

NEW WRITING NORTH

Creative Producer West End of Newcastle
30 days @ £175 per day (July-Sept 2023)

New Writing North receives funding from The Paul Hamlyn Foundation to run an ambitious three-year programme of community-driven, co-creative activity in specific Newcastle locations. We are seeking a freelance Creative Producer to lead the West End Writes programme in the Scotswood and Benwell areas of Newcastle.

The Creative Producer is pivotal to the success of the programme. They will develop partnerships with community-based organisations and relationships with individual residents for a year-round programme of activity. They will have excellent interpersonal skills and a strong track record of creative facilitation. They will have access to a flexible programme budget with which to respond to the cultural ambitions and also the needs, drivers and barriers of people in those communities. The programme invests in promise, leadership potential and ambition of people in the area.

West End Writes began in October 2022 and has grown to include a number of successful, ongoing programmes such as: Brown Girls Write, a regular creative writing programme for women of colour; World Writes, a weekly multilingual workshop programme for ESOL writers; Remembered West, a creative programme for a group of over-50s, as well as drop-in activities and a family literacy programme with a local primary school. The project engages a broad range of local residents of all ages, from talented and aspiring writers to adults with low literacy who want to share their own stories of living in the area.

We have a very impactful relationship with Excelsior Academy, one of the biggest schools in the area, having been embedded there for the past seven years. We are using this relationship-based approach to engagement as a model for our work in the West End of Newcastle. The parents and families of pupils we work with or have worked with are a key target community for this, as are the alumni of our programmes there.

The new Creative Producer will be responsible for maintaining the relationships that we have established via these programmes, as well as developing new activity that responds to community interest and is artistically ambitious in its output.

There are five principal components to this role:

- To maintain existing networks and forge new relationships with communities in and around Scotswood and Benwell through conversation, local research, drop-in sessions, detached work and partnership building
- To bring people together using creative facilitation skills, identifying opportunities for co-created cultural activity

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- To develop, in partnership with residents/participants and with New Writing North's support, a programme of creative activities, projects and ongoing provision involving a range of other artists, which reflects the needs and interests of the community
- To get to know the participants well, so that pathways for development are identified for people or groups coming through the programme according to their needs and interests
- Document and help evaluate (with some freelance support and alongside NWN staff) the programme.

The Creative Producer's practice will be generative; they will work with the community and local partners, supporting them to develop community-led infrastructure for culture. This could include partnerships with health providers and/or wellbeing organisations to explore social prescribing pathways.

Many of the communities we work with think that culture is not for them. They do not see themselves in it. They do not consider working in the cultural sector as an option. 47% of the 700 working class writers applying for a place on our A Writing Chance development programme identified with the statement 'I grew up thinking a job in the creative industries was not attainable for someone from my background'. 46% identified with 'I do not know anyone who has worked or worked in these industries' as the top two barriers to entering the creative industries.

People may express themselves artistically through social media or music or write their own poetry, but many would not take this seriously as a possible profession. Others haven't engaged artistically since school, or don't see what they do culturally as art. We think it is our job to respond to this complex picture in a variety of ways. Targeted support for people in their own communities to discover for themselves what a cultural life might be like for them is one of the ways we address this.

The programme is expected to run until September 2025. The initial contract for this role will be for July – September 2023, but we hope that the new Creative Producer will continue to work with us as a project lead for the future of West End Writes.

A programme budget will be provided.

Responsibilities:

Delivery

- Maintain existing West End Writes programmes and ensure they continue to develop in line with participant interest and need.
- Engage in local research and relationship building in the area
- Work with key partners to programme arts activity in the local area

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- Attend and support workshops and activity as part of the project
- Lead some arts-based sessions in consultation with local partners and participants
- Be the 'on the ground' contact for, and link between, the community, New Writing North and other partners
- Support individual members of the community where appropriate, both in terms of their progression and their engagement in sessions
- Run regular drop-in sessions for the local community in a central location
- Coordinate and produce relevant artistic outputs from the programme (e.g. films, music recordings, poetry collections)
- Ensure that artistic outputs are celebrated in the community and are opportunities to bring people together
- To ensure that all programmes are high quality and delivered within NWN's quality standards
- Adhere to New Writing North's Safeguarding policy.

Artistic Development

- Work with local communities on developing inclusive projects and programmes of activity
- Listen to intergenerational community members and ensure their ideas, interests and concerns are central to the opportunities we offer
- Identify opportunities to develop projects so that they achieve profile and sustainability where appropriate
- Recognise potential, ensure members of the community are given access to opportunities to develop and/or are signposted to opportunities within NWN's wider programme or the cultural programmes of other organisations
- Support annual call outs for writers and artists interested in working on this programme
- Oversee and promote our annual programme of mentoring and investment in promise in the community
- Attend regular planning meetings with NWN staff.

Project Management

- Build and maintain relationships with members of the community as well as staff at other partner organisations
- Liaise with partner staff and freelancers to organise delivery of sessions
- Undertake ongoing evaluation with community members including in-session observations and end of project evaluation using tools including narrative interviewing and questionnaires
- Produce end of project evaluation reports

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- Run an Advisory Group of local community members on a quarterly basis
- Attend regular meetings with NWN staff and other producers to analyse data collected the previous quarter, identify trends and features and plan evaluation focus for forthcoming
- To take photographs where appropriate and create social media content to promote the programme
- Report to NWN at the end of each session using an online monitoring form
- Budget Management in partnership/consultation with NWN.

Person Specification

We are looking for a creative self-starter with exceptional communication and relationship-building skills who is not afraid to take calculated risks.

They need to be confident working with a wide range of people and able to initiate contact.

They must be proactive and a creative problem-solver. It is essential that the Creative Producer is inclusive, adaptable, and responsive in their working style.

We will be using the following criteria in our selection:

- At least one year's experience of working directly with communities in statistically disadvantaged areas
- A passion for working with people and recognising and developing their potential
- Knowledge of participatory arts practice and policy
- Experience of delivering and/or producing projects in the arts
- Experience of working with community organisations
- Self-starter with the ability to demonstrate an entrepreneurial and ambitious approach to developing arts activity
- The ability to work flexibly and independently, manage competing workloads and be highly proactive
- Strong planning and organisational skills with excellent attention to detail
- Ability to demonstrate experience of building and maintaining relationships with a wide range of people
- Ability to work flexibly both with colleagues and with partners
- Ability to identify opportunities and see them through
- A passion for the arts and literature and the role they can play in helping to address social justice issues
- Knowledge of contemporary literature and current affairs
- A good knowledge of the North East region

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- The successful candidate will be required to apply for a DBS check if they don't already have one and hold their own Public Liability Insurance
- Evidence of budget management and report writing/evaluation skills.

How to apply

Please apply with the following:

- A covering letter explaining why you are interested in this residency and how you would approach the challenge which includes evidence of previous relevant experience which demonstrating your suitability for the post
- An up-to-date CV with contact details for two referees.

And submit it [here](#) by midday on Monday 5th June 2023. Interviews will take place on Monday 12th June 2023.

If you have any queries about the role or to talk it through, please contact tessdenmancleaver@newwritingnorth.com.

Tess Denman-Cleaver (Senior Programme Manager, Young People & Communities) will be available on Zoom for a chat with anyone who is interested between 4-5pm on Tuesday 24th May 2023. This is an optional session to find out more about New Writing North and the Creative Producer role. Please book [here](#).