



Recruitment Pack IP-Switched Head of Community Partnerships

Deadline: 9am, Monday 6th July 2026
Interviews: Monday 27th July 2026

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Head of Community Partnerships of **IP-Switched**.

As one of twelve new Creative People and Places (CPP) projects funded by Arts Council England, IP-Switched marks a new chapter for Ipswich and its people. Its mission is simple but powerful: to increase participation in arts and culture, especially among those least likely to take part, and to celebrate creativity as an essential part of everyday life.

Together, as a consortium of civic, social and cultural partners, we are building a project that places creativity directly in the hands of the people who live and work here through genuine co-creation.

The role of the Head of Community Partnerships is to work with communities and partners to build pride, opportunity and connection across the town. This role is part-time at 30 hours per week.

Applicants should bring proven experience in arts, culture or community organisations. As well as, strong project management and people skills, with a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

The deadline for applications is **9am, Monday 6th July 2026**.

Interviews will be held **Monday 27th July 2026** in person at the New Wolsey Theatre. You will be asked to prepare a short presentation as part of the interview process.

We will reimburse reasonable travel expenses for candidates to attend interviews.

We'd love applications from people of all backgrounds, especially from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds, those who identify as D/deaf and disabled people, neurodivergent people, members of the LGBTQIA+ community and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. We are up for exploring support and development needs and will make reasonable adjustments to enable applicants to participate in the selection process, and for the successful applicant to carry out their role.

If you have any further questions after reading this material, would like an informal and confidential discussion about the position, or if you would like this candidate pack in a different format, please contact:

Lucy Parker, Head of People lparker@wolseytheatre.co.uk 01473 295940

We look forward to hearing from you.

Douglas Rintoul
On behalf of the IP-Switched Consortium
Chief Executive / Artistic Director, New Wolsey Theatre

About IP-Switched: Creative People and Places Ipswich

What is Creative People and Places (CPP)?

CPP is an Arts Council England initiative designed to increase participation in the arts in areas where people are least involved. Each programme is unique to its place - shaped by local people and partnerships - and focused on long-term, community-led change. At its heart, CPP champions cultural democracy: supporting communities to make, share and experience creativity on their own terms, so that art becomes a part of everyday life.

About IP-Switched

IP-Switched is one of twelve new Creative People and Places programmes (2026–2029). Ipswich was eligible to apply for CPP funding in this round, and the consortium came together to develop a compelling application that identified local need, defined the target places, and established a strong project framework - which you will now take forward into delivery.

The programme receives £750,000 from Arts Council England over three years, with additional match-funding and support from Ipswich Borough Council, Suffolk County Council, and Ipswich Central (Business Improvement District). It also benefits from significant in-kind resources including office space, infrastructure, financial systems, and executive support provided by the New Wolsey Theatre.

Why is it called “IP-Switched”?

The name is both a nod to Ipswich’s postcode ‘IP’ and a statement of intent. It plays on the town’s identity while symbolising a switching of narratives - about who gets to make decisions, who gets to take part, and how culture is defined and experienced. It also acknowledges that some IP postcode areas have historically had fewer cultural opportunities. IP-Switched aims to change that.

The Head of Community Partnerships will work closely with the Programme Director to remove the barriers that prevent people from engaging in culture - whether those barriers are about visibility, confidence, affordability, or simply feeling that the arts are “for someone else.” This programme exists to make sure that everyone in Ipswich has the chance to take part, not just as audiences, but as creators, leaders and decision-makers.

For this first funding cycle, IP-Switched will begin in three areas in the west of the town, working with local residents to co-create opportunities that feel relevant, joyful and community-driven. Through long-term collaboration, the programme will spark creative activity in everyday spaces: community centres, parks, shopping parades, schools and faith settings.

The project will start with a listening phase — the “Cups of Tea” period — in which the team will meet and learn from local communities, building relationships that shape future activity through the forming, development and nurturing of community steering groups in each area. Over three years, these relationships will define programmes including events from all art forms, creative workshops, commissions, celebrations, and a large-scale festival in Ipswich town centre.

About you

You may have lived experience of, or a deep understanding of, the needs and strengths of people living in some of the most deprived wards in the UK. You believe in the power of creativity to transform both people and places.

You will demonstrate a passion for working with people, influencing change and contributing to a wider vision for the town. You will bring a track record of co-creating with communities, artists and partners to turn ambitious ideas into reality. You're curious, generous and unafraid to experiment, and you're comfortable reflecting on successes and challenges to evolve your practice throughout the programme. We will support your development every step of the way.

