

Hay
Festival
Global

Creative Director



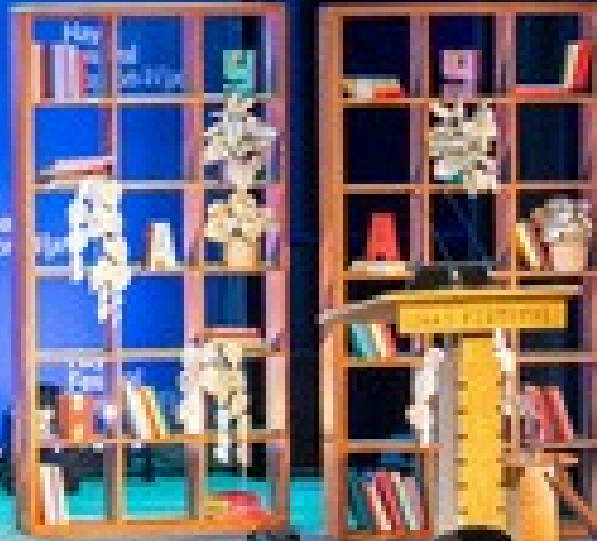
hayfestival.org



01 234 5678



May Festival May-on-Wye



**Welcome to
a world of different...**

Who we are

A global charity, together.

In a time of division and polarity, we spark shared conversations to inspire audiences to think and live differently.

Relevant and inspirational – Established in 1987, we deliver across impactful experiences across five continents.

Contemporary thinking – Our spaces showcase diverse ideas finding truth, hope, and empowering audiences.

Connected and networked – Our artists, partners and stakeholders span industries, with a strong and trusted brand.

Global and local – We reach audiences across the world with authentic, transformative experiences live and online.

What we do

Hay Festival Hay-on-Wye is our flagship annual event, taking place each spring in the world's first town of books, bringing curious audiences together to enjoy 650 events across.

Hay Festival international editions and collaborations take place annually in Colombia, Chile, Mexico, Nairobi, Panama, Peru, Spain, and the US, reaching millions.

Hay Festival learning and engagement programmes run alongside our ticketed activities, offering free access to young people through schools, universities and youth groups.

Hay Festival Medals and Awards celebrate and support the very best artists in the world today.

Hay Festival Anytime opens year-round access to Hay Festival inspiration across social media and our archive platform, including our free monthly **Book Club** events.

What they say

“The Glastonbury of literary festivals.”
– The Guardian

“Hay Festival democratizes inspiration.”
– New York Times

“It all started with books for me. As a kid in school, I fell in love with literature and it sparked a life-long journey with words and writing, which led into my career as a songwriter and a musician. I’m really excited to pass on this passion at Hay Festival.”
– Stormzy



Creative Director

Summary

The Creative Director is responsible for defining and leading the artistic vision, creative strategy and public programme framework for Hay Festival UK.

The postholder will shape the future direction of Hay Festival's creative offer, ensuring the organisation remains one of the world's leading cultural platforms for literature, ideas and interdisciplinary exchange. The role combines creative leadership, strategic thinking and organisational influence, balancing artistic excellence with audience growth, fundraising opportunities and commercial sustainability.

The Creative Director will lead the Creative Directorate through the Creative Team ensuring a coherent, ambitious and distinctive programme across festivals, year-round events, digital content and new initiatives.

Working closely with colleagues across Development, Commercial, Marketing, Operations, Education and International teams, the Creative Director will ensure creative activity contributes to Hay Festival's charitable mission, strategic objectives and long-term growth.

Type of contract – Full Time

Salary – IRO £80,000 per annum

Hours of work – 37.5 hours per week excluding lunch break

Holidays – 25 days / year, plus Christmas shutdown (3 days) and public holidays

Reports to – CEO

Direct reports – Creative Team

Location – Hay-on-Wye, London and other festival locations as required

Key role responsibilities

Creative Vision and Artistic Leadership

- Define and lead Hay Festival UK's Creative Strategy, ensuring alignment with organisational objectives, charitable purposes, commercial objectives and brand values.
- Establish the artistic priorities, themes and editorial direction that shape all UK programming.
- Identify emerging cultural, literary, political, scientific and social conversations that should inform future programming.
- Ensure Hay Festival remains a leading platform for literature, ideas, debate and cultural exchange.
- Champion innovation, diversity and excellence across all creative activity.

