DIRECTOR (50% FTE)

Recruitment Pack

KEY INFORMATION

Job Title: Director (aka Head Gardener)

Salary: £21,000 for 50% FTE role (equivalent to £42,000 gross per annum for 100% FTE)

Contributory Pension: Applied Arts Scotland contribution 7%; employee contribution 3%.

Contract and Hours: Part-Time (17.5 hours per week), fixed term until end June 2028 with the option to extend subject to availability of funding.

Place of Work: Fully remote working. Occasional travel to attend in-person meetings across Scotland and UK.

Holidays: 39 days including public holidays (pro-rated = 19.5 days).

Reporting: Responsible to the Board of Trustees. Day-to-day management via the Chair of the Board.

Probationary Period: The post is subject to a three-month probationary period.

Key Dates:

Closing date: Monday 16 November 2026, at noon.

Interview date: Tuesday 8 December 2026

Start date: On or after Monday 11 January 2027

WHO WE ARE

We support the creative heart and soul of professional making

Applied Arts Scotland (AAS) is a membership organisation run **by makers for makers** delivering tangible benefits by connecting the community through events, projects and discussions, building skills and encouraging self-sufficiency and confidence.

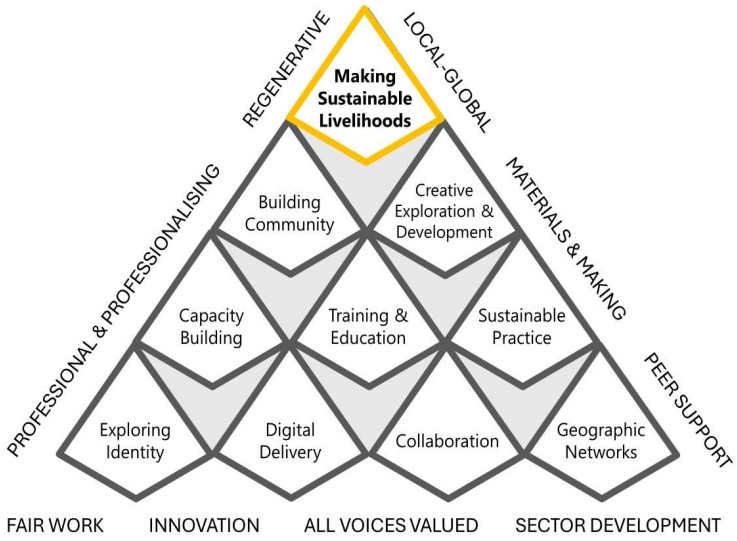
Applied Arts Scotland has been running for over 30 years as a grass-roots organisation supporting a community of making practice across Scotland, largely through voluntary efforts and supported by external project funds. Throughout, we have retained and celebrated a community rooted in shared values of reciprocity, sustainable making practices, creativity and professionalism.

1992	Association of Applied Arts formed to lobby for government support for craft
1994	Registered as an unincorporated charity based in Edinburgh
1999	Scottish Arts Council funds AAS to assess feasibility of a Scottish Crafts publication
2000	Multi-partner conference to scope support systems for craft in Scotland
2002	Publication of “Craft Businesses in Scotland: A Study” & Scottish Arts Council 5-year Craft Strategy; AAS relocates to Glasgow
2003	AAS becomes a Charitable Limited Company, and tenders to manage a new national craft information resource
2004	www.craftscotland.org website launches independently; AAS relocates to Edinburgh
2005	Host maker “Exchange” events around Scotland
2006	Develop online support for maker community - bulletin, blogs, directory via www.appliedartsscotland.org.uk
2012	Expand in-person peer support activities - “by makers for makers”
2016	Pilot Shared Creative Modern Apprenticeship model; transition to Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)
2019	Join British Council’s UK Crafting Futures Network, developing international exchanges & Craft Toolkit
2020	Digital Immersive Technologies and Craft Engagement (DISTANCE) Project launches
2021	Relocate to Aberdeen
2022	First member-led group established: Closing The Loop group, exploring sustainable making practices; pilot Sustaining Craft Business Practice qualification in partnership with University of Highlands & Islands
2023	Makers Offerings: open exhibition for AAS Members
2024	Partner in EU-funded “Culturality” project - cultural heritage in rural remote areas for creative tourism and sustainability
2025	Receive Creative Scotland’s Multi-Year Funding for Organisations

Applied Arts Scotland is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC022604) with registered address at Studio 107, Wasps Artist Studios, 36-48 Langstane Place, Aberdeen AB11 6FB

WHAT WE DO

Our long-term strategy is focused around “making sustainable livelihoods”, rooted in the needs of the local and global craft, design and making sector. We achieve this by: offering creative development opportunities focusing on creative exploration, alternative materials development, materials / tools exploration; collaborative co-creation; networking; showcasing; and considering craft as a means to “make” new perspectives on the world.



