



**Winchester Poetry Festival  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR(s)  
Role Description**

**DEADLINE FOR RESPONSES EXTENDED**

**1. SUMMARY**

The trustees of Winchester Poetry Festival (Registered Charity No: 1150997) are seeking to appoint an Artistic Director (s), following the announcement by Sasha Dugdale, current Artistic Director, that she wishes to step down after six successful years in the role.

**2. ABOUT WINCHESTER POETRY FESTIVAL** <https://www.winchesterpoetryfestival.org/>

International in outlook and rooted in our community, Winchester Poetry Festival (WPF) was established in 2013. Its mission is to bring poetry and poets to new audiences and to introduce audiences to new and diverse poets. We achieve this through a biennial festival, an annual poetry prize, an education and outreach programme, and a range of initiatives, events, and celebrations, including, currently, our Poet on the High Street programme. This **community heritage poet in residence** initiative is running over five months (from June 2021 completing in November 2021).

Traditionally, WPF delivers its festival over a long weekend in October. The 2020 festival was planned for October 2020 but had to be postponed due to Covid restrictions. While it had been hoped to return to a fully live festival for October 2021, continuing uncertainty led to WPF exploring different and innovative ways of presenting its festival programme. We decided therefore to stretch the festival across a five-month period presenting a series of Festival 'Shots' (online workshops, seminars and conversations) running monthly from June and culminating in the live festival in October 2021. Sasha Dugdale, outgoing Artistic Director, has, over the five-months, programmed a diverse range of both national and international poets and workshop leaders, as well as a number of conversations and discussions that bring new insights into poetry.

Full details are available [here](#).

Winchester Poetry Festival is supported by Arts Council England (Project Grant) and applies for funding and support from a range of charitable trusts and foundations as well as sponsorship. Our Poet on the High Street Programme for instance is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Winchester BID, and Winchester City Council alongside individual donations received through a successful Crowdfunding campaign.

Madelaine Smith is the Festival Manager (part-time/freelance) and there is an excellent board of trustees (see [link](#)) who are active in their work to support and grow the reach and diversity of the festival and its related programme of education and outreach work.

### 3. THE BRIEF

The trustees of Winchester Poetry Festival now wish to appoint an Artistic Director(s) to work with them on the vision, development and programming of the 2023 festival and future activity. This is a creative and dynamic role to take forward what has become a very successful poetry festival. The appointment is made on a freelance basis. **Applications are welcome both from individuals as well as from those wishing to apply jointly.**

#### Role Description

<b>Reports to:</b>	Board of trustees (day-to-day via the chair, Jane Bryant)
<b>Attends:</b>	Board meetings and meetings with trustees as required Promotional and taster events as required Festival weekend throughout
<b>Relationships:</b>	Effective cooperation with the Festival Manager Initial contact for key creative partners (unless held by specific trustee) Initial contact for all artists until contracted Key liaison as identified on festival activity schedule

#### Tasks

- Work to support the festival business planning processes, specifically the artistic visioning and associated development
- Propose a concept / theme(s) for the festival for approval by the trustees
- Draw up a programme of events for the festival working within the budget and time frameworks set by the board
- Identify and secure the commitment of key creative partners, and in particular, national and international poets/organisations
- Identify, brief, and secure the commitment of poets and other contributors to the festival
- Contribute to drafting the principal funding application(s)
- Contribute copy for festival publicity and national promotion, and contribute to social media
- Attend the festival and host key events
- Contribute to post festival evaluation

#### Person Specification

##### Essential

- Well versed in contemporary poetry and with extensive active networks among poets, publishers, and literary organisations e.g. other festivals and poetry promoters, Poetry Society, and the literature development community
- Developmental approach to audiences
- Demonstrable understanding of what makes a successful festival
- Flair for programming
- Interest in partnerships and ability to work collaboratively
- Strong organisational skills
- Confident, flexible, and approachable with a personable approach to engaging with the public

- Strong interpersonal skills to work effectively with the festival and its funders and partners, both face-to-face and via telephone and video conference
- Understanding of the importance and value of an organisational business plan to achieve specified outcomes, including artistic, social, educational, and financial outcomes.

