



Steve Edwin Photography

Chair of the Kent & Medway Cultural Transformation Forum & Executive

Chair of the Kent & Medway Cultural Transformation Forum & Executive

Following a recent governance review the Kent & Medway Cultural Forum and Executive are seeking an exceptional Chair to provide strong leadership at a particularly challenging time for the cultural sector. This is an exciting opportunity to broaden the work and the reach of K&MCTF and to play a visible role in supporting the growth and sustainability of the sector. The role is voluntary but expenses will be paid.

Introduction

The Kent & Medway Cultural Transformation Forum is an unincorporated group of cultural leaders who are responsible for strategic planning to develop a strong cultural offer across Kent and Medway. Their aim is to make extraordinary cultural activity available that enriches and transforms the lives of everyone. The forum covers both Kent and Medway and membership is open to anyone working either in or with the cultural and creative industries. Current membership is sector professionals, local authorities, education, HE and Arts Council England.

The Kent & Medway Cultural Transformation Executive is a smaller group of sector leaders. Membership is representative of different artforms, scales of operation and geography. The Executive oversees the strategic direction of the Forum, setting agendas with the aim of driving forward cultural transformation.

Current membership of both groups is included at Annex A.

The creative, cultural and visitor economy sector in Kent and Medway is an integral part of the plans of the Forum for transformation and vital in driving social and economic regeneration of the area through jobs, tourism, education, health & well-being.

Lockdown has shown the value of cultural and creative activity in connecting people and supporting their mental wellbeing. The effects of the pandemic have been devastating and continue to have a negative impact. The Forum has a key role to play in supporting the sector to reset and forward plan.

The work of the Forum will be key in agreeing shared priorities and encouraging strategic collaboration as we rethink and redesign models of practice and explore new ways to engage with the public.

Background and Context

The story of arts and creativity in Kent and Medway in the last 10 years has been an extraordinary journey and includes the cultural renaissance of East Kent and in particular, Ashford, Canterbury Margate and Folkestone, exponential growth in the number of Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations, development of large-scale partnership projects like Pioneering Places, England's Creative Coast and the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, Medway's ambition to be City Of Culture 2025 and a significant rise in the number of creative businesses locating here.

The Kent and Medway Cultural Transformation Forum was established in 2013 as Kent and Medway Cultural Transformation Board and was renamed in 2020 following a governance review. It was formed through a coming together of cultural leaders with the common purpose of moving the Kent and Medway cultural sector to a more ambitious and sustainable way of working. Set within a disparate geographical region the group initiated collaborative working arrangements with the aim to maximise culture's impact on regeneration and place-making and influence local, regional and national strategy.

The group has contributed to the significantly increased visibility of the cultural sector in strategic planning and influencing the Local Economic Partnership. It has supported development of a county-wide cultural strategy that sets out the shared ambitions of partners and has developed a network of strategic relationships which have led to large scale collaborative projects. Pioneering Places East Kent is researching, innovating and testing new approaches to place making, England's Creative Coast will bring about a step change in cultural tourism and a vision for a Thames Estuary Production Corridor has been successful in securing £4.3m investment through the Cultural Development Fund. It has also been successful in establishing cross sector partnerships, for example with public health and the visitor economy. To date, Cultural Transformation Board activity has generated in excess of £10m funding into the Kent and Medway cultural sector.

K&MCTF responded rapidly to the Covid-19 pandemic which has had a significant impact on the sector and its future sustainability. More regular meetings were convened to share and address challenges and experiences. The meetings were strongly valued by the sector and have led to valuable information sharing and joint projects. There is a close working relationship between K&MCTF, Kent County Council and Medway Council and the County Council provides significant support to the Forum. The Forum however operates independently of both councils.

Ambitions & Objectives

Workshop sessions with existing members have led to the articulation and agreement of the following ambitions for the Forum:

- Grow its role as a trusted advocate, influencing national and regional agendas from a position of authority underpinned by research and a proven record in project delivery
- Recognised nationally and internationally as a transferable model of good practice in cultural leadership across a dispersed geographic area
- An agile place-based cultural partnership
- A financially sustainable model, able to develop new income streams
- Occupy a space in the cultural ecology that does not duplicate, but contributes to cultural organisations stretched resources
- Generate new ideas that catalyse collaboration across the breadth of the sector
- Commission research
- Develop and deliver new projects
- Collect data driven evidence that captures the value created by the sector, sustaining support for investment in arts and culture

Role

The Chair will support both the Forum and the Executive and will remain in post for a four year term. The Chair is supported in their role by Kent County Council's Culture & Creative Economy Service. Secretariat for both the Forum and Executive is provided by Kent County Council.