We support professional and professionalising makers (from new entrants through post-retirement) to develop sustainable and regenerative business models via training, education, mentoring, and peer support opportunities; and by ongoing development of audiences for craft objects, processes and ideas.

Creating community for makers within the context of a wider local and global craft ecosystem, we offer opportunities for networking, creative development, reciprocal skills and knowledge sharing, collaboration and showcasing in various forms; and work to raise the profile of craft practice and practitioners, and the wider craft ecosystem. Opportunities for showcasing also embed public benefit via engagement with craft practice, in the form of exhibitions, workshops, talks and tours facilitated by participating makers / Members.

NURTURE

We nurture the creative heart and soul of making practice, celebrate expertise, and facilitate practical opportunities for creative and professional development.

NETWORK

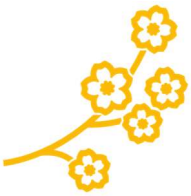
We are a network of like-minded people working together and in partnership within the applied arts sector in Scotland.

KNOWLEDGE

We facilitate knowledge sharing across local, national and international making communities.

SUPPORT

We offer support to assist makers in their day-to-day practice – professional development, creative experimentation, capacity building and the sharing of resources and expertise.



OPPORTUNITIES

Our activities create opportunities for collaboration and sharing of expertise.

ADVOCACY

We represent the authentic voice of the sector which is primarily made up of sole trader and micro businesses in a wide variety of urban and rural locations across Scotland.

More information about us can be found at www.appliedartsscotland.org.uk.

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HOW WE WORK

GOVERNANCE

Applied Arts Scotland is a Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation (SCIO). This structure was adopted in 2016 after operating as an unincorporated organisation registered as a charity since 1994, and an informal collective of grassroots makers for some years before then. The SCIO model was adopted by the governing group at the time to strengthen the business model and resilience for the organisation, and to formalise the remit of our work within the craft sector in Scotland, providing grassroots, maker-led representation for the professional maker community. Formally, the charitable purposes are “advancement of arts, heritage and culture through the promotion of Applied Arts… in society for the benefit of the public in Scotland by developing public appreciation of the Applied Arts and by improving public access to and the quality of the Applied Arts” and “advancement of education through the provision of training and mentoring to applied artists in particular ongoing professional development in the sector”.

As per our constitution, AAS is governed by a Board of 3-10 trustees drawn predominantly from among the membership. We can co-opt Board members who are non-members where they possess specific expertise missing from the current Board’s skill set. Per our governing document, Board members stand down at every Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Members and a new Board is elected by vote.

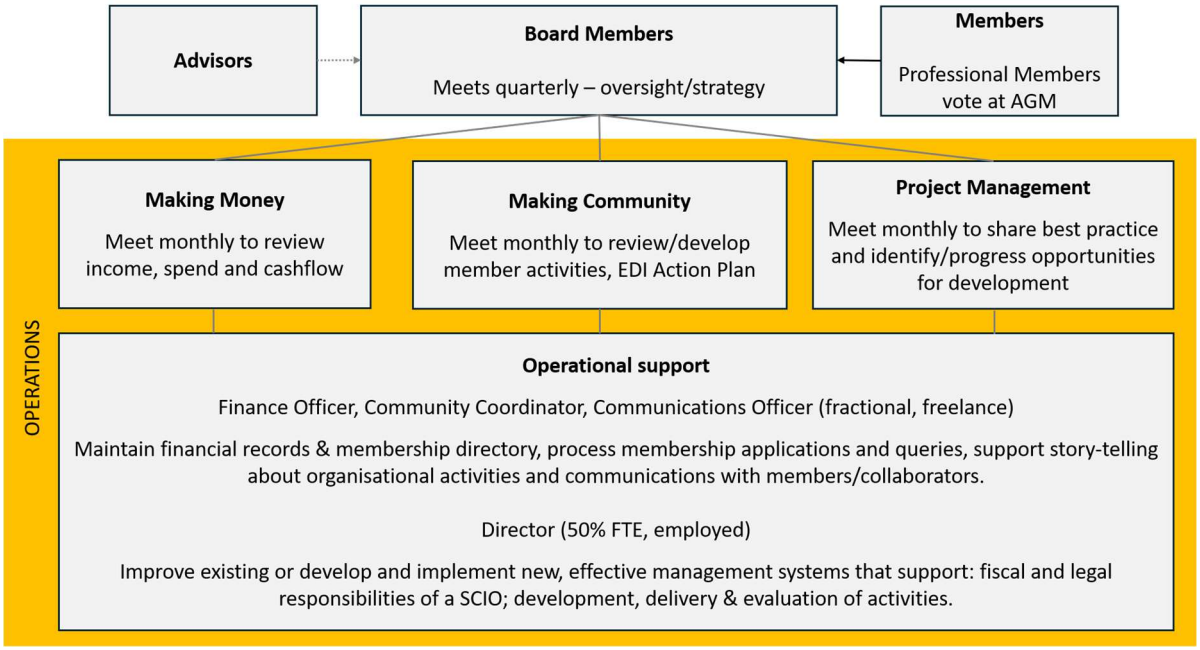
Members in good standing can continue to serve on the Board for as long as they are willing and are elected by the membership. We have had Board members serving from one year to eight years. This structure allows for new ideas and skills to be introduced while also maintaining business continuity and supporting longer-term planning and implementation. Board office-bearer roles are allocated from among the elected Board members.

