

EEA

EMERGENCY
EXIT ARTS



Recruitment Pack: **Creative Director / Chief Executive Officer**

Salary: £55,000 per annum

Registered Charity no 1004137

CHAIR'S WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in leading Emergency Exit Arts (EEA) into the next bold chapter of our story.

For over 45 years, EEA has been one of the UK's most important and imaginative outdoor arts organisations. Our charitable mission drives us to reach people where they are, in streets, neighbourhoods, parks, town squares and unexpected places – creating collective moments of wonder, pride and connection. We work with and for communities who often have the least access to the arts, empowering people to be creative, confident and connected through radical, collaborative artistic experiences.

We are now entering a pivotal moment in our evolution. Following extensive consultation with our team, trustees, artist members and external partners, we are ready to appoint a new Creative Director / CEO who will lead EEA's artistic vision, organisational strategy and culture. Guiding us into a new era of creativity, community partnership and organisational resilience.

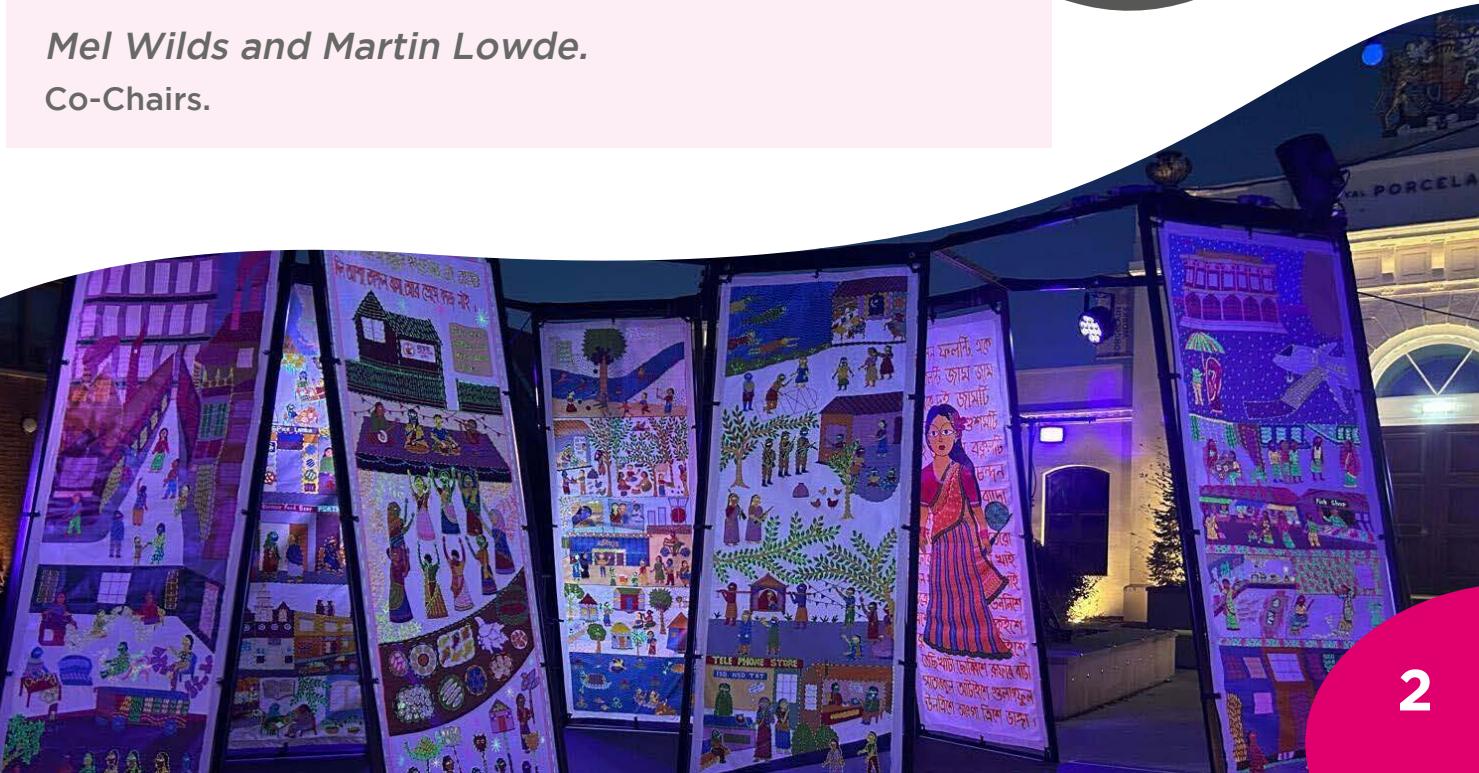
This is a rare opportunity to shape one of the UK's most distinctive and socially impactful arts charities.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Mel Wilds and Martin Lowde.
Co-Chairs.



“There’s an opportunity to be involved, to be part of something – it’s hard to take a community on a journey but EEA can”
External Partner



Founded in 1980, Emergency Exit Arts is a charity and leader in outdoor arts, celebrated for our inventiveness, community focus and commitment to bold participatory creativity. EEA is a National Portfolio Organisation and receives a grant each year from Arts Council England.

