# Chief Executive Officer

## November 2026



## Welcome

Thank you for your interest in this position at Brewery Arts. This pack provides background information on the organisation and a job description for the role of Chief Executive Officer.
If you would like any further information, or would like an informal discussion, please contact us to arrange a call.  We look forward to hearing from you.

## Overview

Brewery Arts is Cumbria's flagship arts centre, presenting a dynamic programme of live music, theatre, comedy, film, festivals, exhibitions and creative learning. Based in a historic building in Kendal, Brewery Arts has been a vital resource for the community for over 50 years. We are now seeking a Chief Executive Officer/Artistic Director will provide the strategic, cultural and organisational leadership necessary to secure the Brewery's long-term success and develop its ambitions for the future.



*The Kendal Brewery Arts Centre Trust Ltd. is registered in England & Wales no. 03927101 and is a registered charity in England & Wales no. 01086789.*
*The Kendal Catering Company Ltd. is registered in England & Wales no. 01064847.*

## Company Information

The Kendal Brewery Arts Centre Trust Ltd (T/A Brewery Arts) is a Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee. The trading subsidiary is the Kendal Catering Company Ltd. Both companies are governed by a voluntary Board of Trustees.

We welcome approximately 150,000 people each year and host major festivals, including the annual Kendal Mountain Festival. We are an Arts Council England National Portfolio organisation and a Strategic Cultural Partner of Westmorland & Furness Council. We also receive ongoing support from Kendal Town Council and the Brewery Arts Centre Endowment Trust. We are members of BFI Film Hub North and currently receive Strategic Award funding. Funding from regular grants makes up 15% of our income and the remaining 85% is generated through ticket sales, memberships, donations and commercial trading revenue through venue hire, catering and hospitality. The annual turnover for Brewery Arts is £2.4m.

## Mission, Vision & Values

Brewery Arts mission is to engage and inspire the community and the next generation. To enrich lives through culture and provide wide ranging opportunities for creative participation in the arts.

We present extraordinary experiences in music, film and performing arts - from across the globe and the community - to wide audiences in the region. Our engagement and learning programmes empower people of all ages to create and celebrate culture in all its forms. Children and young people are inspired and encouraged to develop a lifelong love of the arts, build talent, skills and confidence, and discover pathways to the creative industries.

Our vision is to continue evolving as one of the most innovative arts organisations in the UK, inspiring even more people to live, work and create in Kendal and the region. We are a critical resource for the local community, a catalyst for regeneration, and a destination for national and international visitors.

### Values

- Excellence - creating extraordinary cultural experiences that enrich lives
- Innovation - keeping pace with new developments in our sector and in society
- Inclusion - championing diverse communities that are currently underrepresented
- Sustainability - securing a strong future for our organisation and the environment
- Collaboration - increasing our impact through great partnerships and teamwork

# Job Overview

| | |
|---|---|
| Reports to: | Board of Trustees, through the Chair |
| Responsible for: | Senior Leadership Team and overall executive leadership of Brewery Arts |
| Salary: | Up to £65000 |
| Hours: | Full time, 40 hours per week |
| Holidays: | 6 weeks increasing to 7 weeks after three years |
| Contract: | Permanent |
| Probationary Period: | 6 months |
| Notice period: | 12 weeks |
| Location: | On site in Kendal, with some opportunities for occasional remote working |

## Purpose of the Role

Working with the Board of Trustees, the CEO will establish and deliver a compelling vision for the organisation, ensuring that artistic ambition, public benefit and financial sustainability are mutually reinforcing.

The CEO will be responsible for the overall direction, performance and development of the Brewery, leading a talented team of creative, operational and commercial professionals. They will champion artistic excellence and innovation, strengthen relationships with audiences and communities, develop new partnerships and opportunities, and ensure the organisation remains relevant, resilient and ambitious in a changing cultural landscape.

The CEO is not expected to personally programme the Brewery's artistic activities but must demonstrate the cultural judgement, creative ambition and leadership necessary to shape and champion a distinctive artistic vision.

The role requires an individual who combines a genuine commitment to the arts and their public value with the strategic, commercial and organisational capabilities to lead a complex, multidisciplinary cultural institution.

