



Starcatchers seeks Early Years Artist, Creative Kin

Scotland's National Arts and Early Years Organisation

STARCATCHERS

Title of post: Early Years Artist, Creative Kin

Accountable to: General Manager

Contract type: Fixed-term freelance contract to summer 2023

Fee: £27,500 pa pro rata

Hours: 0.4 FTE, equivalent of two days per week on average

Location: Irvine, North Ayrshire, with meetings at Starcatchers' Edinburgh office

Key dates: Preparatory work and meetings beginning as soon as practicable, with delivery of activity to start in January.

We are looking for an experienced, socially-motivated, collaborative artist to curate and deliver our arts-based project with kinship families living in North Ayrshire.

You will be brimming with ideas and able to create beautiful experiences for families of babies and young children aged 0-3.

Creative Kin is an exciting mix of music, theatre, movement, puppetry, craft, storytelling and visual art activities, delivered through a child-led, play-based approach specifically for very young children. In this project you will be able to explore your own artistic specialism as well as programme across other artforms by drawing in high quality visiting artists. You will have proven track record in devising creative projects or activities for very young children, and have

a personable nature that makes people of all ages feel welcome and at ease. The artistic scope for Creative Kin is limitless and yet, at the same time, the project is highly structured due to the needs of the participants, and bound by key social outcomes. It would therefore suit an artist who is experienced in balancing their personal artistic practice with a clear understanding of child-led approaches and the powerful social outcomes of strengthened relationships between children and their carers.

Given the current COVID-19 restrictions, this project will also involve creating and sharing digital activity through private social media groups.

This role would suit someone based in (or within easy access of) North Ayrshire. Exceptional artistic skills and people skills are both required, as this role involves creative programming and planning, as well as hands-on delivery of participatory arts experiences.

As the Early Years Artist you will work closely with the Creative Kin Project Coordinator, who will lead on the logistical and practical project planning as well as supporting the delivery of every session. Both the Early Years Artist and Project Coordinator share joint responsibility for ensuring the aims of the project are met, cooperating effectively and respecting each other's skill sets. Both roles will be line managed by the General Manager, who will hold the budget and have overall responsibility for the project.

Oct-Dec 2020:

By negotiation and to fit with availability, the Early Years Artist and Coordinator plan Creative Kin, working closely with the Starcatchers team. There may be the option to deliver some taster activity with families, either online or in person, during this period. It is not expected that the post-holder works a regular two days each week during this period.

Jan 2021 – May 2023:

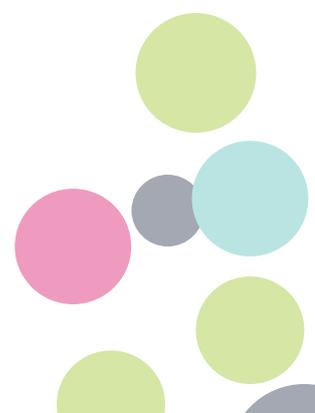
Contracted work, at two days per week Regular weekly activity, with breaks for school holidays. Each day will include up to two workshop sessions and includes sharing a healthy snack. The day of the week is still to be confirmed, but it will be the same day each week, and will be during school hours. The Coordinator and Early Years Artist are required to be on-site in Irvine for a full day every week, and it is anticipated that they will need a further day each week at the desk for planning (or equivalent hours split across the week). This can be done from home or we can source a hot-desk facility in North Ayrshire.

Four additional weekend dates will be programmed over the course of the year to allow wider family to engage in creative activities with the young children (older siblings, carers' partners, birth parents)

North Ayrshire venues can include a range of spaces to reflect the interests and needs of the group, expanding connections with communities.

June-July 2023:

By negotiation and to fit with availability, the Early Years Artist and Coordinator wrap up and evaluate Creative Kin, working closely with the Starcatchers team. It is not expected that the post-holder works a regular two days each week during this period.



COVID-19 adaptations

The above schedule was planned before the COVID-19 pandemic. Creative Kin's delivery model will need to be flexible in order to run uninterrupted throughout the phases of the government's route map. It is anticipated that the activity will initially take place outdoors, sheltered in a temporary structure, before moving to an indoor location.

We intend to be flexible with the activity delivery between Oct-Dec 2020 to reflect the pre-existing commitments the families and project team may have in place. The scheduling of the sessions is important and relies on information about the new school provision; carers must be able to attend with their 0-3 year old children and without older children.

