



# SICK! PRODUCTIONS LTD

## CREATIVE PRODUCER (COMMISSIONING)

### APPLICATION PACK DECEMBER 2022



“We like to think that we’re beyond taboos, that nothing is off bounds any more. But, when it comes to the health of our bodies and minds and the universal, inescapable experience of death, we’re still pretty tight-lipped. In attempting to break the silence and confront the unspoken – often with humour and imagination – SICK! Festival has a vital role to play.”

The Guardian \*\*\*\* review SICK! Festival 2019





# WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in the role of Creative Producer (Commissioning) at SICK! Productions. This pack gives background about the work of SICK! and some of our plans for the future.

Although the last two years has presented us with a number of challenges, the charity is in a strong and robust financial position – thanks to multi-year grants from funders, our growing international partnerships and careful financial management. In the current and post Covid environment we believe that the themes that we address – such as physical and mental health, disability, gender, death, inequality, politics and protest – are ever more important and relevant. Our partners and funders are investing in our long term vision because they understand both our current and potential impact locally, nationally and globally.

It's a very exciting time to join SICK! – We have embarked on a 10-year strategic community engagement programme in the Moston and Harpurhey neighbourhoods of North Manchester, including rolling out a major programme of arts and mental health work. We recently delivered our 2022 Festival and as part of this we have developed newly commissioned art works with partners in South Africa, Finland, Netherlands, and Switzerland. We have also recently developed our programmes and business plan to 2026 and submitted our three-year National Portfolio Organisation application to Arts Council England. The new postholder will play a key role in delivering this, alongside staff and Trustees.

We're looking for a dynamic and inspirational individual to join us, to work closely with me and our fantastic team to help us achieve our potential and grow our impact and reach. We're looking for someone who brings experience of socially-engaged practice, managing budgets, and seeing commissions through for inception to evaluation, who is also passionate about, and interested in, the areas in which SICK! operates – arts, health, diversity, community development and international work.

While we are proud of our diversity achievements in our creative programmes, recognised by ACE in our Strong Creative Case rating, we want to further diversify our workforce to be representative of all sections of society. We actively welcome candidates who are currently underrepresented in the arts including people who face discrimination as a result of racism, those who self-identify as LGBTQIA+, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those who self-identify as disabled. We know that everyone has different commitments in their work/home lives and we are open to requests for varied working hours or work patterns. These will be considered taking into account the impact on the organisation and work colleagues.

We look forward to hearing from you.

