

fierce

Birmingham (UK)

DIRECTOR (ARTISTIC) JOB PACK



FIERCE IS LOOKING FOR... A DIRECTOR (ARTISTIC)

For any enquiries relating to this job pack contact:
catherine@wearefierce.org

[@fiercefestival](https://www.instagram.com/fiercefestival)
www.wearefierce.org

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR OF OUR BOARD

Hello and thank you for your interest in the role of Director (Artistic) at Fierce.

I wanted to write a little introduction here to tell you why I think it's such a brilliant job, where Fierce is at right now, and to help you think about whether it might be the right opportunity for you.

I became Fierce's chair in 2021, joining a brilliant board that had supported the organisation to build its stability, be bold in its ambitions and stay true to its core values. Having previously worked in Birmingham for 15 years, I knew the importance of Fierce to the city's cultural scene and had been a regular audience member. I had seen the impact that their work supporting local artists and bringing world-class performance to the city had had under founding director Mark Ball, then co-directors Laura McDermott and Harun Morrison, and how this had developed again under the present team.

In 2017, for the current team's first festival together, I travelled back to Birmingham to work as a volunteer with them, helping them realise that year's incredible programme of works. Throughout my time in the city, and then watching their work from further away, I'd been excited and inspired by the team's artistic ambition but also their approach as a reflective organisation that sought to constantly improve their ways of working with artists, partners, team members and audiences.

For me, it's this commitment to reflection – considering whether the work they're doing and the way they're doing it is the best it can be for everyone involved – that's one of the things that makes Fierce great. It's also one of the reasons that the team and board have taken the moment of Aaron's departure as a prompt to think about how we all work together, and to reconsider the organisation's structure. It's a task they've approached with curiosity, flexibility and openness and I think we've arrived at what will be a collaborative and supportive model, that reflects the organisation's values and perhaps allows for a greater range of people to consider applying for the role of Director (Artistic).

I hope that, as a potential candidate for this role, you're excited about the opportunity to lead the artistic vision for Fierce in the years ahead. It's a great time to be joining us – we've just started another three years as an Arts Council England NPO, we've just finished an incredible year where we worked with more artists and audiences across the city and country than ever before, and we've just celebrated our 25th anniversary with our 2022 festival.

You'll be joining a new collaborative leadership team with bags of experience in holding relationships with a range of artists, in building partnerships with other organisations and funders, and in realising some hugely ambitious artistic projects.

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR OF OUR BOARD

We hope you'll add to the team an experience of curating exciting programmes of contemporary performance and live art; an infectious passion for the work you love; a genuine desire to meet new people, form new artistic relationships, and find new partners for Fierce; and an excitement about working with the wonderful people and places of Birmingham.

We hope you'll be excited about the opportunities that our new organisational structure gives you to lead an organisation in collaboration with two colleagues with complimentary experience, supported by a developed team and a multi-skilled and passionate board of trustees.

I really hope you choose to apply, and I look forward to hearing all about your plans when you do!

Good luck and all my very best wishes,
PBx

Paul Burns
Fierce Board Chair



**“A daring whirl
of theatrical thrills.”**

- The Guardian

“The Fierce Artistic Director role is surely one of the most exciting jobs in the UK arts landscape, offering huge artistic freedom but with real support from an engaged and experienced board. It’s allowed me to see the world whilst building relationships with some of the most exciting artists, at the cutting edge of practice. It’s a life-changing role for someone with buckets of enthusiasm.”

Aaron Wright
outgoing Artistic Director

DIRECTOR (ARTISTIC)

The remit of this role includes:

1. **Curation**
2. **Partnerships & Networking**
3. **Communications**
4. **Fundraising**
5. **Management**

CURATION

- Develop, design, deliver and lead the curatorial approach at Fierce year round defining it as a leading voice in the contemporary performance landscape globally in dialogue with the team.
 - Actively engage in ongoing attendance of creative work and cultivating a network of artists, both nationally and internationally
 - Research & programme the biennial Fierce Festival to feature a breadth of contemporary and experimental performance, live art, talks, parties and more.
 - Seek out and select from invitations for research trips and exchange.
 - Take into account the needs of different artists, holding those relationships in a way that prioritises care.
 - Negotiate financial conditions with companies, artists and agents in order to confirm the programme.
 - Develop creative projects and programmes responding to the needs of local and national artists and audiences whilst aligning with Fierce's brand and vision.
 - Continued contribution to Horizon, working as part of the consortium to envisage the future of the programme
 - Participation in the Arts & Humanities Research Council funded project "Possession & Automation" led by Queen Mary University.
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DIRECTOR (ARTISTIC)

PARTNERSHIPS & NETWORKING

- Co-contribute to and engage with regional, national and international networks to sustain collaborative and mutually beneficial partnerships for Fierce.
- Co-maintain good relationships with key Fierce stakeholders, including funders and venues via meetings, email updates and other opportunities.
- Co-build new cooperative relationships with venues, festivals and contexts particularly with a view to co-commissioning and co-presentation.
- Co-participate in Fierce's networks including Live Art UK and UK Festival Directors.
- Participate in selection panels, speak at conferences, undertake guest lecturing, and attend other relevant events as invitations arise.
- Attend all Fierce events to build and maintain excellent relationships with artists, producers, programmers and funders.



