

A crowd of people, including children and adults, are gathered at night. In the foreground, a young boy in a grey sweater is looking up with his hand raised, reaching towards a large, illuminated, wireframe sculpture of a penguin. The sculpture is made of a grid of white lines and is glowing from within. Other people in the background are also looking at the sculpture, with some holding up their phones to take pictures. The scene is lit with warm, ambient light, suggesting an outdoor event or festival.

activate
Sparking possibility

Activate Board Information Pack



Are you passionate about performance?

Activate Performing Arts Ltd (Activate) is looking for a diverse range of people to join its Board as Charity Trustees and Directors. We are looking for people as passionate about performance as we are.

‘My time at Activate has been enriched by the commitment, enthusiasm and support of our board and they have been essential to running an uplifting, bold and inclusive organisation.

We have a variety of experience and wide representation on our Board, as well as a staff team of people from a range of backgrounds in age, sexual orientation, disability, caring responsibilities, socio-economic backgrounds, and gender. We want to increase that diversity and representation further.

I’m looking forward to talking to people about the work that we do and what is involved in the role of a Board member here at Activate.’

Kate Wood, Artistic and Executive Director.

At Activate we believe that: extraordinary moments connect and uplift us all.

Our Mission is: to create opportunities for everyone through the performing arts.

We are particularly interested in increasing representation on our Board of people who have experienced barriers or prejudice relating to their ethnicity and/or due to having a disability, long-term health condition or from a low socio-economic background. This is because we want to better reflect the people we serve in our communities.

We exist to promote, support, and produce performing arts projects in our communities. Bringing world-class events to unexpected places, like town centres, village squares, beaches, and hilltops. And we’ve been doing it for 30 years. Our aim is to break down barriers and reach the widest possible audiences, while celebrating our natural landscape and sense of place. In everything we do there are just two rules: anything is possible, and everyone is invited.

Supporting our performing arts community is at the heart of everything we do. We bring people together, offer advice, and provide access to learning and resources. We’re here to help creatives at all levels on their journey towards creating outstanding, inspiring work.

We offer one-to-one free advice sessions and run CPD programmes for creatives working in the performing arts.

We run an inclusive performance group for children and young people called The Remix, and our Dorset Youth Dance company offers contemporary classes for 7–25-year-olds wanting to pursue their passion.

Our Inside Out Dorset festival presents extraordinary events in extraordinary locations. It is free to attend and takes place outdoors with some site-specific performances and a community engagement programme that takes place year-round. Each festival includes international outdoor theatre and dance events across Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, in a mix of rural, coastal and urban locations, and attracts audiences of 15–20,000 each festival.

In the past few years, we have begun to tour and produce work by companies locally and nationally. We are a partner in a number of European programmes, and we produce large scale 'signature events'. For example, in 2019 we produced Dorset Moon with the Dorset Festival Consortium to mark the 50th Anniversary of the first Moon Landing. This presented Luke Jerram's Museum of the Moon to over 41,000 people in 3 locations across the county. In 2022 we produced the Dorset edition of Walk The Plank's Green Space Dark Skies with Dorset National Landscape.

We are supported by a number of key funders, without which our work would not be possible.

'The board of trustees is an important element of Activate, providing continuity, support, and challenge. We are here to support the detailed work of the executive, associates, volunteers, and audiences. Keeping an eye on the needs in Dorset to celebrate people and places.

We participate in important conversations about our work values, mission, vision, and strategy. These conversations at board level build on the richness and diversity of all participants to ensure the organisation is making the best impact we can for everyone.

As a board we are always keen to welcome others to join us who value the arts in Dorset as we work together to help the organisation respond to the challenging demands that lie ahead.'

Michael Noonan, Chair.

A committed Board of Trustees/Directors is crucial to our success, and we are looking for people who have a shared passion for the arts to help Activate to realise the next phase in our company's evolution.

Activate is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and a regularly funded client of Dorset Council and BCP Council. We are a registered charity and company limited by Guarantee.

'Well done all – another great project supported and delivered professionally with partners.'

Matt Prosser, Chief Executive, Dorset Council

New Board Members: Trustee Directors – The Role

We would like you to join us to help Activate into its next phase of development, bringing your passion and ensuring the board meets its governance responsibilities for the organisation in line with the values that guide us.

If you are new to being on a Board and see the responsibilities below as rather daunting, but you are interested in our work and would like to help, then do get in touch to see whether a Board role is for you. We will help you access board training. The position is voluntary, but expenses will be reimbursed. Meeting expenses can be claimed, and access requirements will be supported.

