

# Come and join the Festival team!



Lead Producer  
IF: Milton Keynes  
International Festival 2027  
Job Pack

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## Lead Producer

### IF: Milton Keynes International Festival 2027

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## Overview of the Role

**The Stables is looking for an experienced freelance producer for IF: Milton Keynes International Festival 2027, which will run from 23 July - 1 August.**

The right candidate will have an aptitude for delivering complex and ambitious creative work. You will need to be able to articulate project aims and delivery plans to a wide range of stakeholders, bringing cross-discipline teams together to support the development and delivery of Festival commissions and events.

Your experience will demonstrate ambition realised, detail delivered and life-long memories created.

You will be excited to work on a range of projects - from live to digital and from sonic art to large-scale outdoor spectacles - engaging with nationally and internationally acclaimed artists, locally based practitioners, as well as companies and communities in Milton Keynes.

The Lead Producer provides senior producing oversight across IF: Milton Keynes International Festival 2027, leading on artist and company contracting, detailed producing negotiations and programme-level co-ordination. Working in close collaboration with the Festival Director, Head of Programming & Producing and Head of Production & Safety, the role ensures that artistic ambition is translated into clear agreements, realistic delivery plans and successfully delivered work.

A freelance contract will be offered from the Summer of 2026 to incorporate the 2027 edition of IF: Milton Keynes International Festival (23 July-1 August), including the wrap up and evaluation/ feedback to stakeholders in the Autumn of 2027. The initial term may be extended by mutual agreement. The fee offered will be circa £35k - £38k, dependent on experience and availability.

The role requires a flexible approach with some periods requiring greater commitment to ensure the success of projects and delivery. A blend of home office and on-site working is required with a particular requirement to engage in person with stakeholders and communities in Milton Keynes. It is particularly important that the Lead Producer is onsite for the set up and delivery of the Festival in July 2027.

You will also work with the wider team to ensure their support with logistics, marketing and communication in the lead-up to and during the Festival.

Front Cover Photographs:  
Pagrav Dance: One Sky  
No Fit State Circus: Bamboo  
Deabru Beltzak: Symfeuny  
Michael Pendry: Les Colombes

All photographs by Espey Photography  
and Mubsta: Shaun Armstrong



Chineke! Chamber  
Ensemble: Forever

## Background

### The Stables

Based in the village of Wavendon, Milton Keynes, The Stables is a registered charity and venue with a vision to engage the widest range of people with music in all its diversity, typically presenting around 350 events and 200 learning and participation events annually.

The Stables' mission is to enrich people's lives with opportunities to access, participate in, create, and experience live music and the arts in general.

The Stables has now become synonymous with producing large-scale outdoor events, special projects and IF: Milton Keynes International Festival which it founded in 2010.

**The Stables is a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) of Arts Council England.**

<https://stables.org/>

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### IF: Milton Keynes International Festival

In 2010, The Stables founded IF: Milton Keynes International Festival in response to Arts Council England's ambition to stimulate the level of investment in the arts in Milton Keynes - one of Europe's fastest growing places. The funding acted as a catalyst to draw in a range of other public and private sector partners and enabled delivery of a multi-site, mixed art form festival of 10 amazing days.

*"It's summer, and you're hungry for side-splitting comedy, provocative exhibitions, stonking bands, zany street theatre, acrobats, fireworks and all sorts of unpredictable happenings popping up in unexpected places. What other metropolis in Britain could give you such a feat of cutting-edge culture? No, not Edinburgh. These days that's about as unpredictable as a Tupperware party. I'm talking about Milton Keynes..."* Richard Morrison, The Times 2010

Since then, the Festival has grown into one of the UK's landmark cultural events and has twice been awarded the accolade of one of Europe's 'most remarkable festivals' by the European Festivals Association. The Festival was assessed and scored by 95 experts prior to going before the International Jury who awarded the prestigious EFFE label and said: *"The Festival has grown its artistic programme to embrace its local infrastructure, landscape and communities to extend its ambition and relevance to international issues and embrace innovative artistic engagement."*

The 2025 Festival was delivered over 12 sites with 391 professional artists and crew. There were 243 event and exhibition days and 72% free to attend with 63,000 attendances and over 6,000 community participants. 2 commissions, 2 World Premieres and 4 UK premieres were presented.

