

**Post** Executive Director (Permanent)

**Reporting to** Chair of Trustees

**Salary** £42,000 per annum (pro rata) + pension

**Hours** 16-24 hours per week 0.4-0.6 FTE

**Location** Studio Madlove, Margate, Kent

*A 'pain in the arse', 'disgusting' and 'not entertaining' disability artist and activist is looking for a savvy, thoughtful and proactive Executive Director to join Studio Madlove at an exciting moment in the development of the company's work nationally and internationally.*

*Would you like to help organise a march of 150 mental health disabled young people through Manchester?*

*Ever dreamt of making art in Margate that is about supporting amazingly creative disabled people who don't call themselves 'artists' or 'talk about their practice' or how much this or that has sold for (vomit emoji)?*

*Do you wish mental health was seen as something to acknowledge, not be frightened of? As something natural and even at times something positive? How about doing that with teenagers locked in hospital during the pandemic?*

*Do you love reading and learning about radical culture, politics, aesthetics, health, ecology, disability - particularly from those with lived experience of being badass?*

*Are you bored of ableism?*

## **Madlove**

With roots in activism and radical art, the vacuum cleaner has created one-man interventions and large-scale actions as well as performance, installation and film. His work has been shown in galleries, theatres, hospitals and schools and has appeared on streets, within social movements and in public spaces nationally and internationally.

Madlove is the company that supports the work of the vacuum cleaner (James Leadbitter) - a UK based artist and activist who has been making candid, provocative and playful work since 2003. His work combines Mad Pride and disability justice organising, direct action and deep ecology, but always with a lightness and silliness. Over the last 12 years he has focused on crip aesthetics, design of mad spaces, and lived experience organising. Often working with large groups including young people, health professionals and communities, his art and activism aims to challenge and change how mental health is understood, treated and experienced.

With the Madlove team, the vacuum cleaner works with people facing challenges with their mental health and experience of the failures of the mental health system. It can be demanding, emotional and amazing bringing their work and voices into inter/nationally respected and critically acclaimed art spaces such as Manchester International Festival, Chisenhale Gallery and the National Gallery of Indonesia. Recent support for our work includes Wellcome Collection and Greater London Authority. We are a new Arts Council England NPO, (we're not sure how long that will last, but make hay and all that..)

We've been working with Beki Bateson as Madlove's Executive Producer in a very part-time freelance way since 2020. We are now looking to find an ambitious team player to work alongside James and help take the company into its next phase and the future. The new Executive Director role will support the delivery of artistic projects that help shift experiences of mental health and develop an innovative and responsive practice. The ideal candidate is someone who is highly self motivated, enthusiastic and flexible. We expect the successful candidate to work from the Madlove studio in Margate with the rest of the team (Studio Manager, Producer, Admin Assistant/bookkeeper and sometimes a Whippet called Doris). The organisation is supported by five expert trustees.

### **What we need you to do**

Working in partnership with the vacuum cleaner, the main purpose of this new role is to provide Madlove with strategic, tender, bold and radical leadership. You will lead the team and oversee organisational and finance functions. You will work closely with the Board of Trustees, Madlove's public

and private funders and our diverse range of partners. We also work with a huge range of freelancers across the world, who also need support, excellent working conditions and accountable management.

This is a key leadership role at our burgeoning studio by the sea - one that will inspire and support the Madlove team and those we work with. You will be joining Madlove at a critical and exciting time as we embed (de)growth to support our ambitious projects and radical ethics and as Executive Director you will guide Madlove into this next phase.

You will be someone who sees the big picture, but also knows when it is right to zoom into the details, and be able to lead an organisation through all the necessary steps to create ambitious work. You are a highly skilled listener but also know when and how to be demanding, when to be soft and push things forward. You draw energy from bold disability art, aware of all the joys and complexities of large scale, longform, participatory work with disabled young people and other artists. You understand the timelines, emotional labour and significant cost of making this work brilliantly and safely in a world where funding is decreasing and demands are increasing. You know how to support a disabled team and manage an intimate and happy workplace. You will build on the vacuum cleaners significant profile and experience and have a pivotal influence on Madlove's means of production.

## **Main Tasks**

### **Values and ethics**

- Promoting and aligning our ethics and values.
- Creating disabled and crip ways of working internally and promoting and defending this with partners, commissioners and others.
- Creating an internal work culture that balances the team's needs with the demands of those we serve.
- With the lead artist, navigating the risks and challenges of being an activist and political organisation in the current climate.
- Bravely navigating the challenges of the increased corporatisation of the arts, whilst still creating the right conditions for bold, large scale international work.

### **Strategy and Planning**

- Ensure the delivery of Madlove's artistic vision by evolving and implementing a dynamic organisational strategy with the lead artist and the Board of Trustees.
- Regularly review our business plan ensuring we operate as a radical

and sustainable charity, monitoring process, impact and learning in ways that suit us, not funders and non-disabled folk.

- Work with the lead artist on making of projects that have national and international impact.
- Support and develop the team to be confident and work efficiently; supervising forward planning and prioritisation.

