

GENERAL MANAGER



Join us and become a driving force in Southwold's cultural life!

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ASPIRING LEADERS



This is an outstanding chance for a capable and motivated individual who has experience in a leadership position, whether as a General Manager or not, to take on the responsibility of managing our inclusive and historic arts and community venue. The role offers the opportunity to build on existing skills in a supportive environment, whilst making meaningful contribution ongoing success vibrant of our organisation.

This newly established post is integral to the leadership of the Arts Centre. The Manager General will have autonomy to direct their own initiatives, with guidance from the Trustees as necessary. This position significant opportunity influence the Centre's future direction. As an organisation focused on committed audience. we are expanding our reach to a broader, younger, and more diverse demographic within our dynamic Suffolk coastal town and the wider East Anglia region. We aim to achieve this by curating outstanding performances and continuing community engagement and creative development efforts.

OUR MISSION

Southwold Arts Centre. mission is to deliver high quality, inspirational. and creative experiences to everyone in Southwold, Suffolk, Norfolk, beyond. We engage a wide range of audiences, from schools to local businesses, community groups to performing artists, ensuring that all members of our community have access to enriching cultural activities.

We are committed to maintaining excellence in all our endeavours, carefully balancing this with a diverse programme of events and activities. Our aim is to provide a vibrant and environment inclusive creativity thrives, supporting both established and emerging talent of across spectrum artistic disciplines.

By offering varied and accessible programming, we strive to inspire individuals and groups alike, fostering a deeper appreciation for the arts and strengthening the cultural fabric of our region.



JOIN OUR TEAM

The General Manager

We are seeking a driven, creative General Manager to join our team at Southwold Arts Centre. Our goal is to make the Centre a leader in high-quality arts experiences and ensure its long-term success. The General Manager will guide our efforts to engage more people, promote cultural enrichment across the county, and balance artistic, commercial, and community objectives.

What We're Looking For

We seek an individual driven by passion and a desire to make things happen. You do not need to meet every criterion of our role specification, nor possess experience in all aspects of the position; we can support your development and help fill any gaps. Above all, we are looking for someone ambitious and future-focused, brimming with enthusiasm for our work, who shares our vision and can motivate and inspire others.

Why Join Us?

This is a remarkable opportunity to be part of something truly special and to make a genuine difference. If you believe in our mission, are committed to change and development, and have the determination to see things through, we look forward to hearing from you









ABOUT US

Southwold Arts Centre is located at St Edmund's Hall, originally built in 1934 and rebuilt in 1952 as a functional theatre after war damage. The centre serves as a lively cultural venue in Suffolk, close to the beach and high street. It hosts an eclectic mix of over 170 events—from theatre, music, and film to comedy nights, literary festivals, and community groups. A cornerstone of its calendar is the Southwold Summer Theatre, a beloved tradition for nearly 75 years that draws audiences from across the region. The venue also supports local engagement through outreach programs and offers flexible spaces for everything from weddings to co-working sessions.

Life by the Arts Centre reflects Southwold's friendly spirit, with frequent festivals, markets, and notable landmarks like the lighthouse and pier. The town's strong community and creative energy make the arts central to everyday life.

Our Vision and Approach

We aim to be leaders in the Suffolk Coast's cultural community by making Southwold Arts Centre a welcoming and collaborative space. We provide a varied, high-quality, and affordable programme of arts and cultural events throughout the year. Our focus is on ensuring the long-term success of the venue through active management of both the building and its activities.

Collaborative Partnerships

We actively engage in partnerships with a wide range of organisations, both locally in Southwold and East Suffolk, and further afield. These collaborations span across schools, businesses, community groups, and performing artists, allowing us to offer programming and activities that exemplify excellence while embracing diversity.

Sustaining and Strengthening Our Impact

We are working to grow our income and boost our presence in Southwold and nearby areas. Our goal is to encourage more people to join us as audience members, artists, participants, or volunteers, so the Arts Centre remains a vital community hub.

OUR VALUES



As a community venue and registered charity, we are guided by a core set of values that shape everything we do. These principles ensure that the Southwold Arts Centre remains a place where everyone feels a sense of belonging and is able to participate fully in our cultural offerings. Our commitment is reflected in the following:

Inclusive: We actively work to include people from all backgrounds and walks of life, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to engage with the arts and culture at our Centre.

