

Business Director Application Pack January 2020



BLAST THEORY

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“Since the mid 1990s, the group [has] followed the trajectory of the development of media, with their acute and in-depth psychological analyses. I would call them the most contemporary media-poet of this age.”

Blast Theory creates interactive art to explore social and political questions, placing audience members at the centre of our work.

Led by Matt Adams, Ju Row Farr and Nick Tandavanitj, the group creates interactive art that puts you at the centre of the work. Drawing on popular culture, performance, technology and games, the work often blurs the boundaries between the real and the fictional.

In virtual and physical spaces from pubs, canals and abandoned warehouses to libraries, museums and apps – we go to unexpected places to make our work accessible to everyone.

Our work

Blast Theory was founded in London in 1991 by a group of friends who worked at the same cinema. Since then, the group has grown to a team of nine. The company is based in studios in Portslade, Brighton.

We have collaborated with the University of Nottingham’s Mixed Reality Lab for over 20 years which is, to our knowledge, the longest and most productive partnership between a university and group of artists anywhere in the world. It has yielded 12 new works, four BAFTA nominations, the Golden Nica for Interactive Art at Prix Ars Electronica and academic papers of international significance. This dialogue between scientific and artistic research forms a core thread of Blast Theory’s practice.

Our business strategy supports innovative art practice and ensures that the company has the resources to deliver a creative and visionary programme. The company has been regularly funded by Arts Council England since 1994 and is a National Portfolio Organisation. Additional sources of funding come through a mixed economy of grants, commissions, consultancy, earned income and philanthropic giving. Blast Theory is a charity led by Chair Anthony Lilley OBE.

Since 2004 we have worked in research partnerships with the BBC, British Telecom, Sony and Nokia among others. Our relationship with the commercial sector includes being represented by the Creative Artists Agency and work for the BBC, Channel 4 and Microsoft.

Blast Theory has been nominated for a BAFTA award four times and has won, an International Mobile Games Award and three Lovie Awards among others. In 2016 we were awarded the Nam June Paik Art Center Prize in recognition of the group’s exploration of new boundaries in art.

Internationally, Blast Theory’s work has been shown at the Tribeca Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival, Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis, the Venice Biennale, ICC in Tokyo, the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney Biennale, National Museum in Taiwan, Hebbel Theatre in Berlin, Basel Art Fair and Sonar Festival in Barcelona.

The role of Business Director

We are looking for an empathetic, effective and inspiring leader to join the team as Business Director. This is a fantastic opportunity for someone with drive and vision to support the artists in delivering work of the highest standard.

You will have an ambitious outlook, with a leading role in securing new partnerships and collaboration; driving the company in finance, new revenue streams and communications.

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Our ethos

We strive to provide a warm, welcoming, creative and collaborative environment. Regardless of how busy it is, we all have lunch together in the studio between 1pm-2pm and often have visitors who join us for lunch as well. It's important to us that we take care of each other; we have an ongoing organisation wide dedication to individual support and professional development, including a distinctive sabbatical policy. We currently have a gender-balanced staff ratio and encourage the empowerment of employees and volunteers.

We strive to develop people inside Blast Theory to make the very best of themselves and to make the most ambitious art works that we can.

Equal opportunities

Blast Theory is committed to a policy of equal opportunities. We actively seek personnel that reflect the diversity of the communities we serve and so encourage applications from those with less visibility in the sector.

We welcome applications from people who identify themselves as having a disability. While we recognise that there may be some restrictions that apply to specific disabilities, Blast Theory will adopt as flexible an approach as possible and seek to make reasonable adaptations to accommodate your needs.

Please use the Reference and Disclosure Form to be as specific as possible with your needs so we can make your interview and time with us as comfortable as possible.

Application procedure

Please send us:

- **Cover Letter** addressing the job description and person specification (no more than two sides of A4)
- **CV** (no more than two sides of A4)
- Completed **Reference & Disclosure Form**
- Completed **Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form** (this will be anonymised and not impact decision making)

Please upload these documents and complete the relevant forms via our Survey Monkey here:

https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BD_Application

You are welcome to apply in a format that serves you best, such as audiotape or video.

If you prefer to apply via a video or audio application please contact dan@blasttheory.co.uk for more details.

Key dates

Applications due: 28th February 2020
First interview: 6th March 2020
Second interview: 16th March 2020
Start date: ASAP after appointment

Business Director Job Description

Hours: 35 per week

Salary: £34,000 - £36,000 depending on experience

Annual leave: 20 days (exc. public holidays) plus additional days off over the Christmas period.

Period of notice: 3 months

This post is based at our studios at 20 Wellington Road, Brighton, BN41 1DN and involves travel within the UK and abroad.

1. The purpose of the job

The Business Director is a member of the senior management team of Blast Theory, together with the Artists and the Director. The Business Director writes and delivers the Business Strategy which includes finance, communications, new revenue streams, company capacity and project delivery. The Business Director's job is to:

- 1.1. Support the artists as they create interactive art works of the highest standard to engage the public nationally and internationally;
- 1.2. Support the Director on the development and implementation of the strategic plan and on annual plans within that.