## Principal Responsibilities

### Strategic Leadership & Organisational Development

The CEO will lead the development and implementation of the Brewery's strategic vision, ensuring the organisation continues to evolve in response to changing cultural, social and economic circumstances.

Working closely with the Board and senior leadership team, they will:

- Develop and deliver a clear organisational strategy, supported by effective business leadership and planning, financial management and performance evaluation.
- Lead organisational development and transformational change, ensuring the Brewery has the structures, capabilities and resources necessary to achieve its ambitions.

- Establish a sustainable balance between artistic activity, commercial enterprise, creative learning, community engagement and wider public benefit.
- Identify opportunities for growth, innovation, collaboration and investment, assessing these against the organisation's charitable purpose and financial capacity.
- Ensure strategic decisions are informed by a strong understanding of audiences, communities, the cultural sector and the wider operating environment.
- Foster a culture of ambition, collaboration, accountability and continuous improvement throughout the organisation.

The CEO will be expected to look beyond the immediate operational demands of the organisation and maintain a clear focus on its long-term development.

**Artistic & Cultural Leadership**

The CEO will be responsible for ensuring the Brewery maintains a distinctive, ambitious and relevant artistic and cultural identity.

Working through the senior creative and programming team, they will provide the vision, strategic direction and organisational support necessary to deliver a high-quality multidisciplinary programme.

They will:

- Establish and champion an artistic vision that reflects the Brewery's purpose, values and ambitions.
- Provide strategic leadership of the artistic programme, supporting and empowering specialist staff to exercise creative judgement and expertise.
- Ensure the programme balances artistic excellence, popular appeal, creative experimentation and opportunities for audiences to encounter new work.
- Support the development of artists and creative practitioners, including opportunities for commissioning, collaboration, talent development and the presentation of new work.
- Ensure creative learning, participation and community engagement are integral to the Brewery's cultural purpose and artistic identity.
- Develop opportunities for new artistic partnerships, collaborations and innovative approaches to cultural programming.
- Promote artistic excellence, diversity of expression and equitable access to cultural opportunities.
- Ensure the Brewery remains responsive to developments in contemporary culture, artistic practice and audience behaviour.

The CEO will be an informed and credible advocate for the arts, able to engage confidently with artists, producers, cultural organisations and creative partners.

Artistic leadership will be exercised through vision, judgement, collaboration and the development of others, rather than through direct responsibility for every programming decision.

**Financial Sustainability & Commercial Development**

The CEO will hold overall executive responsibility for the financial performance, sustainability and commercial development of the Brewery and its trading subsidiary (Kendal Catering Company).

Recognising the organisation's mixed-income model, they will ensure that earned income, public investment, philanthropy and other funding sources collectively support its charitable purpose and long-term ambitions.

They will:

- Develop and deliver a sustainable financial and business model, ensuring effective financial planning, budgeting, reporting and control.
- Provide strategic leadership across the Brewery's commercial activities, including hospitality, cinema, ticketing, venue hire and other earned-income operations.
- Identify and develop new income-generating opportunities, partnerships and commercial ventures.
- Lead the development of fundraising and income diversification strategies, including relationships with public funders, trusts and foundations, individual private donors and corporate partners.
- Lead on the development of a Capital investment plan, together with opportunities for funding to implement the proposals.
- Ensure appropriate financial oversight of the Brewery's trading activities and subsidiary operations.
- Maintain effective systems for managing financial risk, organisational reserves, investment and capital expenditure.
- Support the senior leadership team in developing commercial awareness and financial accountability across all areas of activity.
- Ensure financial decisions are informed by the relationship between commercial performance, artistic ambition and public benefit.

The CEO will be expected to demonstrate entrepreneurial judgement and an ability to make informed decisions about investment, risk and opportunity.

**People, Culture & Organisational Leadership**

The CEO will lead and develop an effective, collaborative and inclusive organisation in which staff, artists and volunteers are supported to contribute their best work.

They will:

- Lead, motivate and develop the senior leadership team, establishing clear responsibilities, delegated authority and accountability.
- Foster a positive organisational culture characterised by trust, openness, collaboration and mutual respect.
- Ensure the Brewery attracts, develops and retains talented people across its creative, operational and commercial activities.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the organisation, embedding these commitments in recruitment, employment practices, programming and audience engagement.
- Maintain constructive relationships with staff, volunteers, recognised trade unions and other employee representatives.
- Support professional development, succession planning and the development of future organisational leaders.
- Ensure appropriate policies and practices are in place to support staff wellbeing, safeguarding, fair employment and a safe working environment.
- Lead the organisation through periods of change with clarity, sensitivity and effective communication.

