



Creative Communities Engagement Officer

South Asian Arts-uk (SAA-uk) is the centre of excellence and talent development hub for South Asian classical music and dance in the North.

A dynamic and resilient organisation led by innovators, for over 26 years SAA-uk has organically and proactively built expertise in talent development and cross-cultural creative practices. Over the years, SAA-uk has built robust connections with local community groups and collaborated with national organizations to deliver a diverse and culturally rich program, from early years resources to national touring commissions. With new support from Arts Council England, we're poised to elevate our commitment to community engagement even further.

Our vision is to foster an inclusive environment where diverse voices drive our governance, artistic direction, and audience development. We're excited to partner closely with our communities, ensuring their insights and participation shape our future projects and initiatives. Join us as we continue to champion excellence and innovation in every aspect of our work.

As our Creative Communities Officer, you'll be at the *heart* of discovering and connecting with South Asian communities across Leeds. Your mission? To uncover what **truly matters** to these vibrant groups and to champion the richness of South Asian culture. You'll collaborate with a dynamic team to co-create and launch groundbreaking projects that spark creativity and foster cultural connections.

In particular, you will lead our exciting 'Pop Up Culture' initiative—an innovative pilot project that's set to transform community engagement as part of our 2025-6 audience development plan. This is SAA-uk's first foray into city-wide, community-led events, and you'll play a key role in shaping it. While a deep knowledge of the arts isn't necessary, your passion for exploring, gathering insights, and driving creative thinking will be crucial.

Join us to help illuminate the diverse tapestry of our city and strengthen community bonds through inspiring and inclusive cultural experiences.

Learn more about SAA-uk and our work at: saa-uk.org

Closing Date	15th August 2024, 5pm
Interview Dates	28th – 30th August 2024
Hours	Part-time (22.5h / per week)
Salary	£28,000 pro rata (£16,800 per annum)

Main Purpose

At SAA-uk, we are passionate about preserving South Asian classical music and dance while ensuring its relevance to contemporary communities in Leeds. We're dedicated to engaging with the diverse South Asian communities in Leeds to explore how our work resonates with them and uncover opportunities for deeper engagement and collaboration.

We're looking for a Creative Communities Engagement Officer to play a pivotal role in this mission. Your key responsibilities will include:

- **Exploring Community Needs:** Conducting research to understand the needs, skills, and priorities of Leeds' diverse South Asian communities in relation to arts and culture.
- **Curating Innovative Events:** Developing and delivering a community-curated program through our 'Pop Up Culture' pilot, in collaboration with colleagues and partner organizations.
- **Informing Strategy:** Sharing insights and findings with our senior leadership team to shape the future of our Creative Communities strategy.
- **Ideal Candidate:** We're seeking an ethical and proactive individual with experience or academic preparation in community-led research and co-production. While a deep knowledge of the arts isn't required, a passion for gathering insights and creating impactful connections is essential. A flexible, organized, and professional approach will be key.

Our culture at SAA-uk is built on honesty, integrity, accountability, responsibility, resourcefulness, and resilience. We strive for excellence in all we do and are looking for someone who embodies these values and is committed to making a difference through innovative and data-driven community engagement.

Key Responsibilities

Group Together, Raise Awareness, Create Change.

As our Creative Communities Engagement Officer, you will lead the Pop-Up Culture Project, SAA-uk's new initiative to strengthen connections with local communities. This project will energise Leeds city centre and high streets with community-curated events and workshops across all 33 wards annually.

Building on the success of My Leeds 2023, which involved 33 Neighbourhood Hosts, the Pop-Up Culture Project will maintain the community spirit as LEEDS 2023 ends. Your role will be crucial in driving this project and gathering insights to shape future engagement strategies. Join us in expanding our Creative Communities programme and making a lasting impact on Leeds' cultural landscape!

Your regular tasks will include:

- Engaging with South Asian communities in Leeds to understand their arts and culture needs.
- Organising discussions and listening exercises with diverse groups.
- Helping to plan, coordinate, and execute the Pop-Up Culture Project and Creative Communities programme.
- Monitoring project progress and ensuring milestones are met.
- Archiving text, photos, and videos in the SAA-uk OneDrive system.
- Creating detailed and respectful case studies of individual stories.
- Providing insights for strategic development and supporting the Artistic Director/CEO in project planning.
- Reporting findings to senior leadership to improve the Creative Communities programme.
- Liaising with community partners, participants, and stakeholders for feedback and involvement.
- Using the ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development) model in your work.
- Coordinating with a sub-group of trustees for strategic guidance.
- Incorporating feedback and lessons learned into future planning and strategy development.

Person Specification

Essential

- Experience of creative collaboration and coproduction within communities
- Advocate of diverse South Asian arts and culture
- Strong negotiation and inter-personal skills – to be able to develop and maintain strong relationships with team members, communities’ leaders as well as individuals
- Proactively adapt to change and “shifting sands” quickly
- Excellent and sensitive communication skills – in person, over the phone and via email
- Able to learn systems quickly and streamline/refine where possible
- Demonstration of continuous professional development
- Experience of using social science methodologies to design and/or deliver community-focused or -led research

Desirable

- Experience of managing relationships with a wide range of partners (e.g. charities, local authorities, grassroots organisations, community leaders)
- Knowledge of the Leeds arts and voluntary sectors
- Knowledge and experience of South Asian traditional art forms
- Full UK valid driving licence

Terms of the brief

Salary: £28,000 pro rata (£16,800 per annum)

Start date: As soon as possible; Induction dates for the successful candidate could be as early as Monday 2nd or 9th of September 2024

Fixed term: The role is offered as a part-time fixed term contract (22.5h / per week) until March 2025 (potential for extension depending on funding).

It is important to note that this role will require evening and weekend commitments, with most of the work carried out off-site in Leeds.

Part time annual leave is 17 days or equivalent hours (not inclusive of bank holidays).

Probation period: 3 months.

Notice period: 1 month.

Working at SAA-uk

We are committed to celebrating the diversity of members of the SAA-uk Team and we believe in maximising their potential.

As a member of the SAA-uk Team you'll have access to a range of benefits.

Some of these include:

Skills Development: Access to professional and personal development, including a yearly training budget and mentorship opportunities.

Pension: Access to a competitive pension scheme, with generous employer contributions.

Work Life/Family Balance: A commitment to helping you achieve a work life balance, including flexible and remote working opportunities.

Facilities: Our office in Mabgate Mills, near the Leeds city centre, offers meeting space, parking space, and access to fast Wi-Fi.

Reward and Recognition: Competitive pay structures and reward policies.

Events: We hold events, music and dance classes, and yearly festivals, for which we will offer free access to all our Team members.

How to apply

Deadline: 15th August 2024, 5pm

Please submit your CV (no longer than 2 pages) and a one-page covering letter explaining why you are applying for this position and what you could bring to the role to info@saa-uk.org by 15th August 2024, 5pm.

Job interviews will take from the 28th to the 30th August 2024.

ACCESS and pre application

If you require any access support during the application and interview process, please contact info@saa-uk.org

If a video or audio format application process would be more accessible for you, please contact info@saa-uk.org and we will make the appropriate arrangements.

PLEASE SHARE WITH YOUR NETWORKS