed, sustainable business model.
- Build excellent relationships with funding partners, drive the active management and development of funding streams, fundraising programmes and commercial initiatives to maximise income generation.
- Represent, advocate and communicate our aims and objectives to our audiences, artists, the media and external organisations, through cohesive plans and strategies.
- Create, maintain and develop partnerships across arts, culture and business communities and beyond, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Ensure a first-class customer journey and experience from point of sale to post show/event.
- Lead our safety culture and environmental stewardship.
- Work closely with the Chair and Board, providing policy and management support and advice to the Board on corporate governance and other issues affecting their roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure the effective functioning of the organisation and as a viable charity and trading company, including effective financial management, development and corporate governance.

What You Will Bring

Person Specification

The role requires an inspiring, enterprising, confident and experienced leader, with the vision, commitment, people skills, resilience, innovation and outlook, to lead a highly-regarded, significant and complex arts organisation of scale.

You will have an exceptional blend of cultural leadership, business management, operational, entrepreneurial and commercial skills, and a wide knowledge and understanding of the arts.

Experience and Knowledge

- Strong proven leadership in a diverse cultural/creative organisation and similar complex context.
- Track record of successful senior management in the arts, preferably in theatre and/or music, preferably at Chief Executive/Executive Director level.
- Demonstrable cultural programming, producing or commissioning track record with a vision for development.
- Experience of operating in a sustainable business environment with demonstrable skills in financial management and negotiation, fundraising, balancing risk and managing significant budgets.
- Demonstrable understanding and commitment to equality, diversity, representation and inclusion in the workplace.
- Understanding of the political dimension within which we operate, including decision-making processes of government, local authority, and the work of other strategic bodies and experience of successfully influencing within this context.
- Experience of venue management desirable.
- Experience of capital development desirable.

Skills

- Strong leadership and interpersonal skills, with the ability to inspire and motivate large teams.
- Demonstrable integrity and respect for others, proven values-driven leadership style and ability to model our values in practice.
- Ability to think both strategically and pragmatically, to develop and implement vision, and to turn artistic and cultural inspirations into reality, balancing artistic and financial objectives.
- A passion for the performing arts.
- Entrepreneurial flair and focus, sound judgement and decision-making skills, including identifying cultural product which will maintain our reputation for artistic excellence and deliver audiences within a sustainable business model.
- Ability to work successfully with the Chair and Board in a strong and collegial environment.
- Business skills and commercial acumen, continually striving to deliver the best service with the resources available, and developing strategic partnerships locally and nationally.
- Ability to represent Aberdeen Performing Arts, as an important national arts organisation in Scotland and the UK, and our cultural sector, city and region, demonstrating strong advocacy and influencing skills.
- Strong communication skills, with the ability to collaborate and foster good relationships with a wide variety of people and organisations.

Where You Will Be

(Aberdeen and the North East of Scotland)

Whether you come from near or far, the North East of Scotland is a great place to be. Our corner of the country truly has it all. Across the area there is a wealth of culture, amazing heritage, great food and drink and one of the most spectacular landscapes in the world. All this, alongside the buzz of an area that is really going places. A renaissance city, in a breath-taking region; welcome to Aberdeen.

It's a city that lies at the heart of a region recognised for its quality of life. Aberdeen effortlessly combines the benefits of metropolitan life with easy access to the stunning scenery of Royal Deeside, the Cairngorm Mountains, and the beautiful North East coast.

If you visit, live, learn or work here, you'll know our quality of life is built around good value homes and top schools and universities, but also a passion for culture, love of the great outdoors, wide open spaces and a true sense of community.

There is always something happening. A packed festivals and events programme covers everything from contemporary art and music, to light installations and dance. Sports and outdoor pursuits are also a key feature of our downtime.

Work is well underway to push the bar even higher. There is a 25 year masterplan that will see new investment create an inclusive, exciting and vibrant city centre.

Learn more about Majestic Aberdeenshire by visiting:

www.visitabdn.com



Key Information

- Annual salary: A six figure salary commensurate with the responsibility of the role.
- Hours: 37 hours per week, although it may be necessary to work more than the contracted hours to fulfil the requirements of the job.
- Annual Leave: 37 days per year including 7 fixed public holidays.
- Location: The main base will be His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen, although you will spend time in all our city-centre venues. Travel throughout the UK may be required as necessary.
- Relocation: It is expected that the postholder will live in the North East of Scotland so a relocation package is negotiable.

