

# Cement Fields

## New Art North Kent



## Appointment of Director

Recruitment Pack

November 2022

Deadline for applications: Monday 5 December 2022

At the end of March 2023, our Director Sue Jones is stepping down after more than 17 years leading the organisation. In that time, we have delivered 10 editions of Whitstable Biennale, a visual art festival with an international reputation for developing experimental new work with early career artists, and more recently grown into a new organisation - Cement Fields - an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, working across North Kent.



Nicole Bachmann's *shell of hope, in cycles* performed on Seasalter beach as part of Whitstable Biennale 2022. Photo: Rob Harris

Front page: Behind the scenes of the production of Webb-Ellis' *This place is a message* (2022) near Gravesend. Image courtesy of the artists.

# Introduction to Cement Fields

Cement Fields is a visual art organisation working collaboratively with artists and communities to create ambitious new art along the Thames Estuary in North Kent.

North Kent runs alongside the River Thames from London out towards the sea, and encompasses vibrant towns including Gravesend, Chatham, Dartford and Whitstable, alongside rural areas including the Hoo Peninsula and the Isle of Sheppey. The North Kent Marshes are one of the most important remaining wetlands in northern Europe.

Cement Fields is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, with a skilled board of trustees and small team of permanent employees, associate curators, and freelancers. We currently have the equivalent of 4.2 FTE staff (including the Director), spread across senior management, curatorial, project management, marketing and operational posts.

Our organisation values are:

- Generosity - providing a warm welcome to all, all aspects of our work are inclusive and accessible
- Experimentation - committed to supporting the creation of experimental, ambitious work; encouraging artists, participants and audiences to explore new ideas and take risks
- Complexity - embracing challenge and difference; committed to conveying the complexity of artworks and ideas in accessible ways without losing nuance
- Resourceful - valuing agile and independent thinking; finding creative solutions
- Exchange - encouraging and enabling collaboration between colleagues, artists, communities and partners; valuing and respecting expertise, welcoming different points of view

Cement Fields is part of Arts Council England's National Portfolio (NPO), with core confirmed funding in place from 2023-2026. We also receive strategic support from the University of Kent, where our office is based.

Company turnover is around £500k per year, and modest reserves are in place. We have a strong track record with funders, the company is resilient and sustainable, fleet of foot, and able to scale operations up and down to meet activity levels.

Organisational plans for the future include establishing a new home (or homes) for the organisation in North Kent.



Student from North Kent College on a site visit to Alkerden in Ebbsfleet as part of This Must Be the Place, 2022. Photo: Samuel Taylor

# Artistic Programme

Cement Fields is a visual art organisation working closely with artists and communities to create ambitious new art. Our work, always rooted in place, extends out from the Thames Estuary North Kent, a diverse area that stretches along the river from the outer edges of London to Margate and includes busy urban centres, seaside towns and rural communities.

At the heart of the organisation is work that supports artists' development; projects with young people that develop skills, imagination and paths into creative careers; community engagement and place-shaping strategies.

Our artistic programme in 2022 includes:

- Continued work on *This Must Be the Place*, a long-term project in collaboration with young people in Ebbsfleet, the first new garden city in the UK for 100 years, with an extensive programme of workshops and projects this year, which included projects led by artists Harun Morrison, and Katrin Albrecht.
- The tenth and final edition of *Whitstable Biennale*, in June 2022, included new work by Nicole Bachmann, Savinder Bual, Arianne Churchman, Jade Montserrat, Dipesh Pandya, Lou Lou Sainsbury, Jennet Thomas, and many others.
- In 2022 we launched the *Cement Fields Schools Collective*, a hybrid online and in-person programme for schools in North Kent. Current projects include a new film made with Marcus Coates and local RSPB warden Will Tofts, and a project with poet Dzifa Benson.
- A two-year project with schools and young people in Northfleet led by Webb-Ellis came to an end this year, with the launch of a major new film, *This place is a message*.
- The *Jerwood WB Artist Attachments*, a two-year programme of support for three early career artists, is drawing to a close in 2022.



Phil Coy's *Grain* installed within the No 3 Covered Slip in Chatham's Historic Dockyard as part of *Estuary 2021*. Photo: Simon Martin

# The Role

The Director will be responsible for both the artistic and strategic leadership of the organisation. We are looking for a dynamic and creative person, with the experience and passion to support and realise exceptional projects with artists and communities in North Kent, attracting, engaging and inspiring a wide range of participants and audiences.

The successful candidate will have experience of working at a senior level in the cultural sector and will bring to Cement Fields the ability to continue the organisations development as a resilient and ambitious cultural organisation with a strong national reputation. They will have the expertise, passion and ambition to maximise the organisation's assets and resources, and positively impact communities in North Kent.

This is an exciting opportunity to take Cement Fields into a new phase, working closely with the board of trustees, the staff team, and stakeholders and partners.



