

**Head of Learning and Creative Programming (Maternity Cover)**

**Context**

Discover is the UK’s first Story Centre for children aged 0-11 and their families, based in Stratford, rooted in the borough of Newham and resonating through east London and beyond. We are an inspirational cultural resource, providing excellent story-based play and learning experiences for all children to support and develop a love of language, literature, and storytelling. At the heart of the centre are our purpose-built Story Worlds and Story Garden which are creative play spaces designed to inspire children’s curiosity, creativity, and imagination.

Our temporary interactive exhibitions immerse families in enchanting, fantastical worlds, often working with popular authors and illustrators. The current exhibition is based on the work of Dapo Adeola and Tọlá Okogwu and will be followed by a monster funfair celebrating the work of Nadia Shireen. We also curate a programme of high-quality story-telling events for 0-3’s and throughout the year we invite much-loved and up-and-coming authors, illustrators, poets, musicians, artists, and storytellers to run workshops and events. We work with schools, libraries, festivals and other creative partners to deliver amazing creative literacy experiences that deliver on our mission to transform lives through stories. We receive over 100,000 visitors a year at Discover and work with over 25,000 more through our growing external activities programme.

**Main Purpose**

The Head of Learning and Creative Programming (Maternity Cover) is one of 6 members of Discover’s Senior Management Team (SMT). As a member of SMT you will be expected to contribute to the development of policy, the programme, and its delivery to ensure that our organisation is well run.

The Head of Learning and Creative Programming (Maternity Cover) shapes, brings together and oversees all of Discover’s learning and creative programmes, including school and community work, the immersive exhibition and trails and the programme of events that take place day to day at the Story Centre. The post holder plays an important role in quality assurance, ensuring that our work delivers strongly for children, parents, teachers, funders and partners, and in developing new projects and programmes that respond to need and create the extraordinary. The Head of Learning and Creative Programming (Interim) plays a key role in taking forward our strategic objectives to reach more people in more places, ensure every child can find themselves in Discover and make a difference to every child in our home borough. The role includes representing Discover on external learning, community, and literacy forums and strengthening links with the publishing industry and arts and cultural sector, locally and nationally.

Reports to: Chief Executive

Responsible for:

* Community and Education Manager, who manages the Learning and Events Coordinator
* Creative Events Producer, who manages the Story Builder team
* matrix management of the Senior Exhibition and Design Manager, who manages the Exhibition and Projects Manager and Junior Artworker
* Consultants and freelancers ad hoc

**Main Tasks**

* Lead on the overall development of Discover’s learning and creative programme, including for our forthcoming dedicated 0-2s and SEND sensory space
* Oversee the delivery of the learning and creative programme throughout the Centre and externally, ensuring high quality, timely delivery on budget and in line with all funding agreements
* Manage the Creative Programming team, supporting line managees with day to day operation and ensuring the team works effectively together to deliver an exciting and coherent programme
* Oversee and support the Creative Events Producer to develop and deliver the Early Years internal family events strand and to programme the 0-5 storytelling space, gaining publisher support and recruiting freelance directors; designers and makers.
* Support the Community & Education Manager to design schools’ sessions ensuring that Exhibitions, the Story World and the outreach schools programmes have clear learning outcomes linked to curriculum objectives and that Story Builders are trained and supported to deliver them. Oversee Discover’s Teacher’s Forum and participation/consultation projects.
* Design new projects, internal and external, responding to Newham and wider east London primary schools, early years and local community needs including the production of the highest quality project outcomes, working closely with the Development and Delivery Director to find and utilise funding opportunities
* Develop training programmes for teachers, artists, parents and people who work with young people in how to work with stories to support children and families.
* Seek opportunities through partnership and application to expand Discover’s externally presented programme at appropriate external events including local and literary festivals
* Manage the strategic development of partnerships with school, libraries, local authorities, arts organisations and publishers, authors, and artists, supporting the Creative Events Producer, Senior Exhibition and Design Manager and Community & Education Manager to maintain these relationships.
* Champion Discover’s Access and Inclusion strategy and provision for disabled children and their families and develop and plan for inclusivity within the Centre. Support the Community and Education Manager who leads on Mighty Mega Saturday Club.
* Work with the Chief Executive and Finance Director to manage department budgets and income targets.
* Monitor and evaluate all creative learning projects with participants, staff, partner organisations and external evaluators including ensuring projects achieve agreed outcomes and targets. Ensure statistics are collated and write reports for funders and supporters.
* Generate income through the various strands of the learning and creative programme and activities.
* Manage the process of ensuring that DBS checks are delivered and maintained for all Discover staff.
* Act as a spokesperson for Discover’s work at conferences, on steering groups, and through written articles; promoting the charity’s work through effective advocacy at individual, local and governmental level.
* Act as a senior member of staff and head of department, attending meetings and, where necessary, representing Discover at functions within and outside the building.
* Take on any other duties as mutually agreed with the Chief Executive.

Please note, this job description is a guide to the nature of the work required. It is not wholly comprehensive or restrictive and may be reviewed with the post holder and the Chief Executive as required.

**Person Specification**

You will be a confident arts manager specialising in learning and education with extensive experience creating opportunities for children aged 0 – 11 and their families, with early years settings and with primary schools. You’ll have a passion for the power of stories and storytelling to improve wellbeing, confidence, connection, creativity and literacy. Naturally inclusive, you will be aware of best practice in working with children with special educational needs and disabilities and with children from the rich diversity of London’s communities. You’ll have worked on a variety of creative learning programmes supported by different funding bodies, with a demonstrable track record of designing strategic projects. You will recognise creativity in everyone and as a skilled collaborator have experience of managing and co-ordinating creative education projects.

**Essential**

* At least three years’ experience of managing community and education programmes and measuring impact within an arts education environment
* Experience of developing exciting and innovative projects with children and families
* A track record of designing and delivering literacy/literature-based programmes for primary schools, with knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, principles and workings of early years settings and primary schools
* Knowledge of child progression and appropriate activities for different age levels
* A minimum of two years’ experience of line managing staff and with experience of managing and recruiting freelance artists
* A track record in successful budget management of budgets of £50k +
* Demonstrable ability to think strategically and establish partnerships between different agencies
* Knowledge of and enthusiasm for children’s literature
* Understanding and experience of working with children with SEN
* Understanding of and commitment to the principles and practice of equality, diversity, and inclusion
* Excellent verbal and written communication skills
* Experience and enjoyment of working in a team
* An understanding of and commitment to consulting with children
* Ability and willingness to work outside of normal office hours when required
* An ability to represent Discover in a calm and positive manner

**Desirable**

* Trained safeguarding lead
* Experience of designing and delivering training programmes
* Experience of working within a diverse environment
* Knowledge of, or experience with, hands-on exhibitions for children
* Knowledge and understanding of family learning

**Contract**

This post is offered on a 12 month fixed term contract which is subject to a two month probationary period. The post holder will be required to undertake an Enhanced DBS check.

**Working Hours**

This post is offered on a 28 hours contract working four days per week Monday to Friday. Some weekends and very occasional evenings may be required, for which time off will be given in lieu.

**Location**

A regular presence is required in Discover Story Centre to deliver this role effectively however, it is possible to work remotely for between 1-2 days per week.

**Salary**

The salary is £36,000pa (equivalent to £45k for a full time equivalent).

**Holidays and benefits**

Discover offers 25 days plus bank holidays (pro rata’ed according to contract), paid carers leave, employee well-being support, travel card and bicycle loans, free hot drinks and discounted food in our café.

Discover’s premises are fully accessible.