New Board members are recruited via an open application process in advance of the AGM, considering skills gaps and our aim for conscious inclusion.

OPERATIONS

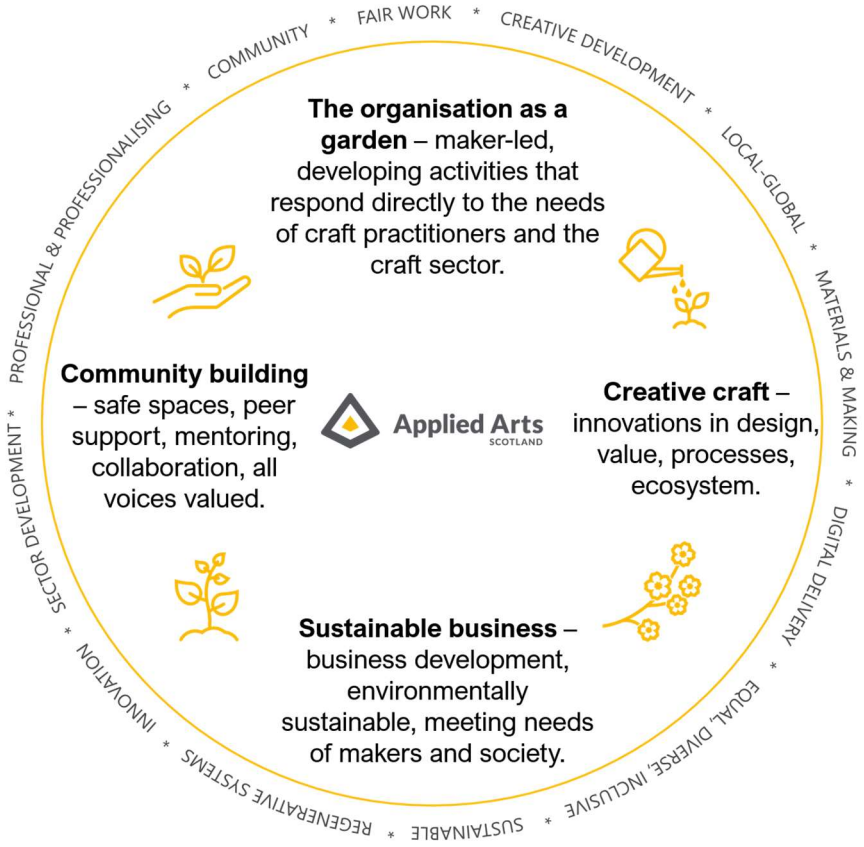
AAS operations are structured to support delivery of strategic priorities in the context of best practice and regulatory compliance while retaining lean, nimble and responsive functions. The Operational Team are themselves makers or supporters of the craft sector in Scotland, and bring their wider knowledge to their roles.

AAS conducts its operations currently through (1) voluntary activities by Board Members - over and above voluntary governance tasks - and Advisors, (2) paid freelance delivery of externally-funded project activities, and (3) paid freelance operational support. These three strands work closely together with each other and the Membership, and individuals can function in more than one strand. This close working allows those involved with running AAS to recognise and understand the interdependence of all aspects of business operations, enabling more informed decision-making and broader consideration of the impact and requirements of individual, operational and strategic decisions, and ensures effective voice among all stakeholders. With Multi-Year Funding for Organisations, freelance operational support has been expanded in line with our Fair Work commitments. We now seek to strengthen this through the appointment of a part-time Director.