All the best

**Helen Medland, CEO/Artistic Director**



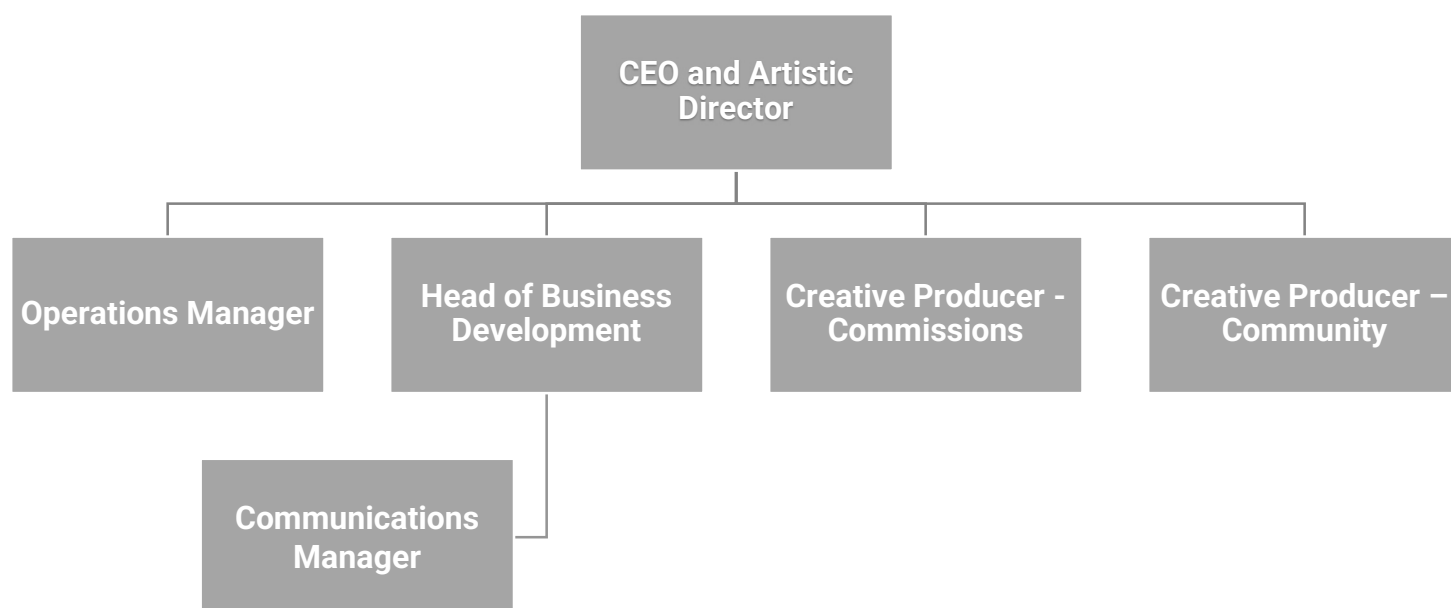
## ABOUT SICK! PRODUCTIONS

SICK! Productions (also known as SICK! Festival) is a Manchester based, diversity-led arts organisation which shines a light on the complexities of mental and physical health. We give voice to the experiences of diverse and often marginalised communities by presenting an outstanding international arts programme, which encourages participants, audiences and partners to learn from and talk about difficult and challenging issues, often hidden from public view.

Rooted in the local community while operating internationally, we commission powerful and engaging work by international, national and GM based artists, who make their work with, and alongside, local communities with lived experience, health professionals, charities and researchers.

Our activities include a biennial international festival which takes place across Manchester, an innovative cross-artform commissioning programme which brings artists together with local communities with lived experience, the health sector, community groups/charities and researchers and a growing year-round programme of community engagement in local Manchester neighbourhoods.

Our staff team consists of six permanent staff: CEO/Artistic Director, Head of Business Development, Creative Producers x2, Communications Manager and Operations Manager. We have a strong, diverse and supportive Board of Trustees and are planning to expand membership to at least 10 members over the next 12 months.



We receive core funding from Arts Council England through their National Portfolio programme and attract funding from a wide range of sources, including extensive international funding. While, like most arts organisations in the UK, we have had challenges due to the Covid 19 crisis, we are in a solid financial position and have ambitious plans to develop our organisation over the next three years.

### **SICK! Festival:**

SICK! delivers a biennial festival in Greater Manchester, in cultural venues, community spaces, public realm and online - our 2022 Festival recently took place in May.



The festival featured commissions, exhibitions, performances, public realm projects, workshops and symposia. We have presented a range of international artists including Eetu Rantanen and Essi Rossi, national companies including Company Chameleon and Jimmy Cauty, and regional and local artists including Allie Crewe and Toni Dee Paul. We've created online content through our SICK! Digital programme, which includes a major programme of international commissions/events in public spaces in Manchester and online in partnership with Finnish Institute, DutchCulture, Dutch Embassy and local arts partners, looking at mental health and the landscape we live in.

Projects were delivered with Transport for Greater Manchester, Manchester City Libraries, Manchester City Council, SafeLives, Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Manchester, alongside, Manchester Central Library, STUN Studio, Contact, FC United, Simpson Memorial Hall, Boggart Hole Clough and HOME.

### **SICK! Commissions:**

SICK! commissions innovative cross-artform work, bringing artists together with local communities with lived experience, the health sector, community groups/charities and researchers. We create high impact/profile works, with strong legacy in GM and beyond. Our commissioning model attracts considerable international support – e.g. Finnish Institute, Government of Flanders, Dutch Performing Arts and Pro Helvetia. Our commissions are regularly exported to other international festivals.

### **SICK! Community:**

In 2021, SICK! committed to working in Moston, Harpurhey and Charlestown for 10 years to make real difference in the community. We will invest in communities and local artists and deliver year-round community-based projects, bringing international calibre artists and companies to co-create work with communities.

Our key objectives for this work are to: improve the quality and experience of the local environment and contribute to local community pride; and build bridges between communities.

Local people will participate in regular creative activity, sharing experiences and work with international, national and local artists. Projects will connect with the history of the neighbourhood and the personal and social histories of people from a range of communities, complementing other creative community activity. Programmes will be driven by our Creative Producers who will be embedded in the community, with a local office base.



