

OVERVIEW

The Ark is a dedicated cultural centre for children. We opened in 1995, three years after the Irish government ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of The Child (UNCRC), recognising the rights of children to “participate freely in cultural life and the arts’. The Ark was founded on the principle that children are entitled to great art made especially for them.

Our purpose is to realise children’s right to art and culture with ambition and joy. We do so by commissioning, producing and presenting fun and ambitious art for, by, and about children from birth to twelve. Our work is also our advocacy.

We share the work of brilliant and daring Irish and international artists in our award-winning, purpose-designed home in the heart of Dublin’s Temple Bar, as well as in-person and online in schools, in libraries, in early years and care settings around Ireland. We seek to engage children in the places and spaces and on the platforms that are meaningful to them. We often work in partnership with others as artistic collaborators or to advance the diversity and inclusivity of our engagement with children.

Child participation is at the heart of our practice. We work closely with our Children’s Council and have a robust model of child participation embedded across all of our programmes. Consultation with children actively, comprehensively informs all our decision-making.

As firm advocates of children’s right to art and culture and as leaders in participatory practice, we regularly share our resources and knowledge with artists, educators and all those interested in child-centred arts practice. We also curate specific professional development opportunities for teachers and artists, and work with other like-minded organisations to advance children’s rights to art and culture as part of their learning and development.

In April 2024 we will publish *The Ark Strategy 2024-2028* which sets out our ambition to be a thriving, inclusive, sustainable, climate-friendly organisation, recognised for the integrity, influence and impact of our work in realising children’s right to art and culture.

Building on our leading, rights-based, child participation practice we will innovate to further engage children as co-creators in the artistic process. Together, through ongoing collaboration with diverse artists we will create playful, experimental art for today and imagine the art of the future.

To mark our 30th anniversary in 2025, we broaden our audience for children from birth to 12, establishing an equitable and profound early years practice to include babies in our programming for the first time.

We will continue to be a vocal champion of the arts and of artists and a trusted advocate for children, working closely with them and on their behalf, to ensure their right to art and culture is meaningfully realised in both policy and practice.

With these commitments and by living our values: dreaming big, thinking ahead, opening hearts and minds, showing kindness and care, and, of course, having fun, The Ark will remain at the heart of artistic life for children in Ireland.

THE ROLE

The Ark is now seeking a Development & Advocacy Manager to deliver our fundraising and advocacy strategy to achieve our strategic commitment to delivering transformation in our engagement with children.

This is an existing role and is an exciting opportunity for someone who demonstrates an affinity for the values of The Ark, a talent for initiating and delivering campaigns and the ability to persuasively communicate the work of The Ark to prospects, donors, sponsors and partners.

The Ark is seeking a candidate who has at least 3 years' experience in advocacy or fundraising and excellent written communication skills. This role provides the right candidate with an opportunity to build on their previous experience in fundraising, campaign management or advocacy, and develop these skills further within the cultural sector for children.

Reporting

Reports to the Director.

Key Relationships: Director, General Manager, Creative Arts Manager, Marketing Manager and Visitor Services Team.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Drive the implementation of The Ark fundraising strategy and advocacy campaigns.
- Identify and develop new revenue streams for The Ark.
- Support The Director in relationship building, stakeholder management and presentations.
- Steward and nurture relationships with current and future supporters.
- Lead the cultivation of new donors, sponsors, members and other funders.
- Manage all elements of the memberships, including promotion and sales strategies for box office staff, working closely with the Visitor Services Coordinator to manage and report on annual membership targets.
- Manage and update the donor database and all communications with donors (The Ark Opportunities Fund) including event invites, biannual newsletters and renewal notices.
- Manage and deliver one major advocacy and fundraising event per year.
- Research and write grant proposals and other funding applications.
- Manage stakeholder and donor special events.
- Work closely with colleagues to identify opportunities to connect fundraising and advocacy activity to the artistic programme.
- Represent The Ark at local, national and international level at networking events, conferences, external meetings and public functions as appropriate to identify, cultivate and recruit new connections, fundraising and investment opportunities.
- Report regularly to The Ark team and board.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:**Knowledge and Experience:**

- At least 3 years' experience in advocacy, fundraising or another relevant area.
- Demonstrable record of crafting written communications to a high standard for a corporate audience or stakeholder group.
- Experience of initiating and delivering work plans and working to targets.
- Practised at making pitches both in person and in written communications.
- Evidence of building and using networks to develop partnerships.
- Up to date knowledge of good governance in relation to fundraising and the charity sector.
- An understanding of the power and potential of advocacy.

Skills:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills

- Ability to think strategically and translate into effective campaign and event plans.
- Ability to advocate, persuade and pitch and present development ideas.
- Ability to initiate projects alone, to be a self-starter.
- Highly proficient IT skills especially in the area of maintaining databases and tracking activity.

Personal Attributes:

- An affinity to the mission, vision and values of The Ark and passion for our work.
- A self-starter who works well within a small team.
- Organised with the ability to manage multiple projects and stay on top of the details.
- Resilient in face of setbacks, possesses integrity and demonstrates discretion.
- A confident communicator in formal and informal settings.

TERMS

Salary

€44-46,000 per annum

Contract

The role is based at The Ark's venue in Dublin. This is initially a 2-year fixed term appointment with a 6-month probationary period. Employees must also participate in an annual performance review. Garda (police) vetting is a requirement of the appointment process.

Benefits

After six months The Ark provides employees access to the company pensions scheme with a 5% contribution of annual salary from the employer. Employees must contribute a further 3% to avail of employer contributions. Contributions are made through payroll.

Holidays

There is a holiday entitlement of 20 days per annum, in addition to public holidays. There are also 5 company holidays allocated by the organisation – generally at Christmas.

Working Hours

This is currently a full-time role [35 hours week excluding lunch] with shifts primarily Monday to Friday, with the occasional weekend and evening work required. However for the right candidate, we are open to discussing how we could make this role more flexible for you – e.g. the possibility of reduced hours, job share, remote working, or flexible start and finish times. In such an arrangement, the salary would be adjusted pro-rata. Please outline in your covering letter what you would be looking for in terms of flexible working.

Time off in lieu will be given for any authorised overtime as per company policy - see staff handbook.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates are invited to apply by completing / providing the following items:

1. **A CV** highlighting your relevant experience for this role.
2. **A covering letter** outlining your experience, how you believe it relates to the role as described and your reason for applying for the role.

Please send your application by email only to Al Russell, General Manager, al@ark.ie with the subject line 'Development & Advocacy Manager' **The closing date for applications is Monday 29 April 2024 at 12pm.** Late applications will not be accepted.

Please note that successful candidates will be required to provide proof of identity and complete our Garda vetting process.

All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence. The Ark is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. The Ark's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy can be found [here](#)

Interview Dates and Selection methods

- Initial short-listing of candidates will be on the basis of the information contained in their CV and covering letter.
- Candidates who are short-listed will be invited to attend for interview to be held in **early-May** at The Ark, 11a Eustace Street, Temple Bar, Dublin 2.
- In line with our data protection policy, we will only use the information that you provide for the purposes of this recruitment process. On completion of the process, your information will be securely retained for a maximum of 6 months before being erased.