

SKIMSTONE ARTS



Trustee Recruitment Pack
June 2017

Skimstone Arts seek Charity Trustees

Closing Date: 31 July 2017

Download Recruitment Pack: skimstone.org.uk

Skimstone Arts create collaborative theatre, music and art with artists and researchers, and develop artistic practice with diverse individuals and communities, to reflect challenges in society.

Based in Newcastle upon Tyne, since the organisation's formation Skimstone Arts has grown in reputation and influence within the regional and national arts sector. Skimstone has produced important professional touring work, and developed recognition of our Young Artist Collective (vulnerable young people aged 16 – 25) who produce high quality music, artworks, and performances.

Skimstone Arts reaches wide-ranging audiences though originally devised touring theatre, exhibitions, performances, and multi-arts work inspired by common societal challenges and themes. In turn Skimstone Arts is contributing to national debate on social challenges including dementia, isolation/loneliness, identity, and mental health.

This vital work continues with support of funders including ACE and Youth Music, strong relationships with wide reaching networks, and governance through our Board of Trustees.

Skimstone Arts is entering an exciting new phase and will soon become a registered charity and is looking to strengthen and diversify its board-level governance with the appointment of a number of new Trustees with a range of skills and experience.

Skimstone Arts is looking for 3 inspiring individuals to join the board of Trustees (in unpaid roles) to support its on-going aims and objectives, exploit new opportunities, as well as the ability to support the organisation to the next stage of its development.

If you would relish such a challenge and share a commitment to our charitable aims and objectives of supporting diverse and socially important work then we would be delighted to hear from you.

Introduction to Skimstone Arts

Skimstone Arts' mission is to create collaborative theatre, music and art with artists and researchers, and develop artistic practice with diverse individuals and communities, to reflect challenges in society.

Founded in 2007, Skimstone Arts has developed to become one of the North East's leading organisations in inclusive arts practice and the development of high-quality work responding to current social challenges, especially those concerning mental health. Our work sits across three mutually-reinforcing themes; the direct provision of **multi-arts opportunities** and support for the most socially vulnerable groups; the production of high-quality **touring work**; and contribution to **national debate on social challenges**, particularly around diversity and inclusion.



Multi-Arts Opportunities

Skimstone Arts is the only organisation in Newcastle providing a professional studio which equally supports professional artists and people experiencing social vulnerability.

We provide a regular programme of creative and professional development activities including band sessions, cross artform workshops and masterclasses, graphic design and film-making and instrumental tutorials, as well as performance and touring opportunities.

"Listening to Reality Boots and talking to the young people afterwards encapsulated everything YM stands for. I came away humbled, inspired and energised by what you were doing, musically and socially." – Clive Grant, Trustee, Youth Music

From our studio space in the centre of Newcastle's Creative Quarter we choose to recruit, work with and recognise disengaged and vulnerable individuals who are facing multiple life challenges, ranging from multiple mental health issues, isolation, autism, and socio-economic deprivation to have a right to explore the world they live in and make work we are all proud of. We provide an environment which is safe and supportive, and a programme that is challenging and professionally rigorous.

The best thing about Skimstone is we've all been through things ...gives us strength ... support ... a safe environment to be heard and listened to...and to learn and still be respected" – Skimstone Young Artists Collective Member

Touring Work

Skimstone Arts maintains an annual programme of professional touring theatre – often commissioned by **University research partners such as Edinburgh and Northumbria** – which is inspired by work around dementia. The work is toured to established small/medium scale theatres, cultural and health venues and include post-performance Q&A sessions with audiences.

In addition to touring theatre, gigs and performances by our Young Artists Collective are commissioned by partners **e.g. Trinity College London, Northumberland Music Partnership North, and Juice Festival**. The tours can involve workshops designed and run by the young artists. This aids development opportunities – artistic, professional, and personal – for the young people.



Touring work not only maintains Skimstone's reputation and outlook as a national organisation, but affords us the opportunity to take the stories we have collected to the widest possible audience. All the groups we work with – whether socially vulnerable young people, our older people's collective, or our academic partners – have stories to tell, and we can best fulfil our mission by amplifying their voices to national platform.

