

## Digital Arts Manager Information for Applicants

### About Phoenix

Phoenix is a rapidly growing charity whose purpose is to enrich lives and celebrate diversity and ambition in film and art. The Phoenix Square venue is a hub for digital arts, creative media and independent cinema in Leicester's Cultural Quarter where pre-COVID annual participation had grown to 220,000. We also engage communities in diverse neighbourhoods and locations through digital arts and film making.

Phoenix was established as a theatre in 1962 and incorporated as a charity in 1989. It is one of Leicester's most popular and long-lasting cultural organisations. In 2009, Phoenix moved to a new venue **Phoenix Square** - an arts-led regeneration initiative in a rundown part of the city that has since transformed into St. Georges Cultural Quarter.

Phoenix Square was developed to be a centre of digital culture and the focus of the cultural programme changed to one of digital arts, film and education. Throughout its history the charity has sustained an ethos of cultural innovation and support for emerging talent whilst firmly anchoring itself in the affections of the community.

Phoenix joined Arts Council England's (ACE) portfolio of strategically important arts organisations in 2012. The theme that pervades our arts programme is an exploration of the impact of technology on society and arts itself.

### Inclusion: At the Heart of Phoenix

We are working hard to make sure that Phoenix is an inclusive and welcoming place for everyone – a place that is representative of the communities we serve that celebrates diversity and provides equality of opportunity.

For us, inclusion is about creating an environment where everyone feels they belong. To help us achieve this we aim to listen and learn, to be open to ideas and to take action to understand people's needs and get them involved – especially those from groups under-represented in the arts.

We particularly welcome applications from Asian, Black, and Minority Ethnic candidates, candidates with disabilities, and female candidates.

### Phoenix Arts Programme

The arts programme is forward looking and important because it explores the impact of technology on culture and society. The pace of technologically driven change continues to accelerate, creating huge benefits but also disruptions. It is also having a huge impact on the creation, presentation, and accessibility of new forms of artistic expression for all ages and particularly the young. Creativity and engagement through digital technologies and platforms is natural and ubiquitous among the young and across cultural and social demographics.

This will increase in the years ahead, making our programme ever more relevant to a wider range of people. We commission and support artists to present work in a dedicated gallery as well as other spaces in the city and online. We work with artists who bring ideas and skills together in ways that are exciting, thought-provoking, and engaged with the critical discourse of digital culture, while focussing on works that are relevant to Leicester, reflecting the diversity of the city.

Whilst exploring the impact of technology on culture and society, the arts programme deals with themes that are important to our audience such as identity, dislocation, and the environment.

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Through these mediums we engage a wide range of people. We believe Phoenix has a unique role in developing digital arts and independent cinema. The arts and cinema programme intersect to include work by emerging filmmakers and digital media artists. We work with national and international partners to present touring work alongside that commissioned by Phoenix.

Over the past decade, our art programme has established a reputation for bringing some of the world's most exciting digital artists to Leicester, including Julian Oliver, Semiconductor and Anab Jain. We have also developed a track record for supporting emerging artists at a local, national and international level to develop ambitious new works and experiment with new technologies and approaches.

### Arts engagement

Arts audiences and participants are mostly drawn from Leicester and the greater urban area, although activity across the year draws engagement regionally, nationally, and internationally. Over the years, we have established a loyal following for the arts programme.

At its core will be the dedicated visitors who spend time at Phoenix on a regular basis. They are a diverse group in age and cultural background who are keen to explore narratives that resonate with their experiences and inspire their curiosity. We also know that they are drawn to creative innovation, particularly in new technologies that offer a spectacular or extraordinary experience.

The city is home to pockets of significant exclusion and deprivation - ranking as the 21st most deprived local authority, with some wards amongst the most deprived in the country. Our strategy includes working in particular city neighbourhoods and other locations in the city to broaden our reach. This includes creative technology workshops for children and families.

An important strand of the arts programme is our work for children and families. This includes a popular programme of creative technology workshops run as drop-in events at Phoenix Square and at community venues. The workshops are designed to engage children in creativity using accessible "lo fi" technologies combined with craft and play.

Our programmes for artists and filmmakers provide opportunities to build professional practice through skills development, training, mentoring from artists of international and national standing, regular networking and showcasing opportunities, and commissions that engage practitioners and audiences with our cultural programme.

Recently, we launched REAL Initiative – an exciting new project to fast track the growth of entrepreneur filmmakers and digital artists in Leicester/shire that will run between spring 2022 and June 2023: [realinitiative.phoenix.org.uk](https://realinitiative.phoenix.org.uk)

### Quality, Funding and Evaluation

We aim to improve continuously through a mixture of self-evaluation, peer and independent assessment, and participant surveys and feedback. Arts Council England recognises the quality and inclusiveness of our arts programme as Strong through its Creative Case for Diversity, and British Film Institute recognises the quality and diversity of our film programme awarding us its Screen Diversity Mark of good practice.

Arts Council England provides the core funding of the arts programme as an annual grant of **£82k** a year. This covers staff costs and a year-round programme of gallery exhibitions, workshops, and on-line activity. The arts programme is promoted by digital and print communications as part of Phoenix's overall marketing budget.