You will be pragmatic and detail orientated and happy unpicking large quantities of data, to understand insights.

You have a strong sense of social purpose, driven by the belief that everyone has the right to shape and enjoy culture, regardless of their background. You're a great empathiser, attuned to the needs and aspirations of communities.

You may be an experienced leader or stepping into the next phase of your leadership journey. You thrive in partnership - balancing empathy with strategic clarity. You're an excellent communicator and an inspiring presence.

You are tenacious, hands-on and equally comfortable supporting activity on the ground as you are contributing to planning and partnership discussions.

You bring energy, diplomacy and imagination to your work: a connector who can turn conversations into shared action. Above all, you share our belief that Ipswich's creativity is its superpower - and that IP-Switched is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to unlock it for everyone.

About the role and team

You will be part of a small dynamic team working closely with the Programme Director to realise IP-Switched's vision, harnessing creativity as a catalyst for social change - making culture more central, more accessible, and more celebrated in the everyday life of Ipswich.

The core team will include the Head of Community Partnerships and the Creative Producer, who will both be line managed by the Programme Director.

IP-Switched are not fixing the full set of roles at this stage and the wider staffing structure will be shaped through conversations with local communities and partners, so that the team we build reflects priorities on the ground, rather than assumptions made during early stages of the programme development.

In the early years of delivery, you'll work closely with the Programme Director and community steering groups to build and line-manage a delivery team. You will have key responsibilities for developing:

- Our volunteer workforce
- Our apprenticeship schemes and work experience programmes.

Working closely with the Programme Director, you'll lead on growing the infrastructure of how our volunteer workforce functions. Including the governance of steering groups and wider volunteering opportunities across the programme.

You'll be based in the New Wolsey Theatre's offices. Although IP-Switched will operate as a distinct programme within the New Wolsey Theatre, a strong presence in the organisation will be essential to ensure IP-Switched is never siloed. You'll work with and be supported by colleagues in the organisation so that more people understand, support and celebrate what the project is achieving.

Consortium oversight

You'll work with an inspiring group of consortium members who bring deep experience, insight and commitment to Ipswich's communities. Together, they represent the best of the town's civic, cultural and social energy - a collective that believes creativity can connect people, build pride and open new possibilities.

The New Wolsey Theatre – lead organisation and accountable body.

Nationally recognised for its inclusive practice, the New Wolsey Theatre provides a creative and supportive base for the IP-Switched team.

Jobcentre Plus Ipswich

A pioneering partner using creativity to boost confidence, skills and employability — helping people recognise their potential and feel part of the town's creative life.

Ipswich Borough Council — Vibrant Towns and Communities Support Department

Provides resources, insight and expertise to support community-focused initiatives and safe, inclusive events across the town.

Ipswich Central (Business Improvement District)

Champions the town's cultural and economic vibrancy, connecting businesses, artists and communities to create a thriving, welcoming centre and waterfront.

Ipswich and East Suffolk Alliance (Suffolk & North East Essex Integrated Care Board)

A major regional health partnership focused on wellbeing and community resilience, ensuring creativity and culture are recognised as essential to living well.

Volunteering Matters Ipswich

A national leader in community action and youth empowerment, specialising in co-design and decision-making that puts local voices at the heart of change.

Together, these partners will be your key collaborators.

Job Description

Job Title: Head of Community Partnerships

Responsible to: Programme Director

Responsible for: Volunteer workforce, freelance practitioners and emerging career placements & apprenticeships.

Key NWT Relationships: Chief Executive / Artistic Director, Executive Director, Head of People.

Job Purpose: To lead on data-led planning and community engagement, that holds the IP-Switched programme accountable to the needs of residents and stakeholders, as a major Action Research initiative and one of ten Creative People and Places programmes in the East of England.

The role exists to forefront community relationships as a core priority for the growth of the IP-Switched programme. The programme's mission is to empower communities across Ipswich to shape, create, and experience culture where they live.

You will be responsible for nurturing relationships in the community and working closely with the Programme Director to ensure local residents, partner organisations and stakeholders are prioritised, engaged with and feel they have a voice in the development of the programme. Drawing on the expertise of consortium partners, you will have a key responsibility in leading the growth of the programme's volunteer workforce, ensuring that a robust infrastructure is built to ensure our relationship with volunteers is mutually beneficial, values their contribution day-to-day and is ultimately nourishing. You will also have a key responsibility for the development of monitoring and evaluation processes that will drive data-led planning – holding the programme accountable for its delivery with communities.