‘Being a trustee of Activate has been an eye-opening experience and helped me gain a fuller picture of the landscape of arts and performance across Dorset. The opportunities as a board member have ranged from learning and honing skills to providing perspectives context which may not otherwise have been thought to be considered.

The team of fellow board members and staff are incredibly supportive. From the papers for each meeting to the activities at away days, our meetings are always interesting, often insightful, and evidence of our positive impact on the strategy of Activate is clear throughout all the great work of the operational team.’

Rowan Headley, Board Member & Diversity and Inclusion Champion.

Below are the main tasks of a Board member:

Main Areas of Accountability

The Board of Trustees has full legal responsibility under the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006 and is also accountable to a variety of other stakeholders including the Information Commissioner, Fundraising Regulator, and our core funders. The executive staff team carry out the majority of the legal duties on behalf of the Board members.

Strategy

The Board work with the staff to help to determine/help sustain Activate’s mission and purpose. Board members may help represent Activate strategically at a local, regional and national level. The organisation will provide the tools and information you need.

Management

Board Members attend and participate in all Board Meetings, workshops and occasional meetings as required, and all Board members have shared responsibility for collective decision making. Board Members work with our Executive Director to achieve and develop Activate’s vision and keep us on track.

Communication and Advocacy

Board members help to grow Activate's reputation by sharing our ambition with the wider community.

Fundraising and Finance Strategy

Board members ensure there are appropriate resources for us to fulfil our ambitions. Board members occasionally support and help in our fund-raising by attending stakeholder events. Board Members ensure that we operate within the law and in line with its financial responsibilities. There is a finance sub-group that supports the staff and the wider Board. Board members approve our annual budget and make sure appropriate financial controls are in place. Board members have limited financial liability of £1.

Recruitment and Induction

The Board are responsible, with the Chair, for the recruitment of the Executive Director. The Board are responsible with the Chair and staff for the recruitment and induction of new Board members.

Monitoring and Policy Development

The Board makes sure Activate has policies that are up to date and ethical. They monitor how we plan and deliver our ambitions – measuring achievements against aims and objectives and make sure we stick to our vision.

Diversity

The Board embraces diversity, supports and creates a welcoming environment where difference is embraced, and everyone is treated with respect and dignity.

Health and Safety

The Board makes sure our staff are overseeing the management of health and safety, following in law and in line with our policies and procedures.

Qualities

These are some of the qualities we welcome in our Board members:

- a dynamic and collaborative approach;
- a positive 'can do' attitude;
- the ability to think strategically;
- an inclusive thinker;
- a respected leader or emerging leader;
- an interest in the performing and outdoor arts.

Skills, experience and abilities – some or all of these skills would be ideal:

- *Management experience – within the arts or related to a skills area below;
- Analytical skills;
- We are looking for a finance non-executive with strong financial skills but we don't expect this of everyone;
- Excellent people skills.

*This could be self-management as a freelancer.

One or more specific skills/experience or interest in the following areas

Theatre / Dance / Outdoor Arts / Diversity / Youth / Environment / Finance / Fundraising

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Time commitment

4 Board Meetings a year including the AGM. Board Members are expected to attend and participate in all Board Meetings. These are 2 hours, plus travel and time is required to read papers and other documents in advance which can take between 2-3 hours.	Formal meetings with Stakeholders – approximately once a year.
4 Potential Sub-group meetings a year.	Various public events, receptions and performances throughout the year.
1-2 Away Days per year – Board and staff.	

The position is voluntary, but expenses will be reimbursed. Meeting expenses can be claimed and access requirements will be supported, including travel and care costs.

How to apply:

Please send us a letter with your CV as a word or PDF file, or you can use other formats such as video and audio. Your application should say what interests you have about this role with Activate, your qualifications, skills and experience, and how these relate directly to the position of Charity Trustee/Director at Activate.

Please also complete our [Equality Of Opportunity form](#).

This will be treated anonymously and will not be used as part of the selection process.

If you have any access requirements or need any help with your application, please contact us below and we will be happy to help.

If you would like this pack in another format such as BSL, Large Print or Audiofile, we will happily arrange this for you or if you need further information, please contact info@activateperformingarts.org.uk or call 01305 260954

Send your application to: irene@activateperformingarts.org.uk

We recommend using [WeTransfer](#) to send large files.

If you wish to talk through what it means to become a Board member at Activate, please contact our Artistic and Executive Director, Kate Wood on 01305 260954 for a confidential discussion.

You can also visit our website for more background information:
www.activateperformingarts.org.uk

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