

Exchange

East Sussex Arts
Education Network

Charity number:
1179740

Contact:
admin@exchangecharity.org

Freelance Project Manager Invitation to Apply

Contract: 12-month initial freelance contract, with intended extension, starting November 2026.

Hours & Fees: 33 hours per month to be worked flexibly @ £36 per hour (£1,188 per calendar month). A regular pattern of work days can be chosen but events and meetings may be on various days of the week, so some flexibility is needed.

Location: Hybrid. Remote working with some in-person meetings and events across East Sussex.

Equalities Statement

Exchange is an equal opportunities organisation committed to anti-oppressive practice. We particularly welcome applications from global majority, disabled, and LGBTQ+ candidates, as well as people with lived experience of the areas and communities we serve. We want to make our application process as accessible and stress-free as possible. We are happy to talk informally about the role before you apply, or discuss any adjustments that would make applying easier for you.

About Exchange

Exchange (formerly Hastings Arts Education Network, established 2013) connects schools, cultural organisations, and artists across East Sussex. Together, we build lasting partnerships that embed the arts in young people's everyday lives by running network meetings, sharing resources, and facilitating school arts projects.

Having recently transitioned from a local network to a county-wide registered charity, we are at a pivotal stage. Over the past nine months, we have successfully moved from a volunteer-led Trustee group to a staffed organisation. We have planned and fundraised for a major school project, shaped our fundraising and business strategies, upgraded our governance, and launched a fresh website and brand, all while maintaining our core network.

Our Current Work

We are now focused on delivering our funded projects, the main one being 'Creative Reconnection', a 12-month pilot in 5 East Sussex schools- 3 secondary and 2 primary - which have high numbers of pupil premium plus attendance and attainment challenges. The aim is to support children with emerging attendance difficulties or challenges linked to anxiety, disengagement or transitions. Working with artists in residence, the project will deliver short, regular creative sessions embedded within the school week and activities will be designed by artists in partnership with schools. In primary schools it focuses on upskilling teachers to deliver the curriculum more creatively and in secondary schools the focus is on a range of filmmaking activities, which may include acting, script writing, prop and set design, directing and technical. The main focus is on fun, creative expression, connection to place, and rebuilding positive relationships within the school. The project is positioned as supportive and preventative, contributing to improved engagement rather than acting as an attendance enforcement intervention.

Additionally, we will host network events in regions across East Sussex; Hastings & Rother, Eastbourne & Wealden and Lewes to bring artists, schools and cultural organisation together to ensure learning from the project is shared across the whole county.

Role Description

As Project Manager, you will work with our Trustees and Development Director and line-manage a part-time Project Assistant. Once initial project frameworks are set up, the delivery is led independently by our artists in residence.

Core responsibilities include:

1. **Project Oversight:** Managing the coordination of 'Creative Reconnection' and occasional short-term projects, serving as a key point of contact for schools, artists, and cultural partners.
2. **Youth Voice:** Guiding the setup of a new young people's forum to ensure youth perspectives shape our work.
3. **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Setting up a straightforward 'distance travelled' monitoring system to track project impact against basic KPIs.
4. **Reporting:** Writing clear, concise reports for funders, partners, and Trustees using the data collected.
5. **Team Collaboration:** Supporting the Project Assistant and chairing regular team update meetings to keep everyone aligned.
6. **Overseeing Network Coordination:** Keeping our three geographic networks in East Sussex connected (Hastings & Rother, Eastbourne & Wealden, and Lewes). These networks will meet twice a year, with some meetings held online and the admin work will be carried by the Project Assistant.
7. **Representation and strategy:** Represent Exchange at partnership meetings and events, advocating publicly for arts in education so it is considered in strategic decisions about resource allocation. Alongside the Development Director, maintain a strategic overview of Exchange's organisational development.

8. **Fundraising:** Our Development Director is responsible for the fundraising strategy and you will support them by co-writing bids and overseeing our established crowdfunding campaign, with communications support via the Project Assistant.
9. **Flexibility:** Contributing to the wider health of a small, agile charity where team members support one another as needed.

Person Specification

We are looking for someone with a blend of the following skills:

- **Project Management:** Experience coordinating multi-stakeholder projects with moving parts.
- **Evaluation & Impact:** Experience tracking and reporting on project delivery against contract timelines or KPIs.
- **Leadership:** Experience managing staff or freelancers, and confidence chairing project and team update meetings.
- **Communication:** Clear, accurate writing skills tailored for different audiences (e.g., funder reports, newsletters, and internal team updates).

Personal Qualities

- Flexible, quick-learning and self-directed, working with minimal supervision
- Thrives in changing environments and able to focus on multiple priorities, systems and stakeholders
- Ability to establish lasting, positive relationships with colleagues, trustees, schools, artists, funders and network partners.

How to Apply

We know your time is valuable, so we have designed a short application form that shouldn't take long to complete. If selected for an interview, questions will be sent in advance to aid preparation.

Please complete the [application form](#) by **midnight on Sunday 8th November 2026**. Interviews will be held in person at our Bexhill office on **Tuesday 17th November 2026** and the role will begin the following week.