BENEFITS

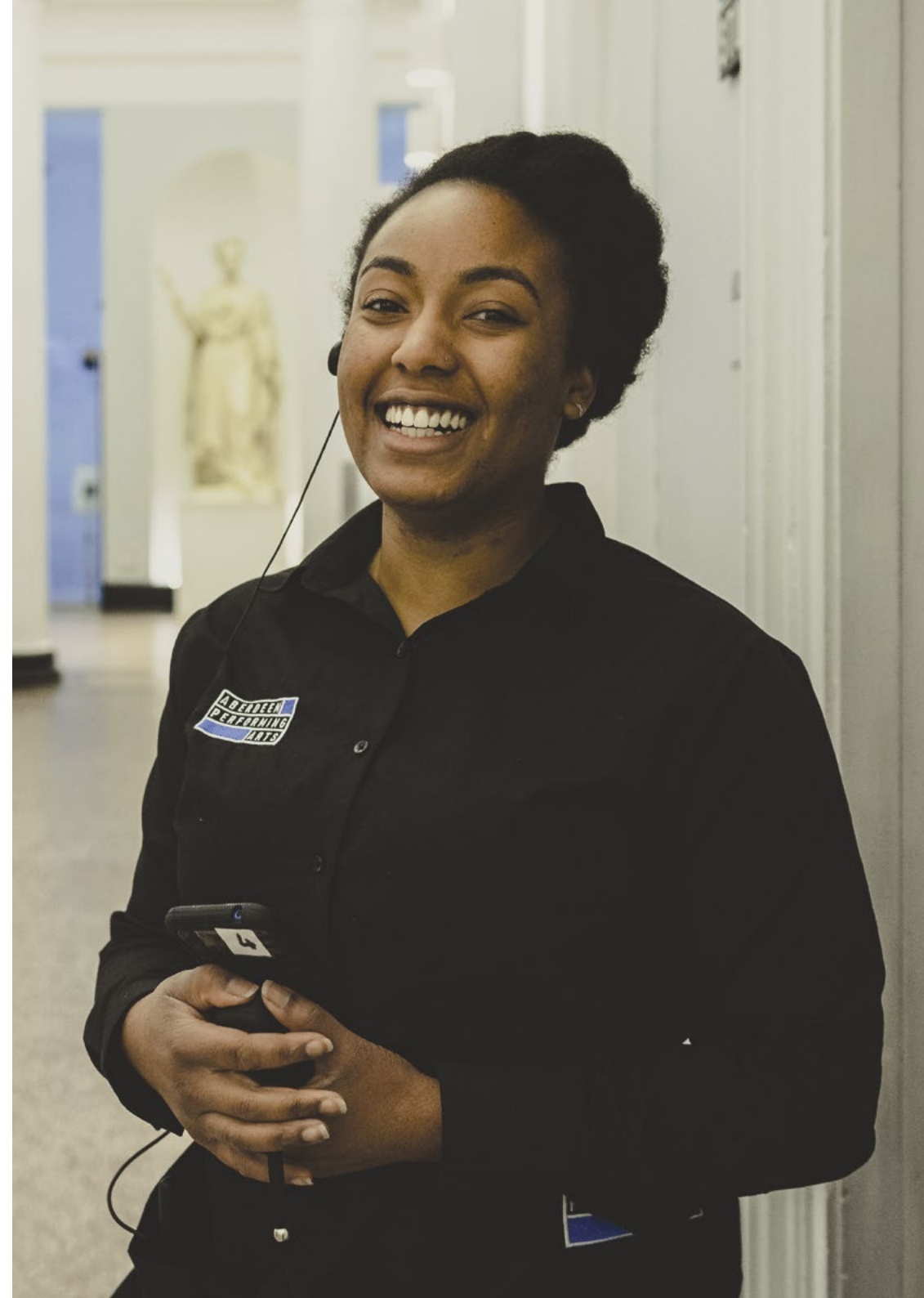
We offer a range of company benefits including:

- Pension: Defined contribution pension plan operated by Scottish Widows with matched employee/employer contributions of 5%
- Life Assurance benefit for pension members
- Generous company sick pay and family friendly policies
- Discount on all food and soft drinks in our cafe bars
- Complimentary management hold tickets for all performances plus Friends membership and additional staff offers and subsidized tickets
- Wellbeing programme including annual flu vaccinations, discounted gym/swim/leisure memberships with Sport Aberdeen, access to Theatre Helpline and Employee Assistance Programme, and access to a range of health and wellbeing activities and shopping discounts.

HIS MAJESTY'S
THEATRE

MUSIC
HALL

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TREE



How to Apply

Saxton Bampfylde is acting as an employment agency advisor to Aberdeen Performing Arts on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **DBITA**.

Click the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter, and complete the online equal opportunities* form. We want you to apply in a way that is best for you. This may mean applying in writing, or you may wish to submit some or all of your application by video or audio file.

**The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.*

For an informal discussion about the role, contact **Saxton Bampfylde on 020 7227 0800**.

Deadline for applications: 16 March 2023.

Aberdeen Performing Arts is committed to equality, diversity, inclusion and a culture that values difference. We are an Open House, and we are passionate about providing the best possible experience for everyone. We welcome applications from candidates from all backgrounds and experiences, and particularly encourage applications from those from backgrounds under-represented in our industry.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, health, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

