



Accessible Arts & Media
Programme Manager (Wellbeing)
Information Pack

1 Introduction to Accessible Arts & Media

Thanks very much for your interest in working for Accessible Arts & Media!

We're a small charity, based in Chapelfields, York. We've been delivering inclusive creative learning and wellbeing projects in and around York since 1982.

Our work's built around the belief that everyone can learn, everyone can be creative, and everyone can play a part in their local community. They just need the right support, and that's where we come in. We've got a vision for a more inclusive society, where everyone gets the chance to shine, and we're helping to make that happen in York.

Our projects include specialist creative sensory activities for people with complex disabilities, dementia and mental ill health; training programmes where learning-disabled adults and young people learn how to be workshop leaders; singing and signing choirs; accessible music-making groups; and creative media programmes that help people tell their stories.

The people who take part in our sessions often face difficulty with everyday activities and can end up feeling isolated and cut off. Taking part in our projects helps them:

- explore and connect with the world around them, in a safe, supportive, fun environment;
- learn new skills that they can transfer to other parts of their lives, including education, training and employment;
- connect with other people, making new friends along the way;
- grow the confidence to have more of a say in the things that matter to them;
- build emotional resilience;
- contribute to their local community through workshops, performances and film commissions;
- feel happy, connected, confident and valued, all of which can have a profound impact on wellbeing.

We use a person-centred approach and a co-production model. All our activities are tailored to the individual, supporting everyone to take part in the way that suits them best. We level the playing field by providing everyone with the support and space they need to have an equal say.

We're not a campaigning organisation but we've brought inclusion and diversity to the forefront in York for more than 30 years. We're experts in creating a caring environment where everyone's supported to take part in the way that suits them best. It's a space where you can be yourself. And it's a space where people develop the confidence to realise that they have a voice.

One of our volunteers had this to say: *I have volunteered with Accessible Arts and Media for over 3 years now and the people I have met through the charity have really made an impact on my life for the better. They are such positive workers and very understanding of people's needs and each other's. I have gained lifelong skills in communication, and it's given me a lot of reward from being part of the team. I recommend them to anyone wanting to gain skills and be part of great ongoing projects in York.*



Young people in our IMPs (Inclusive Music Projects) group

As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic, our projects and activities are more essential than ever. We know, from talking to the people who take part in our projects, that the past two years have had a big impact on them. We've got an important role to play in supporting their wellbeing as they rebuild their confidence and re-connect with their community. So you'll be joining the team at a really important time.

2 Our Wellbeing Programme - iMUSE

iMUSE (Interactive Multi-sensory Environment) has proven to be of benefit to people enduring mental-ill health, adults and young people with complex needs and older people experiencing memory loss. It is currently our core wellbeing programme that has huge potential for development.

iMUSE is a relaxing, creative, therapeutic learning space. Spending time in the iMUSE space helps people reduce stress and anxiety, connect/re-connect with the world around them, explore their creativity and learn/re-learn how to make their own choices.

iMUSE uses interactive technology to help people experience:

- Relaxation – a vibrating mattress or backpack gently massages the body. Combined with deep breathing and other relaxation techniques, this calms and focuses the mind, relaxes muscle tone and reduces anxiety and stress.

- Accessible Music Making – you don't have to have any previous musical experience to make music with iMUSE. A motion sensor detects your movements and turns them into sounds that can relax and lift mood. You can choose from an extensive range of instruments and other sounds to create your own music or soundscapes. Or you can just listen to some of your favourite music.



- Creating visuals – participants can select from a wide range of graphics that are projected into the iMUSE space and create their own sound effects using a microphone.

Each 1-to-1 session lasts for 30 minutes. Our facilitator works with the participant to find out which sounds, music and visuals help them to relax and focus. They then use these to personalise their iMUSE experience so it's tailor-made for them.

We're one of only a handful of organisations worldwide who use the iMUSE technology and we've been developing our iMUSE programme since 2013. We initially worked with adults and young people with complex needs and, since 2017, we've worked with people with mental ill health and older people living with dementia.

The people currently taking part in our mental wellbeing programme are primarily adults living with long term mental ill health, although we're also supporting young people with eating disorders, people experiencing bereavement and other forms of trauma, people coming to terms with a recent diagnosis such as autism or dementia, those with chronic pain and adults and young people with complex needs.

