



CEO/Artistic Director Application Pack

Thank you for your interest in the post of Chief Executive Officer/Artistic Director of DaDa.

We are looking for someone who will bring a new vision, energy and direction to our leading and influential company. They should have a combination of business acumen, artistic experience and imagination, commercial insight, and an entrepreneurial approach to new opportunities.

DaDa runs DaDaFest, our biennial festival which has an international reach and impact, and the CEO/Artistic Director will have the rare opportunity to influence and develop future artists and practitioners, both disabled and non-disabled, create and commission exceptional work, and create a new artistic identity for the company by supporting our core team.

2025 marked the 40th year in which DaDa has pioneered the active involvement of disabled people in DaDaFest, the arts, and creative industries as audience members, artists, employees, and participants. DaDa remains the largest organisation of its kind in the Northwest, delivering Disability Arts events in the North of England with international reach.

Considering the ethos of the company, the successful applicant must have direct or personal experience of Disability and ideally have experience of working within, or for, a Disabled-led organisation.

We are open to all sorts of discussions about how we cover this role. We are committed to flexible ways of working. We will ensure we will manage the logistics of delivering the requirements of the job so that all individual access needs are met.

We encourage applications from anyone who can demonstrate relevant CEO skills, including strong leadership, business planning, financial, fundraising, partnership working, governance, and artistic experience, with a knowledge and understanding of Disability arts – this might be theatre directors, creative producers, live artists, designers, visual artists/sculptors, and performers.



Applicants need to demonstrate excellence in their discipline, and the ability to lead and influence an organisation, or groups of practitioners, in both formal and informal settings.

We are also aware of the need for the arts to be more inclusive in terms of diversity. We are looking for a leader who will champion inclusivity and ensure representation across ethnicity, class, ability, gender, sexual orientation, and more, to strengthen our work, approaches and initiatives.

Within this document you will find background information about the company, a job description, a person specification, and information about how to apply. We accept proposals in writing, video/audio format and BSL.

Applications close: 12pm on 4th September 2025

Interviews held: Dates to be advised

We look forward to hearing from you.



ABOUT US

DaDa is an award-winning and pioneering disability arts organisation based in Liverpool with international reach and impact. Founded in 1984, we were one of the first disability-led arts organisations in the UK and an integral part of the campaign for greater equality and access for disabled artists across the arts sector.

As an organisation we are known widely for DaDaFest, our biennial cross-arts festival which has nurtured and supported many renowned disabled artists from the UK and beyond since its first iteration in 2001.

Now, the organisation wants to continue our pioneering work by reimagining trusted formats, refocusing on our social justice mission, continuing to break down barriers and campaign for change and explore new ways to enable disabled artists to create challenging, entertaining and powerful work.

DaDa is a Disabled-led charity, focused on reflecting the lived experience of Disability. We believe that Disability is a social issue – it is systemic barriers, negative attitudes and exclusion by society (purposely or inadvertently) that are the main contributory factors in “disabling” people.

We use our work to educate, challenge attitudes and help remove the barriers that restrict life choices for disabled people to live independently and equally in society.

Our Funding

We are an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and receive regular funding from Liverpool City Council. Our programme of events and activities have also been supported by a wide range of charitable Trusts and Foundations, including the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Children in Need, and Youth Music. We have an annual turnover of £330,000.



Organisation and Governance

DaDa is a registered charity (Charity Number, 1014390) and a company limited by guarantee (No. 2636606). We are overseen by a non-executive Board of Directors. The Board delegates the day-to-day management of the company to an Executive Team of seven people led by an interim CEO.

Staffing Structure

The company is currently looking at a re-structure and more contemporary ways of working for an SME.

We believe that the company will be stronger with a CEO/Artistic Director and a small team has been designed to ensure that accumulated expertise and knowledge is retained with the company. There is still flexibility within this structure to respond to the new CEO/Artistic Director's vision.

OUR HISTORY

Over the last 40 years, our work has covered varied and combined arts forms including; theatre, visual arts, dance and explored the global language of disability culture with the aim of building a more accessible, inclusive, and diverse arts and cultural ecosystem.

Our approach includes programming, commissioning and collaborating with international, national and local artists and companies with a wide range of both arts and non-arts partners.

We are not a venue-based organisation so have become experts at programming in other people's homes and non-traditional, but always accessible, spaces. We have presented work in civic halls, churches (from cathedrals to crypts), museums, basements and boats.

We also operate as a critical friend and as an adviser on how best to engage Disabled, D/deaf, and neurodivergent people in the arts as artists, participants, and audiences.



We have established long-standing, close collaborations with many venues and organisations locally, regionally and nationally. With some, we have formal agreements which give us the ability to influence a cohort of organisations and artists to include access from the start of, rather than as a later adjunct to, the creative process.

DaDa and our DaDaFest has played a key role in the development of Disability and D/deaf arts in the UK and internationally. In 2001 we created DaDaFest International (DDFI) to provide a much-needed platform for Disabled artists.