Digital platforms will be used in conjunction with the weekly outdoor (indoor) gatherings to provide uninterrupted wraparound resources, contact and connection for families. The Coordinator and Artist are required to be knowledgeable about how to engage effectively with families across both settings. Starcatchers has a COVID-19 Policy to ensure the safety of staff and participants, and provides high-level support for the management, marketing and digital communications of its projects.

This can be done from home or we can source a hot-desk facility in North Ayrshire. There is a requirement to have regularly meetings with both the Starcatchers and Children 1st teams. The office staff are currently working remotely so meetings are being held digitally on a weekly basis with the General Manager and monthly with the wider team. We anticipate in-person meetings in our Edinburgh office base to resume in line with government guidelines.

Closing date: Monday, 14th September 2020 at 5pm

Interview dates: Monday 21st - Thursday 24 September 2020 by video call

Access: If you would prefer a face-to-face interview in Irvine to a video call, for access reasons, please advise us as part of your application.





Background to Creative Kin

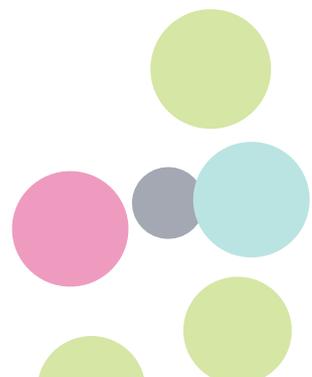
Creative Kin is a 3-year project funded by The National Lottery Improving Lives, The RS Macdonald Charitable Trust, and the Scottish Power Foundation.

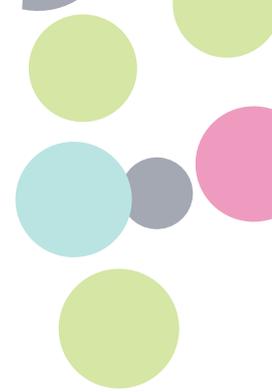
Creative Kin is an arts for social change project working alongside Kinship Carers and their families in North Ayrshire and sits as part of Starcatchers' Community Engagement activity. Starcatchers, in partnership with Children 1st ran a successful pilot project from 2017-2019 and the evaluation film can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/324907799>

Working strategically with Children 1st and local health and social partners, we will offer a programme that builds on carer's parental capacity, strengthens attachment and contributes to positive health and wellbeing of both the carers and their children. This programme will complement the other Kinship Care services being provided in the area.

Purpose of the role

- To curate the artistic content and lead on the delivery of the Creative Kin project, both in-person sessions and digital resources.
- To ensure the project achieves excellent artistic and social outcomes.
- To nurture and grow strong trusted relationships with the families, planning responsively to their interests, needs and long-term benefit.
- To work with the Starcatchers team to ensure evaluation, reporting and funding targets are met.
- The Early Years Artist will be required to undertake a PVG check through Disclosure Scotland.





Specific duties and responsibilities

- Create and lead the artistic vision for Creative Kin
- Work with the Coordinator to plan the sessions each week: the Early Years Artist leading on artistic content and the Coordinator leading on practical and support considerations for the group
- Work with the Coordinator to create regular online content for the digital platform.
- Work side-by-side with the Creative Kin Coordinator to ensure smooth running of the project
- Identify other artists to visit sessions, whether in person or digitally via social media.
- Develop positive relationships with local referral/support partners so that they understand the project and the benefits to families with whom they are working
- Work with the team to continually monitor and evaluate the project, ensuring it is meeting its social and artistic aims
- Contribute weekly reports capturing what was delivered, artistically, and the responses from participants
- With the Coordinator, ensure materials and artist fees and other expenditure stays within the set budget
- With the Coordinator, ensure the Project documentation is kept up to date on Starcatchers' online shared working platform (Session plans, Visiting artist details, Reflection Logs)
- Ensure safeguarding measures are in place for each digital and online session

General

- Fully participate in project meetings and events as required (weekly and monthly)
- Attend relevant training as and when required
- Positively represent Starcatchers at events
- Any other duties appropriate to the post and organisation

Qualifications and experience

- Degree (or equivalent professional experience) in the arts: theatre, music, dance, visual art, poetry/literature etc
- Minimum three year's work experience in creating and leading high-quality arts engagement activity
- Experience working with Early Years children or families

