



talking birds

Community Development Facilitator

May 2026

About Talking Birds

Talking Birds is a theatre company based in Coventry since 1992, known for its thoughtful, playful, resonant, mischievous and transformative meditations on people and place. The company's base - [The Nest](#) - has been created as a hub for [Regenerative Creative Practice](#): exploring ideas, building community, cultivating care and reciprocity, and opening space for collectively imagining and nurturing alternative futures.

Talking Birds has built a reputation for creating safe and welcoming spaces, bringing diverse groupings of people together and facilitating meaningful conversations that lead to tangible action. Our work includes artist and sector support, policy interventions, audio walks, theatre of place, outdoor art that tours to towns and festivals across the country - and much more - working with numerous community members, performers and other creative practitioners on varied types and scales of project each year.

We are a small, friendly core team with an impact that belies our size, including the invention of [The Difference Engine](#), our nationally-recognised in-pocket captioning tool which pioneered affordable, mobile captioning, in 2010; and, in 2021, calling the UK's first [Citizens' Assembly on Arts & Culture](#), convening a cross-section of Coventry people to map out a better future for our city through a [series of recommendations](#), which now guide much of our (hyper-local) activity.

Talking Birds has been regularly funded by Arts Council, England (and previously West Midlands Arts) since 2002 as a Regional then National Portfolio Organisation.

Job Description - Summary

Job Title: Community Development Facilitator

Hours: 0.6FTE (22.5 hrs based on 37.5 hrs per week)

Contract: 3 years Fixed term to September 2029, with the likely extension to December 2029, and possibly beyond (subject to further fundraising by the company).

Salary: Annual = £19,032
(0.6 pro rata of F/T rate £31,720.00)

Purpose: to engage communities and support community/citizen empowerment in relation to the Collective Creative Regenerative Futures programme, in an ethical and regenerative way, consistent with the values of the company.

Location: Based out of Talking Birds' base, The Nest, Coventry, and working 'on the ground' in neighbourhood locations around Coventry.

Holiday: 15 days annual leave plus 4.8 public holidays for 0.6 FTE (pro rata of 25 days annual leave, plus 8 public holidays) plus one week pro rata Christmas/Winter break in December.

Notice period: 2 months (following probationary period of 3 months)

Reports to: Co-Artistic Director, Janet Vaughan





Community Development Facilitator

Focussing on Community Empowerment & Climate Justice

Application Deadline: Monday 6 July, 9:00 am

Talking Birds is looking for someone with a passion for community empowerment to join our small team to work on an exciting new programme over the next 3+ years. It's a role that would suit someone who has worked in community development, participatory democracy, climate justice, or nature-based work, and can empower people to make things happen in their own neighbourhoods.

The Programme

Building on the recommendations from our Citizens' Assembly, **Art for the People** (2021), we are now embarking on a multi-year programme connecting communities, culture and creative climate action, with the support of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

The programme involves collaborative, creative place-making combined with strategy development grounded in neighbourhoods. Building carefully outwards from the work already done to pilot, advance and deliver the Assembly's recommendations, and steered with the help of our cohort of Assembly participants turned Creative Community Changemakers, the programme will include:

- on-the-ground community development work to support, strengthen, and be the catalyst for neighbourhood-based cohorts of Creative Community Changemakers.

- offering Creative Community Changemaker training and support to these cohorts, building capacity and skills in: creative climate action, putting on events, fundraising and access to decision-makers.
- working with locally-based, socially-engaged artists, alongside Change makers, communities and other partners and specialist collaborators (eg geographers, climate scientists).
- developing - in collaboration with our Changemaker cohorts - a comprehensive and accessible community arts-led activation wayfinding toolkit.
- building on existing relationships to increase the visibility and impact of community-influenced policy including the Assembly recommendations and Coventry's Cultural Strategy action plan.

The programme will be collaborative, flexible and iterative, looking at building community power in particular neighbourhoods, and supporting specific groups in those areas to make things happen, and to build their agency.

We will focus initially on consolidating and extending visioning and support for the Green Ways recommendation - building on the ideas and resources we have already created around relatively simple and low-cost arts-led, nature-based climate adaptation measures. For communities, these act both as a way into the climate discussion, and encouragement to start taking action at a community level.

For more on the Citizens' Assembly and its recommendations, see [link to Background Information](#).





Specific responsibilities

This role has some very specific areas of responsibility to deliver a particular programme of work. We know you may not have done all of these things before, and that's okay. We anticipate some areas will need more time to grow into, and we have built in capacity to support that transition. The programme will also develop over time, and you will be involved - alongside communities and team members - in shaping this.