The CEO will be responsible for creating the conditions in which creative ambition and operational excellence can flourish together.

**Place, Partnerships & External Leadership**

The CEO will be a prominent advocate for Brewery Arts and its contribution to the cultural life of Kendal, Cumbria and the wider region.

They will develop the organisation's position as a valued cultural institution, strengthening its relationships with communities, public bodies, cultural organisations, educational institutions and commercial partners.

They will:

- Represent and champion Brewery Arts locally, regionally and nationally, building its profile, reputation and influence.
- Develop strategic relationships with local authorities, Arts Council England and other public agencies and funding bodies.
- Strengthen partnerships with cultural organisations, artists, educational institutions, businesses and community groups.
- Identify opportunities for the Brewery to contribute to wider cultural development, creative industries growth, place-making and regional collaboration.
- Ensure the Brewery remains connected to the needs, interests and aspirations of the communities it serves.
- Champion the role of culture in supporting individual wellbeing, community life, education and economic development.
- Develop opportunities for collaboration and investment that extend the Brewery's reach, relevance and impact.

The CEO will be expected to demonstrate a strong understanding of the relationship between cultural organisations and the places in which they operate.

They will be an effective ambassador for the Brewery, capable of building confidence among partners, stakeholders, funders and the wider public.

**Audiences, Participation & Public Benefit**

The CEO will ensure that audiences and communities remain central to the Brewery's purpose and future development.

They will:

- Lead the development of an ambitious and evidence-informed approach to audience development and engagement.
- Ensure the Brewery is welcoming, accessible and relevant to the diverse communities it serves.
- Support the development of creative learning, participation and outreach programmes that provide meaningful opportunities for people of different ages and backgrounds.
- Develop approaches to reaching new and underserved audiences, including younger people and those who experience barriers to cultural participation.
- Ensure the organisation understands and responds to changing patterns of cultural engagement and audience behaviour.
- Establish effective approaches to measuring and communicating the cultural, social and economic impact of the Brewery's work.

**Governance, Risk & Organisational Accountability**

The CEO will be accountable to the Board of Trustees for the effective management, performance and development of the organisation.

They will:

- Work closely with the Chair and Board to develop organisational strategy and translate agreed priorities into effective executive action.
- Provide clear, accurate and timely information to support effective governance and informed decision-making.
- Ensure appropriate systems are in place for financial management, risk assessment, internal control and organisational performance.
- Maintain compliance with relevant charitable, company, employment, health and safety, licensing, safeguarding and data protection requirements.
- Ensure the effective management, maintenance and development of the Brewery's buildings, facilities and physical assets.
- Lead the organisation's approach to environmental responsibility and sustainability.
- Maintain effective relationships with auditors, regulators, professional advisers and other relevant bodies.
- Support the Board in maintaining high standards of governance, transparency and accountability.

The CEO will attend Board meetings and relevant committees, providing advice and recommendations while respecting the distinction between executive management and trustee responsibilities.

**Initial Priorities**

During the first 12–18 months, the CEO will be expected to:

**Establish a clear strategic direction.** Work with the Board, staff team and stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of the Brewery's future ambitions, priorities and organisational development needs.

**Strengthen financial sustainability.** Review the organisation's operating and income model, identifying opportunities to improve resilience, commercial performance and investment in artistic activity.

**Develop a distinctive cultural vision.** Work with the creative team to establish a coherent artistic direction that builds on the Brewery's strengths while identifying opportunities for innovation, collaboration and new audiences.

**Build organisational capacity.** Review leadership structures, internal systems and organisational culture, ensuring the Brewery is equipped to deliver its ambitions.

**Strengthen the Brewery's external position.** Develop strategic relationships and partnerships that enhance the organisation's cultural influence, civic contribution and future investment opportunities.

