

Chief Executive - Job Information Pack

As we start a new and exciting chapter at Toonspeak, we are seeking an inspirational, visionary, creative, and passionate Chief Executive, who will build on the strong foundations of the charity and work with our Board of Trustees, the staff team, our participants and stakeholders, to ensure the delivery of our strategic objectives and the ongoing sustainability, growth and success of Toonspeak.

With an understanding and appreciation of the value that active involvement in the arts provides, the successful candidate will bring skills, expertise and knowledge to support and challenge our staff and board deliver our vision to be a centre of excellence in Youth Empowerment and Inclusion in the Arts.

The Chief Executive will drive the mission and values of Toonspeak. As a brand ambassador, the CE will represent the charity and communicate on behalf of the organisation with Government authorities, funders, and key stakeholders and will be a positive, progressive leader and role model who inspires employees, artists, participants and the wider community.

Many posts talk about 'working in a fast-paced environment', Toonspeak really is this! so you will need energy, drive and enthusiasm.

In return we can promise you a hugely rewarding role.

About Toonspeak

Who We Are:

Toonspeak is a Youth led Arts organisation based in Glasgow working with young people aged 0-25.

Toonspeak's mission is to support, nurture, connect, inspire, transform and progress children & young people in Glasgow

Our activities include theatre, music, writing, technical production, arts & crafts, creative careers coaching, and events production. All activities are provided at zero cost, with free transport and food provided where needed to meet our commitment to absolute equality of access. Working in areas of multiple deprivation, and supporting young people who face additional challenges, the aim of our activities is to enable young people to realise their potential, becoming leaders and beneficiaries of the arts, as practitioners, participants and audience members.

Toonspeak's work involves developing relationships with people from a range of backgrounds and cultures. Working effectively with diversity and promoting equality of opportunity and inclusion is therefore an essential part of our work. We believe that there is no equality of opportunity if diversity and inclusion is not recognised and valued.

We work with high quality artists and socially engaged practitioners who challenge and inspire young people to create their own performances and manage their own projects – our work is young people led and we have six places for young people on our voluntary Board to ensure young people are part of the governance of the organisation.

We aim to expand young people’s imaginations to help them reach their full potential and to inspire positive change within communities of disadvantage across the city. We ensure that anyone, regardless of experience, ability or personal circumstances can take part.

Our values:

Excellence

Toonspeak exists to create authentic, high-quality arts experiences and improves the lives of the children and young people who engage in them.

Empowerment

Through our holistic approach, we will nurture and connect young people who face deprivation and disadvantage with the best of collaborative creative practices, removing barriers to participation, inspiring and supporting self-empowerment.

Progression

Our work will facilitate progression and celebrate the voices of young artists as the guardians of our cultural future.

Advocacy

Toonspeak will advocate for its people and their communities and elevate their successes to achieve recognition beyond the limitations of background or status.

Listening & Learning

As a participant-led (*person centred*) organisation we will strive to be a learning, listening, ever-evolving one, trusting that our young people know what is best for them, and being unafraid to take action, to change, to explore, and to grow.

Background

Since 1987, Toonspeak has provided free, high-quality drama and theatre activities for young people living in Glasgow.

We work with high quality artists and socially engaged practitioners who challenge and inspire young people to create their own performances and manage their own projects – our work is young people led and we have up to 6 places for young people on our voluntary Board to ensure young people are part of the governance of the organisation.

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Where we are now:

Our programme of workshops, classes and events are divided into three strands - INSPIRE, TRANSFORM and PROGRESS - designed to provide a golden thread of creative progression from cradle to adulthood. Activities include specialist classes for participants with additional support needs and all are provided at zero cost, with free transport provided to meet our commitment to absolute equality of access.

Working closely with community partners and with sector peers and national bodies, Toonspeak has a wide network of connections and partnerships locally, city-wide and nationally. We wish to capitalise on this in our building-back strategy, expanding on the visibility afforded by our Creative Scotland RFO status to promote our work and the inclusion of young people in the wider creative sector.

Colin Bradie, Head of Creative Learning at Creative Scotland, told us “Creative Scotland recognised Toonspeak for their extensive track-record and ambition across community arts engagement and youth empowerment.”

Toonspeak worked unceasingly throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, adapting and pioneering novel forms of delivery to meet the needs of our children and young people and communities. When we shut our doors in March 2020 we opted, as a core team, not to furlough but to dig in deeper and support our participants and the wider communities in which we are based. Our Response and Recovery programmes have resulted in Awards nominations and commendations national and internationally. We were also able to use our influence with Policy Makers to highlight the plight of not only our participants and families but also of freelance artists and practitioners who are the lifeblood of our delivery. The work we did as an anchor organisation during the pandemic led us to being selected as one of 26 Scottish arts organisations funded through Creative Scotland’s national Culture Collective recovery initiative.

The role of Chief Executive has been refreshed since first coming into being in 2018 and in planning for this recruitment. The current post holder has led the organisation through a period of considerable change and development, and we are now in the strongest position the organisation has ever been in its history with a strong foundation across all areas of our business and creative development to build upon.

