
Head of Learning

Walk the Plank/Green Space Dark Skies

1 x Full Time Post (Fixed Term, approx. 12mths)

Job Description

JOB TITLE: Head of Learning

SALARY: £30k - £33k pa.

DURATION: Full time, 12 month fixed term contract

This post combines leading the learning for Green Space Dark Skies (see below – approx. 3 days per week) with taking the lead for Walk the Plank’s learning programme.

RESPONSIBLE TO: Creative Producer

LIAISON WITH: Key members of permanent and freelance staff, Walk the Plank’s academic partners (University of Salford, plus other HEI’s), public sector and corporate clients, stakeholders including Festival*UK2022 Arts Council England and education sector.

Equal Opportunities

Walk the Plank is committed to equal opportunities and, as part of our aim to reflect the diversity of our audiences, we actively seek applications from people from diverse communities and backgrounds, or those with unconventional career paths.



Walk the Plank is a Disability Confident Committed and Mental Health Aware Employer.

Company Information

Walk the Plank is one of the UK’s leading outdoor arts organisations with a reputation for creating innovative events in public space, and performances which engage communities in a wide range of outdoor settings. Our HQ is in Salford and the company works regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Our track record of making work that engages citizens in civic celebration is founded on ambitious creativity that connects with ordinary people. From festivals to fire gardens, site-responsive installations to parades and podcasts, the company consistently attracts acclaim and showcases talent.

We share our expertise widely, and we know how our creativity changes people’s lives. Many of our projects have learning and participation embedded within their design. We aim to develop meaningful links with local partners wherever lead in time and resource allocation enable this

to happen. Investing in learning through engagement with students - in further education, in schools and with adult learners strengthens the echoes our events leave behind.

To explore some of what we do, have a look at [our showreel](#). More information about Walk the Plank can be found on our website www.walktheplank.co.uk.

Green Space Dark Skies – journeys into the landscape

Green Space Dark Skies (GSDS) is a [Walk the Plank](#) project that has been commissioned by [Festival UK* 2022](#) - one of 10 groundbreaking commissions designed to reach millions, bring people together, and showcase UK creativity globally.

GSDS will see up to 20 spectacular events embedded in a 12-month programme of engagement that celebrates the contemporary landscapes of Britain while also flinging open the doors and welcoming people in. The project is UK wide: nine events in England, four in Scotland, four in Wales and three in Northern Ireland; and project partners include Siemens, National Parks UK and the AONB's, Extraordinary Bodies, and the University of Salford.

It is the most significant project in Walk the Plank's programme for 2021/22 and the Head of Learning will support the significant learning opportunities that underpin the project (3 days per week), building and nurturing the complex web of partnerships with individuals, communities and institutions for this exceptional project.

The successful candidate will also work strategically to explore and develop learning and engagement across the company's wider programme long term (2 days per week).

Walk the Plank is a registered charity and a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England.

KEY QUALITIES

Passionate about creating meaningful learning journeys across a wide range of projects; collaborative, and also used to working on own initiative; ability to listen well to the needs of partners and to speak eloquently about the value of our work; able to forge new partnerships while maintaining existing stakeholders; able to be entrepreneurial as well as understanding of third sector challenges; with creative flair and a willingness to innovate; an ability to manage their own time & resources and that of others; confidence-inspiring and strategic.

Role & responsibilities:

To LEAD the learning element of **Green Space Dark Skies**, developing and implementing the Learning and Participation Plan which involves working with the University of Salford and our other national partners; with other academic partners in Wales, NI and Scotland; with FE colleges, schools and with those in informal education.

To USE a variety of creative learning and teaching methods/materials to challenge ideas, foster debate and encourage the development of new skills. To proactively evaluate learning objectives and outcomes and make sound judgements on the impact of the learning experience. To engage in research/scholarly activity to remain up-to-date with developments in arts education.

To CREATE opportunities for creative learning, linked to other new & on-going projects; and to use work to NOURISH our core activities – new artists, new ideas, R&D opportunities, new collaborations coming back into the company.

To LIAISE with and support the PG Cert in Festival Production, due to be launched by the University of Salford in January 2022, with Walk the Plank as the key industry partner.