Clio Barnard's *Plotlands* installed in Seasalter as part of Whitstable Biennale 2008.  
Photo: Simon Steven

# Key Areas

## **Artistic Leadership**

- Lead the creation and delivery of an ambitious programme of artistic excellence which reflects the mission, vision and values of Cement Fields
- Ensure the programme supports artists' development, work with young people, community engagement, and place-shaping strategies
- Ensure that diversity, equality and inclusion are at the heart of the programme
- Ensure the provision of meaningful opportunities for participants and audiences
- Support the learning strategy and our work with schools in North Kent, young people including NEETs, participants, and community groups
- Oversee the continued development of the digital strategy, ensuring our work is fully accessible

## **Strategic Leadership**

- Lead the organisation, including development of the vision, mission and values, and plans for the future
- Ensure a strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and accessibility and environmental sustainability, across the organisation
- Provide effective leadership to the staff team, and oversee recruitment and HR
- Represent Cement Fields regionally, nationally and internationally
- Ensure Cement Fields' brand and marketing are in line with our vision, mission and values
- Ensure sufficient resources are in place for the organisation to operate effectively and responsibly
- Ensure effective communication with the Board, and timely reporting
- Ensure the organisational culture is understood across the whole organisation and promotes high standards of governance, ethical practices, and social responsibility

## Partnerships and Development

- Ensure and be responsibility for Cement Fields' ongoing financial viability, performance, and long-term sustainability
- Research and develop new sources of funding, and set and oversee delivery of the fundraising strategy
- Ensure excellent relationships with, and our accountability to, our existing stakeholders and partners
- Maintain and develop new partnerships which support the effective delivery of our vision, mission and values
- Ensure the organisation conducts effective financial planning, management of funds, and has financial controls in place



Dzifa Benson's *I Told It to the Sea* performed with musicians from the Royal Academy of Musicians as part of Whitstable Biennale 2022. Photo: Rob Harris

# Person Specification

## **Relevant skills, attributes and experience**

- Experience of both strategic organisation and artistic programme planning and delivery
- Experience in a senior position within an arts/cultural organisation
- Experience of successfully engaging participants, audiences, and communities
- Experience of managing people and teams
- Experience in raising significant funds, and successfully managing funder relationships
- Knowledge of the UK arts sector and its role within a wider strategic and political environment, and how to build strong networks
- Knowledge of the Arts Council England funding system and National Portfolio Agreements
- Knowledge of best practice and strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Experience of effective budgeting and financial management
- Commitment to Cement Fields' vision and values
- Ability to lead and advocate both within and on behalf of the organisation with a wide range of people
- Excellent communication and problem-solving skills, and effective time management skills



Production still from Mikhail Karikis' *Ain't Got No Fear* on the Isle of Grain, 2016.  
Image courtesy of the artist.

# Summary of Terms

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**Job title**

Director

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**Reports to**

Board of Trustees

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**Salary**

£50k+

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**Hours of work**

Full-time permanent post. 37.5 hours per week. Evening and weekend work may be required at times.

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**Benefits**

25 days holiday per annum plus public holidays. Pension scheme membership.

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**Place of work**

We would expect the Director to live in North Kent, or within easy commuting distance. Cement Fields has a flexible working policy which includes:

- Working remotely
- Working from our small office space, currently at the University of Kent in Canterbury (we plan to relocate to North Kent)
- Working on-site in North Kent
- Attending meetings and representing the organisation in North Kent and beyond

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**Probation**

A 6-month probation period, terminable on one month's notice by either party. Notice period after probation will be 3 months.



Keira Greene's *Totally on Fire* (2015) screened as part of *motus lineae* at Whitstable Biennale 2018.  
Photo: Rosie Lonsdale

# How to Apply

To apply, please email your completed application form and equal opportunities monitoring form to [recruitment@cementfields.org](mailto:recruitment@cementfields.org) by **10am Monday 5 December 2022** with 'Application for Director post' in the subject line.

- Application form ([download here](#))
- Equal opportunities monitoring form ([download here](#))

If you would like to ask questions about the role or have a conversation with us before applying, please get in touch by email at [recruitment@cementfields.org](mailto:recruitment@cementfields.org).

Cement Fields is an equal opportunities employer. We acknowledge the structural exclusion in the arts, and are committed to equality of opportunity for all, and are actively striving to make our organisation more inclusive. We actively encourage applications from those who face barriers to employment in the arts. We guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the person specification. We welcome flexible working arrangements, including flexible working hours and job shares.

## Selection Process

First interviews will take place on Thursday 15 December. If you are shortlisted for the position you will be contacted by the end of Friday 9 December to arrange an interview time. First interviews will take place online. We anticipate that second interviews will take place in-person, at a mutually convenient time.

## Access

If you need this information in a different format, or if you need to submit your information in a different format to be able to apply, or require us to make any other reasonable adjustments to assist you in the recruitment process, please contact us on [recruitment@cementfields.org](mailto:recruitment@cementfields.org).



Mike Nelson's *Artist Walk #3* on the Hoo Peninsula, 2016. Photo: Matthew de Pulford

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[cementfields.org](http://cementfields.org)

Cement Fields is a registered charity.  
Charity Number: 1122498  
Company Number: 6272178

**Cement Fields**  
New Art North Kent



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