2. The principal tasks

Strategy

- 2.1. Develop and deliver Blast Theory's business strategy alongside the Director and the Board to ensure the artistic vision is realised and delivered to the highest standard
- 2.2. Develop and build strategic relationships for the company, locally, nationally and internationally, positioning Blast Theory strategically for future opportunities
- 2.3. Ensure all wider areas of activity are embedded in the strategy including Learning and Participation, New Technologies for Engagement and project delivery

Finance

- 2.4. Manage and oversee Blast Theory's financial plan and annual budget, working with the Director and Company Manager to ensure the continued financial strength of the organisation
- 2.5. Maintain a detailed financial overview of all of the company's activities, providing reports to the Board
- 2.6. Oversee the Company Manager in preparing budgets, accounts and payroll and VAT returns
- 2.7. Ensure strong financial management systems are implemented and monitored including compliance with all legal and regulatory financial requirements
- 2.8. Lead on the annual production of the Trustee Report and EOY accounts

Fundraising and Income Generation

- 2.9. Produce and implement the fundraising strategy, sourcing funding from public and private sources nationally and internationally including commercial partnerships and sponsorship
- 2.10. Lead on the development of funding applications, managing the contribution of other members of the team in the process
- 2.11. Nurture and develop relationships with funders, partners and stakeholders
- 2.12. Support the Director in relationships with partners and profile-building
- 2.13. Lead Blast Theory's relationship with the Arts Council England

Communications

- 2.14. Produce the communication strategy
- 2.15. Manage the Communications Coordinator, freelance PR Consultant and other members of the team to deliver the strategy
- 2.16. Ensure that Blast Theory's brand is being clearly communicated at all times to its various audiences and stakeholders
- 2.17. Ensure high quality systems for audience data collection, analysis and management are implemented

Company, Capacity and Culture

- 2.18. Manage the operations of the company including staff recruitment, internal communications and procedures
- 2.19. Manage internal policies ensuring all requirements are met regarding risk management, health and safety, equal opportunities, mental health at work, safeguarding and employment
- 2.20. Assess company capacity and ensure personnel needs are met and supported
- 2.21. Produce policies for diversity and ensure their delivery
- 2.22. Manage contractual agreements with partners, ensuring robust contracts are signed in a timely manner
- 2.23. Support the Director to ensure that Blast Theory's Intellectual Property is protected
- 2.24. Fulfil the duties of Company Secretary and report to the relevant authorities

Project Development and Delivery

- 2.25. Oversee the delivery of new projects in liaison with the Lead Artist
- 2.26. Recruit and manage a freelance Creative Producer or fulfil the role of Producer as appropriate
- 2.27. Ensure the artists are supported appropriately with capacity and viable budgets
- 2.28. Ensure a suitable communications strategy is in place for each project
- 2.29. Oversee the Company Manager marketing and contracting touring works
- 2.30. Manage freelance staff when appropriate
- 2.31. Develop and maintain strong relationships with partners

General

- 2.32. Represent Blast Theory on professional networks and at events
- 2.33. Speak at relevant conferences on behalf of Blast Theory

3. Line management

The Business Director line manages the Company Manager, Communications Manager and Creative Producer.

There may be occasions when the Business Director needs to manage temporary or freelance staff working at 20 Wellington Road or elsewhere on behalf of the company.

Person Specification

Essential attributes:

- Dynamic manager with at least 5 years' experience working in a senior management position within the cultural sector
- Strong grasp of finance with a track record of taking financial responsibility for an organisation, including controlling and managing financial strategies and policies and implementing successful management of budgets
- Track record in setting and developing business, fundraising and communication strategies
- Experience of delivering complex and demanding projects across a variety of artforms and work diplomatically with partners and stakeholders to do so
- Diplomatic negotiator who is able to identify, secure and sustain a range of partnerships and networks
- Proven track record in generating income from a variety of sources
- Experience of risk management and mitigation
- Flexible and collaborative outlook
- Excellent written English and good communication skills
- Excellent computer skills
- Fastidious attention to detail

Desirable attributes:

- Knowledge of visual art, digital media, film and contemporary theatre
- Knowledge of Intellectual Property issues
- Understanding and commitment to equality action
- Experience of writing and implementing contracts and HR policies
- Knowledge of charity law, and experience of working with and developing a Board of Trustees
- Experience of working with a National Portfolio Organisation

Personal attributes:

- Strong organisational skills and able to problem solve
- Able to work under pressure and to multitask over long periods, moving between different projects and demands
- Empathetic leader, with an ability to enable others to realise their potential
- Entrepreneurial approach to securing income
- Excellent communicator
- Highly focused and productive
- A meticulous eye for detail and high standards in all areas
- Adaptable and quick learning
- Confident and calm