We have recently delivered our 40th Anniversary DaDaFest International Festival themed 'RAGE', with key partners and venues in Liverpool.

Over the last 21 years the festival has included artists from across Europe, United States, South Africa, Indonesia, Cambodia, Saudi Arabia, India, and the Middle East.

Our festivals and events are interspersed with talks and debates addressing the social justice issues raised by the works we present.

Our work and Festival have helped shape the disability arts scene.

Our next International Festival is March 2027

The festival includes a diverse and intersectional range of artists, and you can find out more about our 2025 International Festival here:

<https://www.dadafest.co.uk/artists/>

In all of our work over the last 40 years, DaDa has strived to be innovative, powerful, and impactful. However, about 12 months ago we began a process of reflection that will support us in building a vibrant and resilient organisation for the future. We invite the new CEO/Artistic Director to continue to guide us on this journey; to lead, innovate, challenge, and imagine the new direction for the organisation.



Building on past success we want this future direction to:

- Concentrate on longer-term activity designed to bring about sustainable change in external organisations for our artists and participants.
- Build on sustainable partnerships to strengthen opportunities for Disabled artists
- Produce work that is both reflective of, and challenging to prevailing values, so we engage more with Disabled, D/deaf, and neurodivergent artists who are traditionally under-represented in the sector – and particularly African, Caribbean and South Asian, East Asian and South East Asian diaspora artists and audiences.
- Further develop the intersectionality of our programmes and collaborations.
- Integrate our young people's and artistic development work more with the core programme.
- Ensure collaborative working practices are centred in our partnerships to maximise our artistic impact and influence.

The CEO/Artistic Director will rebuild our momentum, re-energise our vision, and continue to support, develop, and deliver work that is exciting, creative, and thought provoking.

We need to work out new methods of delivery that are supported by, and meet the needs of, both our artists and audiences. We need to consider what support our artists will need to develop their skills and expertise in a world where digital and the virtual are likely to play an increasingly important role.

We need a CEO and artistic leader to manage our organisation and business plan, create productions, events, festivals that deliver this vision. How this is realised will be dependent on their approach and interests.



Equity and Inclusion

While we are already in the process of reflection and change, as a social justice organisation and an organisation committed to intersectionality, we are aware that there are some areas we fall short of, and we are committed to addressing these.

We now need to build on this as well as address the medium to the long term. We are committed to all staff and the Board undertaking unconscious bias assessment and/or training and using the results of this along with advice and guidance from local specialists to inform and re-write a broader range of our policies and procedures.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	CEO/Artistic Director
Hours:	Part time 28 hours per week (excluding unpaid breaks)
Duration:	Permanent
Salary:	Actual salary £45000 pro-rata depending on experience (FTE £45000-£50000)
Responsible:	To the Board
Responsible:	For the Executive Producer and Operations and Finance Officer
Based:	Liverpool, in the DaDa Office.
Holiday:	25 days plus bank holidays pro rata
Pension:	Employee enrolled into the NEST Pension Scheme with employers' contributions

All candidates must have the right to live and work in the UK and be in the UK before applying



PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

- Provide inspiring leadership, shaping a bold, creative, sustainable future for DaDa, and communicating an influential vision for the place of Disability within the arts across Liverpool and beyond.
- Create an inspiring programme of Disability arts, activities, audience and artist development, to fulfill DaDa's mission and objectives. Lead robust business planning to support the programme and strategy.
- Develop and maintain strategic, collaborative partnerships, to support delivery of our mission. Represent, and be an active ambassador for DaDa, ensuring a strong reputation and profile.
- Lead on equity, diversity and inclusion. Ensure our commitment to accessibility and respect is experienced by all.
- Working with the Operations Manager, overall responsibility for HR. Attract, manage and retain a high-performing, collaborative team. Overseeing appropriate wellbeing support and professional development, for staff, volunteers, and freelancers.
- Working with the Operations Manager, overall responsibility for ensuring safe, effective running of operations, systems, and programme activity, including clear articulation of impact, collection and reporting of useful data, evaluation and learning.
- Working with the Operations Manager, overall responsibility for ensuring implementation of an effective fundraising strategy, meeting income targets and reporting requirements. Maintain positive relationships with key funders.
- Working with the Operations Manager, overall responsibility for ensuring trustees receive timely, accessible reporting, support, and guidance to enable good governance, liaise with the Chair, arrange and attend board and sub-group meetings as needed.
- Oversee marketing, ensuring high quality, effective communications.



- Working with the Operations Manager, overall responsibility for producing and managing organisational budgets, ensure sound financial management, accounting and reporting.
- Working with the Operations Manager, overall responsibility for managing organisational risk and policy development and monitoring.
- Working with the Operations Manager, overall responsibility for safeguarding, health & safety and data protection.
- Working with the Operations Manager, overall responsibility for compliance with relevant regulatory, contractual and legal requirements, as an employer, charity, and charitable company.

