



Could you be the new Chief Executive of the Petworth Festival?

The Petworth Festival brings world-class musical, artistic, and literary talent to the heart of the South Downs. Established over 45 years ago, it has evolved from a weekend of music into a two-and-a-half-week summer festival and a twelve-day autumn literary festival, drawing audiences from across Sussex, Surrey, and Hampshire. Through its summer and autumn festivals, the Petworth Festival fosters a vibrant cultural landscape in which residents and visitors alike can engage with the arts and literature. Additionally, the festival supports year-round educational initiatives in local schools, aiming to inspire new generations through music, literature, and the arts.

The festival is a registered charity with a public-benefit remit that drives its mission to inspire and educate. Funding for the festival is generously provided through local business sponsorship, private support, and ticket sales.

This year the festival has hosted musical artists as wide ranging as Boris Giltburg, Catrin Finch, Simon Keenlyside, Mark Watson and Vanessa Haynes at its summer festival as well as giving stage to spectacular emerging talent through its partnerships with the Leeds International Piano Competition and the Royal Academy of Music. It has brought literary talent including Dame Judi Dench, Robert Harris and David Baddiel to its autumn literary festival, worked with the National Trust to stage a weekend of promenade concerts at Petworth House and has brought the Big Sing project to Petworth Primary school, giving all local children an opportunity to work with a professional composer and to perform their resulting songs as the curtain raiser for its autumn literary festival.

We now have an exciting opportunity for someone to lead the festival team as we work towards our 50th anniversary.

The new Chief Executive will work closely with the Board of Trustees and the Artistic Director to guide the festival as it builds towards its 50th anniversary in 2029. The successful applicant will become a key face of the festival, developing the partnerships and relationships necessary for a secure future as well ensuring excellence in delivery of the festival itself. They will be supported by an events manager, responsible for the detail of event planning and delivery, a marketing and development manager, a festival administrator, a bookkeeper and a team of over 100 volunteers.

As well as a proven track record in a senior arts administration role we are looking for team leadership skills and the confidence and relationship skills necessary to play an ambassadorial role for the festival.

You will need to live within reach of Petworth and be office based at least part of the working week.

You will also need to be in Petworth every day during key festival periods (in 2025 these are 16th July to 2nd August and 29th October – 9th November) and will need to attend key sponsor and supporter events which are typically during the evening and in Petworth.

This role will average as three day a week across the year but, in effect, will require full time working during festival periods. The additional time worked during these periods will be offset by shorter working weeks at other times of the year.

Salary will be competitive for the arts festival industry.

If you think you could be the person to lead the Petworth Festival as it builds its future, please get in touch via the details below with your CV and a covering letter setting out why you are interested and what you believe you could bring to the festival and its team.

The deadline for applications is 6th December 2024.

All applications should be sent to info@petworthfestival.org.uk and marked clearly as “**Application for Chief Executive**”.

Candidates shortlisted for interview will be contacted on the 11th December 2024 and provided with a full role specification and further background information about the Festival so that they can prepare for interview in January.

Please note - first interviews will take place on Thursday 9th and Friday 10th January 2025
Second interviews will take place on Thursday 16th January 2025

Informal meetings with Trustees key stakeholders not already met during the interview process will take place on Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st January 2025.