In your first year, you will work with the Programme Director to establish steering groups across the town who will lead action research - commissioning test events, community forums and consultations. You will also be building a baseline picture of data and measurable community feedback which will drive the direction of the business plan. You will meet with local community champions and collaborate with the Creative Producer to coordinate meaningful moments which will act as a 'test-kitchen' for creative activities which have been flagged as a priority by our steering groups and local residents. A core part of the role is ensuring that feedback and rigorous evaluation sit at the heart of the programme's practice - driving ongoing engagement and long-term positive cultural outcomes.

As Head of Community Partnerships, you will work closely with the Programme Director to grow the IP-Switched Programme and delivery team, contributing to planning and implementation. You will act as the connector between strategic planning and the realities of working in a community setting.

You will be part of a small dynamic team working closely with the Programme Director to realise IP-Switched's vision, harnessing creativity as a catalyst for social change - making culture more central, more accessible, and more celebrated in the everyday life of Ipswich.

Main Responsibilities

You will:

- Develop robust and positive partnerships with residents, stakeholders and local organisations. Nurturing partnerships that will endure beyond the lifespan of funding.
- Lead on the co-creation of a robust offer for our volunteer workforce.
- Lead on the creation and development of evaluation processes of the programme demonstrating excellent operational planning and organisational skills.
- Build confidence, opportunity and civic pride across the town, particularly among those least engaged in the arts.

This role is a great opportunity for someone who is stepping into the next phase of their leadership journey. You will demonstrate proven experience of your passion for working with people, influencing change and contributing to a wider vision for the town.

Programming & Partnership Development

- Support creative programming and embed co-creation and cultural democracy in all stages of planning and delivery.
- Support community steering groups to take leadership roles in programming, commissioning and evaluation.
- Act as a connector building partnerships across social, health, civic, charitable, business and cultural sectors.
- Ensure environmental sustainability is embedded across all programme activity.
- Work with the Programme Director to research and monitor funding opportunities for existing and future projects.
- Research UK best practice in community engagement to influence the programme

Action Research and Reflective Practice

- Develop and implement a rigorous evaluation framework aligned with ACE CPP requirements, including effective use of the Impact & Insight toolkits.
- Lead on the procurement of independent evaluation of the programme annually.
- Lead comprehensive data collection and engagement monitoring to assess impact and ensure the CPP is achieving its intended outcomes.
- Embed reflective practice methodologies across the programme
- Champion an 'open source' approach to sharing insights and learning locally and nationally to strengthen sector knowledge and practice.
- Work with the Programme Director to actively contribute to the national CPP learning network, representing Ipswich's approach to co-creation and community-led culture.

Main Responsibilities cont.

Advocacy

- Support IP-Switched to be connected to the wider cultural ecology of Ipswich and beyond.
- Build healthy, reciprocal relationships with local, regional and national partners.
- Connect the programme with wider initiatives and opportunities. Nurturing opportunities for partnerships sponsorships and earned income.

Governance

- Directly oversee the growth of the volunteer workforce in years 1-3, delivering projects with, by and for the people of Ipswich.
- Actively nurture the growth of your own team.
- Foster a culture of collaboration, inclusion and shared ownership among partners.

Financial Management

- Work with Programme Director and NWT's finance team and Executive to monitor and forecast expenditure
- Oversee effective systems for financial tracking and procurement.

Team & Operations

- Line manage staff, freelancers and volunteers, ensuring supervision, support and training.
- Engage with role within the New Wolsey Theatre, attending staff meetings and shared community moments.
- Ensure safeguarding, equality, health and safety and HR policies are upheld.

Other

- Contribute to the long-term development, profile and sustainability of the IP-Switched Programme
- Contribute to the creation of IP-Switched marketing materials, where appropriate
- Maintain the security and confidential status of all information as designated, and to conduct all activities in a professional manner at all times
- To undertake any other reasonable responsibilities as and when required

This job description is a guide to the nature of the work required of this position. It is neither wholly comprehensive nor restrictive

NOTE: An enhanced DBS check will be sought from the successful applicant: the candidate should be in no way unsuitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Person Specification

Essential

- Proven experience in an arts or community organisation, with demonstrable strength in project and programme management.
- Proven experience working directly with, and providing meaningful support to, underserved or marginalised communities.
- A strong track record in developing, managing and delivering creative or participatory programmes that respond to local needs.
- A strong understanding of evaluation methodologies and action research in a cultural context, with demonstrable experience designing and implementing evaluation frameworks and using data, insights and analysis to drive decision making and evidence programme impact.
- Proven ability to develop, sustain and collaborate across complex partnerships, including civic, social, cultural, health, community and voluntary-sector partners.
- Excellent stakeholder management and communication skills, with the ability to engage confidently with a wide range of partners.
- Proven experience of your passion for working with people and influencing social action.
- A demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of work.
- A demonstrable commitment to environmental responsibility across all aspects of work.