The Making of Pinocchio @ Fierce Festival 2022 (Photo: Manuel Vason)

DIRECTOR (ARTISTIC)

COMMUNICATIONS

- Lead the vision for communications for the organisation, including briefing, liaising and giving feedback to sub-contractors including print designers, web-designers, video editors, photographers, videographers and the PR company.
- Oversee and manage the company's marketing strategy with support from the Marketing Coordinator, both ongoing and for particular projects and/or moments of profile and opportunities to champion Fierce and the community of supported artists.
- Ensure effective creation of marketing & press materials:
 - writing text for the festival brochure
 - proofing press releases
 - editing artist texts for Birmingham context
 - selecting lead imagery
- Contribute articles to media publications and be interviewed for press including print, radio and television.

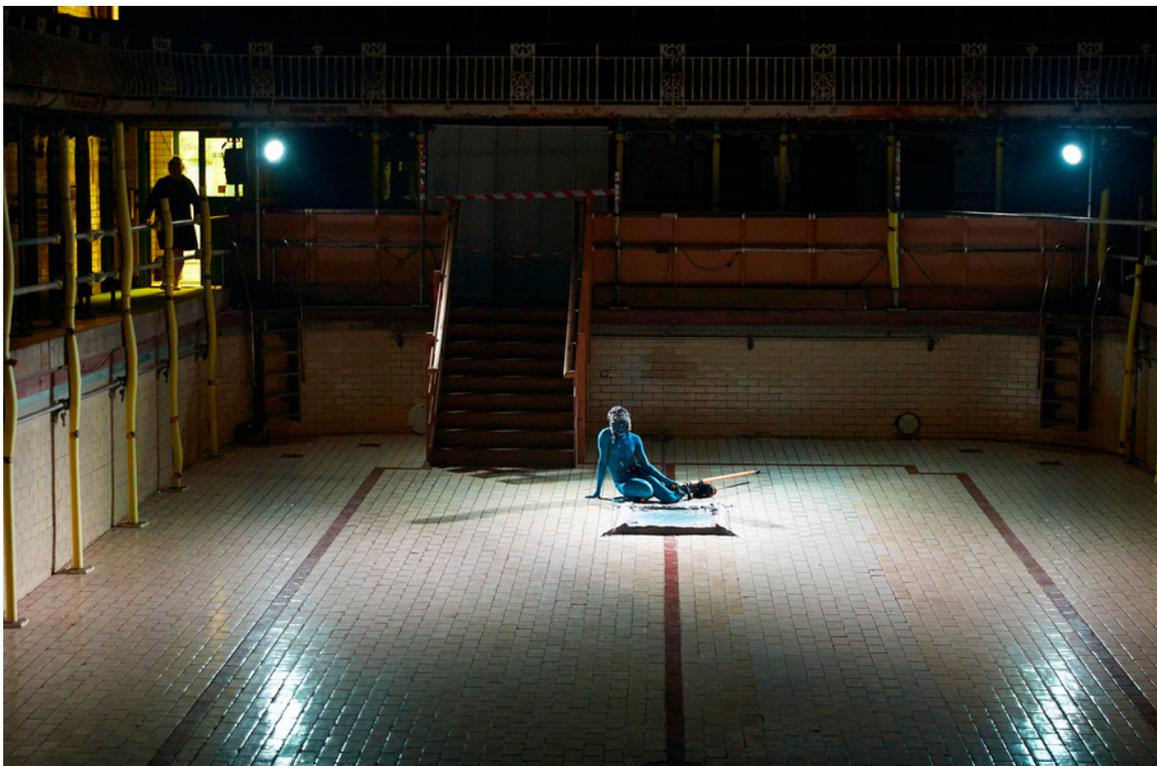


Bain Brisé @ Fierce Festival 2019 (Photo: Manuel Vason)

DIRECTOR (ARTISTIC)

FUNDRAISING

- Co-manage existing relationships with stakeholders including embassies and international funders and lead on funding requests and applications.
- Co-lead on developing new relationships with international embassies, international arts councils and other international funders with a view to funding requests.
- Seek out appropriate new funding relationships with local and national Trusts & Foundations and develop funding applications in collaboration with other team members.
- Contribute to reports and evaluations as required by funders.
- Identify and develop new income generation and fundraising activities in conjunction with the other Directors and staff and/or consultants hired to work on fundraising and development.