“Strong performances and subtle, affecting writing from artistic director Claire Webster Saaremets... a poignant lifeline to normality.” The Scotsman

National and International Debate on Social Challenges

Skimstone Arts has a network of strategic partners across academic and clinical spheres. Our ambition is to not only inform and develop our own practice and programme design by learning from these partners, but to provide a mechanism by which our various stakeholders – from socially vulnerable young people, those living with dementia, to early, mid-career artists and arts/health/cultural organisations – can be instigating and enriching the debate which has direct consequences on their, and our lives.

We create opportunities for collaboration between artists, clinicians, and researchers. The resulting partnerships gives researchers and clinicians the opportunity to work in a creative context with individuals and groups who are the focus of their work, and artists the opportunity to respond to areas of critical societal importance.

“Many thanks for today's presentation...The feedback we have had (from psychologists and psychiatrists) has been really positive and people have particularly commented on Ben's contribution. He was fantastic ... I will be formally writing to thank Ben.” – Ann Graham, Connexions LLDD Co-ordinator Newcastle City Council

Skimstone occupies an important niche in the arts landscape, by providing development and support for individuals who would otherwise never realise their artistic potential, and by sharing untold stories which bring to life dialogue around important societal challenges.

We have embarked on a new 3-year plan to build on the successes of the past, providing a road-map to a more robust, higher-profile, artistically ambitious, and impactful Skimstone for the mutual benefit of the diverse groups and individuals we exist to support and who inspire us.

You can explore more of our work at our website: <http://skimstone.org.uk/>

Funding

Skimstone Arts operates a mixed funding model and is successful in drawing down funding from sources ranging from charitable Trusts and Foundations to statutory funders including Arts Council England and Youth Music.

Skimstone Arts: People

Leadership Team:

Claire Webster Saaremets, Artistic Director

Claire established Skimstone Arts in 2007 and is committed to arts practice with vulnerable groups.

Claire's professional practice reflects 15 years work including over 50 collaborative artistic projects/commissions with more than 5000 people of all ages, regionally to internationally. Her touring multidisciplinary theatre explores contemporary and universal themes e.g. love, loss, dreams, dementia, loneliness. Claire uses artistic interventions to collect stories e.g. on public transport, care homes, studio spaces, and performs crafted work back in those same spaces and theatre/arts venues.

Claire trains artists in UK and abroad in exploring and understanding quality methodology and arts engagement practice with vulnerable people/places.

Peter Saaremets, Lead Musician

Peter is a musician and performer, and part of Skimstone Arts' Ensemble.

Peter Saaremets is an experienced musician and performer who has worked with Skimstone Arts for the last 9 years. Before joining Skimstone Arts he was experienced as a performing musician for 16 years specialising in Jazz, performing in venues across the North East. With Skimstone Arts he has devised, improvised and performed in Doorbells (Barnsley CIVIC Theatre and Northern Stage Scratch Nights, Edinburgh Festival), Peace Process-ion (Sunderland Minster / Sanctuary Arts Space Gateshead) and Cold Coffee (Edinburgh Festival), Tea-side – a Travelling Tearoom (North East of England), Time for Tea (Part of Open Heritage Days in Newcastle), Angel Train, Dust and Sojourn (Washington Arts Centre) trained with Frantic Assembly and Spymonkey at Hull Truck Theatre.

The Skimstone Team

Adam Cooper, Company Development Manager

Emma Pybus, Marketing and Communications Officer

Yvonne Dobson, Financial Administrator

Keith Hill, Sessional Musician

Liz Corney, Sessional Musician

Alex Elliot, Performer

Josep Bria Garcia, Technician

Trustees:

Craig Astley, Chair - Head of Communications at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, Craig Astley chairs Skimstone's Board and assists in leading the strategic direction of the company.

Jayne Hopkins - Jayne is a freelance trainer & consultant working nationally on asset-based approaches to improving community health and wellbeing

Wendy Scott - Cultural Development Manager for the County of Northumberland with overall responsibility for strategic cultural development including the arts, creative industries, cultural education, heritage development, strategic festivals and events.

