

National Portfolio Organisation Advisory Board Recruitment Pack





Role Overview

Warwickshire County Council's library service has recently become a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO), directly funded by The Arts Council England, to deliver a programme of arts-based events and activities over an initial three-year term.

We need to set up an Advisory Board, to be in place by April 2023, to monitor and guide the NPO programme over the next three years.

We are looking to recruit board-members from a wide range of backgrounds to bring different perspectives to the role - including community minded local people, councillors, artists, volunteers, and arts' consumers.

Warwickshire Libraries are keen to attract a diversity of applicants interested in supporting the NPO - people of different ages, ethnicities and educational backgrounds, from all parts of the county and wider community - who can bring fresh ideas and impetus to the work we do. We welcome applications from under-25s to ensure young people are represented and have a voice.

The main attribute required is enthusiasm for libraries, heritage, culture and the arts and a willingness to give honest, constructive advice on the NPO's progress. Board-members will offer oversight and guidance to a team widely known for its innovation and can-do approach to delivering services local people, and visitors, want and will use.

This is an honorary, voluntary role so there is no salary, although reasonable travel and associated expenses will be paid.



St Johns House Fayre



Roman Soldier Alcester Library Museum



Requirements

We seek applicants who, ideally, have experience in one or more of the following:

- arts programming
- community development
- arts in education
- as a freelance artist or practitioner
- public sector
- commercial/finance

Commitment

- four Advisory Board meetings per year
- initial/refresher training and development session(s)
- three-year term of office



MND Highly Sprung in Rugby Library



NPO Ambitions

Our overarching ambition is to grow and develop a high-quality cultural offer for the people of Warwickshire that delivers against County Council priorities, ACE's Let's Create programme and four investment principles:

- inclusivity and relevance
- environmental responsibility
- dynamism
- ambition and quality

In essence, the NPO is about making arts and culture more attractive and accessible to all Warwickshire residents, wherever they live, whatever their circumstances or previous levels of engagement.

Levelling Up

The Warwickshire Libraries NPO will focus heavily on the County Council's Levelling-Up agenda, and a co-design and Community Powered Warwickshire approach to service delivery - which this Advisory Board will oversee and be part of. The NPO team will support County Council ambitions towards increased community involvement, narrowing gaps and creating equality of opportunity for all Warwickshire residents - but particularly rural communities, young people, and those living in less advantaged parts of the county.

Seventeen of the 22 Warwickshire areas identified for levelling-up are in the Nuneaton and Bedworth district. The NPO team will be based in the town of Nuneaton where we are building a new £19 million Library and Business Centre as part of a major regeneration programme.

For more information on County Council policy on levelling-up see:

<https://api.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/WCCC-970487194-271>

<https://api.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/WCCC-808477336-692>

<https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/s19549/Community Powered Warwickshire Ground Breakers Partner Mobilisation and Mainstreaming.pdf>

Governance and Staff

The Warwickshire Libraries NPO will have a separate Advisory Board, in place by April 2023, and employ a team of four staff:

- Library Delivery Lead/Creative Director (22.5 hours)
- Programmes Librarian/Producer (full-time)
- SCSA Coordinator (part time)
- Apprentice (full-time)

The process begins in January 2023 with the recruitment of a part-time Creative Director, to be in post by March 2023.



Warwickshire Heritage Learning

"Libraries are trusted, creative spaces at the heart of their communities, free to enter and open to everyone – and we're delighted to be welcoming Warwickshire Libraries to the portfolio for the next three years. I look forward to seeing even more people visiting their local libraries across Warwickshire, reading and enjoying creativity together."

Peter Knott, Area Director for Arts Council England

Activities Programme

Arts Award

Develop our support for young people wanting to deepen their engagement with the arts, build creative and leadership skills and achieve a national qualification during 2023-2026.

Bhangra Beats

A programme of storytelling, movement, and dance for under 5's across libraries, to support health and wellbeing in 2023-2026.