***This list is not exhaustive. The organisation may evolve and your duties may be amended. There may also be occasions where you are required to undertake additional tasks as necessary to meet the needs of the business.***

## Person Specification

We are seeking an exceptional leader who combines cultural ambition with strong organisational and commercial judgement.

The successful candidate will understand the value of the arts in people's lives and recognise the potential of a multidisciplinary cultural organisation to contribute to the communities and places it serves.

They will bring the experience, confidence and imagination to lead the Brewery through its next phase of development.

We welcome applications from individuals with substantial leadership experience across the cultural, creative and related sectors. Previous experience as a Chief Executive or Artistic Director is not essential, though a demonstrable background in artistic or creative leadership is.

**Essential**

- Significant experience of leading an organisation, substantial programme or complex area of activity.
- A demonstrable ability to develop and deliver organisational strategy, lead and manage transformative change and translate ambition into achievable plans.
- Experience of leading and developing multidisciplinary teams, with the ability to establish effective organisational cultures and leadership structures.
- A strong understanding of the arts and cultural sector, including the role of cultural organisations in supporting artistic practice, audiences and communities.
- The ability to establish, articulate and champion a compelling artistic and cultural vision.
- An understanding of contemporary cultural practice, audience development and the importance of participation, access and inclusion.
- The judgement and confidence to support, challenge and empower creative specialists without needing to personally direct every aspect of artistic programming.
- Significant experience of financial management, including responsibility for substantial budgets, financial planning and organisational performance.
- Strong commercial judgement, with experience of developing income, managing financial risk and identifying opportunities for organisational sustainability.
- An understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with mixed-income organisations, including the relationship between commercial activity, public funding and charitable purpose.
- A successful track record of developing and maintaining productive relationships with external partners, stakeholders and funders.
- Experience of leading facility a review, developing funding opportunities for capital programmes and managing associated stakeholders.
- Excellent communication, advocacy and influencing skills, with the ability to represent an organisation credibly and persuasively.
- An understanding of the relationship between culture, communities, education, economic development and place.
- Experience of working within effective governance and accountability structures.
- An understanding of organisational risk, regulatory responsibilities and the principles of sound financial and operational management.
- The ability to work constructively with a Board or equivalent governing body, providing transparent reporting and sound strategic advice.

**Desirable**

- Leadership experience within a multidisciplinary arts centre, cultural venue, festival, creative organisation or comparable public-facing institution.
- Experience of working within the charitable or publicly funded cultural sector.
- Experience of fundraising, philanthropy, sponsorship or securing significant external investment.
- Experience of overseeing commercial trading operations.
- Experience of organisational transformation, capital development or significant strategic change.
- Knowledge of the cultural landscape of Cumbria, the North West and the wider UK.

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- **Vision and ambition:** The ability to see the Brewery's potential, articulate a compelling future and inspire others to contribute to its development.
- **Integrity and sound judgement:** A principled and thoughtful approach to leadership, with the confidence to make difficult decisions and take responsibility for their consequences.
- **Cultural curiosity:** A genuine interest in artistic practice, contemporary culture, creativity and the changing relationship between cultural organisations and their audiences.
- **Commercial and entrepreneurial thinking:** The imagination to identify opportunities and the discipline to assess their financial and organisational implications.
- **Empathy and collaborative leadership:** An ability to build trust, listen to different perspectives, develop others and create an inclusive and supportive working environment.
- **Resilience and adaptability:** The capacity to navigate complexity, uncertainty and competing demands while maintaining a clear strategic direction.
- **Commitment to public benefit:** A belief in the importance of accessible cultural opportunities and the contribution of the arts to individual and community life.

Candidates from all sectors and backgrounds are highly welcomed. We especially welcome and encourage applications from people with backgrounds currently underrepresented in our staff team, particularly people who are black, brown or marginalised, people from the LGBTQ+ community, or people who are disabled.

# How to Apply

Please download and complete an Application Form from the website and send it by email to Hannah Sinclair at: recruitment@breweryarts.co.uk

| | |
|---|---|
| **Deadline for applications:** | **Monday 14 December 2026 at 12pm** |
| **First Interviews:** | **Monday 11 January 2027** |
| **Second Interviews:** | **Tuesday 19 January 2027** |

If you would like an informal discussion before making your application, please contact:

Adrian Leather, Chair of Governors on aleather@activelancashire.org.uk