ETHOS

We have used Multi-Year Funding for Organisations to develop our thinking and test ways of working around the idea of “the organisation as a garden”. How might Applied Arts Scotland offer the supporting infrastructure that enables diverse practices and nurtures the people who make them to flourish, all across Scotland? How and who tends to systems of support? Who decides? How can we redistribute funds and decision-making for community benefit? How does our own experience of being makers influence how we understand supporting systems?



These questions are being actively explored through activities that include our member-led groups, Commoning Craft Fund, Connecting Makers programme, Making Place festival; and other externally-funded projects including Thread Counts and Culturality.

More information about all of these can be found at www.appliedartsscotland.org.uk.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

THE BIG PICTURE

We are now seeking a part-time Director who shares our ethos to help steward the organisation alongside the Board, Advisors, and the existing team of freelance operational and project support. The role will provide a centralised coordinating function, supporting us to achieve our aims by ensuring that actions are followed through, opportunities are identified at an early stage, and processes are robust. This is an exciting opportunity to strengthen the organisation and create conditions that enable makers and making to flourish.

Aligned with our "Organisation as a Garden" ethos, we consider this role to be one of a "Head Gardener", overseeing and stewarding the maintenance, development and presentation of Applied Arts Scotland. The role requires knowledge of how professional makers work and how needs vary across time and discipline; understanding of the networks of wider support available to makers in Scotland and the opportunities that these enable; and demonstrable experience of developing and implementing systems of working that can support and nourish craft practice – for makers and those who support making.

This knowledge and expertise could have been gained from running your own craft business and/or working in a similar role in another creative support organisation.

THE DETAIL

You will work as a member of the AAS team to provide a coordinating and implementation function for AAS activities. Specifically:

- Improve existing or develop and implement new, effective management systems that support: fiscal and legal responsibilities of a SCIO; programme delivery & evaluation. This includes around, for example, activity timelines, policy review, risk management, contracting, assets, projects run by freelancers on behalf of AAS, MYFO reporting, and other systems as identified.
- Regularly review and evaluate processes for suitability.
- Identify opportunities for improved ways of working, and undertake research for options appraisals to share with the Board.
- Review and support implementation (with commissioned technical support) of new technical systems for file storage & management, including documentation to support AAS ways of working.
- Support development of funding applications for AAS activities by advising on operational impacts and considerations.
- Support future business planning by the Board.
- Coordinate arrangements for board meetings, AGM and AAS working groups, and track progress with actions arising from these.
- Alongside other members of the team, represent AAS at sector meetings, including Craft UK (and subgroups), Craft Development Network, Scottish Creative Networks, Scottish Artist Union.
- Develop and maintain relationships with other sector organisations to develop and share best practice in relation to charity operations.
- Ensure EDI, decolonisation and democratisation of the organisation are threaded throughout all of the above.

Working Pattern

This is a **50% FTE** role. Subject to negotiation with the preferred candidate, this role will include **core 'office hours'** with flexibility to manage your time around these.

This is a **fully remote** role with occasional in-person attendance at meetings and events. You will be provided with an AAS laptop to undertake this work.

SKILLS AND EXPERTISE FOR THE ROLE

The following skill chart outlines expertise we consider to be essential to undertake the advertised role (labelled as Level 1) and additional, desirable expertise (labelled as Level 2). However, we are still keen to encourage applications from you if you are confident with the majority of the Level 1 Skills and are able to demonstrate a willingness to learn the others. If this is the case, and you are successful in your application we will develop a tailored training package around this role.

Although not essential at the point of application, we consider that the skills listed under level 2 would facilitate an easier transition for the successful applicant into this new role.

If you don't think you hit everything shown at level 1 but are confident with most of them and think you could learn the others, consider submitting an application – we will develop a tailored training package around this role.