Some people self-refer, others are signposted and supported to attend by our network of partners. Over the course of the pandemic and currently, we've seen a rise in requests/referrals for iMUSE sessions from individuals and partners. Current partners include several mental health teams in our NHS trust (in-patient/community-based), Local Area Coordinators (city council community wellbeing support team), NHS Link Workers and our local Child & Adolescent Mental Health in-patient unit, who've all seen a rise in mental health referrals over the past 18 months.

An important development over the past two years has been establishing our iMUSE at Home programme. We've created smaller versions of the iMUSE kit that can transform a room in a house into a new space, full of light, music and acoustic vibrations (which help relax muscles). As well as sessions being led remotely by our facilitator, people can also easily use items of the kit by themselves at home, to support their mental wellbeing and manage anxiety. This is a major step forward in us being able to support people's wellbeing when they're unable to leave their house or between sessions.

You can find out more about iMUSE on our website: <https://aamedia.org.uk/our-projects/imuse/>

2.1 The difference iMUSE makes

iMUSE has a profound impact. We've built a significant body of evidence that demonstrates the following benefits and outcomes:

- **Reduced anxiety/improved mood:** People who are agitated and anxious become more relaxed and calm.
- **Exploring creativity – developing creative skills:** iMUSE engages people creatively on several levels and participants, if they choose to, are able to create a new multi-media artwork each session.
- **Taking control and making decisions, leading to increased confidence:** Every element of the iMUSE space is customizable and participants are given a variety of choices, so no two sessions are ever the same. People learn that they can control the iMUSE space by making and expressing their own choices. This can be really empowering and give people a strong sense of control, something that's often stripped away by mental ill health, learning disability and dementia.
- **Greater mindfulness to control mood/self-regulation:** iMUSE helps participants relax into the space and become more mindful of their bodies and minds. This can help people to feel more grounded and begin to control their mood and emotions. It also helps people become more focused, engaged and alert and better able to concentrate. The benefits of iMUSE have also been shown to last after the session has ended.
- **Enhanced communication:** iMUSE helps people connect with the people around them. Creating music or visuals can help people express feelings without words, developing non-verbal ways of communicating. Feeling more grounded and focused and less anxious can also help people feel more able to articulate how they're feeling and what they're going through.
- **Improved physical wellbeing:** iMUSE uses a vibrating mattress or cushion that offers a range of health benefits. It can help to relax muscles and improve their tone. The vibrations also help to massage the body internally. For example, iMUSE can help with respiratory and digestive problems. In addition, iMUSE also helps to reduce pain, symptoms of fatigue and to improve sleep.



Recent feedback from participants includes:

"I found it really helpful. I have PTSD & CPTSD and I'm on lots of medication. I've come in to help with relaxation. After my first session the affect was incredible! I did not need nearly so much medication the day after."

"I feel so peaceful and, in less pain, post-session"

"I usually leave, and I feel my lungs can get air inside again - I feel I can do it – anything's possible – it gives me more confidence to feel I CAN do things."

‘The vibration really helps release the pain and tightness’

3 The Role – Programme Manager (Wellbeing)

We’re looking for an experienced project manager who’s passionate about creating opportunities for people to support their own wellbeing and developing a project they are passionate about.

You’ll play a key role in developing our iMUSE for wellbeing programme and future wellbeing projects at AAM. You’ll lead on the development of new and existing partnerships and referral routes, including arranging taster sessions and outreach residencies and presenting about iMUSE and its impact to a range of stakeholders. Another key focus for the role is engaging with and supporting the people who attend iMUSE.

Responsible to: Creative Director

Responsible for: Small team of project staff and freelance artists, including some line management

Working Relationships:

- AAM’s Programme Manager (Learning Disability)
- AAM staff team and freelance artists
- AAM volunteers
- Participants in AAM’s projects and their families and supporters
- AAM partners and other stakeholders

Purpose of Job:

- Oversee, manage and develop all aspects of the iMUSE Project at AAM to ensure they give the highest quality experience for participants, staff and partners.
- Ensure the programme fits with the ethos and vision and mission of AAM and helps AAM achieve its strategic aims.

Key Tasks (some are regular, and some are one-off):

- Lead on project scoping, planning and development.
- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with participants, partners, professionals, and other stakeholders to achieve positive outcomes for participants.
- Attend and participate in events and partnership networks to develop and promote our work.
- Research and develop referral leads, delivering presentations as required.
- Explore potential funding/new income sources and write funding bids in liaison with the Development Manager.
- Recruit (as needed) and manage a small team, ensuring appropriate level of training, experience, and delivery.
- With the Director, feed into budgets for new work and monitor/review project budgets.