### **Fundraising and Development**

- Lead on and implement Madlove's fundraising strategy, developed by Adapt for Arts, setting and achieving annual targets.
- Develop and deliver all funding applications (with external consultants where necessary) with support from the Studio Manager, Producer and the Trustees of Madlove.
- Within our ethical framework, identify and nurture new opportunities for income generation that will support current and future ambitions in line, including funding from public and private sources and relevant tax reliefs.

### **Leadership, Management and Advocacy**

- Regular liaison with the Co-Chairs of the Madlove Board and the Finance Committee.
- With the Studio Manager, be the lead contact with the Finance Committee, ensuring they receive regular and accurate information.
- With the Studio Manager, ensure all team members have the resources and information required to support and deliver their individual briefs and that professional development and HR procedures are in place and delivered.
- Represent and advocate for Madlove amongst the culture and health sectors and our stakeholders, developing profile and networks to support our work.
- Develop an appropriate practice for radical governance along with the lead artist and Trustees.

### **Finance and Governance**

- Lead on governance matters, support on Board development and recruitment, efficiently communicate with the board in order to inform the decision making process and make best use of their expertise.
- Oversee organisational budgets, forecasts and scenario planning with the Studio Manager and monitor and advise on risk, cashflow, reserves and audits ensuring timely and resourceful delivery.
- Oversee regular and accurate reporting to the Board and Finance Committee on strategy, development, staffing and finance.
- Oversee compliance with relevant regulatory requirements and legislation, undertaken by Studio Manager.

## **Producing**

- Lead on negotiations with project partners; securing agreements that are fair, thorough and robust, encompassing all financial considerations and ensuring ideal presentation conditions.
- Regular liaison with and support of the Producer in delivery of projects.
- Support project budget development and monitor delivery, with the Producer.
- Lead on safeguarding requirements and act as Safeguarding Officer.

## **Person Specification**

You will be a confident leader and manager with significant experience in strategic planning, generating income and developing effective relationships. With a successful track record working at a senior level within the cultural sector, you are calm when faced with challenges, and have a sense of humour and values that align with ours.

## **Essential**

- Knows how to work with artists and has an understanding of how artists make process-led work.
- A leadership approach that combines innovation and care with a pragmatic and rigorous approach to organisational management.
- Ability to lead and inspire a team, manage staff, develop a positive culture and work productively with a Board of Trustees.
- Experience in scenario planning, business plan development and the setting of a long-term strategy.
- Experience of partnership working, including individuals, organisations and public bodies.
- Ability to represent an organisation to a broad range of stakeholders.
- Strong diplomacy and astute negotiation skills, proven experience of using a fair and ethical approach to negotiating complex terms with artists, partners and other stakeholders.
- Experience in taking financial responsibility for organisations and/or major projects including setting and controlling budgets.
- Evidence of successful fundraising through public and private grant applications.
- A knowledge of current developments within the art and mental health settings with an extensive network of experienced colleagues in the arts sector in the UK and internationally.
- Commitment to equity of access and opportunity, cultivating an inclusive and representative organisation and broader creative sector.
- Knowledge of the current legislative framework and good practice guidance for charities and limited companies.
- Excellent writing and communication skills.

## **Desirable**

- Experience in delivering projects for the NHS, including managing the complexity and challenges this entails.
- Many of our projects involve working directly with vulnerable adults and children, this may include working in Mental Health hospitals or other challenging environments. Awareness of your own stress and psychological wellbeing is critical and being active and clear if moments are demanding or too much is important.

## **Other**

- 27 days holiday (pro rata) annually, excluding bank holidays.
- 6 month probationary period.
- 3 month notice period.
- Duvet days.
- Home/beach working days are occasionally required.
- We are happy to explore a working pattern to suit your circumstances based around the hours required for the role.
- If you would find a phased start to the position preferable based on your current work/life situation we would be happy to discuss.

## **To apply**

Please send a maximum 4 page CV and 2 page covering letter as PDFs to [katie@thevacuumcleaner.co.uk](mailto:katie@thevacuumcleaner.co.uk). Please address the following in your application along with anything else you wish to tell us about your experiences and appetite for this role:

1. Highlight your key interests and experiences in relation to Madlove and the artistic practices, societal issues, and cultural values the organisation's work represents?
2. Outline how you would approach this role, particularly your ideas on leadership and your 'ways of working'?
3. What do you believe you can contribute to Madlove and what can Madlove contribute to you?

If you would like to discuss the role prior to applying please email the Studio Manager - [katie@thevacuumcleaner.co.uk](mailto:katie@thevacuumcleaner.co.uk) to arrange a time to speak with our current freelance Executive Producer or Co-chair of Trustees.

**Deadline for applications - 5pm Tuesday 2 July 2024.**

## **Interviews**

- Interviews will be held at Studio Madlove in Margate.
- First round (max 1hr) Wednesday 10 July.
- Second round Wednesday 16 July
- Shortlisted candidates for first round interviews will be marked against criteria based on their application.
- Majority of questions can be sent prior to the interview.
- Reasonable travel costs may be claimed if invited to interview.
- As a disabled led company we know that however hard we work there are always things for us to learn, there are still barriers for anyone applying. We aren't going to get this perfect but we really want to learn and do better. We also want to work to remove any barriers you experience - please email Studio Manager [katie@thevacuumcleaner.co.uk](mailto:katie@thevacuumcleaner.co.uk) - Katie is happy to respond via text, call or video call to work this through with you.