Skill	Expertise	Level
Organisational Management	Experience of developing, implementing and improving organisational systems, processes and administrative procedures.	1
	Ability to manage multiple priorities, projects and deadlines simultaneously, including working with freelancers.	1
	Strong organisational skills with excellent attention to detail.	1
	Ability to work independently, take initiative and solve problems proactively.	1
Sector Knowledge	Up-to-date working knowledge of the craft sector in Scotland	1
	Experience working within an arts, cultural, creative or community organisation.	2
	Awareness of support needs for artist-led, community-engaged or participatory programmes.	2
Charity Governance, Compliance and Risk	Ability to develop and maintain policies, procedures and organisational records.	1
	Knowledge of charity governance and regulatory responsibilities.	2
	Experience preparing information for trustees or funders.	2
	Experience of supporting compliance with legal, financial, safeguarding, data protection and health and safety requirements.	2

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Skill	Expertise	Level
Communication and Relationship Management	Excellent written and verbal communication skills.	1
	Ability to build positive working relationships with members, trustees, advisors, freelancers, funders and partners.	1
	Confidence facilitating meetings and coordinating communications across distributed and diverse teams.	1
	Strong digital communication and information management skills.	1
Project Support	Working knowledge of how projects are planned, delivered, evaluated and reported.	1
People and Resource Management	Experience coordinating the work of freelancers, contractors and/or volunteers.	1
	Experience developing organisational policies.	2
Finances	Experience supporting development of budgets and managing cashflow.	1
Digital Systems	Experience and confidence using digital tools for project management, collaboration and administration, including for remote working.	1
	Ability to identify opportunities to improve efficiency through digital systems and workflows.	2
Systems Development and Organisational Change	Experience of establishing or improving organisational systems and processes within a small organisation, start-up, charity or creative business.	1
	Experience introducing new operational workflows.	2
	Knowledge of organisational development and capacity-building approaches.	2
Personal Attributes	Self-motivated and comfortable working with a high degree of autonomy in a remote-working role.	1
	Comfortable navigating complex and competing needs of different activities.	1
	Collaborative and supportive approach to working with creative practitioners, freelancers, board members, advisors and/or members.	1
	Strategic thinker who can balance day-to-day administration with longer-term development of support systems.	1
	Commitment to equity, inclusion and accessibility.	1

ELIGIBILITY

You must have the right to work in the UK and be resident here to undertake this role. Preference will be given to candidates who live and work in Scotland.

Current AAS Members **can** apply for this role. However, the AAS Constitution prohibits Members from being employees of the organisation. Any current Member of AAS who applies for this role should note that – if appointed – your membership will be suspended for the duration of any employment contract.

Any AAS Board Member (current or past) involved with securing or delivering Multi-Year Funding on behalf of AAS is ineligible to apply for this role.

HOW TO APPLY

By submitting an application, you consent to us using the information provided as described in the AAS Privacy Policy.

To apply

We are using a three-stage process of written application followed by video response from invited applicants then online interview for shortlisted candidates.

For your written application, send us a cover letter and a CV (traditional or narrative) or portfolio link – as works best for you to demonstrate your career history – by email to chair@appliedartsscotland.org.uk by the date below.

The cover letter should highlight how your skills and expertise make you the best person for this role; and why you want this role. Use your cover letter and CV/portfolio to highlight to us the ways you meet the skills and expertise we're looking for.

Please also:

- Indicate your availability for an online interview on the date below.
- Confirm that you have the right to work in the UK. You will need to provide evidence of this only if offered the role.

Cover letters may also be submitted in alternative formats – please contact us before the submission deadline to discuss.

Then what?

We'll send you an email acknowledging receipt of your application (Stage 1).

Your CV and cover letter will be assessed by a panel made up of three AAS Board Members against the essential and desirable criteria listed above. The panel will create a longlist of candidates to progress to Stage 2. This longlist will be reviewed and approved by the full Board of AAS. All applicants will be notified of the outcome.

Stage 2 candidates will be invited to read our current business plan and respond by short video to two questions. The business plan and questions for Stage 2 will be shared with shortlisted candidates when we notify the outcome above. Videos will be reviewed by the same panel of AAS Board Members plus one member of the Operations team. Your responses will be used to create a shortlist for Stage 3.

Stage 3 candidates will be invited to an online interview – this is the final stage. Interviews will take place with the same panel of three AAS Board Members plus one member of the Operations team. Interview questions will be shared with Stage 3 candidates when we notify the outcome of Stage 2.

We will not utilise AI at any point in the assessment process.

Key dates:

Stage 1 application by	: **Monday 16 November 2026 (noon)**
Longlist outcomes shared	: Monday 23 November (5pm)
Stage 2 application by	: Monday 30 November (noon)
Shortlist outcomes shared	: Friday 4 December (5pm)
Stage 3 interview on	: Tuesday 8 December
Decision by	: Friday 11 December (5pm)

If you have any questions about this role before applying, get in touch with Lynne Hocking, Chair of the Board of Trustees via chair@appliedartsscotland.org.uk.