Akin to Hurricane @ Fierce Festival 2022 (Photo: Manuel Vason)

DIRECTOR (ARTISTIC)

MANAGEMENT

- With the other Co-Directors, strategically co-lead the organisation, managing risk to effectively deliver Fierce's Vision.
- Co-lead the Fierce team with care and compassion, ensuring everyone is supported to do their best work.
- Co-lead ongoing engagement with the Board, including reporting and frequent meetings both collectively and individually.
- Lead appraisal processes for Marketing Coordinator and participate in appraisals with other Co-Directors.
- With the other Co-Directors, plan and monitor annual and project budgets, following robust financial management procedures for long-term, sustainable financial stability.
- Co-lead the development, implementation and advocate for all Fierce policies to align with Fierce's values.
- Help to maintain the Fierce database, ensuring contacts and intelligence are kept up to date.



Pig Pen / Club Fierce @ Fierce Festival 2022 (Photo: Manuel Vason)

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

This job is for an **exceptional curator** who is capable of **strategic leadership**, building **excellent partnerships** with stakeholders to deliver an **exciting programme**, informed by an understanding of (and ideally lived experience of) the **progressive politics** that is implicit in Fierce's work. They must be open-minded, respectful and inclusive of ideas, with a commitment to **anti-racism**, **trans rights**, **disability rights** and **care-centred** approaches.

CURATION

ESSENTIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a strong artistic vision incorporating diverse national and international influences.• experience of curating Live Art / contemporary performance / experimental practice. This doesn't need to be in an institutional context; it could be for DIY, small-scale events or parties.• an understanding of and passion for Fierce's brand and values.• capacity and willingness to travel internationally for rigorous research.• an understanding of the local, national and international contexts that Fierce sits within and how Fierce contributes to those landscapes through programming, opportunities for artists and strategic communications.
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PARTNERSHIPS & NETWORKING

ESSENTIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ability to maintain and develop relationships with existing and potential partners, locally, nationally and internationally to meet the needs and vision of the programme and organisation.• experience of building and negotiating partnerships with a variety of arts, commercial and community organisations.
DESIRABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• existing networks that will enable you to set up new partnerships for Fierce.

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

COMMUNICATIONS

ESSENTIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ability to communicate your programme choices, making complex ideas accessible, to get the team, stakeholders and audiences excited about your vision.• an understanding of Fierce's tone and voice and ability to lead this through marketing and communications activities.• a sound understanding of the mechanics of marketing, enabling you to strategically lead marketing campaigns and audience development plans with the support of the wider team.
DESIRABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• confidence in working with freelance / external designers, documenters, and PR teams.

FUNDRAISING

ESSENTIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ability to research and secure a range of international funding opportunities across country specific programmes, embassies, and schemes.• experience of working on projects with multiple funders with different priorities, ensuring that activities are delivered to meet funding requirements and communications are tailored accordingly, without compromising on vision or values.
DESIRABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a track-record of securing funding from a range of trusts and foundations, and international sources.• confidence in holding relationships with key funders (including ACE) ensuring reporting is accurate and on-time and activities meet the relevant commitments.

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

MANAGEMENT

ESSENTIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ability, alongside the other Co-Directors, to strategically lead the organisation according to its vision, mission and values, primarily ensuring the safeguarding of the company's future. (This does not mean you have to have led an organisation before, but you must have an understanding of what is needed to do this.)• a strong understanding of high-level budgets and ability to strategically plan and manage finances, with the support of the Co-Directors.• good time management, applying this in your working practice.
DESIRABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• experience of line management and be able to do this with care and rigour.• experience of answering to and working with a Board of Trustees and an understanding of the governance structure of the organisation as a registered charity.

If you do not meet all of the essential criteria but can demonstrate strategies for how you could develop in role, we are open to hearing from you and encourage you to have a conversation with us before applying. Please email catherine@wearefierce.org to arrange a call with one of the Co-Directors.

OUR WORKING CULTURE

From our programme to our working culture, we aim to be as accessible and inclusive as possible. We are committed to being an inclusive workplace where all employees feel able to be their whole selves, free of (micro)aggression.

Particularly, we highlight our commitment to anti-racism, trans rights and access for disabled people. You can read more about our work in this area and how we are holding ourselves accountable [here](#).

We want all Fierce employees to feel comfortable and able to be themselves at work. Our working culture is built on Fierce's core values of Trust, Joy, Disruption and Rigour. As the Fierce team grows it is important to us that we maintain a caring working environment. Our working culture is fluid and all team members have agency to influence it.

Read more about our working culture [here](#).



