Manchester Craft & Design Centre (MCAD)

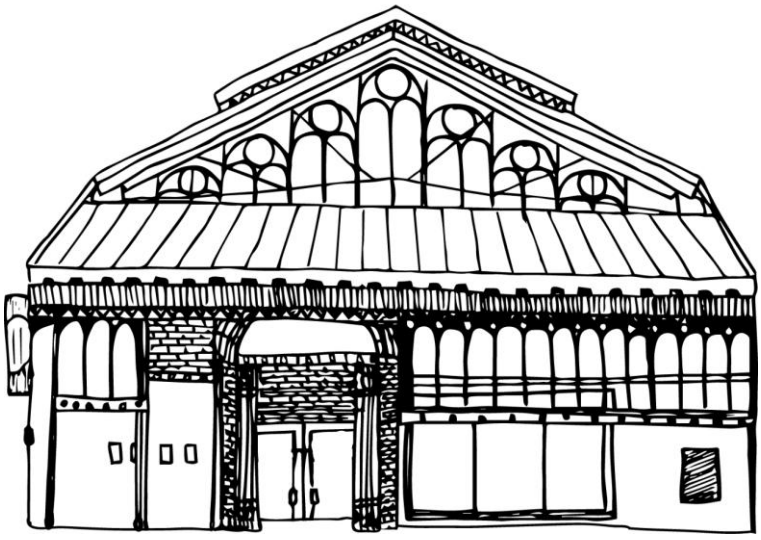
Director

Lead one of Manchester's most distinctive creative destinations. Champion independent makers. Shape the future of contemporary craft and design.

Salary: £36,000 (based on £45,000 full time)
Hours: 28 hours p/w (based on 35 hours full time), ideally spread across five days
Location: Manchester Craft and Design Centre, Northern Quarter
Reports to: Chair of the Board of Trustees

Manchester Craft & Design Centre
17 Oak Street
Manchester
M4 5JD

0161 832 4274
contactus@craftanddesign.com
www.craftanddesign.com



About us

Manchester Craft and Design Centre is one of Manchester's most distinctive creative destinations, housed in a beautiful historic Victorian fish market building in the heart of the Northern Quarter.

Home to a vibrant community of independent makers and designers, we champion contemporary craft, support creative businesses, inspire audiences, and connect the public with making through exhibitions, workshops, and events, enriching our city.

Supported by Arts Council England, we are a small, ambitious charity with a big heart, and a clear vision – to create a sustainable future for craft and design.

We believe craft and design matter to people, places, and communities and should remain inclusive, innovative, and accessible, supporting wellbeing, enjoyment, and sustainable creative careers.

About the role

We are looking for an inspiring and experienced Director to lead MCAD into its next chapter.

This is an exciting opportunity to shape the future of an established creative organisation, champion our community of independent makers and strengthen our place within Manchester's cultural landscape.

This is our most senior role in the team. Working closely with the Board of Trustees, staff team, resident makers, and cultural partners, you will provide strategic leadership and operational oversight, drive fundraising and income generation, and ensure the Centre is financially sustainable and creatively ambitious.

It is a varied role. In a typical week you might be finding new ways to secure income for MCAD, building relationships with funders and partners, making sure we spend it wisely, and shaping the future of our centre, so it thrives as a wonderful place for Makers, visitors, staff and volunteers. We are a small team, so you will think big and roll your sleeves up too.

What you will do

- Lead MCAD’s strategy and keep everyone pulling in the same direction.
- Raise MCAD’s profile, developing programmes, audiences and opportunities.
- Champion resident makers and support the growth and visibility of their creative businesses.
- Drive fundraising, income generation and partnership development.
- Provide operational and financial oversight, overseeing financial planning - looking after the budget with care.
- Make sure we have the right people in the right roles, doing the right thing, always leading with fairness and care.
- Lead, inspire and support the team, creating a positive, supportive working environment.
- Be the steward of our culture, making MCAD a vibrant, inclusive, and rewarding place to work, make and visit.
- Build positive, lasting relationships with funders, partners, cultural and educational institutions, and the wider craft sector.
- Oversee the care and long-term future of our historic building.

- Work with our Board, maintain a strong and constructive relationship with the Chair and Trustees, supporting good governance and providing clear reporting on organisational performance.

About you

You will be an enthusiastic, skilled, and confident leader with:

- Significant senior leadership experience, ideally in a cultural or creative organisation.
- A passion for contemporary craft and a commitment to supporting independent makers.
- A real understanding of how creative charities work and the funding pressures they face, and experience of making limited resources go a long way.
- Experience of fundraising, income generation and developing successful partnerships.
- Strong financial management and a track record in fundraising and income generation.
- Experience working with a Board of Trustees and a sound understanding of charity governance.
- A passionate advocate for craft and makers. An existing network in the sector would be helpful but is not essential; we are more interested in your experience, ideas, and enthusiasm for what MCAD can achieve.

Above all, you will understand the importance of creative communities and be excited by the potential of this unique organisation.

Working pattern

This role needs to be visible in the centre as well as developing a powerful strategic focus, so our preference is for the 0.8 hours to be spread across five days. We are open to hearing good ideas about working flexibly and how this could work for the right candidate.

How to Apply

Come and meet us – **Open Day on 8th December**, **12 noon – 5.30pm**
We warmly invite prospective candidates to visit MCAD, to meet the Chair, staff team and Makers, and discover more about the organisation and the opportunity.

Deadline for Applications

Please send your up-to-date CV plus a covering letter (no more than 2 sides of A4 / 750 words) that sets out how your skills and experience meet the requirements of the **Role Profile** and **Job Description** to contactus@craftanddesign.com by **7th January 2027.**

Interview Process:

13th January 2027 - First round interviews
Week beginning 18th January 2027- second round interviews for selected candidates.

We welcome applications from people with a range of backgrounds and experiences who share our passion for craft, creativity and supporting independent Makers.