The Chair's role is to provide leadership, representation and advocacy for the Kent Cultural sector, the Forum and its objectives, and the Executive and its objectives, locally, nationally, and internationally.

The Chair will:

- Lead the Executive and the Forum
- Work with KCC to horizon scan and set agendas for the Executive

- Work with the Executive to agree agendas for the Forum
- Manage and direct meetings of both groups.
- Develop and maintain relationships and collaborations with other sector organisations
- Support the Forum to build and maintain relationships with a range of other partners and stakeholders
- Encourage and facilitate communication between the Executive and Forum;
- Oversee Forum and Executive recruitment and development
- Ensure that the skills and expertise of all members are fully utilised.

Person Specification

The Chair will have:

- Vision with a passion for culture and creativity
- Some Board level experience
- Excellent communication and advocacy skills, and enthusiasm to represent the Forum and Executive across a wide range of stakeholders
- The ability to think and act strategically
- The ability to influence others and encourage delivery of the cultural strategy
- The ability to develop and maintain genuine partnerships
- Understanding and knowledge of the Kent & Medway cultural landscape, including both the opportunities and challenges
- Understanding and knowledge of the wider national cultural landscape, including both the opportunities and challenges

Time Commitment

Meeting dates for the Executive and Forum are set in advance by Kent County Council's Culture and Creative Economy Service.

A minimum of six meetings of the Executive and a minimum of two meetings of the Forum will be held each year plus additional meetings and events may be convened for specific purposes.

Regular update meetings between the Chair and Kent County Council's Culture and Creative Economy Service will also be scheduled.

How to Apply

Application is by CV and brief supporting statement outlining the reasons for your interest in the post and why you believe yourself to be suitable. Please include your full contact details, including telephone numbers and email address. Applications should be emailed to arts@kent.gov.uk with **K&MCTF Chair recruitment** in the subject line.

If you would like an informal conversation about this opportunity, in confidence, please email Alastair Upton, Chief Executive, Creative Folkestone alastairupton@creativefolkestone.org.uk

Applications should be submitted by 9.00am Tuesday 1 June 2021

Interviews will be held w/c 14 June 2021

The successful applicant will be invited to take up their responsibilities from 1 July 2021

Forum Membership

John-Jackson	Almond	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Suzanne	Andrade	Theatre 1927
Keely	Augustus	Lyrical Arts
Dawn	Badland	Applause Rural Touring
Victoria	Barlow	Maidstone Borough Council
Peter	Bolton	Kent Music
Samantha	Bowen	SE Museums Development Programme
Hollie	Coffey	Visit Kent
Barbara	Cooper	KCC
Paul	Cowell	Medway Council
Jo	Crowley	Theatre 1927
Steph	Dickinson	Pie Factory Music
Catherine	Herbert	Whitstable Biennale
Peter	Heslip	Arts Council England
Richard	Holdsworth	Chatham Historic Dockyard
Sue	Jones	Whitstable Biennale
Lucy	Keeley	Kent County Council
Jon	Linstrum	Arts Council England
Katie	McGown	Canterbury Christchurch University
Janice	McGuinness	People United
Lucy	Medhurst	Ideas Test
Geoff	Miles	Maidstone Studios
Michele	Moubarak	Canterbury City Council
Jo	Nolan	Screen South
Melanie	Norris	Gravesham Borough Council
Victoria	Pomery	Turner Contemporary
Beatrice	Prosser-Snelling	Artwork
Ian	Ross	Jasmin Vardimon Company
Verne	Sanderson	Medway Council
Gurvinder	Sandhur	Cohesion Plus
Deborah	Shaw	Marlow Theatre
David	Smith	Kent County Council
Kirsty	Sulston	Royal Opera House
Eni	Timi-Biu	Open School East
Bethan	Tomlinson	StrangeFace
Alastair	Upton	Creative Folkestone
Deidre	Wells	Visit Kent
Tony	Witton	Kent County Council

Executive Membership

Dawn	Badland	Applause Rural Touring
Lucy	Keeley	Kent County Council
Janice	McGuinness	People United
Victoria	Pomery	Turner Contemporary
Ian	Ross	Jasmin Vardimon Company
Alastair	Upton	Creative Folkestone
Tony	Witton	Kent County Council