The list of responsibilities is not exhaustive, and the CEO may be required to undertake additional duties, as operationally required at the discretion of the Board.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

We acknowledge many Disabled people are denied opportunities to fully develop their employment potential. DaDa is positive about disability. We will interview you, if you are Disabled, D/deaf, or neurodivergent, and you meet (or plan to meet) the essential criteria in the person specification. In your application, please describe how you'd plan to meet any gaps in your experience - this might be through mentoring, training, peer networks, etc.

Essential Experience

- Personal or direct experience of Disability, ideally a Disabled, D/deaf and neurodivergent person.
- Overseeing or creating high-quality artistic programmes ideally within disability arts.
- Senior management or leadership in a relevant creative sector, preferably within an arts programming or Disability arts context.
- Financial planning, budget setting and management.
- Charitable governance, ideally working for a trustee board.
- Forming creative and effective partnerships, ideally with funders, artists, and other arts organisations.
- Management of positive, high-performing teams.
- Track record of compelling, successful funding bids.

Essential Knowledge & Skills

- Current knowledge of Disability culture, access and Disability arts
- Understanding of structural oppression and intersectionality, including in relation to global majority identities
- Demonstrable commitment to EDI, widening access to the arts and to developing audiences, participants and artists



- Ability to persuasively articulate a vision to a wide range of audiences eg staff, artists, audiences, donors, the media.
- Strong communication, listening, negotiation and influencing skills.
- Understanding of safeguarding, health & safety, and data protection.
- Use of Office 365 and remote/hybrid working solutions

Desirable Experience

- Maintaining positive funding relationships with ACE (as an NPO) and/or other statutory or relevant funding bodies.
- Accountability and reporting in a charitable context.
- Leading an organisational business planning process. Managing an impact focused outcomes framework.
- Working with a diverse range of Disabled people.
- Management of: HR, governance, charity compliance, organisational risk, policy development, and safeguarding.



HOW TO APPLY

The recruitment is being led by Mandy Redvers-Rowe (Chair of Trustees).

If you would like an informal confidential chat regarding the position with the current CEO before applying, please contact DaDa:
info@dadafest.co.uk

Deadline: 4th September 2025 12.00pm

There are several ways you can apply:

Send a CV and covering letter (no more than two pages), addressed to Mandy Redvers-Rowe (Chair of Trustees), including:

- Why you are applying for this role
- How you think you could contribute to the next chapter in DaDa's development
- How your skills and experience match the skills and experience outlined in the Job Description and Person Specification.
- Contact details for two referees who have seen your work as a leader– whether that's as a performer, director, producer, designer, live artist etc.
- Completed Equal Opportunities monitoring form which can be downloaded [here](#).

Send by email to info@dadafest.co.uk and please put DaDaFest CEO in your email's subject line.



We are also accepting proposals in video / audio format and BSL – please send a film/audio file no longer than 15 minutes to info@dadafest.co.uk, or send a link to the same address for us to download the file.

Interview Process

The process will include two rounds of panel interviews, presentations and an opportunity to meet Board members and staff of the company. We would like to recruit as soon as possible, and will advise on the interview dates once we have shortlisted.

Please indicate any additional access needs that this approach may raise.

The interview panel will be led by our Chair of trustees, and made up of other Trustees.

Data Protection

As part of any recruitment process, DaDa collects and processes personal data relating to job applicants. DaDa is committed to being transparent about how it collects and uses data to meet its data protection obligations. Please read DaDaFest Privacy Notice for further information.

To carry out the recruitment process DaDa will share the personal data received from you in your application with the Executive Team and the shortlisting and interview panel.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Salary

The salary for this post will be £45,000- £50,000 depending on knowledge, skills and experience 4 days pro rata

Contract

Permanent



Hours

DaDa operates a flexi-time system. All employees are contracted for a standard 35 hours per week pro rata, this role is for four days a week. However, the person appointed will be expected to be available as the circumstances demand. Evening and/or weekend work in association with events and performances will be necessary.

We welcome applications from candidates who wish to work in a flexible working pattern (for example around caring responsibilities or access requirements).

Location

DaDa offices are at the Bluecoat, School Lane, Liverpool, L1 3BX.

Holidays

The leave year runs 1 April to 31 March. The annual holiday entitlement is 25 days pro rata, plus all public holidays.

DBS Check

The post-holder must be able to satisfy an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check for working with children, young people and adults at risk.

Pension

The company provides a contributory pension scheme, details of which are available on request.

Supported Period

Three months.

References

The appointment is subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

Performance Appraisal

Performance will be appraised at least annually by the Chair of the Board and principal objectives for the following period will be agreed.



Service

Post 12 months in role any additional work will then be agreed in advance with the Chair. It is understood that freelance work might be undertaken, and we will make every endeavour to respond positively.

Notice Period

One month during settling in period, rising to three months after confirmation of a permanent appointment.