



Accessible Arts & Media

Project Assistant

Information Pack

1 Introduction to Accessible Arts & Media

Thanks very much for your interest in working for Accessible Arts & Media!

We're a small charity, based in Chapelfields, York. We've been delivering fun, inclusive creative learning and wellbeing projects in and around York since 1982.

Our work's built around the belief that everyone can learn, everyone can be creative, and everyone can play a part in their local community. They just need the right support, and that's where we come in. We've got a vision for a more inclusive society, where everyone gets the chance to shine, and we're helping to make that happen in York.

Our projects include specialist creative and therapeutic sensory activities for people with complex disabilities, dementia, and mental ill health; training programmes where learning-disabled adults and young people learn how to be workshop leaders; singing and signing choirs; and accessible music-making groups; and creative media programmes.

The people who take part in our sessions often face difficulty with everyday activities and can end up feeling isolated and cut off. Taking part in our projects helps them:

- explore and connect with the world around them, in a safe, supportive, fun environment;
- learn new skills that they can transfer to other parts of their lives, including education, training and employment;
- connect with other people, making new friends along the way;
- grow the confidence to have more of a say in the things that matter to them;
- build emotional resilience;
- contribute to their local community through workshops, performances and film commissions;
- feel happy, connected, confident and valued, all of which can have a profound impact on wellbeing.

We use a person-centred approach. That means that all activities are tailored to the individual, supporting everyone to take part in the way that suits them best. We level the playing field by providing everyone with the support and space they need to have an equal say. And we make sure everyone has a lot of fun along the way!

We're a small charity with a big heart, and an even bigger personality. And we make a big difference. In a 'normal' year, we directly engage over 500 people as core and outreach participants and deliver over 900 creative sessions. Over the last year, our new online sessions have been viewed over 20,000 times, 540 of our free resource packs have been downloaded for use in schools, homes and community groups across the country, and we've directly supported our 118 core participants.

As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic, our projects and activities are more essential than ever. We know, from talking to the people who take part in our projects, that the past two years have had a big impact on them. We've got an important role to play in supporting their wellbeing as they rebuild their confidence. So you'll be joining the team at a really important time.

If you'd like to take the next step in your community music/arts career with a small charity where you can make a big difference then we'd love to hear from you!



Young people in our IMPs (Inclusive Music Projects) group

2 Working for Accessible Arts & Media

We think AAM's a great place to work, but don't just take our word for it. Here's what someone who nominated us for a National Diversity Award had to say: *"Accessible Arts & Media are an incredible organisation! Nothing is ever too difficult or too much trouble. Everyone is made to feel welcome and encouraged to share their skills with others, who might not yet know they have skills yet. They are masters at making people feel good about themselves and living every moment to the full. People blossom at AAM and everyone has huge amounts of fun doing it!"*

These are some of the reasons we all think AAM's a great place to work...

We're a small, close-knit team and we're all passionate about the work we do. Supporting the people who take part in our projects to get creative, make new friends, learn new skills and achieve their goals is what gets us all out of bed in the morning.

We work hard but we make sure we have a lot of fun while we're at it. Our project sessions and our events are full of laughter and that spills over into the office.

We create opportunities for people from different groups and backgrounds to come together to share and showcase their skills, creativity, passion and personalities. They show us, time and again, that we can achieve incredible things when we work together!



Members of our Hands & Voices Choir

We're not a campaigning organisation but we've brought inclusion and diversity to the forefront in York for more than 30 years. We're experts in creating a caring environment where everyone's supported to take part in the way that suits them best. It's a space where you can be yourself. And it's a space where people develop the confidence to realise that they have a voice.

And one of our volunteers commented: "I've volunteered with Accessible Arts and Media for over 3 years now and the people I have met through the charity have really made an impact on my life for the better. They are such positive workers and very understanding of people's needs and each other's. I have gained lifelong skills in communication, and it's given me a lot of reward from being part of the team. I recommend them to anyone wanting to gain skills and be part of great ongoing projects in York."

3 The Role – Project Assistant

We're looking for an enthusiastic person who's passionate about making the arts inclusive and accessible to all. If you'd like to work for a small local charity with a big heart, then we'd love to hear from you.

This is an exciting opportunity for somebody who wants to develop a career in community music. We'll support you to develop skills, confidence and expertise in project administration and delivery and you'll learn about person-centred delivery - shaping the activities around the needs and abilities of the participants you'll be working with.

No two days will be the same. On any one day you might be working in schools, supporting one of our participants to facilitate a workshop; creating accessible resources such as newsletters and sign sheets; or performing on stage with 30+ adults with learning disabilities.

We've worked with lots of people who've gone on to build successful careers with AAM (by taking roles as workshop leaders, project coordinators and managers). Many have also gone on to establish successful freelance careers and further postgraduate study while working for AAM.

You'll work closely with the Programme Manager to support the successful delivery of a range of exciting and varied music projects, such as singing and signing choirs, accessible music making and sensory activities.