Through support from Creative Scotland’s Cultural Recovery Funding, we have developed a new Funding and Income Strategy and are in the process of developing a new organisation Strategic Business Plan 2023-2028. We are also in the process of developing a new website and CRM system which we intend to launch at the end of the year.

We are the lead on the Ward 17 Culture Collective (CC) programme and have secured funding for a stage 2 of that programme until Autumn 2023. A key focus of the role will be developing a legacy for that programme with the staff team, the CC Project Manager and partners.

During Covid we were unable to physically perform and share our work to any great extent. This next phase for Toonspeak’s development will include creating opportunities for performance and creating new opportunities for wider engagement with our work. Many of our participants were adversely affected by the long periods of lockdown and uncertainty around their education and work and are now affected by the Cost-of-Living Crisis. More than ever, we feel our work is necessary and needed to inspire Glasgow’s young people and give them opportunities for creative and personal transformation and progression.

This is a unique opportunity to take an established organisation forward, and establish new areas of work, all with the support of a highly skilled and effective team and committed board.

The Chief Executive Role on offer

Purpose of Post

The role of the Chief Executive is to provide inspirational leadership for Toonspeak, ensuring a positive and supportive working environment for the core staff team and our freelance workforce. A strong focus on working with the Board of Trustees to give clear strategic focus and direction for the organisation. This is an opportunity to lead a strong, committed, and cohesive organisation, and to build on both its current reputation and its network of partners and collaborators.

Key Responsibilities

The role of the Chief Executive is to provide leadership for the organisation across the following areas:

- Strategic Business Planning
- Supporting Creative Development
- Securing Sustainable Funding & Income
- Advocacy and Representation
- Overseeing Operations
- Ensuring Quality and Compliance

Strategic Planning

To ensure that all Toonspeak's activities are contributing to the company's core aim: *To support, nurture, connect, inspire, transform and progress children & young people in Glasgow*

- To lead on the implementation, monitoring and review of our Strategic Plans
- To produce and deliver annual Action Plans which focus on company priorities, especially inclusion, diversity and environmental issues
- To work with the Board and Staff to develop new activities and programmes which will deliver our mission
- To ensure that our plans are informed by, and can be integrated with, national cultural, social and economic policies
- To develop and regularly review an effective strategy for the delivery of our mission, manage change and monitor progress
- To demonstrate strong leadership, driving team and individual performance and to develop and maintain a supportive, inclusive and responsive culture that allows the organisation to align the needs of our people, funders and supporters

Creative Development

- To work with the Head of Programme and Creative Development to ensure a full programme of high-quality arts activity, events and performances are delivered for our participants across our Inspire, Transform and Progress programme strands
- To support the development of new creative programmes, working closely with the Head of Programme and Creative Development to achieve this, encouraging experimentation and new ideas.

- To oversee the completion of the Culture Collective programme until October 2023 and plan and develop a legacy strategy for this work across Ward 17.

Securing Sustainable Funding

- Ensure that effective fundraising strategies and plans are in place to maximise income generation – proactively encouraging and facilitating new ways of accessing funding
- Build strong relationship with current and potential funders, and oversee identification and submission of key applications for trust and grant funding and relationships with potential donors

Advocacy and Representation

- To represent the organisation in all appropriate regional and national and contexts, including contacts with local and national media, acting as ‘brand guardian’
- To maintain close working relationships with our key funders including Creative Scotland
- To advocate for the value and impact of our youth led provision
- To ensure that Toonspeak works closely with partner organisations, both in the Youth and Theatres sector (e.g., Youth Theatre Arts Scotland, Federation of Scottish Theatres) and in the wider field of community development and cohesion
- To promote, represent and raise awareness of the activities and impact of Toonspeak

Overseeing Operations

- To guide the Staff team in ensuring that the services we deliver are operating as effectively as possible, in terms of scheduling, programming, marketing, access, and community engagement
- Ensure all activities and programmes are aligned with and contribute effectively to strategic plans
- Direct line management responsibility for the Head of Finance and Operations Manager, and the Head of Programming and Creative Development, with oversight over deliverables and for the wellbeing of the wider team

Ensuring Quality and Compliance

- To enable the Board of Trustees to fully exercise its governance function of overseeing all strategic, financial and employment aspects of the company, and ensuring full and timely reporting and participation in planning and evaluation
- To ensure that the company is fully compliant with all regulations and in its obligations to Companies House, OSCR, HMRC, and all sources of funding, whether public or private
- To work with the Head of Finance and Operations to ensure robust and effective financial planning, monitoring and reporting.
- To work with the Head of Finance and Operations and Board to ensure that Toonspeak is both fully compliant with all statutory aspects of HR, GDPR, Health and Safety and exercises best practice in all aspects of employment, staff development, volunteer management and staff engagement, ensuring that effective processes are in place to facilitate this
- To ensure that the policies and procedures that will maintain the safe and effective operation of all the services of Toonspeak are in place
- To make sure that all on-line and direct contacts with Toonspeak are consistent, high-quality experiences which meet our business and client needs

Qualities:

- Able to think creatively, bring new ideas and solutions, seek opportunities and solve problems
- A passion for the impact of theatre and the arts on young people
- The ability to listen and engage with young people in a meaningful way and work with them collaboratively
- Can empower, develop and get the best out of the Toonspeak team and maintain the organisation's supportive and inclusive culture
- Able to delegate effectively, and trust their team to deliver, but is also willing to help when required
- An effective listener, willing to learn, collaborative in working style and able to gain team buy-in and bring the team with them
- Has a positive can-do attitude, is dynamic, proactive and able to work at pace, whilst respecting other viewpoints and demonstrating humility when challenged whilst willing to make the big calls when necessary
- A strong influencer and communicator, able to build strong relationships quickly, and represent the organisation with integrity and gravitas
- A strategic thinker, able to take a long-term view, manage projects and change, to plan and organise effectively and to mitigate risks
- Understands the political and cultural context of the sector in which Toonspeak operates and can navigate complex issues and manage conflicting demands of multiple stakeholders
- Cares about quality and the impact of our activities on communities and individuals
- Able to remain calm and professional under pressure

Experience:

- Track record of demonstrating effective strategic and people leadership. This can either be in a current or previous CEO post, or within a different role within previous organisation(s), in which case, the ability to evidence readiness to take your first step into a CEO role will be essential
- Experience of operating within the third sector
- Experience of working within the cultural/arts sector is required. Applicants without this but demonstrating exceptionally strong experience in other areas may be considered
- Similarly, background in or experience of working with arts organisations or funding bodies is preferable
- A background of working with or supporting local community projects, an understanding of community arts is preferable but not essential
- Experience of seeking funding and generating income is essential
- Experience of maintaining relationships with key stakeholders, and building effective relationships with charity boards is essential
- Successful line management of individual staff members and provision of direction to a small team is essential
- Experience in leading change is desirable
- Experience of working in SIMD communities and an understanding of the multi-dimensional challenges and issues they face.

Knowledge:

- An appreciation of the challenges faced by under-provided, and marginalised communities, and a demonstrable passion for making a difference to them
- Understanding of the political and cultural infrastructure on which Toonspeak relies, with knowledge and/or experience of how this is structured in Scotland
- Knowledge of the mechanisms and processes of creative development, performance related programming is important
- Understanding of the role of a Board in supporting the Chief Executive's role, with a clear understanding of the responsibility to report information fully and clearly
- The value of developing and sustaining productive partnerships and networks and how to position self and the organisation with stakeholders and partners

Reporting structure

You will report to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Working Arrangements:

We operate a hybrid model, involving working from home and from our office base in Barmulloch, Glasgow. Working arrangements will be flexible – there is a requirement to work part of the week from our base. It will therefore not be necessary for the postholder to be based in Glasgow however you must be available to be a regular presence at our office. Some weekend and evening work will be required for events and meetings.

Terms

Salary: £37,500 per annum

Hours: 35 hrs (a 30-minute unpaid lunch break is added to each 7hr day), Monday-Friday with some evening and weekend work expected. We do not pay overtime; we operate a flexible working system where TOIL of up to 21 hrs is given for additional hours worked. A degree of flexibility is required to fulfil the needs of the Chief Executive role.

Holidays: 36 days per annum (includes all public holidays), for each complete year of service a day is added (up to 5). 10 days of holiday are currently fixed for our full Christmas and New Year office closure.

This role involves regulated work with children and as such, the successful applicant will be required to register with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme (this will be processed by Toonspeak).

You can find information about what we do on our website www.toonspeak.co.uk

Recruitment Process and Timetable**How to Apply**

To apply for this post, we ask that you email the following to recruitment@toonspeak.co.uk

A small sub-group of our Board is leading the recruitment and selection of the new CE and includes Young Board Directors.

A tailored CV, **maximum of 4 sides of A4**, outlining your experience, and highlighting your key skills, achievements and attributes

A supporting letter and/or personal statement, **maximum three sides of A4**, which should include:

- Why you are interested in taking on the role of Chief Executive at Toonspeak
- What you specifically can bring to the role
- Evidence of any relevant experience that would help you and the organisation to thrive
- Brief thoughts on how you would approach the role, and the challenges you would perceive within it

If you are shortlisted for an interview, you will be asked to provide contact details for two referees (we may wish to contact them should you be successful in reaching the final round of our selection process and would not approach them without your permission beforehand).

Applications should be submitted by email to recruitment@toonspeak.co.uk by 17.00 on Tuesday 22 November.

It is our intention at this stage that first round interviews (via Zoom) will be held in the week commencing 5 December.

We will aim to inform you if you have been selected for an interview **by Tuesday 29 November.**

Second round interviews will take place in the week commencing 12 December 2022.

It is anticipated that this will involve a face-to-face meeting and will include a presentation to a range of stakeholders, which might include Trustees (including young board directors), staff and/or funders.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity before applying, please email recruitment@toonspeak.co.uk and we will set up a call with you (excludes 7-11 November)

We do not encourage contact from recruitment agencies in respect of this job role.

Toonspeak is committed to and promotes equal opportunities, actively encourages and values diversity. We are committed to creating a diverse environment and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, colour, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age or educational background. We value diversity of thought, background, culture and perspective.