## ABOUT THE ROLE AND APPLICATION PROCESS

<b>Job Title:</b>	Creative Producer (Commissioning)
<b>Employer:</b>	SICK! Productions Ltd (also known as SICK! Festival)
<b>Responsible to:</b>	CEO/Artistic Director
<b>Responsible for:</b>	Freelance staff
<b>Contract:</b>	Permanent
<b>Hours:</b>	Full time – 37.5 hours per week
<b>Holiday Entitlement:</b>	25 days per annum, plus Bank Holidays
<b>Notice Period:</b>	Two months
<b>Probationary Period:</b>	Six months
<b>Salary Range:</b>	£30,000 to £34,000 (depending on experience).
<b>Pension:</b>	The People's Pension Scheme, Employer contributions 3% gross salary
<b>Location:</b>	Working at The Sharp Project, Thorp Road, Manchester, M40 5BJ
<b>References:</b>	All offers of employment are subject to receipt of satisfactory references

**Application Deadline:** Friday 13 January 2023 at 12noon

**Interviews:** Wednesday 18 January & Thursday 19 January 2023.

### Application Process:

Please submit the following as either PDF documents or in an alternative format if you would prefer (e.g. video):

1. CV - 2 sides A4 max
2. Completed Diversity Monitoring Form (this information will be stored anonymously and separately to your application)
3. Covering letter (1500 words max) outlining how you meet the criteria in the Job Description and Personal Specification, with examples from your previous work (you will have the opportunity to expand on these examples during interview)
4. Details of two professional references with current knowledge of your experience and abilities

Please send the above to [info@sickfestival.com](mailto:info@sickfestival.com) marked **Creative Producer**

**Please contact the above address if you would like to discuss this opportunity with one of our team.**



## **JOB DESCRIPTION: CREATIVE PRODUCER (COMMISSIONING)**

**DECEMBER 2022**

### **OVERVIEW OF POST:**

The Creative Producer (Commissioning) is responsible for leading and managing the creation and presentation of new artistic projects commissioned by SICK! and the delivery of SICK! Festival. They will be responsible for instigating, developing, managing, and presenting projects with our local communities, working closely with Health and social care organisation, charities, community groups, educational institutions and other arts organisations. Working closely with the Artistic Director / CEO and the Creative Producer (Community), they will contribute to the development and delivery of Community Engagement and Social prescribing activity.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **COMMISSIONING (LEAD):**

- Lead, develop and implement the commissioning activity within the artistic strategy and artistic development plan
- Working closely with the CEO/Artistic Director, develop the artistic / creative strategy and identify themes and artists to deliver commissions that align with SICK!'s vision and strategic priorities
- Develop new ideas for future commissions, working with the CEO/Artistic Director and Creative Producer (Community) in particular and externally with artists on key themes that SICK! can influence and promote to drive greater awareness and give voice to those often, underrepresented groups
- Establish and maintain strong working relationships with external organisations, enabling them to contribute to the development of specific projects and the festival as a whole. These may include other arts organisation, academic institutions, local authorities, healthcare providers and charities
- Manage relationships with artists on commissioned work and support those artists throughout delivery of those commissions
- Provide creative development support for commissioned artists
- Manage and deliver commissioned projects within the agreed programme, priorities, timeframes, and budgets
- Manage and deliver risk assessments for commissioned projects
- Work closely with the Operations Manager to develop budgets for commissioned projects in line with organisational budgets and financial plans
- Maintain, manage and report on project budgets ensuring that projects are delivered on budget
- Work closely with the Head of Business Development to identify funding sources and develop opportunities to commission relevant projects
- Lead on the development of smaller, project-specific funding applications and contribute to larger strategic / organisational fundraising
- Lead on reporting and evaluation for commissioned projects (including internal/external as necessary)
- Audience development – Work closely with Communications Manager and the Creative Producer (Community) to review channels and use of language to maximise accessibility, messaging and engagement with SICK!

#### **PRESENTATION (LEAD):**

- Work closely with the Artistic Director / CEO and Creative Producer (Commissioning), contributing to develop the programme of SICK! Festival
- Work closely with the Operations Manager to develop budgets for SICK! Festival in line with organisational budgets and financial plans
- Working closely with the Creative Producer (Community) and the festival Production Manager to ensure that commissions are developed and ready for presentation at the relevant events on time and to the right quality
- Lead on identifying and the recruitment of commissioned artists
- Lead on the scheduling and logistics to enable artists to deliver and/or perform the work they are commissioned to deliver in the right location, time and approach to maximise audience engagement and access

- Lead on the recruitment of and liaisons with participants in collaboration with healthcare, community and charity referral partners
- Develop and deliver high quality, impactful, contextual programmes, including but not limited to symposiums, public debates, post show discussions and digital content that enables a wide range of audiences to access, engage with and explore the issues raised by the programmes, festivals and events.
- Support the use of digital content across all SICK! Presentations to maximise the accessibility, effectiveness and impact of SICK!'s message
- Lead on reporting and evaluation of SICK! festival (including internal/external as necessary)
- Sustain dialogue and engagement with audiences to check for relevance and impact and subsequently, adjust our work based on feedback and insight.