Developing community links and supporting volunteers

- Going out into specific communities and making contacts, building trust and confidence.
- Pulling people together and working with those groups, to identify local priorities, and to define actions, particularly around climate justice.
- Helping people to work collectively to make things happen, and empowering them to take the initiative, including by recruiting people to join the Creative Changemaker programme.
- Recruiting locally-based artists to work on community projects, and liaising with them, alongside community members.
- Developing - in collaboration with our Changemaker cohorts - a comprehensive and accessible arts-led wayfinding toolkit, to help communities activate similar work in their own neighbourhoods.

... and in liaison with the Co-Artistic Director:

- Growing the leadership capacity of community members through the Creative Changemaker programme (with external trainer support).
- Helping local people demonstrate the viability of citizens' recommendations, garner political/financial support and reach decision makers.
- Sharing learning and wider impact.

Partnership development

In liaison with the Co-Artistic Director:

- Developing/growing partnerships with local stakeholders, (including community groups, place-based partnerships, organisations involved in nature/climate based work, city council departments, universities) and regional/national partners.
- Building on existing relationships to increase the visibility and impact of community-influenced policy.
- Continuing to influence the collective direction and delivery of the city's Cultural Strategy and action plan, connecting to the city's Culture Works Collective.

Project Management

- Oversee and monitor project schedules, evaluation, data collection and fulfilling of the programme's strategic objectives - with support from General Manager/Co-Artistic Directors.
- Work with the General Manager to issue contracts, invoices and partnership agreements where relevant, and to ensure payments are made in a timely fashion.
- Manage any freelancers, or temporary project admin staff, as agreed with the Co-Artistic Director.
- Prepare/contribute to reports on the programme to keep the company's Board and funders up to date.
- Contribute to/lead on production of funding bids as agreed.

Responsibilities shared across the team

- Keep up to date on what is going on in relevant sectors – for this role particularly within community development, community empowerment, climate justice, political/policy developments and other areas of interest to the company – within Coventry, the region and nationally.
- Develop and promote the company's work, values and strong commitments to climate justice, and broadening access to, and diversity within, arts and culture.
- Generally being part of the team: attending and contributing to company meetings, planning and strategy; being a key part of our collective decision-making; acting as 'ternkey' (with responsibility for un/locking the building, and sounding the communal lunch bell!), and as cover for colleagues as needed.
- Attend relevant networking & training events locally, regionally or nationally, including participating in the peer networking/support provided by the programme funder Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.
- Identify opportunities for partnerships and projects.
- Plus other tasks commensurate with the role and being part of the wider team - the primary responsibilities are listed above, but sometimes the whole team will be asked to muck in to get whatever needs to be done, done (and we will almost certainly draw on any transferable skills).



Where & how you'll be working

The role is based out of The Nest, Talking Birds' home for Regenerative Creative Practice, near Coventry City Centre. Whilst there is some flexibility for occasional remote working, the on-the-ground nature of this role, with the need to connect with and support local community members, means that this post will mostly involve working at locations around Coventry.

When not meeting with people in the community, you will work at The Nest, alongside the wider Talking Birds team: we would anticipate you would spend at least one day a week there (perhaps not all in one chunk of time).

There will sometimes be a need to work in evenings or at a weekend for a few hours, to be able to connect with community groups within their regular meeting times, and so some flexibility will be necessary. There will also be a requirement for occasional travel to other UK locations for meetings and events, depending on the programme's needs.

Although not an artistic role, the Community Development Facilitator role is a big part of a small team (you'll be working closely with Co-Artistic Director Janet Vaughan, who is the lead artist on this programme, and alongside Co-Artistic Director Derek Nisbet and General Manager Melissa Jordan). We ask everyone in that team to draw on their knowledge, skills, lived experience and creative ideas in working collectively to shape the company's vision and deliver its programme - encompassed by the belief that anyone can have 'the best idea in the room'.

Support will be given by other team members, particularly in the first few months of the job, but as you settle into the role, we anticipate you will be working largely independently, on your own initiative.

Person Specification

This role would suit someone who is passionate about climate justice and excited by the power of connecting arts, community and climate to build agency and effect positive change.

We are looking for someone who has good organisational skills, enthusiasm, and the ability to listen, build relationships, and inspire collaboration: someone who is independently motivated to play their part in delivering an ambitious and wide-ranging programme of work, whilst also enjoying working as part of a team.

