

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Job Description

Post:	Interim Director Arts Planning and Producing (12-month fixed term contract)
Department:	Arts Planning and Producing
Reports to:	Deputy Chief Executive
Reports:	5 direct reports including 4 Heads of Department
Salary:	Circa £90,000 per year subject to experience
Start date:	December 2026

Southbank Centre

We are Europe's largest arts centre and the UK's fifth most visited attraction, occupying an 11-acre site that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. Our focus, as a charity, is to remain innovative, bold and experimental in what we do and to be highly relevant to the artists we want to work with and to the audiences we want to attract as well as to our current and future employees. We remain committed to creating a place where as many people as possible can come together to experience bold, unusual, entertaining and eye-opening work.

We present work for everyone and we welcome applications from everyone. By attracting people to work for us from a broad range of backgrounds with diverse attitudes, opinions and beliefs, we can continue to look at the world with fresh eyes and find new ways of doing things.

Purpose of the role

This key Interim Director role oversees the translation of artistic vision and event planning strategy into a plan of action that both meets our obligations to deliver a world class programme and key revenue targets. This role leads the site-wide diary planning and the artistic programme delivery functions, acting as enabler, influencer and collaborator across different art-form and functional departments. This role is one of 15 Director roles and reports to the Deputy CEO, who is a member of the Executive Leadership Team.

Main Responsibilities:

Strategic Planning

- Lead the annual diary planning function, setting the volume and shape of the artistic programme, alongside commercial and estate requirements, having regard to the wider SC strategy and resource levels in the organisation.
- Working with the Artistic Director and Art Form Leads to translate the Artistic Vision into an action plan. Leading key cross art-form and departmental working groups to manage programme strands and ensure resources and focus are considered at the outset and allocated at the appropriate time and level.
- Lead on multi-year operational planning of the artistic programme to ensure successful delivery, overseeing a process of prioritisation and effective allocation of dates to meet wider organisational objectives, alongside retaining some flexibility to adapt and respond to risks and opportunities.

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- Work in close collaboration with the Audiences Division to develop the strategic connection and integration between artistic programming and audience development.
- Play a leading role in creating and devising ACE revenue grant applications and reporting, aligning our internal artistic ambitions with ACE priorities, as advised from time to time.

Financial Management, Risk Management and Processes

- With the Artistic Director, lead the process for setting the artistic budget, ensuring the financial resilience and viability of all artistic activities. Monitor earned artistic income, ensuring targets are met, and risks and opportunities are managed. Lead on the implementation of new initiatives to grow earned income and optimise opportunities.
- Lead on the review and management of the quarterly risk register, business continuity planning, and data retention policies for the artistic directorate.
- Ensure appropriate risk management strategies, assessments, policies and procedures are in place and adhered to for all performing arts programming.
- Liaise closely with the Health, Safety and Security team ensuring key issues are identified and advice is sought and implemented on a timely basis.
- Work in close collaboration with the Development team to support opportunities to secure and deliver fundraising income for applicable programming.

Programme Delivery & Operations

- Oversee the producing and practical delivery of the artistic programme, working across all areas ensuring excellence and innovation is embedded within the approach.
- Ensure the process to approve, publicise and mobilise for delivery, artistic events is effective, efficient and timely for delivery teams and that audience and wider communication with audiences can be optimised.
- Serve as the senior point of escalation for all producing, planning, and event management matters across all performing arts programming.
- Maintain a close working relationship with the Director of Technical Production, the Director of Finance, the Director of Estates and the Director IT to ensure operations, initiatives and major projects are integrated.
- Provide oversight for all performing arts contracts, being the final point of escalation for complex negotiations and oversee the approval of any changes to standard terms and conditions or template amendments, in close collaboration with the legal team.

Team Leadership & Culture

- Provide leadership, strategic direction, and clear objectives to all direct reports, including the Head of Planning, Head of Event Management, Head of Rentals, Partnerships & Administration and Head of Producing.
- Promote skill development, collaboration and a culture of continuous improvement and adaptation across relevant teams, ensuring resources are allocated efficiently and effectively.
- Maintain strong relationships with the Directorate group and contribute to wider organisational strategy and priorities.

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- Promote a positive, inclusive, and supportive company culture for the whole organisation.

Person Specification

- Experience of working at a director level and leading a division or large team within a large organisation in the cultural or wider creative sector.
- Proven ability to translate artistic and creative strategy into effective programme delivery.
- An extensive track record as Lead Producer on major creative projects and events, preferably in larger organisational settings, nationally and internationally.
- A track record of leading complex scheduling and planning functions affecting the work of multiple delivery teams, with the ability to structure and simplify processes, enabling delivery teams to function effectively and efficiently.
- Significant experience of negotiating major contracts with leading artists and their representatives, ensuring the organisation secures appropriate terms.
- Substantial experience of managing people and teams, ensuring that they are engaged, developed and clear about expected standards of performance.
- High level, complex financial management experience, including budget forecasting and reporting.
- Experience of working on a variety of art forms and inter-disciplinary programming.
- Strong communication, influencing and negotiation skills with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders across all levels.
- Commitment to working in an inclusive organisation with a diverse workforce and audience base.

Devised: October 2026

At the Southbank Centre we believe in:

Creating welcoming spaces

- Because upholding respect, safety and belonging is at the heart of vibrant teams and communities.
- This means us all taking responsibility for shaping and protecting a kind, compassionate and inclusive environment for others.

Making wonderful experiences together

- Because we all contribute to amazing artistic moments at the Southbank Centre.
- This means us all understanding and valuing the different parts we play in creating enjoyment and success.

Sparking new thinking

- Because different views and thought-provoking conversations inspire innovation, learning and growth.
- This means everyone having a desire to learn and being open to evaluating how they think and work.

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Benefits & Perks:

As well as working at one of London's most popular and exciting sites the successful candidate will also benefit from the following:

- A minimum 5% employer's pension contribution (rising to 9% depending on your employee contribution) to a maximum contribution of 16% of salary, from day 1 of employment
- 28 days annual leave, plus bank holidays (pro-rata for part time employees)
- Hybrid working model (3 days office working, 2 days from home for full time employees)
- Two months' notice period on either side, once confirmed in post after four months probation
- Enhanced sick pay
- Enhanced family leave benefits
- Up to 30% discounts at on-site retail, food and beverage vendors
- Staff ticket offers for Southbank Centre events
- Free entry to Hayward Gallery
- Free/discounted entry with other reciprocal arts and culture organisations
- Free staff yoga
- Free access to emotional support from a confidential specialist Employee Assistance Programme available 24/7
- Interest free season travel ticket and rental accommodation deposit loans
- Cycle to work scheme

How to Apply

This is an interim position offered on an initial 12-month contract and we are looking for someone to begin no later than early December 2026.

We are working with [Achates](#) as our recruitment partner and reviewing applications on a rolling basis. If you are interested in the role, please send a CV and a short statement (of no more than 500 words) outlining your interest and suitability for the role to Vicki Grace, Director of Recruitment and Organisational Change at Achates on recruits@achates.org.uk. Vicki will then be in touch to invite suitable candidates to an initial telephone call to discuss the role in more detail. Suitable candidates will then be put forward to the Southbank Centre team for consideration and interview.

If you have any questions about the role or the process, please contact Vicki on vicki@achates.org.uk.

Expressions of interest will be accepted until 9am on Monday 9 November. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis throughout the open period.