Trustee Roles

We are looking to appoint 3 new Trustees to our board with skills, expertise in all areas and would welcome particular track-record in the following specialist areas Touring Theatre, Finance and Law.

For you, joining Skimstone Arts Board of Trustees will enable you to utilise, harness and develop skills, expertise and business acumen.

- opportunity to guide an organisation who are contributing to the national conversation around diversity and access to arts and culture
- involvement in one of the few ACE Elevate funded organisations, designated by Arts Council England as making a significant contribution to the Creative Case for Diversity
- skills in governance and leadership

For Skimstone Arts, the Board of Trustees will take on duties and responsibilities as follows

- sets the overall strategic direction, setting policy, defining objectives and setting targets and evaluating performance;
- observes the Articles of Association, charity and company law and other regulatory requirements;
- safeguards the good name and values of the organisation;
- safeguards financial stability, including approval of the annual budget and deciding on major resource issues;
- provides constructive challenge to the Directors/ Senior management team
- approves the Business Plan;
- focuses on key issues
- provides guidance on new initiatives.

Prospective Trustees: Essential Requirements

Time Commitment: 4 board meetings per year which take place at Commercial Union House, Newcastle upon Tyne. Reasonable travel costs will be accommodated.

In addition to being empathetic and supportive of Skimstone Arts aims, ethos and objectives we will expect prospective Trustees to demonstrate most of the following requirements and qualities:

- An ability to think strategically, focusing on major issues
- Experience of leadership in either private or public sectors
- Effective networking skills
- Well established professional networks
- Effective communication and advocacy skills
- A readiness and ability to play a leading role in fundraising
- Empathy with our mission and vision, including an appreciation for multi-arts (theatre, film, music, photography, visual art)
- An ability to command respect amongst regional stakeholders and national decision makers in the public and private sectors
- A wide range of skills and professional backgrounds.

Eligibility

The law places certain restrictions on becoming a charity trustee. For example, you cannot be under the age of 18, previously been removed from trusteeship of a charity by a Court or the Charity Commission, disqualified under the Company Director's Disqualification Act 1986, or been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty (unless the conviction is spent). If you are in any doubt about your eligibility, visit the Charity Commission website at www.charitycommission.gov.uk

Recruitment Process

- A diversity and monitoring form and an Expression of Interest (1 side of A4) **submitted by post or e-mail by 31 July 2017**. We are requesting applicants respond to the following questions:
 - o What interests you about Skimstone Arts?
 - o What skills, experience, and knowledge can you bring to benefit Skimstone Arts?
- Short informal interview with the Artistic Director and Chair of Trustees **throughout August, subject to scheduling and availability**

If you would like an informal conversation or to visit our studio in advance of an application please don't hesitate to get in touch with our Company Development Manager, Adam Cooper, to arrange something: adamcooper@skimstone.org.uk

Contact

To arrange an informal conversation please contact any of the following:

- Claire Webster Saarements, Artist Director, Claire@skimstone.org.uk
- Craig Astley, Chair of Trustees,
- Adam Cooper, Company Development Manager, adamcooper@skimstone.org.uk

Equal Opportunities

Skimstone Arts is working towards achieving diversity and welcomes applications from all members of the community. Skimstone Arts work to actively combat discrimination and make sure that prospective or present employees, are not treated less favourably on the grounds of: Gender / Marital Status / Employment Status / Responsibility for Children or Dependents / Race, Colour, Religion, Ethnic or National Origin / Age / Disability / Class / Sexual Orientation, or are disadvantaged by the application of any other conditions or requirements, which cannot be shown to be justified.

Data Protection

Data Protection Act, 1998

The information that you provide as part of your application will be used in the selection process only. All information about you will be securely held and access restricted to colleagues directly involved in dealing with the selection process. Unless you are appointed as a Trustee, your data will be kept for 12 months and then destroyed. By signing and submitting your application and the selection monitoring questionnaire, you are giving your consent to your personal data being stored and processed for the purposes of the Trustee selection process.