Essential skills, experience and knowledge:

- Experience of community development/engagement, and working with volunteers.
- Ability and confidence to work independently and take the initiative.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to listen, to collaborate effectively with a range of people and build relationships.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, and comfortable using a range of appropriate communication methods to connect with communities, having sensitivity to varying needs and backgrounds of different community members.
- Ability to problem solve and be a solutions-focused team member, who rises a challenge.
- Experience/strong interest in working in community empowerment and/or in climate justice.

Desirable skills, experience and knowledge:

- Interest/experience in arts/culture/creativity
- Experience of working with communities in Coventry
- Experience of working with freelancers and volunteers
- Experience of managing/working with project budgets
- Experience of project monitoring and evaluation
- Experience of developing funding bids and working with funders
- Knowledge of Equality legislation and of access provision
- Knowledge of Safeguarding procedures

Applicants must already have the right to work in the UK, and be able to provide evidence of this before any confirmation of appointment.

The successful candidate will be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.





Terms and conditions

Salary

Annual = £19,032 (0.6 pro rata of F/T rate £31,720.00)
Reasonable Time Off In Lieu (at a time agreed with the Co-Artistic Directors) will be granted for excess hours worked. Occasionally, by agreement, additional pay may be offered instead of TOIL.

Hours

Part-time 0.6 FTE (25 hrs based on 37.5 hrs per week FT)
Normal working hours at The Nest are between 9:00 - 5:00 but some evening and weekend work will be necessary in this role to engage with communities.

Working patterns

We are open to different working patterns (by agreement), and we are committed to family- and carer-friendly working, but must highlight that we expect this post might often require evening and weekend working to fulfil the purpose of this role.

We recognise that part time staff may have other work which may mean a certain amount of flexibility is needed from time to time. We operate a Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) approach, which can support flexible working.

Support for Access needs

We are committed to providing any access support you might need for you to achieve your best work and be happy in your role, and will discuss this with the successful candidate.

Travel

Talking Birds encourages the use of active travel and public transport for getting to/between working locations in the city, where access needs allow. We recognise that occasional late evening working may necessitate use of a car or taxis.

Holiday

15 days plus 4.8 public holidays for 0.6 FTE (pro rata of 25 days annual leave, plus 8 public holidays). In addition, we provide an extra week (pro rata) of closure/winter break at Christmas.

Benefits

Auto enrolment into Talking Birds' **pension** scheme held with Aviva, with a 3% employee contribution matched by a 5% contribution from Talking Birds. Employees may choose to make additional payments, or can opt out of the pension if they wish.

We believe **staff wellbeing** is important, and that we all have a right to, and responsibility for, ensuring that our work is enjoyable - as well as offering positive creative challenges and the opportunity to make a difference.

We're keen to support (as well as to initiate) **Continuing Professional Development** opportunities for team members - both individual and collective. In the past, this has included a learning opportunity of the individual's choice taken during the summer, as well as support to attend training as appropriate.

Probationary Period

There will be a mutual probationary period of 3 months (with 1 week's notice on either side).



Community Development Facilitator

Application Deadline: Monday 6 July, 9:00 am

How to apply:

If you think you might be the person we are looking for, then please send a letter by email (up to 1000 words) along with a CV or list of work to talkingbirdsc Coventry@gmail.com

Please attach both your letter & CV in pdf format to your e-mail, with the subject:
[YourName] Community Development Facilitator Application.

In your letter, please let us know:

- What interests you most about working with Talking Birds in this role?
- How do your skills and experience match the person specification?
- What particular strengths do you think you will bring to the company?
- Details of two Referees, including a recent employer (whether as staff or freelancer or volunteer).

Closing date for applications: 6 July 2026, 9:00 am.
Applications received after this time will not be considered.

Interviews: Thursday 23rd July 2026, in person at the Nest, Unit 3 Sandy Lane Business Park, Sandy Lane, Coventry CV1 4DQ (either am or pm). If you'd be unable to attend that day, please mention this in your application.

We will share the primary **questions** we'll be asking with all interviewees in advance of the interview date. We will cover **travel**, and offer a small **participation fee** to invited interviewees.

Questions about this role: We've tried to take care with the language in this job call out, and to write it in an open, accessible and equitable way – but if anything isn't clear, or you'd like to chat with someone before applying, we're really happy to talk to you. Please email birdmail@talkingbirds.co.uk (this email address is for questions only) with your name, details with the best way/time to contact you – and one of us will be in touch. Alternatively leave us a message on 07708 262 182



Talking Birds

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