Essential skills and abilities

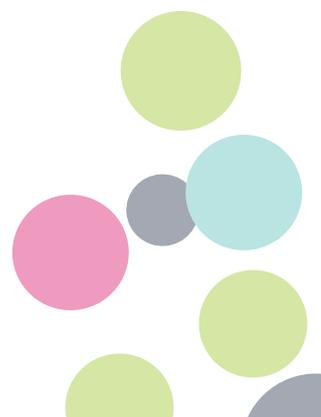
- A proven track record of delivering high quality arts experiences
- A proven track record of collaborating with other artists and practitioners
- A proven track record of engaging with people digitally
- Excellent communication skills, both oral and written
- Excellent interpersonal, organisational and planning skills
- An ability to deliver activities for a variety of groups and participants with varying needs
- An ability to work as part of a small team and show initiative
- An ability to develop good working relationships with artists, project partners, funders and other staff, retaining your own artistic vision while valuing the importance of the skills others bring to social projects
- Knowledge of the children's arts sector in Scotland and how arts can support social change

Desirable

- Additional training or qualifications in community engagement, arts for social change, trauma-informed practice, working with additional needs
- Experience of working with looked-after children, vulnerable families, intergenerational groups
- Digital skills such as creating short films on a mobile phone
- An understanding of the role creativity plays within child development and how it supports positive attachments with their primary carer
- An awareness of the wider Care policy agenda
- A full driving licence and access to own car

Personal qualities

- Ability to think strategically and imaginatively
- Approachable, empathetic manner
- Analytical and problem-solving skills
- Energy and commitment



How to apply

To apply, please download and complete the Application Form and return it to Judith.walsh@starcatchers.org.uk by Monday 14 September 2020 at 5pm.

In the interest of equal opportunities we want to ensure that information about candidates is provided in the same format, therefore all applicants are required to complete our application form and CVs will not be accepted.

Alternatively, you may submit a video application outlining your skills, experience and artistic vision along with your qualifications and work history details. Please contact judith.walsh@starcatchers.org.uk to arrange.

Starcatchers welcomes applications from all sections of our community. We also ask all candidates to complete a short equal opportunities survey on Survey Monkey so we can anonymously collect information to enable us to monitor the effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy. This information is anonymously stored and for statistical purposes only. Please follow this link to complete the survey – <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RTPD8XK>.

If you have any questions about the role or to make the application process as accessible as possible, please call Judith for an informal chat on 07976 531 117.



Starcatchers

Starcatchers is Scotland's National Arts and Early Years Organisation, charity registration SC042222. Our vision is that every child is inspired through innovative, beautiful, collaborative arts and cultural experiences from birth regardless of where they live or their background.

Our work is driven by evidence of the hugely positive impact that engaging and participating in arts can have on a child's development and overall wellbeing, and by our commitment to ensure children's rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child are fulfilled. Since 2006 we have delivered consistently across three programmes of work:

We connect artists with some of Scotland's most marginalised families and communities, offering a long-term creative early intervention approach to building parental capacity, family resilience and cognitive, physical, emotional and social skills for life.

Our projects provide safe, nurturing opportunities for carers and children to have fun and be creative together. Relationships and parent/child bonds are strengthened through these shared experiences in arts activities such as music, drama, creative movement, mark-making, storytelling and puppetry. The arts are also exceptional tools for empowering very young children whose language is still in development, enabling them to communicate in ways that are meaningful for them. Our activities support the adults who care for these young children, including teen mums, kinship carers, and adults facing challenges of living in poverty.

We reach children and families through live theatre, music, dance and arts installations, with a commitment to delivering high quality, inspirational experiences in areas of deprivation and rural areas.

We provide unique artist-facilitated training and professional development for early years professionals across sectors, recognising the crucial role that adults play in facilitating the best creative opportunities for very young children. We also support and nurture the expertise, curiosity and creativity of artists who want to develop their professional practice in Early Years.

STARCATCHERS EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY STATEMENT

Starcatchers wholeheartedly supports the principle of equal opportunities and values the individual contribution of people, irrespective of sex, age, marital status, disability, sexuality, race, colour, religion, ethnic, or national origin, history of illness, needs of dependents and/or parenthood.

We believe that it is in the company's best interests, and all those of who work in it, to ensure that the human resources, talents and skills available throughout the community are considered when employment and training opportunities arise. To this end we are committed, within the framework of the law, to achieving and maintaining a workforce who broadly reflect the local community in which we operate. Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions on recruitment, selection, training, promotion and career management are based solely on objective and job related criteria.

Starcatchers fully supports this policy statement. All employees and those engaged in our activities are responsible for playing their part in achieving these objectives.