

## **Artistic Director/Joint CEO (3 days per week initially)**

Arts Catalyst is looking to appoint a new Artistic Director/Joint CEO, to develop its programme and establish the organisation in Sheffield, where it will be relocating from its current home in London over the next two years. This is an exciting opportunity for an ambitious, imaginative individual to take one of the UK's leading art and research organisations forward into the next phase of its development and to take an active role in shaping its artistic future.

Over 25 years, Arts Catalyst has established a reputation for commissioning bold and experimental art that expands art practice into domains commonly associated with science and specialist research, and for its unique curatorial model of transdisciplinary co-inquiry that brings together artists, scientists, communities and interest groups for long-term, thematic programmes. Arts Catalyst supports artists at pivotal stages in their careers, providing opportunities to develop projects and create ambitious new artworks.

Currently based King's Cross, London, Arts Catalyst is at the start of a process planning a strategic relocation to the city of Sheffield, with the transition expected to be complete by the end of 2020. Over the coming year, Arts Catalyst will begin the process of embedding itself within Sheffield's cultural landscape through a programme of activity in the city.

The ideal candidate will be based in the Sheffield area (and willing to travel to London from time-to-time) or based in London with a view to relocating to Sheffield within a two-year timeframe. The candidate may be an artist, curator or other creative leader in the contemporary art sector with a collaborative approach to working. They will have strong networks in the UK and a proven interest in transdisciplinary art and artistically driven research.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

Reports to:	Arts Catalyst Board of Trustees
Responsible for:	Programme Curator, associate curators, artists and creative teams
Hours:	3 days per week initially
Salary:	£22,800 (£38k pro rata) per annum
Workplace:	Based in Sheffield with occasional visits to London. Or based in London and willing to travel and relocate to Sheffield within two years.

## **Background**

Arts Catalyst is one of the UK's most distinctive arts commissioning organisations. Based in London and working nationally and internationally, its work has been distinguished by ambitious artists' commissions that experimentally and critically engage with science. In its 25 years, Arts Catalyst has commissioned more than 160 artists' projects, including major new works by Tomás Saraceno, Otolith

Group, Aleksandra Mir, Critical Art Ensemble, Marko Peljhan, Susan Schuppli, Ariel Guzik, and Carey Young, and produced numerous exhibitions, events, performances and publications, collaborating with major art galleries, museums and universities.

Formerly non-building based, developing projects and exhibitions in partnership with galleries, museums and other public spaces, in 2016 Arts Catalyst set up the Centre for Art, Science and Technology in King's Cross, London, where it incubates new work and curates exhibitions of new works and works-in-progress, as well as producing and touring work nationally and sometimes internationally.

The founder and former Artistic Director/CEO of Arts Catalyst, Nicola Triscott, departed the organisation in April 2019 after being appointed as the new Chief Executive of FACT (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology), Liverpool. The Board is taking this opportunity to restructure the leadership of Arts Catalyst, sharing this between the new Artistic Director and the current Executive Director, Claudia Lastra.

**The 2019 team consists of:**

- Executive Director, Claudia Lastra
- Programme Curator, Anna Santomauro
- Communications Officer, Poppy Cockburn
- Development and Events Coordinator, Diane Edwards

**Freelancers and associates include:**

- Radical Ancestry Associate Curator, Annie Jael Kwan
- Nuclear Culture Associate Curator, Ele Carpenter
- Invigilators
- Technicians

Arts Catalyst is proud to be an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation, and is also supported by a range of different funders and sources, including the Wellcome Trust, the European Commission, Higher Education and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation.

Recent artists we have supported, commissioned and exhibited: Larry Achiampong and David Blandy, Tuguldur Yondomjamts, Tom James, Fiona Crisp, Mission//Misplaced Memory, Dubmorphology, Ruth Levene, Neal White, Lise Autogena and Joshua Portway, Nabil Ahmed and Don't Follow the Wind. In 2019 we are commissioning, exhibiting and partnering with Otolith Collective (as part of the Undisciplinary residency programme), Marwa Arsanios, Paloma Polo, Lorenzo Sandoval, They Are Here (Harun Morrison and Helen Walker) and Ignacio Acosta.

The team is supported by a dynamic Board of Trustees and an Advisory Group.

**Mission**

Arts Catalyst is a nonprofit contemporary arts organisation that commissions and produces transdisciplinary art and research. We activate new ideas, conversations and transformative experiences across science and culture, engaging people in a dynamic response to our changing world.

## **Purpose of the Role**

- Set the strategic long-term artistic vision for the organisation and provide artistic leadership.
- Ensure Arts Catalyst maintains its position as a leading commissioner of new transdisciplinary art and a supporter of experimental art practice.
- Ensure that supporting artists and audiences from diverse backgrounds forms an essential component of the artistic vision.
- Work with the Executive Director to set the strategic direction of the company and ensure a sustainable business model for Arts Catalyst in its new location.
- Develop an artistic programme focused in Sheffield and South Yorkshire and oversea and contribute to the programme at the Arts Catalyst's King's Cross Centre, working in partnership with the Programme Curator.
- Work with the Executive Director to promote and maintain an organisational culture which values high standards, diversity, collaboration, experimentation and a critical perspective.
- Develop key strategic partnerships with organisations in Sheffield and beyond, including cultural organisations, universities and public bodies.