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Previous editions of the Festival have included work by La Machine, Graeae, Compagnie Carabosse, Deabru Beltzak, Rosemary Lee, Casus, Ilotopie, Ray Lee, Jackie Kay, Miguel Chevalier, Gravity & Other Myths, Richard DeDomenici, Station House Opera, No Fit State Circus & Motionhouse, Group Acrobatique de Tanger, Dries Verhoeven, Schweigman& with Slagwerk Den Haag, Teatro Container, Luke Jerram, Kinetika, Transe Express, Gratte Ciel, and Kamchàtka.

*“For The Birds was one of the most unique and amazing experiences I have ever had. The choice of location was absolutely perfect too. I will not forget that experience.”*

Audience Feedback on For The Birds created by Mark Anderson, Jony Easterby, Kathy Hinde, Ulf Pederson and Pippa Taylor in Linford Manor Park 2018.

*“The highlight for me was Transe Express: DNA, Vertical Odyssey which the whole family thoroughly enjoyed. The atmosphere was amazing and the skill of the performers was breathtaking.”*

Audience Feedback 2025

<https://ifmiltonkeynes.org/>



For The Birds



Transe Express:  
DNA, Vertical Odyssey

## Artistic Direction

The Stables is an organisation that enriches people's lives with opportunities to access, participate, create, and experience live music and the arts. Complementing the year-round venue programme, the biennial International Festival enables us to:

- engage people with music and sound in surprising ways through an international programme of mixed art forms including - but not limited to - physical theatre, dance, contemporary circus, performance art, installations, sound trails, concerts and family friendly events.

### It aims to feature:

- international and nationally acclaimed companies/ artists working in unexpected places and spaces including retail environments, boulevards, parks, lakes, woodlands, disused supermarkets, car parks etc.;
- spectacular opening/ closing events;
- new and site-specific/ responsive commissions;
- free/ low-cost outdoor performances;
- a Festival Central hub featuring a Spiegeltent, Acoustic Stage, food and drink, installations and family-friendly events;
- digital commissions, projects and broadcasts; and
- artistic explorations of relevant/ contemporary local, national and international discourse (for example previous Festivals have considered climate change, Brexit, homelessness, community cohesion, access and inclusion).

The programme draws inspiration from the unique architectural landscape of Milton Keynes and its reputation for innovation, developing work in temporary spaces or unusual locations. The focus is on engaging people with outstanding and unforgettable experiences working with some of the finest producers, artists and companies in the UK and internationally.

### Previous Festival commissions include:

[Under The Vaulted Sky](#) - created by Rosemary Lee for the Tree Cathedral (2014)

[Magic Carpets](#) by Miguel Chevalier with sonic spheres from Ray Lee, interactive installation in Middleton Hall, centre:mk (2016)

[The Place Between](#) - an award-winning creation by Rebecca Louise Law with soundscapes by Jason Singh (2023)

[One Sky](#) by Pagrav Dance (2025)

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## About Milton Keynes

In 1967 Milton Keynes was born, a designated New Town for a population of 250,000 people. Its unique grid road system and modernist buildings peppered with ancient villages is now hailed as visionary urban design and architecture. With 6,000 acres of green spaces, lakes and over 20 million trees you are never more than a few minutes away from its stunning parks, canals and woodland walks. It lies at the heart of the Oxford to Cambridge arc and accessible to central London in just 32 minutes by rail. It is home to national and internationally significant businesses and organisations including The Open University, Red Bull Racing, Niftylift, and Bletchley Park. It is a diverse city that provides an exciting space for artists to explore.

2027 marks the 60th anniversary of Milton Keynes, designated as a City in 2022 as part of HM Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

## Audience Development and Engagement

We aim to be culturally aware to reflect a diverse population, with a programme that reflects a wide range of interests to reach and engage as broad a range of the city's residents as possible, whilst pulling in new visitors to the city.

To this end, ticket prices are set to reflect our ambition for reach and engagement with a significant free/ low-cost strand of work balancing the requirement to generate earned income from ticket sales, sponsorships and trading activity.