Body in the Library

Piloting income generation and broadening participation through literary themed murder mystery nights in libraries and in other historic settings.

Green Futures

Annual reading festival in country parks across Warwickshire. Storytelling to provide a focus on health and wellbeing, as well as culture and reading.

Hidden Stories

Inclusive and representative narratives that celebrate diversity and strengthen people's sense of place and community.

Human Library

Support wellbeing and cohesion through creative self-expression; reach new audiences - original and progressive, supporting inclusion agenda.

Let's Make Digital

Across 2023-2026 we will extend our current 'Let's Make' Digital offer with new and emerging digital arts and technology commissions, building digital creative skills and capacity for staff and communities.

Shakespeare 400

We will celebrate the 400th anniversary of the First Folio of Shakespeare in 2023 by taking a facsimile edition on a canal tour - stopping at places close to libraries and working with key partners.

Warwickshire Reads

We will secure sponsorship and deliver a countywide digital and physical reading initiative for all - including a countywide competition, led by communities, to select one adult and one children's title.



Fantastic Fun-with Words Festival Pirates



Atherstone Library



Let's Make Space in Rugby Library



Fantastic Fun with Words Festival

Terms of Reference

Background

Warwickshire Libraries and Communities have been awarded National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status and funding by Arts Council England (ACE) for three years - with the option to reapply at the end of the term.

As an NPO, Warwickshire Libraries will receive a total of £650,000 from ACE, on top of the service's County Council budget. The ACE funding will be used for activities and programmes to extend and enhance the arts, heritage and culture offer in libraries across the county. In essence, the NPO is about making arts and culture more attractive and accessible to all Warwickshire residents.

Ambitions and priorities

The NPO ambition is to grow and develop a high-quality cultural offer for the people of Warwickshire that delivers against ACE's Let's Create programme and County Council priorities.

Let's Create is ACE's strategy and vision for culture and creativity to 2030. It is based on four investment principles: inclusivity and relevance, environmental responsibility, dynamism, and ambition and quality.

ACE's desired outcomes:

- Creative people - everyone can be creative and taking part in creative activities delights and fulfil us, and help us to think, experiment, and better understand the world
- Cultural communities - cultural activities can help improve lives, regenerate neighbourhoods, support local economies, attract visitors and bring people together
- A creative and cultural country - driven by a professional cultural sector that generates new ideas, works easily and effectively with others, and is adept at developing diverse talent from every community

ACE believes that getting involved in creative activities in communities reduces loneliness, supports physical and mental health and wellbeing, sustains older people and helps to build and strengthen social ties.

Warwickshire County Council priorities:

The County Council wants to make Warwickshire "the best it can be". The Council Plan 2022 - 2027 is based on three strategic priorities. It wants Warwickshire to:

- have a thriving economy and places that have the right jobs, skills, education and infrastructure
- be a county where all people can live their best lives; where communities and individuals are supported to live safely, healthily, happily and independently
- have a sustainable future which means adapting to and mitigating climate change and meeting net zero commitments

The Council aims to narrow gaps and create equality of opportunity for all Warwickshire residents - but particularly rural communities, young people, and those living in less advantaged parts of the county. It has developed a Levelling-Up Approach and identified priority areas.

Advisory Board role and responsibilities

- The Board will operate within Warwickshire County Council's governance structure to oversee the work of the NPO and ensure planned programmes of work are delivered.
- It will have no legal status and will not be required to develop NPO strategy, although it will advise on future direction and delivery, in support of ACE and WCC priorities identified above.
- Its role will be to monitor progress and spending, to challenge, make recommendations, and to offer independent judgement and scrutiny.
- Members will be expected to champion the NPO within WCC and more widely, and to promote its work so that new partnership opportunities can be identified and developed.
- The Board will not have financial responsibility for the NPO, which remains with WCC, nor will it have any legal liability.
- Members will elect a Chair who will liaise with the NPO administrator to arrange quarterly Board meetings, draw up agendas and ensure minutes are taken.
- In addition to Board meetings, members will be expected to attend relevant training sessions - and meetings with Warwickshire Libraries and/or ACE if required. However, the aim is to cover necessary business at quarterly meetings as far as possible.