#### **Desirable**

- Experience and understanding of evaluation and how this can inform future planning
- Experience of working with a board of trustees
- Experience of PR / media work
- Experience in event management
- Experience of fundraising
- Understanding of the current structure of the cultural sector

#### **Fee**

This is a freelance role for which a fixed fee is available. Since the WPF's festival is biennial, the role of Artistic Director is an appointment over a two-year period for which a total fee is available, in principle, over the two years (e.g., January 2022 to December 2023) as follows:

- a. £5000 for a single appointee
- b. £7000 for a jointly shared approach (£3500 each)

Expenses would be on top of this and would be negotiated

The next festival series will take place in 2023.

For 2022/23, trustees will commit to one year of the fee (50%) in the first instance, with the second year to be confirmed subject to successful bids for grants including to Arts Council England.

For subsequent two-year periods, the fee will be at a level to be determined by trustees by April of the year preceding the festival year.

Winchester Poetry Festival is looking for a creative, innovative, and flexible approach. The precise contractual details will be negotiated and confirmed in discussion with the appointee(s).

In addition to the core programming role, there may be scope for additional activities, relevant to the WPF business plan. Such activities would be by agreement with trustees, and, subject to successful fundraising, may attract additional payment.

#### **4. TIMELINE**

- Responses to this brief, clearly titled Application for Artistic Director, should be submitted by email to Madelaine Smith **by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November at 5 pm** (new extended deadline) at: [hello@winchesterpoetryfestival.org](mailto:hello@winchesterpoetryfestival.org)
- Shortlisted\* candidates will be informed by **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> November**
- Interviews will be held on **Monday 15 November** (in Winchester)
- Appointment confirmed by early December with proposed starting date/contracted hours to be agreed.

\*Our current Artistic Director, Sasha Dugdale, is willing, subject to her availability, to talk with **shortlisted** candidates about the role. Details of the process to do this will be shared with shortlisted candidates by 10<sup>th</sup> November.

**NB** The successful candidate will be invited to attend if/as possible, a WPF business planning day in Winchester on **Monday 6 December 2021**. This will discuss and begin to shape a new 4-year business plan.

## **5. HOW TO SUBMIT A RESPONSE**

Please provide the following information by the deadline, now extended, of Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November at 5 pm:

- Personal statement addressing the role specification and highlighting the relevance of your work and experience to the role
- Current CV
- Contact details of two referees (referees will not be contacted without your permission)
- Confirmation of public liability insurance.

To discuss the role description, or for more information, please contact [hello@winchesterpoetryfestival.org](mailto:hello@winchesterpoetryfestival.org)

## **6. MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS**

The appointee will be contracted by Winchester Poetry Festival. He or she will be expected to work closely with Festival Manager, Madelaine Smith, reporting to the chair of Winchester Poetry Festival, Jane Bryant, with wider accountability to the board of trustees

## **7. OTHER INFORMATION**

### **Equal Opportunities**

Winchester Poetry Festival has an active equal opportunities policy. No job or role applicant or employee shall receive less favourable, or more favourable, treatment on the grounds of age, care of dependents, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion & belief, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background & status.

### **Confidentiality**

The appointed individual(s) are required to maintain the confidentiality of all private or privileged information which they may be party to during the contract, and they are expected to work on behalf of Winchester Poetry Festival. They should also work in accordance with WPF's Conflict of Interest policy.

### **Safeguarding**

Ensuring the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is embedded in all the work that WPF undertakes. Working in accordance with our safeguarding policy applies to all who work or volunteer with, on behalf of, and in association with us.

Thank you very much for your interest.

**18<sup>th</sup> October 2021**