Desirable

- Knowledge of Ipswich, Suffolk and the East of England's cultural landscape.
- Understanding of audience development strategies.
- Familiarity with Arts Council England's CPP programmes.
- Knowledge of UK and international arts networks.

Terms and Conditions

Contract

Fixed-term until the end of the current funding period (March 2029), with potential extension subject to securing further investment in the next funding round. This position is subject to 6 months probationary period.

Salary

£41,320 pro rata (subject to review as part of the April 2026 financial pay review). An additional x 0.5 of your hourly rate will be paid if you are required to work on a Sunday or Bank Holiday

Hours

30 hours per week (some evening and weekend work is required).

Overtime

No overtime payment is available. Any overtime is to be taken as Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) at a later date by arrangement with your line manager.

Location

Based at the New Wolsey Theatre, with regular work in defined West Ipswich communities.

Ideally you will live within 30 minutes' travel to Ipswich.

Holiday

28 days per year, increasing by one day for each years' continuous service up to a maximum of 33 days (based on working 5 days per week). You will be expected to take statutory bank holidays as part of your annual entitlement unless you are required to work on a particular bank holiday

Pension

NWT provides a contributory pension scheme with Now: Pensions. Employer contributions 3%, employee contributions 5%

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check

As this role involves regular engagement with community participants, including young people and vulnerable adults, appointment is subject to a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check. The New Wolsey Theatre will support the successful candidate through this process.

Training & Development

CPD opportunities through NWT and CPP networks



TELL YOUR STORY (2024)
PHOTO CREDIT: POLLY ALDERTON



THE BIG AFTERNOON (2023)
PHOTO CREDIT: WILL GREEN PHOTOGRAPHY

If you're new to Ipswich

If you're new to Ipswich, you'll be joining a town with a thriving, generous and deeply collaborative cultural community — and a local MP who is a committed champion for the arts. Ipswich is home to an impressive range of artists, companies and creative collectives working across theatre, dance, music, visual arts, heritage and festivals. Several Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations are based here, including DanceEast, Eastern Angles, Gecko, SPILL Festival, Suffolk Community Libraries and the New Wolsey Theatre.

They sit alongside much-loved local partners such as Brighten the Corners, Colchester + Ipswich Museums, Ipswich Book Festival, Ipswich Institute, Ipswich Minster, Red Rose Chain, Suffolk Archives, Suffolk New College, University of Suffolk and Wolsey 550. Together they create a connected, ambitious and supportive cultural landscape that is open to new people, new perspectives and new ideas. As Programme Director, you'll be welcomed into this creative ecology — one that sees culture as a driver of connection, belonging and civic pride.

Ipswich is a young, dynamic and growing town of around 140,000 people, making it one of the most densely populated places in England. It faces real challenges: household incomes sit below regional and national averages, and many residents work in lower-paid jobs despite high overall employment. But these challenges also give the town a powerful sense of purpose. There is a clear civic ambition here to widen opportunity, improve life chances and build a more inclusive future — an ambition that the cultural sector is actively helping to drive.

Ipswich is Suffolk's most culturally diverse place — a town shaped by many histories, heritages and communities. Its population reflects a rich mix of cultures, with significant numbers of residents who have roots across the globe and many who have made Ipswich their home after being born elsewhere. As a historic dock town, cultural exchange has always been part of its DNA, and today the town continues to evolve as new communities settle and contribute to its character. While demographic change can sometimes bring challenges, it also generates enormous creative potential — the opportunity to share new stories, forge new relationships and imagine a more connected and vibrant town.

For someone passionate about culture's civic role, Ipswich offers a rare combination: real need, real energy and a community ready to work together to make change happen.

How to apply

To apply, please send:

- Your CV (with two referees)
- A cover statement (maximum two sides of A4 or a 2-minute video) outlining your interest in the role and how your experience and passions align with the job description and person specification.
- Complete our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring Form](#)

Send to: Sam Bates, Administrator admin@wolseytheatre.co.uk

Deadline: **9am, Monday 6th July 2026**

Interviews: First round interviews will be held **Monday 27th July 2026** in person at the New Wolsey Theatre. You will be asked to prepare a short presentation as part of the interview process.

For an informal conversation about the role, please contact:

Lucy Parker, Head of People lparker@wolseytheatre.co.uk 01473 295940