Welcoming: Our venue is a friendly and inviting space, where audiences, participants, and artists alike feel at home and valued.

Open to All: We are dedicated to removing barriers to participation, so that the Arts Centre is accessible to the entire community, regardless of circumstance.

Environmentally Aware: We recognise our responsibility to the environment and make conscious efforts to operate sustainably and minimise our impact on the world around us.

Affordable: We strive to keep our activities and events within reach for as many people as possible, ensuring that cost is not a barrier to experiencing culture and creativity.

The Power of Culture and Creativity

Culture and creativity play a significant role in transforming lives. At Southwold Arts Centre, we are dedicated to providing a diverse range of events and activities, enabling everyone to access and engage with the arts. Our mission is to ensure that the community not only has opportunities to participate in cultural experiences but also enjoys them to the fullest.

Addressing Rural Isolation through Partnership

While Southwold is renowned for its natural beauty as a coastal town, it faces challenges associated with rural isolation. We are committed to addressing this by forging partnerships with organisations both within the local area and beyond. Through collaboration, we strive to increase connectivity, foster community spirit, and broaden the reach of our cultural initiatives.

Valuing Our Volunteers

We warmly encourage individuals who are able and willing to join us at Southwold Arts Centre as volunteers. Volunteers are an integral part of our community, and those who come on board are welcomed, appreciated, and highly valued for their contributions.







STRATEGIC GOALS

Our strategic goals reflect our commitment to the long-term success, inclusivity, and sustainability of Southwold Arts Centre. These objectives guide our decisions and underpin our ongoing development as a vibrant cultural hub for the community.

1. Ensuring Long-Term Financial Stability

We are dedicated to securing the future of Southwold Arts Centre by maintaining robust financial health. This goal will be achieved through a balanced approach that includes strong ticket sales, securing grant funding, encouraging individual donations, and developing additional income streams. By diversifying our financial base, we can support our mission and adapt to changing circumstances.

2. Enhancing Artist and Audience Spaces

We are committed to continually improving the spaces used by both artists and audiences. Through a carefully planned programme of development and refurbishment, we aim to create welcoming, functional, and inspiring environments that enhance the overall experience for all who visit or perform at the Arts Centre.

3. Creating a Community Space That Meets Local Needs

Our vision is to provide a space that truly reflects and meets the desires and needs of our local community for theatre, arts, and entertainment. We strive to make the Arts Centre a central gathering place where everyone can come together to enjoy and participate in a wide range of cultural activities.

4. Offering a Rich and Varied Programme

We are committed to being an active venue, presenting a diverse and enjoyable calendar of community and cultural events. By ensuring regular activity, we aim to foster sustained engagement and maximise opportunities for participation.

5. Increasing Access Through Diverse Programming

To ensure that everyone in the community has the opportunity to enjoy and participate in our events, we will continue to expand our programme to include a wide variety of offerings. Our goal is to appeal to all sectors of the community, breaking down barriers and broadening access to arts and culture.

6. Advancing Sustainability in All Our Operations

We recognise the importance of operating in an environmentally responsible manner. Our commitment is to become more sustainable across all aspects of our operations, and to encourage our partners and collaborators to do likewise, in alignment with our sustainability policy.

www.southwoldartscentre.co.uk





LEAD AND INSPIRE SOUTHWOLD'S LEADING CULTURAL VENUE

Job Title: General Manager

Location: Southwold, Suffolk.

Reports to: Board of Trustees. Southwold Arts Centre is managed by Sole Bay Arts CIO, a registered charity dedicated to enriching and engaging the community through culture.

Job Type: Permanent, full-time. Primarily venue based, including evenings and weekends, with some remote work possible. Success in this role requires strong time management and prioritisation. **Salary:** c.£35,000 per annum, dependent on skills and experience.

Main Purpose of the Role

The General Manager is responsible for ensuring the efficient daily operation of Southwold Arts Centre, overseeing its programme of events, venue operations, and the management of volunteers, staff and freelancers. The role includes ensuring that the venue remains fit for purpose and compliant with the requirements of charitable status and other statutory regulations. Working in close partnership with the Board of Trustees, the General Manager is also tasked with leading fundraising activities and generating income to support the Centre's sustainability and growth.

RESPONSIBILITIES



Programme Development and Management

The General Manager develops and manages the hall's events programme, working with the Chair of Trustees and Programme Group to coordinate an annual schedule across all genres, attract new audiences, and stay within budget. The role includes communicating with organisers about bookings and contracts, and arranging events.