As Project Assistant you'll gain experience in the following areas:

- € Project facilitation;
- € Performances and events;
- € Outreach projects and workshops, including music education, community programmes, and settings where disabled and non-disabled people come together;
- € Accessible Communication, including Sign Supported Communication, Intensive Interaction, Sensory Integration and Total Communication;
- € Person-centred ways of working, including setting individual goals for participants to develop their skills and producing learning journals;
- € Arts administration, including evaluation and impact measurement, project planning and developing accessible resources.

This role is currently part time over 17.5 hrs a week. There may be additional hours/work as AAM's plans develop.

3.1 Job Specification

Responsible to: Programme Manager

Working Relationships:

- AAM's Programme Manager
- AAM's Creative Director
- AAM staff team and freelance artists
- AAM volunteers
- Participants in AAM's projects and their families and supporters
- AAM partners and other stakeholders

Purpose of Job: To support the day-to-day administration and delivery of AAM's creative projects, primarily with adults and young people with learning disabilities.

3.2 Key responsibilities and tasks

• Project Administration

- Providing administrative support for projects, performances and outreach events, including participant/family/carer liaison, project planning, arranging meetings and session admin e.g. completing registers and administering weekly session fees.
- Ensuring learning journals/training plans are updated and supporting participants to keep them up to date.
- Supporting the Workshop Leaders with impact measurement.

- Supporting the Programme Manager to coordinate equipment, accessible resources and liaison with venues.

- **Project Delivery**

- Supporting the Workshop Leaders in the smooth running of sessions.
- Gathering together equipment to and from the workshop venue (transport will be provided if required).
- Helping to set up for sessions and pack away afterwards.
- Encouraging interaction and engagement with the participants at sessions, outreach workshops and during social times, ensuring a person-centred approach.
- Liaison between the Workshop Leaders and Programme Manager as required.

- **Other Responsibilities**

- Adhering at all times to AAM's Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity and Data Management policies and comply with all statutory requirements, including DBS.
- Contributing at all times to an inclusive, positive atmosphere, reflecting the values and aims of AAM.
- Working alongside your line manager to agree your own continuing professional development plan.
- Work towards achieving agreed targets.
- Attending regular staff meetings and meetings with customers/clients as required (and sometimes note-taking).
- Any other duties which may be reasonably required.

3.3 Training

On the job training will be provided in workshop leading and facilitating sessions in a person-centred way, and in accessible communication methods to suit the groups you'll be working with.

4 Person Specification – About You

Essential:

The following are the skills, qualities and experience we definitely want our new Project Assistant to have:

- A can-do attitude and the confidence and initiative to work alone.
- Strong administrative and organisational skills with an eye for detail.

- Good verbal and written communication skills and experience using Microsoft office packages, including Word and Excel.
- Proven ability to build positive relationships with a range of people, including practitioners, partners, colleagues and participants.
- A passion for music, inclusive events and inclusive creative music projects.
- An understanding of the importance of the issues of safeguarding, health and safety and equality and diversity.
- An eagerness to learn and a commitment to your own professional development.

Desirable:

The following would also be an advantage (but they're not essential and we can provide training and support):

- Experience of supporting and communicating with people with learning or communication difficulties or sensory impairments.
- Experience of working in an inclusive environment and working with a person-centered model.
- Experience of working on community projects.
- Experience of different forms of communication, such as Sign Supported Communication and non-verbal communication.
- A love of singing.
- A driver with a clean driving license.

5 Terms and Conditions

Rate of Pay: £9.90 per hr. AAM is a Real Living Wage Employer.

Hours: Part-time, 17.5 hours per week. There are regular sessions on Monday and Thursday evenings during termtime with other activities taking place during school holidays and occasional weekends. No overtime is payable but Time off in Lieu may be taken in agreement with your line manager.

Place of work: The role will be based at AAM's office in York, with some remote working and local travel to attend projects and events.

Employment type: Permanent

Annual Leave: 25 days, some of which must be taken between Christmas and New Year. Bank Holidays are in addition to this.

Training: We offer opportunities to take part in external and internal training and access professional development opportunities.

Probation Period: 3 months

Notice Period: 1 month (2 weeks during probation period)

DBS: All posts are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced disclosure checks.

6 How to Apply

You can apply by submitting a statement of up to 500 words telling us why you'd be great for this role and either:

1. Completing our Person Specification table – this gives you the chance to share your relevant skills and experience in relation to each part of the Person Specification, or
2. Submitting a CV.

Once you've completed your application, please email it, along with a covering email and contact details for two referees, to projects@aamedia.org.uk. Referees will not be contacted until a job offer is going to be made.

If you've got any questions about the role or the application process, please contact Hannah Hardcastle, Programme Manager (Learning Disability), at projects@aamedia.org.uk or on 01904 626965.

The closing date for applications is **5pm Friday 20th May**

7 Interviews

We'll interview shortlisted candidates on **7th June**

Interviews will be held at the Accessible Arts & Media office in York, with the option to have an interview on Zoom if you're unable to attend in person.