### **SOCIAL PRESCRIBING & COMMUNITY PROJECTS (SUPPORTING):**

- As appropriate support and advise the Creative Producer (Community) on the development and delivery of public outcomes from Community & Social Prescribing projects
- Support the Creative Producer (Community) in identifying contributing artists
- Where appropriate, due to sensitivities, lead on specific community engagement projects
- Share contacts for partner organisations, artists and potential participants, from commissions that may benefit from engagement with community and social prescribing projects
- Work with CEO/AD and Creative Producer (Community) to ensure that knowledge and ideas are shared effectively between programme areas
- Support Creative Producer (Community) and artists to establish relationships, to underpin the delivery of projects embedded in those communities
- Support recruitment of participants for, and the management of Community and Social Prescribing projects
- Contribute to the scheduling and logistics to enable artists to deliver and/or perform the community engagement/social prescribing work, to deliver in the right location, time and approach to maximise engagement and access.

### **GENERAL:**

- Work closely with the CEO/Artistic Director and Creative Producer (Community) to develop the artistic strategy and artistic development plan
- Work closely with the CEO/Artistic Director and Creative Producer (Community) to develop the programme of activities, events and projects in line with SICK! Strategy and Business Plan
- Contribute to the development of new concepts, themes and formats for the creation and presentation of new work
- Work with the Creative Team and the Communications Manager to develop promotional materials for events (both in Community settings and the Festival) to maximise awareness and participation
- Document and disseminate the outcomes of our activity, and work with the Communications Manager to publish and distribute outcomes
- Contribute to the embedding of SICK! work through a Legacy process, to ensure optimal value, impact and learning is gained organisationally and shared from events, projects, products, etc.
- Working jointly with the Creative Producer (Commission) to develop and deliver SICK!'s Interplay programme
- Represent SICK! at public arts, health and wellbeing contexts, events and networks to grow the profile of our work in this area and build relationships with potential partners, funders and stakeholders
- Manage and mitigate project risks and work with the rest of the team to contribute to the identification and mitigation of risks at an organisational level
- Ensure that all relevant staff are briefed on and regularly informed on the progress of projects as appropriate.
- Advise and report regularly on activity as required by the Leadership Team, Board and sub-boards, supplying any data required to meet funder reporting requirements.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS:

- Substantial experience of producing, funding and managing complex artistic projects
- Demonstrable experience and interest in working within socially engaged arts practice
- Experience in working closely with diverse communities; engaging with hard to reach audiences and participants with a range of support needs
- Knowledge of communities in Manchester and the social issues affecting these communities
- Knowledge of a range of contemporary theatre, performance and live art practices
- Experience of community engagement around production of new work
- Experience of producing projects in the public realm
- Proactive, efficient, and systematic approach to projects
- Experience of managing project budgets and financial reporting
- A strong grasp of sensitivities of working around emotionally challenging issues
- Ability to work independently and under pressure
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills – both speaking and in writing confident in the use of information technology
- Must have knowledge of equality and diversity legislation and thinking, and how it relates to production work with communities and socially engaged art.

### DESIRABLE

- Experience of recording and editing audio and video content
- Experience of managing a diverse group of stakeholders who are invested in a project/programme
- Experience of working with and supervising volunteers
- Experience of contributing to the development of a creative programme.

### FRONT PAGE CREDITS:

(top – bottom, left – right)

**Robert Softley**, *If These Spasms Could Speak*, SICK! Festival 2014

Photo Credit: Eoin Carey

**Candy Chang**, *Before I Die*, SICK! Festival 2017

Photo Credit: Trevor Coe

**Paraorchestra**, *The Nature of Why*, SICK! Festival 2019

Photo Credit: Paul Blakemore

**Jaamil Olawale Kosoko**, *#negrophobia*, SICK! Festival 2017

Photo Credit: Umi Akiyoshi