Fierce Festival 2019 Launch Party (Photo: Anne Marie Hayes)

OUR APPROACH TO RECRUITMENT

We are committed to making application processes as accessible as possible and are happy to provide information in alternative formats and answer any other questions you may have regarding this opportunity. We actively encourage and welcome access documents.

We are available to talk to anyone who wants to discuss how Fierce's Working Culture can support you, particularly if it may make you feel more comfortable in applying to work at Fierce. To arrange this or to request alternative formats, please contact our Director (Operations), Catherine Groom: catherine@wearefierce.org

With this round of recruitment, we will offer interviews to all candidates who meet the basic eligibility criteria who experience racism and/or who are disabled as these are underrepresented characteristics in the Fierce team. There will be space to opt in for this on the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. Our interview panels will be representative of a spectrum of protected characteristics.

In the last 2 - 3 years Fierce has experienced a period of growth, which has meant we have decided this is an exciting moment to extend the collaborative working culture that we have fostered into our leadership model. This means we will progress to a co-leadership structure, ensuring Fierce's stability and leaning into opportunities longer-term for safe and successful succession. This sits alongside a long history of making space for fresh curatorial voices to step up into leadership positions.

These factors mean we are approaching our search for a new Artistic leader at Fierce with some flexibility and true openness.

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OUR APPROACH TO RECRUITMENT

We want to ensure the most exciting artistic voices see this opportunity can be for them, and could be able to join the organisation in the way that is best for them, and for Fierce. We imagine some people might be positioned and ready to join the existing Co-Director structure, (Director (Producing), Director (Operations), Director (Artistic)), but for others an approach that allows them to be artistic lead, with time and space to grow into the full leadership opportunity in a supported way might be better. The role therefore is advertised at a salary scale, with space for us and the candidate to talk together about what feels an exciting and accessible way for them to join the team.

For this role, due to the restructuring to a co-leadership model we are seeking to appoint 1 person. The role has most recently been full time, however the other Co-Directors work 4 days per week and we are open to a conversation with candidates about how they would deliver the role in terms of capacity and approach.



Dachshund UN @ Fierce Festival 2012 (Photo: Jaskirt Dhaliwal and Pete Ashton)

ROLE COMMITMENT

PERIOD OF WORK AND HOURS	Permanent contract with 6 month probationary period.
SALARY	We acknowledge that the person coming into this role may be taking a step up and not have all the skills and experience listed in the About You section of this job pack. Therefore the salary is advertised at a range of £35,713 - £39,713 pro rata, with the top end of that scale equal with the salary of the other Co-Directors. Where candidates still need time and support to develop in some areas of the role it is our intention is to agree together a plan that would see them develop into the role with a timescale for bringing them to a level of salary parity with the other Co-Directors.
HOLIDAY	30 days. Bank holidays are additional to this allowance.
RESPONSIBLE TO	The Board of Trustees
RESPONSIBLE FOR	Marketing Coordinator
LOCATION	The role will be based at the Fierce office in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter and requires some national and international travel. It is expected that this person will live in or relocate to Birmingham for the role. Fierce enables flexible working as part of our commitment to accessibility and the support of individuals.

Location

If you would need to move to Birmingham for this role and want to know a bit more about the city before you apply, we have provided some basic information about the cost of housing and transport links below. We encourage you to have a google, chat to us (details above) and anyone else you know in the city about what it's like to live here.

BIRMINGHAM CONTEXT



HOUSING

SIZE OF PROPERTY	AVE. COST	AVE. RENTAL
1 BED	£180,500	£800 PCM
2 BED	£240,000	£1,375 PCM
3 BED	£280,000	£1,675 PCM



TRAINS

DESTINATION	OFF PEAK OPEN RETURN	JOURNEY TIME
LONDON	£33	1hr 47m
MANCHESTER	£43.40	2hr
LEEDS	£71.30	2hr
BRISTOL	£64.30	1hr 20m
GLASGOW	£151.20	4hr 30m

HOW TO APPLY

Please submit the following to catherine@wearfierce.org by 9am on Wednesday 7th June 2023:

- an up-to-date CV – this can be in the form of a link to a website or LinkedIn if it saves you time.
- a covering letter of no longer than three sides of A4 or video/voice note of no longer than eight minutes. We score applications against the criteria in the 'About You' section of this Job Pack, so you should use this to detail your experience and suitability for the role.
- the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

You must submit all three to be eligible for the role.

We will not penalise applications that are a few minutes late but please be respectful of other applicants by not submitting applications hours or even days later.

Interviews: First interviews will be held online on **Tuesday 20th June** and second interviews will be held in person on **Wednesday 28th June**. We will let you know when we invite you to interview who will be on the panel and will send out copies of all interview questions in advance. We will let you know by the end of the day on **Tuesday 13th June** if you have been invited to interview.



My Last American Dollar @ Fierce Festival 2019 (Photo: Manuel Vason)