Flagship Festival Leadership

- Shape the overall creative architecture of Hay Festival Hay-on-Wye, Winter Weekend, After Hours and other UK activities.
- Lead decision-making on headline bookings, major programme strands and key creative priorities.
- Ensure Venue 1 and other flagship stages deliver world-class line-ups capable of attracting large audiences, generating significant ticket income and enhancing Hay Festival's reputation.
- Maintain senior relationships with leading authors, artists, thinkers, performers, broadcasters and cultural leaders.
- Ensure the programme balances artistic ambition, public relevance, audience demand and financial sustainability.

Key role responsibilities

Leadership of the Creative Directorate

- Lead and develop the Creative Team
- Ensure strong collaboration between literary programming, interdisciplinary programming and partnership activity.
- Create a culture of creativity, accountability, collaboration and continuous improvement.
- Provide strategic oversight of programme quality, audience development and creative innovation.

Organisational Leadership

- Contribute to the strategic leadership of Hay Festival as a member of the Executive Team.
- Work closely with the CEO and Board on the development and delivery of organisational strategy.
- Collaborate across departments to ensure creative activity supports audience growth, fundraising, partnerships, advocacy and commercial objectives.
- Ensure robust evaluation and audience insight informs future programme development.

Key role responsibilities

Audience Growth, Partnerships and Income Generation

- Deliver annual commercial income target from ticket sales
- Ensure creative strategy contributes to audience growth and diversification.
- Support fundraising, sponsorship and partnership opportunities through the development of compelling creative propositions.
- Work with Commercial and Marketing teams to maximise attendance, engagement and earned income.
- Balance artistic integrity with financial sustainability, ensuring creative activity contributes to organisational resilience and growth.

External Profile and Sector Leadership

- Act as a senior ambassador for Hay Festival nationally and internationally.
- Build and maintain influential relationships across publishing, arts, media, education, philanthropy, policy and cultural sectors.
- Represent Hay Festival at major industry events, conferences and stakeholder meetings.
- Position Hay Festival as a thought leader in literature, culture and public engagement.

Key performance indicators

- Delivery of Creative Strategy objectives
- Audience and growth and diversification
- Ticket income and attendance budget deliverables
- Artistic quality and reputation
- Artist and audience satisfaction
- Fundraising and partnership contribution to fund the programme
- Media profile and brand impact
- Budget management, value for money and ROI
- Interdisciplinary results

Skills specification

Essential

- Significant senior leadership experience within arts, culture, publishing, media or creative industries.
- Proven experience developing and delivering successful cultural programmes, festivals or public events.
- Strong understanding of literature, publishing and contemporary cultural sectors.
- Demonstrable ability to attract major talent and shape compelling public programmes.
- Experience balancing artistic ambition with commercial and organisational objectives.
- Strong leadership, influencing and stakeholder management skills.
- Experience contributing to fundraising, sponsorship or partnership development.
- Financial and budget management experience.
- Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Personal Attributes

- Welsh speaker (desired)
- Visionary, creative and strategically minded.
- Collaborative and empowering leader.
- Commercially aware and audience-focused.
- Credible and influential ambassador.
- Innovative, curious and outward-looking.
- Passionate about literature, ideas, culture and public engagement.

How to apply

Accessibility and inclusivity

Please send your CV with a cover letter explaining how your experience fits the role by 8 July 2026 to hr@hayfestival.org.

First interviews will take place 14 July 2026 in Hay-on-Wye.

We welcome applications regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, age or religion or belief.

Disabled applicants are invited to contact us in confidence at any point during the recruitment process to discuss steps that could be taken to overcome operational difficulties presented by the job, or if any adjustments or support are required regarding the recruitment process.

For an informal conversation about the role, please email hr@hayfestival.org in the first instance



Get in touch

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