Other terms and conditions

- Board decisions will require at least 40% attendance. However, absent members can be contacted by email to ensure necessary business can be concluded.
- Board members unable to attend three consecutive meetings will be asked to stand down.
- Members will have to declare any potential conflicts of interest - and withdraw from discussions as appropriate. However, Board members - such as practising artists - will be able to enter into NPO contracts without disadvantage.
- Any complaints, internal or external, will be dealt with by the standard WCC Complaints Process (<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/complaints>)

Advisory Board recruitment and membership

The recruitment process will be open and transparent and encourage a wide range of applicants - for an initial three-year term of office. Further recruitment may be undertaken during this period, to bring in new skillsets or increase diversity.

Board members will be expected to adhere to WCC's core values - which are to be:

- High performing
- Collaborative
- Customer focused
- Accountable
- Trustworthy



How to apply

If you are interested in becoming a board member, please send no more than one side of A4, explaining why you're interested in this role showing any relevant details and skills you have. Could you also provide a hundred word biography and headshot photograph. **Closing Date: Monday 6th March 2023.**

Send your information to: (Please indicate whether you'd also like to express an interest in the Chair)

Ayub Khan MBE, Strategy and Commissioning Manager (Universal Services)

E: ayubkhan@warwickshire.gov.uk

About Warwickshire

Shakespeare's County is a great place to live and work with plenty to do, see and enjoy. The county covers an area of around 760 square miles and has several large towns but no city.

However Coventry - City of Culture in 2022 - is approximately 10 miles from Warwick, and Birmingham - which hosted the Commonwealth Games in 2022 - is about 30 miles from the county town.

The University of Warwick is actually located on the southern edge of Coventry, close to the Warwickshire town of Kenilworth.

Warwickshire is a green county (64% rural) - with a rich heritage and culture, and one of the fastest-growing economies in the country.

We have good schools, plenty of green public spaces, and a long list of world-famous attractions including Warwick Castle, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, and Compton Verney Art Gallery.

Being at the heart of the Midlands motorway network makes it relatively easy to travel further afield.

About Libraries

Warwickshire Libraries are one of several universal, public facing services managed together as a group within the Business and Customer Support section of the Resources Directorate. These include Meet and Greet, Library and Information Services, Registration Service, Heritage and Culture, and Communities and Partnership - all of which provide frontline services to the residents of Warwickshire.

We have 18 council-run libraries, three mobile libraries and a Schools Library Service, plus reading and learning, digital and outreach teams - and have recently introduced a tablet lending scheme. We also support a vibrant network of 13 social enterprise libraries, and our services actively involve hundreds of volunteers. We have been fortunate to have been awarded Capital Investment in order to update our estate and technology, and have plans for a flagship £19 million Library and Business centre in Nuneaton, as part of a major Transforming Nuneaton redevelopment scheme.

The service is part of the British Library's Living Knowledge Network and has a crucial role to play in delivering the Warwickshire Heritage and Culture Strategy 2020 - 2025 and allied Warwickshire Waterways Strategy. Both are key five-year strategies for the County Council, shaped around three main themes: health and wellbeing, sense of place and economic vibrancy.

Our work and programmes need to meet the key priorities of the Council Plan, which are:

- To have a thriving economy and places that have the right jobs, skills, education and infrastructure.
- A county where all people can live their best lives; where communities and individuals are supported to live safely, healthily, happily and independently.
- Sustainable for the future, which means adapting to and mitigating climate change and meeting net zero commitments.

Key themes in our NPO programme support all of the above.