- Create, maintain and develop project systems and resources e.g. long term project plans, training and online resources.
- Manage project admin and participant liaison, ensuring this is carried out according to AAM procedure.
- Ensure records are kept up to date, using shared databases and project documents e.g. registers, booking & evaluation forms, partner, professionals and venue lists.
- Collate and analyse monitoring and evaluation data and report on outcomes and outputs in line with AAM procedure and funder/contract requirements.
- Alongside the AAM Programme Manager (Learning Disability), ensure best practice in accessible communication and co-production is maintained and a person-centred approach is consistent across the iMUSE Programme at AAM.
- Liaise with the Marketing & Community Fundraising Coordinator to ensure that promotional materials (print and online) are up to date.
- Liaise with the project technical contractor to ensure all project resources and equipment are maintained, hardware and software is kept up to date and ongoing troubleshooting is carried out.
- Liaise with the project technical contractor and project team on the development of the technology used in iMUSE.
- Ensure all members of the team are fully aware of safeguarding, health and safety and data management issues and procedure and AAM's procedures are followed correctly.
- Ensure all data collection, storage and usage complies with AAM's Data Management Policy.
- Carry out, monitor and maintain health and safety checks and risk assessments.
- You may be asked to carry out other duties in addition to those included above, as reasonably requested.

Person Specification

Essential:

- Minimum of 2 years' experience of managing participatory projects in community/voluntary/education/health settings.
- Experience of partnership/ collaborative working and building relationships across a range of partners.
- Experience of managing staff.
- Experience of working on programmes that support people's wellbeing.
- Experience of working with/supporting people from a range of backgrounds.
- Working knowledge/experience of person-centered approaches and/or co-production.
- Ability to communicate confidently, both written and aural.
- A passion for using creativity and media arts to improve wellbeing.
- Experience of report writing and presenting information in an informative way for different audiences.
- Experience of following safeguarding policy and procedure.

- Experience of working on a variety of tasks simultaneously, managing your own workload and prioritising deadlines.
- Experience of working successfully as part of a team.
- Confident using Microsoft Office 365 apps including Outlook, Word, Excel and PowerPoint.
- A driver with a full clean license.

Desirable:

- Lived or learned experience of mental ill-health and related issues/challenges.
- Experience of supporting and communicating with people with learning or communication difficulties or sensory impairments.
- Experience of project development.
- Experience of writing funding bids.
- Experience of procurement and negotiating commissioning contracts.
- Experience of creating and maintaining records that contain sensitive personal information.
- Experience using impact measurement tools.

Circumstances: This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Any provisional offer of employment will be subject to a check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before such offer can be confirmed.

4 Terms and Conditions

Salary: 3 days, pro rata from c.£25,000 per annum

Hours: 21 hours per week. Working hours include a Wednesday and will usually be during office hours. Please note that this role will involve some evening and weekend work, and some working from home.

Employment type: Permanent

Place of work: This will be determined by the delivery plan and will include project locations and AAM's office (both of which are in York), some remote working and some travel across the region.

Training: We offer opportunities to participate in external and internal training and access professional development opportunities.

Annual Leave: 25 days, some of which must be taken between Christmas and New Year. Bank Holidays are in addition to this.

Pension: Our pension scheme is provided by the People's Pension. Employee contribution is 3%, with an additional 5% employer's contribution from AAM.

Probation Period: 3 months

Notice Period: 1 month

5 How to Apply

You can apply by submitting a statement of up to 500 words telling us why you'd be great for this role and either:

- Completing our Person Specification table – this gives you the chance to share your relevant skills and experience in relation to each part of the Person Specification, or
- Submitting a CV.

Once you've completed your application, please email it, along with a covering email and contact details for two referees to recruitment@aamedia.org.uk

If you've got any questions about the role or the application process, please contact Rose Kent, Creative Director, at recruitment@aamedia.org.uk or on 01904 626965.

The closing date for applications is **Monday 26th September 2022 at 5pm.**

6 Interviews

We'll interview shortlisted candidates **Wednesday 12th October**

Interviews will be held at the New Earswick Folk Hall, New Earswick, York , with the option to have an interview on Zoom if you're unable to attend in person.