## Governance and Management

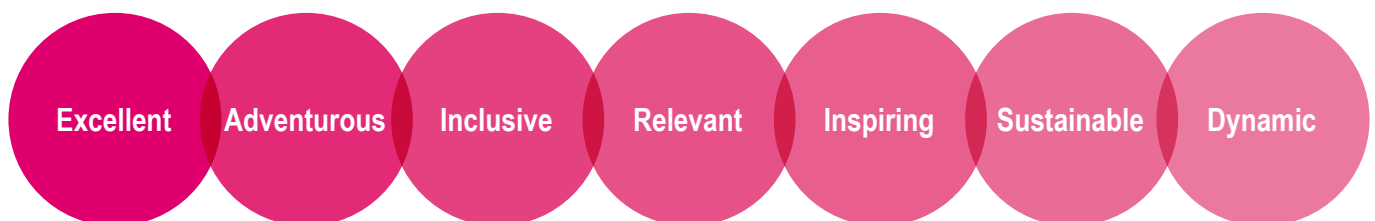
Wavendon AllMusic Plan, (operating as The Stables) is a registered charity and has overarching responsibility for the delivery of projects including IF: Milton Keynes International Festival. It draws upon the expertise of a Festival Advisory Board and ad hoc project groups from time to time.

The Lead Producer reports to the Festival Director (*Chief Executive & Artistic Director of The Stables*).

Their role requires the post-holder to work with a range of partners across the city as required to support the planning and delivery of Festival projects.

## Organisational Values

Underpinning all our activities we strive to be:



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## BRIEF: LEAD PRODUCER

The Lead Producer will report to the Festival Director working closely with The Stables' Head of Programming & Producing, liaising closely with the Head of Production & Safety and other project team members as required.

You will enable, facilitate and resolve logistical issues as they arise, working alongside and offering guidance to the wider team as well as leading on contracting.

The role is central to ensuring that artistic ambition is translated into clear agreements, realistic plans and successfully delivered work.

Previous experience of producing including work with national and internationally recognised artists and companies - particularly in outdoor contexts/ temporary spaces - is important, as is a willingness to work closely with the creative and operational teams.

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## Principal Responsibilities

Please note that this list is designed to give you an overall view of the role and is not a definitive list of tasks.

### Programme Development and Delivery

- Liaising with The Stables creative and engagement teams and other key partner organisations to help shape and develop Festival projects in response to our vision and commissioning briefs.
- Contributing senior producing insight into project-shaping discussions, with a focus on feasibility, delivery planning, risk and contractual considerations, in support of the Festival's artistic leadership.
- Researching and assessing potential venues and locations for events, negotiating with the land/ premises owners.
- Liaising with the Festival and artists' production and safety teams to ensure that projects can be delivered safely and within budget.
- Assisting in recruitment of key project staff and freelance roles for the delivery of the Festival.

### Fundraising and Budgets

- Working on the feasibility of projects and programmes, developing budgets, liaising with artists and other delivery partners to ensure that projects are properly resourced.
- Identifying additional funding and investment opportunities and working with the executive team to secure additional resources for projects.
- Managing complex budgets using the Festival's budget systems, liaising closely throughout with the Finance Director.



Barely Methodical Troupe:  
Bromance

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## Communication

- Providing regular briefings to the Festival Director, the Festival Advisory Board and other working groups and project teams, attending meetings as required.
- Acting as an advocate for the Festival locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Working with the Marketing/ Ticketing teams to ensure accurate and timely information about the programme and events.

## Contracting & Producing Negotiations

- Leading on artist and company contracting for the Festival.
- Leading on and producing a small number of specific projects of scale.
- Undertaking detailed producing negotiations in collaboration with the Head of Production.
- Ensuring clarity around scope, fees, delivery requirements and responsibilities.
- Acting as the primary point of contact for companies and artists on contractual matters.

## Management and Administration

- Maintaining an overview of project delivery, working within and managing aspects of the budget including the negotiation of fees and other contractual matters as required.
- Liaising with the project teams to ensure information is up-to-date and communicated in accordance with agreed systems (eg Marketing, Finance and Artist Liaison support roles).
- Supporting and managing producers, project managers and creative practitioners working on key projects.
- Assisting with evaluation and post-production management.
- Adhering to relevant policies and values of the organisation, including health and safety, child protection, environmental sustainability, equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Support in the recruitment and line management of festival staff.

## Other

- Undertaking any other duties that are commensurate with the responsibilities of this post.