The partnership with the Executive Director is key to the role. The Executive Director will lead on the strategic business management of the organisation as well as overseeing its operations, finances, HR and strategic income generation, funding partnerships and relationships.

## **Main Duties and Responsibilities**

### **Artistic Programme**

- Develop and oversee delivery of an ambitious and innovative programme of commissioned artworks and projects that are timely and relevant, working with the Programme Curator, artists and associate curators. This programme is likely to include exhibitions, community engagement processes, symposia, documentation, archive materials, publications and communications strategies that ensure maximum possible audience reach and impact for Arts Catalyst programmes.
- Develop and ensure a programme balanced across the home region, national and international activities to ensure Arts Catalyst visibility and impact.
- Develop and enhance Arts Catalyst's network of professional art, science and research contacts and partnerships.
- Foster collaborations between artists, scientists and researchers with external organisations and research institutions.
- Ensure that Arts Catalyst's programme reflects the diversity of contemporary society.

### **Strategic**

- With the Executive Director, develop strategic options and proposals for Arts Catalyst in the light of changing trends in art, culture, science, society, policy, education, wider government initiatives and technological development.
- Alongside the Executive Director, work to articulate Arts Catalyst's future vision.
- Develop and maintain effective partnership working with staff, artists, scientists and experts, volunteers, and a wide range of external partners, funders and stakeholders.
- Support and work with the Board of Trustees, sub-committees and advisory group.

### **Communications**

- Work with the Executive Director and Communications Officer to oversee marketing and communications, brand and audience development and targets,

- Represent and promote Arts Catalyst externally in meetings with key stakeholders and through public speaking, lectures, writing, media interviews or other activities.

### **Income Generation**

- With the Executive Director, ensure that Arts Catalyst has sustainable sources of income from a range of sources to meet its current and future financial needs, identifying and developing new economic opportunities within the organisation's remit and in keeping with its charitable aims and objectives.
- To develop the organisational and project related funding strategy and to closely support fundraising activities.
- Support the preparation of funding bids and applications, build funder relationships
- Work with the Executive Director to deliver and continue to develop the organisation's ongoing business plan.

### **Leadership and management**

- Undertake line management responsibilities for the Programme Curator and freelance curatorial staff jointly with the Executive Director, interview and appoint candidates for posts and actively promote professional development of staff.
- Lead and participate in team and programming meetings.
- Help staff to realise their full potential to maximise results and opportunities for the organisation.
- With the Executive Director, strive towards ensuring Arts Catalyst's Board, staff and programme reflect the organisation's diversity ambitions and implement Arts Catalyst's equal opportunities and diversity policies.
- Attend and co-deliver Board and advisory group meetings.
- Attend openings, events, and other Arts Catalyst events as required.
- Adhere to and implement Arts Catalyst's policies, including data protection, environmental, and health and safety.

### **Finance**

- With the Executive Director, develop and monitor annual budgets appropriate for the ambitions of the artistic programme, Business Plan objectives and Arts Council and other funding agreements.

*This list of responsibilities is not exhaustive and the Artistic Director may be required to perform duties outside of this as operationally required and at the discretion of the Board.*

### **After 12 months in the role the Artistic Director will have successfully:**

- Shaped and started implementing the strategy for 2020-2026. With a 4-year business plan in place (to 2022), there will be an element of implementation combined with opportunity to develop new strands and programmes.
- Formed strong working relationships with the core team of Executive Director, Programme Curator and Communications Officer and with the Board of Trustees.
- Produced some preliminary activities in Sheffield and developed and started to implement the 2020/21 programme.
- Been identified internally and externally as the new Arts Catalyst Artistic Director, having built and enhanced relationships with key stakeholders.
- Played an active role in raising the profile of Arts Catalyst.
- Begun to build strong links within Sheffield and the region.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Required:

- Minimum 6 to 8 years' proven track record of working in or within the arts as a curator, creative producer, lead artist, or similar.
- The vision, imagination, ambition and passion to lead Arts Catalyst.
- Knowledge and experience of commissioning/developing new work that expands artistic practice across other fields and disciplines.
- Experience of commissioning/developing new work and programmes that speak to and reflect today's diverse society.
- Productive and wide ranging contacts in the UK contemporary art sector.
- Experience in working with HEIs and international partners.
- Experience in successful fundraising for both small and large-scale projects and programmes.
- Experience of working with artists to develop their practices and careers.
- Experience of and willingness to contribute to all areas of Arts Catalyst activities across commissioning, exhibitions, events, community engagement, professional development, research, digital commissions and publications.
- An interest in the social, cultural and financial context within which Arts Catalyst operates.
- A genuine and demonstrable commitment to maintaining the broadening of cultural diversity and access across all areas of Arts Catalyst.
- Outstanding communication skills.
- Experience working in a small to mid-scale contemporary art organisation.
- Based in the Sheffield area or willing to relocate there in due course.