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We have been entrepreneurial in making this comparatively modest core funding go a long way by working in partnerships, raising additional funds, and carefully balancing the investment across commissioned work, touring exhibitions and support for local artists.

Phoenix has a long-lasting multifaceted partnership with De Montfort University. In the arts programme this has resulted in the annual ART-AI festival (now part of the UK National Science Festival Network) and experimental digital and audio-visual art produced with leading cultural producers and researchers at the University.

### Opportunity

The new Digital Arts Manager will join us at a very exciting time as we near completion of a major capital project to expand the Phoenix Square venue. The capital project is one of the largest investments in digital culture in the Midlands for many years.

It will double the size of the art gallery creating a more visible and accessible space, add two new cinemas, increase and remodel spaces for learning and creativity, and expand the café and events spaces. The development will enable a significant expansion of our film, digital art and education activities and audience: [www.phoenix.org.uk/phoenix2020](http://www.phoenix.org.uk/phoenix2020)

The capital development will create a gallery that is a much larger, more visible, and accessible space. The new open entranceway will lead directly from the main concourse of the venue into Gallery 1, an 'introductory' space that is roughly the same size as the existing gallery. From here audiences will access Gallery 2, a state-of-the-art gallery designed specifically for showing creative media work. These new spaces represent a step change in our capability to exhibit work and engage audiences. The gallery's cutting edge presentation facilities include 4K projection and an outward facing media wall that will act as a 'shop window' for the space.

The expansion will also include two new 70-seat cinema spaces that will significantly increase the scope and ambition of our film programme, doubling our screen capacity, as well as a dedicated learning space for workshops, courses, and school-visits, a new, fully equipped creative media studio, a remodelled and much larger café bar, and a flexible events space.

We have an important role to play in Arts Council England's new strategy Let's Create: [www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/our-strategy-2020-2030](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/our-strategy-2020-2030)

We believe we can have a special role playing to our strengths and opportunities as an innovative arts organisation that is international in outlook and relies on established long-term collaborations with universities and other arts organisations.

In our local area we have a particular contribution to make in ensuring that everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life. We will continue to prioritise our outreach work in areas where people feel excluded or see little relevance in publicly funded arts.

Phoenix is currently applying to Arts Council England's **2023-26 Investment Programme**.

We are looking for someone who can build on our existing strengths, contribute to the development of innovative creative technologies programming, working closely with artists and collaborating with partners to expand the reach and identity of the Phoenix arts programme.

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### How to Apply

We are excited to be recruiting a Digital Arts Manager to deliver a step change in the ambition, quality, and relevance of our arts programme. We particularly welcome applications from Asian, Black, and Minority Ethnic candidates, candidates with disabilities, and female candidates.

The successful candidate will be responsible for curating an innovative exhibitions programme, in consultation with key stakeholders, communities and partners, and for developing a programme of learning and artist development that provides multiple opportunities for Leicester's diverse communities to deepen their engagement with Phoenix.

People interested in applying should review our on-line arts programme archive to gain an overview of the sort of work that we present: [www.phoenix.org.uk/about-art/art-archive](http://www.phoenix.org.uk/about-art/art-archive)

**SALARY:** £29,250 per annum.

**AVERAGE HOURS PER WEEK:** 37.5 hours.

**WORKING PATTERN:** Flexible working is required with a mix of office hours plus some work evenings and weekends as required for events.

**LOCATION:** Phoenix Square, 4 Midland Street, Leicester.

If you would like an informal conversation about the post, please contact John Rance directly via [john.rance@phoenix.org.uk](mailto:john.rance@phoenix.org.uk)

To apply for this post please send:

- A Personal Statement explaining why you believe you are suited for the role.
- A CV that summarises your work experience, qualifications, and personal achievements.
- A completed equal opportunity monitoring form.

The Personal Statement should explain why you believe you are suited for the role and the difference that you could make. Please read the role description and information for applicants carefully and give specific examples from your past work to show how you meet the criteria in them. It should be no longer than 2 A4 pages of text and you may add a third page of images.

Our preferred method for applying is to email the completed documents to [jobs@phoenix.org.uk](mailto:jobs@phoenix.org.uk). Alternatively, postal submissions can be sent to: Administrative Officer, Phoenix, Phoenix Square, 4 Midland Street, Leicester, LE1 1TG.

Our recruitment and selection process involves the following stages:

- **Application:** please follow the instructions here and on the website to make an application.
  - [www.phoenix.org.uk/about-phoenix/vacancies/](http://www.phoenix.org.uk/about-phoenix/vacancies/)
- **Shortlisting:** a panel will assess and rank applications using the evidence of suitability provided in your application in relation to the criteria in the role description.
- **Interviews:** shortlisted candidates will be offered an interview with a panel to further assess the strength of their application in relation to the role criteria.
- For some roles we may ask interviewees to give a presentation or complete another assessment task. We may request a second interview.
- **References:** we will require references from your current and former employers or persons who can comment on your suitability for the role.

## **Digital Arts Manager Information for Applicants**

- For some roles our Safeguarding Policy requires the selected candidate to have a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before employment is confirmed.

All applications must be received by 12:00 noon **3rd June 2022**.

**Interviews will be held on 15th or 16th June.**