Transe Express:  
DNA, Vertical Odyssey

## Required Skills and Experience

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Work Related Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proven experience of successful, complex artistic project planning and producing within a festival context that spans across a range of art forms and diverse cultures</li> <li>• Experience of negotiating and drafting artists' contracts and riders</li> <li>• Understanding the requirements of international touring artists (e.g. travel requirements, visas, carnets, etc.)</li> <li>• Commercial awareness, strong negotiation and producing skills across genres and differing scales of work</li> <li>• Proven ability to work with a diverse range of stakeholders including technical, marketing, administrative team roles and community partners</li> <li>• Excellent communication and negotiation skills – written, verbal and interpersonal</li> <li>• A good understanding of, and empathy with, diverse audiences and an ability to identify appropriate artistic work to engage them</li> <li>• Proven complex budget management skills, and a track record of working within tight financial and organisational frameworks</li> <li>• Proven ability to raise funds and develop partnerships to support large-scale project delivery</li> <li>• Proven interest in, attendance at and experience of a range of music, arts and festival events nationally and internationally</li> <li>• A good knowledge of, and interest in, a wide variety of contemporary professional arts including theatre, dance, circus, outdoor arts, visual arts, music, film, digital and interdisciplinary arts</li> <li>• A project manager with an ability to deliver on the ground</li> <li>• Good managerial skills, including line management of staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working with/ managing budgets in excess of £250k</li> <li>• Experience of line managing freelance contractors</li> <li>• Understanding of the local area</li> <li>• Language skills, especially French, Spanish, Dutch, German</li> </ul>

## Required Skills and Experience

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent interpersonal skills, with a proven ability to quickly build and maintain relationships with colleagues and nurture relationships with collaborators</li> <li>• Confident, outgoing and enthusiastic personality with an extensive network of professional and personal contacts</li> <li>• Creative thinker with an ability to turn ideas into action</li> <li>• Ability to problem solve quickly and independently</li> <li>• Good time management skills, and an ability to prioritise and work to deadlines</li> <li>• Commitment to innovation, excellence and diversity</li> <li>• Ability to work flexibly on own initiative as well as part of an extended team as required</li> <li>• Ability to remain calm in busy periods</li> </ul>	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good personal presentation</li> <li>• Prepared to take a hands-on approach</li> <li>• A flexible, proactive and positive approach to work with an ability to work early mornings, late evenings and weekends as required</li> <li>• Willingness to support the commitment to equal opportunities, inclusion, health &amp; safety, child protection and other relevant policies</li> <li>• An avid consumer of artistic work nationally and internationally, with a willingness and ability to seek out, travel and attend events to pursue personal and professional development</li> <li>• A strong awareness of Health &amp; Safety legislation and risk management</li> </ul>	

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## Contract Terms

A freelance contract will be offered from the Summer of 2026 to incorporate the 2027 edition of IF: Milton Keynes International Festival including the wrap up and evaluation/ feedback to stakeholders in the Autumn of 2027. Following Festival delivery in July 2027, the role will reduce to light-touch involvement focused on the evaluation period, contractual close-out and final checks.

The initial term may be extended by mutual agreement. The fee offered will be circa £35k - £38k, dependent on experience and availability. Out of pocket expenses when working away from home in the course of the agreed schedule will be reimbursed on submission of relevant VAT receipts.

The role requires a flexible approach to onsite and home office work with some periods requiring greater commitment of time spent in Milton Keynes to ensure the success of projects and delivery. Engagement in person with stakeholders and communities in Milton Keynes is expected. Flexibility to working outside of usual working hours is essential particularly in the run up to and during festival delivery.

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## How To Apply

The Festival Director Monica Ferguson is available for an informal conversation about the role if you have any questions. Please contact [joana.cooper@stables.org](mailto:joana.cooper@stables.org) to arrange this.

Deadline for applications is **midday on Monday 25 May 2026**.

Please submit a CV with covering letter that details your interest and suitability for the role with particular reference to how you meet the skills and experience required. Submit your application by email to [joana.cooper@stables.org](mailto:joana.cooper@stables.org) or post to Joana Cooper, The Stables, Stockwell Lane, Wavendon, Milton Keynes, MK17 8LU.

*The Stables is committed to equality of opportunity in recruitment. We value a diverse team and welcome applications from all sectors of the community.*

*We are committed to protecting your personal data. Our Data Privacy Policy for Applicants gives you detailed information on when and why we collect your personal information, how we use it and how we keep it secure. Please see our Privacy Statement on our website (<https://stables.org/data-protection-policy-for-those-who-work-with-us>) for further information.*