The General Manager confirms event details, contracts, and invoices with artists, agents, managers, and hirers, negotiating deals that ensure financial viability. They also advance the Hall's community mission by building partnerships locally and nationally.

Events and Hall Management

The General Manager oversees hall operations, including equipment management, contractor coordination, and event provider support for technical needs. They maintain contact lists for contractors and organisers, ensure health and safety compliance with the Health and Safety Officer, supervise cleaning, staff, and volunteers, and act as the hall licensee. Additional duties include scheduling front-of-house shifts, training new volunteers, collaborating on publicity, managing correspondence, ensuring box office coverage, stocking bars, organizing event layouts, inducting users on facility safety, and ensuring adherence to all relevant laws and regulations.

Financial Management and Fundraising

The General Manager supports the Finance Director with invoicing, payments, managing petty cash, and banking. They lead fundraising efforts with the Chair and Board, handle donations, and communicate with sponsors and major donors. The role includes overseeing the Box Office coworking space, implementing strategies for sustainability and revenue growth, and requires fundraising, business planning, budget management experience, and success in securing major funding in the charity sector.

Marketing and Public Relations

The General Manager collaborates with the marketing Trustee to maximize event visibility and ticket sales. Duties include coordinating marketing materials, overseeing distribution, maintaining media relationships, and managing website content, ticketing, and sales reports.

Strategic Relations and Communication

Building strong ties with local cultural organisations and businesses is essential. The General Manager oversees communication, serves as spokesperson for Southwold Arts Centre, attends Trustee meetings, and reports regularly to support trustees in their oversight and decision-making.

Hall Maintenance

The General Manager is responsible for ensuring that the hall is operational, clean, tidy, and fit for purpose. Any major maintenance issues must be communicated to the trustees in a timely manner.

Partnerships

The role demands proven skills in networking, building partnerships with donors and sponsors, and engaging grant-making organisations. Strong entrepreneurial and collaborative leadership, flexibility, effective communication, and presentation abilities are required. The General Manager must understand programming and offer artistic guidance to creative partners.

PERSON SPECIFICATION



The ideal candidate will demonstrate a genuine passion for the arts and a strong commitment to supporting the organisation's mission. They should possess in-depth knowledge of arts programming, coupled with a thorough understanding of community engagement. The role demands an innovative and forward-thinking approach, with a proactive attitude toward problem-solving and the ability to anticipate the needs of colleagues.

Excellent leadership qualities are essential, with the ability to collaborate effectively and inclusively. The successful candidate will uphold the highest standards of integrity and professionalism. Attention to detail and strong organisational skills are vital, as is the capacity to manage time efficiently while handling administrative and IT tasks with a high degree of accuracy. The candidate must be able to work at pace, approach challenges with curiosity, and maintain a solution-focused mindset.

Education and Experience

Candidates must have a minimum of three years' experience in management within the arts, cultural, or non-profit sectors.

A proven track record in strategic planning, financial management, and organisational leadership is required.





Benefits

- Workplace Contributory Pension Scheme (3% employer, 5% employee)
- 20 days' holiday plus statutory holidays in lieu
- Supportive, creative, and passionate team environment
- Opportunity to shape the future of a renowned arts venue

APPLICATION PROCESS



Applicants are invited to send a statement on how they meet the job and person specifications and why they are the best person for this role, together with an up-to-date CV to Michael Rowan-Robinson, Chair of The Trustees at **Southwold Arts Centre Recruitment** (sac.recruitment@icloud.com).

This email address should also be used for any queries.

Key Dates

Closing date - 23 January, 12 noon

Interviews – w/c 9 February (first round), w/c 16 February (second round)



GDPR Notice for Job Applications

By submitting your application, you consent to the processing of your personal data by Sole Bay Arts CIO for the purposes of recruitment and selection. Your information will be used solely to assess your suitability for the role applied for and, where appropriate, to contact you regarding the recruitment process.

We will store your data securely and retain it only for as long as necessary to fulfil these purposes, or as required by law. If your application is unsuccessful, your data will normally be retained for up to 12 months before being securely deleted, unless you consent to us keeping it on file for future opportunities.

You have the right to access, rectify, or erase your personal data, to restrict processing, and to object to processing. You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).