We:

- Enhance places by transforming public spaces with ambitious, surprising creative work
- Enable people to be creative through accessible, inclusive participation
- Astonish audiences with unforgettable, large-scale visual and performance events

- Collaborate deeply with communities, artists and partners
- Champion equity, access and inclusion at every level of our organisation
- Our home at Rothbury Hall, Greenwich, is both a workspace and a creative incubator – full of possibility, making, collaboration and community energy.

Where we are now:

A 2025-26 organisational review affirmed that EEA has:

- A powerful legacy of spectacular community-rooted arts
- Strong partnerships across London and the UK
- A passionate and committed staff and freelance team
- A financially stable but challenging funding environment
- A need for clearer vision, collaborative culture and strategic focus

We are ready to:

- Reassert our artistic ambition
- Deepen our work with communities
- Diversify and strengthen our fundraising
- Build on our collaborative, creative internal culture
- Develop a new multi-year strategy and vision
- Position EEA confidently as an arts charity with a compelling case for support

Our new Creative Director / CEO will play the central role in realising these ambitions.



THE ROLE



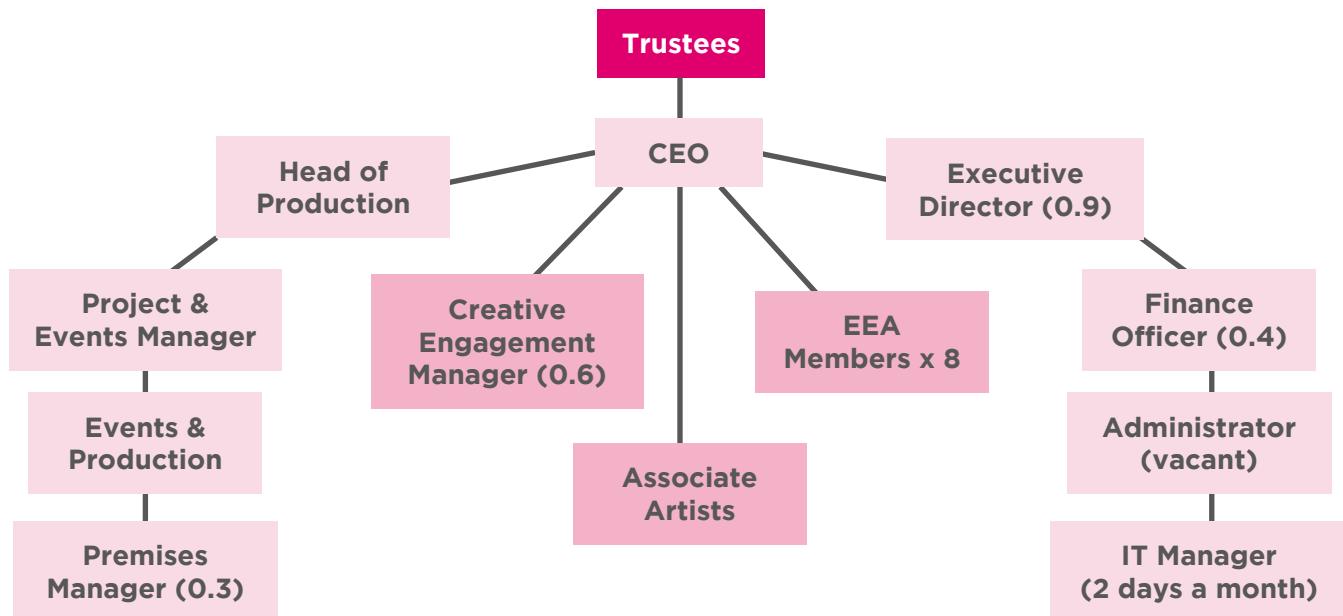
Creative Director / Chief Executive Officer

Reports to: Board of Trustees

Works closely with: Executive Director

Responsible for: Creative Producers, Executive Director, Head of Production, Creative Engagement Manager, freelance directors, designers, artists, producers and project teams. EEA currently operates a membership model for freelance artists with members supporting the organisation with policies, values and working practice.

Current organisational structure



As the senior artistic and organisational lead for EEA, you will be both:

Creative Director – shaping bold artistic direction and empowering the creativity of EEA's team, artists, communities and collaborators

Chief Executive Officer – leading organisational strategy, advocacy, partnerships, and shared executive responsibility for governance and business development

This is not about being a solo artistic auteur. The role is about leading creativity, not owning it. We are looking for a leader who can facilitate an empowered ecology of producers, artists, communities and staff where ideas thrive and collective imagination drives the work.