To SUPERVISE the General Manager in the management of Volunteers, Placements, Apprentices to ensure that expectations between project team and individual students/volunteers are aligned.

To work with the Executive Director and the Business Management Team (BMT) to seek INVESTMENT in our Learning programme from Trusts and Foundations, Private giving, and other innovative partnerships in the commercial and education sectors.

To ENHANCE the opportunities in terms of the links we already have with University of Salford and others eg: MMU/LIPA/CSSD/WRCMD.

To MAINTAIN & GROW a culture of learning within all Walk the Plank's activities – across all projects and core activities.

To ADVOCATE for Walk the Plank through platforms like conferences & seminars, and find ways of reinforcing our profile as a learning-focused organisation through effective PR

To EXPLORE new avenues of work – looking at the legacy of Green Space Dark Skies around training; and sustaining new partnerships created as a result of GSDS.

To SUPPORT producers to develop opportunities for learning – at prospect stage and/or through the life of a project – through regular meetings with Producers around Learning

To DIRECT project managers to offer consistency in our approach across a wide variety of learning activities.

To ENCOURAGE more sharing of expertise – eg. ensuring that the benefits of any CPD/training are felt across the company as well as the individual and disseminated across the wider WTP freelance community; and find creative ways to share expertise that already exists within the company.

Learning needs to SUSTAIN our core values of innovation and engagement and BE AMBITIOUS in terms of quality – quality of experience for our learners, quality of learning outcomes and quality of product: from a European training school to an online/in person course.

Opportunities in 2022 and beyond

1. Green Space Dark Skies – lead the learning element of this major UK-wide project working with the country producers in Wales, N, Scotland and England to maximise the impact and legacy of the project.
2. PGCE in Festival production – WTP are industry partner for this new online course which will be offered for the first time from January 2022.
3. Represent the organisation at Salford and Manchester LCEP's
4. Grimsby Festival of the Sea – placement opportunities, volunteer training and other learning projects linked to the 2022/23 festivals eg Badge Nation or similar accreditation
5. Manchester Day Parade – Elevate – work with the existing Producer to explore learning partnerships with FE colleges and schools.
6. BODY and other one-off projects – look at longer term learning partnerships with museums, science festivals and others
7. Work with BMT to develop forum(s) for internal discussion focused on company's own artistic development; and maximise profile and influence externally through conferences, seminars etc.
8. Our own artist summer schools or residencies

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Any other duties commensurate with the post and its responsibilities or as allocated by the Executive Director / Producers.

Carry out duties with due regard to Walk the Plank's Equality and Diversity Action Plan, Health and Safety Policy and other policies at all times.

Person Specification

ESSENTIAL	How this will be assessed
Experience of working in an Education or Learning context at a senior level	Letter/CV/ References
Ability to think creatively around the Walk the Plank brand and around the potential of learning across all our projects.	Interview
Experience of procuring or creating teaching materials	CV
Knowledge & experience of Trusts, Foundations and Fundraising in an Arts/Education context	Letter/CV/ Interview
Knowledge, experience and connections to the Higher Education Sector in this region and beyond - or a proven ability to make those connections	Letter/CV/ Interview
Ability to communicate persuasively and appropriately across a wide range of platforms – in writing, in person, via social media	Letter/CV/ Interview
Ability to get on with a wide variety of people, to work inclusively, and to work well within a team	Letter/CV/ Interview
Ability to advocate at a high level to draw in resources and build strategic relationships.	Interview
Ability to delegate effectively	Letter/CV
Evidence of strategic thinking and outstanding performance, delivering results within deadlines and under pressure.	Letter/CV/References
Ability to create and manage budgets, and report to Board	Letter/CV
Appropriate level of computer literacy in Microsoft Office Software particularly Word, PowerPoint, Outlook.	Letter/CV
DESIRABLE	
Proven interest in the creative sector	Letter/CV/ Interview
Empathy to the ambitions of Green Space Dark Skies	Interview
Full clean driving license	Interview

How to Apply

To apply, please send your current CV together with a supporting statement - created as a **single PDF document** - to recruitment@walktheplank.co.uk

Deadline for Application Submissions: 23 September 2021 [9 am].

Interviews will be held in the week commencing 27 October 2021.

If you would like an informal chat about this role please contact: info@walktheplank.co.uk