### Desirable (but not essential) qualities, skills and experience:

- Knowledge/experience of national/international touring and co-productions.
- Experience working in partnership with Higher Education Institutions.
- Experience of non-arts fundraising. For example, developing grants with science and technology trusts.
- Curating experience in a transdisciplinary field.

### Essential Competencies

- Ability to provide artistic and managerial leadership.
- Ability to work flexibly and collaboratively.
- Willingness to be part of a small, hands-on team.
- Ability to form effective partnerships internally and externally.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to network effectively.
- Strong writing abilities.
- Ability to inspire and motivate stakeholders, team, artists and people outside the arts.
- Empathy with our mission and values.
- Commitment to diversity and equality.
- Professional and with high standards.
- Able to multi-task, delegate and prioritise.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Holidays: 5.6 weeks per annum (16.8 days)  
Probation: Six months

Period of notice: Three months in writing

Access: Arts Catalyst will make every reasonable adjustment to the office or to working arrangements so as to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities. Please discuss your access needs with us at any stage in the application process.

Equal Opportunities: Arts Catalyst is committed to being an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from all sections of the community.

## **TO APPLY**

To apply please outline your skills and experience in accordance with the person specification with your approach to the role of Artistic Director.

Application by letter (no longer than 3 A4 pages) with a copy of your CV should be submitted in an email attachment to [opportunities@artscatalyst.org](mailto:opportunities@artscatalyst.org) and should also include the Equal Opportunities form downloadable from the website or [here](#).

For any queries regarding the role please contact Claudia Lastra, Executive Director at Arts Catalyst: [claudia.lastra@artscatalyst.org](mailto:claudia.lastra@artscatalyst.org).

Short-listed candidates will be asked to present a provisional year's programme. The presentation should comprise explorative research themes and programmes, events, related budgets, and sources of funding. Our current programmatic research strands are outlined on the next page.

We regret that we are not able to respond to every application.

## ABOUT ARTS CATALYST'S PROGRAMME

Arts Catalyst's programme emerges from thematic strands that form the basis of our longer term research. We are keen to work with someone who is interested in taking aspects of these strands of research forward whilst developing new ones.

### Test Sites

Test Sites is Arts Catalyst's series of inquiries into matters of concern connected with environmental change – such as flooding, pollution, and species loss – and their impact on local culture and the health and wellbeing of our ecosystems and ourselves. At each site, we are inviting local people and groups to be part of art-centred co-inquiries, working with artists, scientists, and other experts.

In 2018-19, we worked with artists Ruth Levene, interactive arts studio Invisible Flock as well as anthropologist Megan Clinch in the Calder Valley. Over Summer 2019, we will present two artworks at arts festivals in the region, whilst hosting a parallel exhibition in our London space exploring planetary health.



### Radical Ancestry

Radical Ancestry explores deep histories of human migration and contemporary biopolitics of race. Through a programme of cross-disciplinary research, artists' commissions, exhibitions, and discussion events, we critique the re-emergence of damaging myths of biological concepts of race and "othering" of migrants and inquire into how history and science provide alternative perspective on today's politics of migration.

From January-March 2019, we hosted the second exhibition in this long-term project, which comprised an installation by artists Larry Achiampong and David Blandy. Genetic Automata was a film-based commission that set out to explore notions of race and categorisation in the age of avatars, video games and DNA ancestry testing. An accompanying programme of talks and workshops drew out some of the project's central themes and concerns.



Larry Achiampong & David Blandy, *Genetic Automata*, 2019, installation view

## Extractable Matters

Despite the de-territorialised nature of contemporary economy, borders remain central to the architectures through which contemporary capitalism is framed and to the organisation of capitalist space and time (Mezzadra, Neilson 2013).

Beyond the conventional geopolitical territories that they define, borders proliferate within cities and territories, across economic interests and in the form of fluxes of trade and labour force.

Extractable Matters is Arts Catalyst's new thematic strand exploring extractive capitalism and the politics that underlie its spatial infrastructure and logistics. Starting with an exhibition in Autumn 2019 by artist Ignacio Acosta the programme will reflect on the extraction and exploitation of both material and immaterial resources, such as primary minerals, labour, data, affects and cultures. The programme examines how borders, conflicts and trades emerging from extractive infrastructures shape contemporary subjectivities and form uneven maps of political agency and power.

## Artist commissions and residencies

A central focus of our work is to commission new artists' projects, particularly inquiry-led, and to set up residencies and other placement opportunities. These include residencies at scientific facilities and, through international partnerships (such as with S-AIR, Sapporo, Japan), residencies for UK artists abroad, and opportunities for international artists to undertake residencies at the Arts Catalyst Centre.





Mongolian artist Tuguldur Yondonjamts during a research residency at Arts Catalyst's London Centre, October, 2018

## Undisciplinarity

Undisciplinarity is a peer-led residency programme providing artists, curators and practitioners with a space for dialogue and learning in an informal, dynamic environment. Undisciplinarity serves as a laboratory from which to discuss, develop and reflect on transdisciplinary practices and discourse.

The pilot residency took place in April 2019. The selected residents were Aliyah Hasinah, Angela Chan and Priya Jay.