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

- Hold, articulate and drive EEA's artistic vision and organisational direction
- Lead and inspire a creative, collaborative, imaginative culture
- Build strong and lasting relationships with communities and partners
- Position EEA as a national leader in outdoor, participatory and socially engaged arts
- Work closely with the Executive Director to deliver a sustainable, strategic charity with financial resilience, strong governance and clear purpose

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Artistic Vision & Creative Leadership

- Lead the creation and delivery of an ambitious, inclusive and distinctive artistic programme grounded in community collaboration, creativity and relevance
- Develop a fresh, future-focused vision that builds on EEA's heritage while setting new artistic directions
- Facilitate and empower a diverse creative ecology of staff, artists, associates and community contributors
- Support producers and creative teams to conceive, design and deliver projects with imagination and excellence
- Create time and space for research, development and experimentation
- Ensure artistic work is aligned with community needs, organisational vision and funder priorities

2. Strategic Leadership & Organisational Development

In partnership with the Executive Director:

- Lead the development of a new organisational vision and multi-year strategy
- Co-develop the business plan, budgets and organisational goals
- Embed a culture of collaboration, shared decision-making and organisational learning
- Help build a representative workforce that reflects the communities we serve
- Strengthen EEA's presence and reputation as a national leader in socially engaged art



“The people who watch are active participants. Not just spectators.”





3. Community Engagement & Partnerships

- Build trusting, long-term relationships with priority communities
- Champion EEA's work externally, acting as a primary spokesperson and advocate
- Cultivate partnerships with local authorities, cultural organisations, funders, educational institutions and community groups
- Ensure EEA's work is responsive, inclusive and grounded in genuine listening

4. Fundraising & Income Generation

Shared responsibility with the Executive Director:

- Lead on shaping creative propositions for funding, partnership pitches and strategic bids
- Lead on the NPO funding applications and relationship with Arts Council England
- Develop new opportunities for trusts, foundations, individual giving and commercial income
- Strengthen organisational storytelling and vision-driven fundraising narratives



5. Governance & Leadership

- Work closely with the Board of Trustees, ensuring informed decision-making
- Support organisational reporting, evaluation and strategic risk management
- Support robust HR processes, staff well-being and organisational policies
- Ensure compliance, safeguarding, health & safety and best charitable practice

Creating moments of joy, wonder, curiosity and connection.

6. Team Leadership & Culture

- Provide inspiring, compassionate leadership to staff and freelancers
- Develop a culture of creativity, empowerment, accountability and inclusion
- Encourage professional development and nurture emerging talent
- Champion equity, diversity and anti-oppression principles internally and externally



PERSON SPECIFICATION

We welcome applications from candidates with diverse artistic, creative, community, producing or cultural leadership backgrounds. Outdoor arts experience is not essential.

ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES

Experience

- Proven leadership in an arts, cultural, community or creative organisation
- Experience developing and delivering creative programmes or productions
- Strong track record of collaborative partnership working
- Demonstrated ability to empower teams and foster collective creativity
- Experience engaging communities in participatory or socially engaged work
- Financial literacy and understanding of charity or cultural sector operating environments
- Fundraising experience (trusts, foundations, partnerships, commercial income)

Skills & Qualities

- Inspirational artistic vision and imagination
- Excellent communication, advocacy and relationship-building skills
- Ability to facilitate and empower others' creativity
- Strategic thinking and the ability to turn vision into deliverable plans
- Commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and community empowerment
- Ability to navigate complexity, lead change and hold space for differing perspectives

DESIRABLE ATTRIBUTES

- Experience working with outdoor, site-specific or large-scale participatory arts
- Experience in working in the Charity Sector,
- Experience developing business plans, strategic frameworks or organisational change
- Local knowledge of London communities
- Experience with NPO funded organisations
- A full UK driving licence



TERMS & CONDITIONS

Salary: £55,000 per annum

Contract: Full-time (open to 4 days/week / 0.8 FTE)

Location: Greenwich (minimum 3 days per week onsite)

Annual Leave: 25 days + bank holidays + TOIL, rising incrementally to 30 days. Some weekend and evening work necessary across the country

Pension: Auto-enrolment, 3% employer / 5% employee

DBS: Appointment subject to DBS check

Probation: 6 months

Notice: 1 month during probation, 3 months thereafter

TIMELINE

Application deadline: 16 March 2026, 10am

First interviews: 24 March 2026

Second interviews: 31 March 2026

Possible 3rd interview-date tbc

Ideal start date: Summer 2026 (negotiable)



HOW TO APPLY

EEA

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Please submit:

- Your CV (max 2 pages)
- A letter or video (max 3 pages / 5 minutes) responding to:
 - Why do you want to lead Emergency Exit Arts at this moment?
 - How does your experience align with the role of Creative Director / CEO?
 - How would you lead on creativity, collaboration and community impact at EEA?

*Please note – whilst artificial intelligence can be a useful tool to support your application, all examples and statements provided must be truthful, factually accurate and taken directly from your own experience

- Completed Equality & Diversity Monitoring Form

Send your application to: info@eea.org.uk with Creative Director/CEO Application in the subject line.

For an informal conversation about the role, please book a 15 minute call between the 11th and 20th February with one of our co-chairs.

Click here to book a call with **Martin Lowde**

Call availability between 9.30am and 11.30am

Click here to book a call with **Mel Wilds**

Call availability between 1pm and 3pm

For any meetings outside of these times please email info@eea.org.uk and we will try and accommodate this.

