awen

Ymddiriedolaeth
Ddiwylliannol
Cultural Trust



HEAD OF LIBRARIES, THEATRES AND COMMUNITIES

RECRUITMENT PACK

MARCH 2026



WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in the new role of Head of Libraries, Theatres and Communities at Awen Cultural Trust. We are looking for an exceptional leader to join our organisation and help shape the future of our libraries, theatres and our community focussed activity.

Now in our tenth year, Awen is a well-respected and trusted cultural charity, making significant impact within communities across South Wales. Our work spans libraries, theatres, community centres, a country house and 113-acre park and initiatives for adults with learning disabilities.

Within these settings, Awen has firmly embedded its commitment to social purpose, aiming to "make people's lives better" through arts, culture and heritage, and ensuring access is inclusive and transformative for all.

What we do extends well beyond our buildings. Through our community engagement programmes and partnerships, we support physical, mental and social wellbeing, nurture talent and help people of all ages enjoy the possibilities that cultural experiences can bring.

Our libraries, theatres and community centre teams reflect the breadth and ambition of our work. They are welcoming, creative spaces where artists, audiences, families, individuals and community groups can come together to connect and feel a sense of belonging.

We are proud to be an Arts Council of Wales portfolio member since 2024 and work in partnership with freelance artists, health boards, local authorities and third sector partners to make significant, lasting social impact on communities, groups and individuals.

As Head of Libraries, Theatres and Communities, you will play a pivotal role as part of Awen's Senior Leadership Team in delivering our strategy. You will provide strategic direction and shape our libraries, theatres, community centres and activities, to increase access and participation and deliver high quality visitor and customer experiences.

You will offer insight to national policy and sector trends, strengthen our local, regional and national partnerships, and drive new opportunities to increase access, deepen engagement and enhance Awen's social impact.

Your leadership will support dedicated teams within our libraries and theatres, encourage and empower collaboration, and ensure our cultural services are financially sustainable, well-governed and continuously improving.

If you are inspired by the prospect of leading within a values-driven cultural organisation with ambition, purpose and community at its core, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please get in touch for an informal chat by emailing richard.hughes@awen-wales.com.

Richard Hughes
Chief Executive



LIBRARIES



LIBRARIES

Awen manages six full-time libraries, two part-time community libraries and the Books on Wheels delivery service. We support and stock two additional community libraries in venues staffed and managed by Halo Leisure; we also manage a large book reserve which is based at Pyle Library.

Some of the key aims of the library service are:

- To improve the literacy of people of all ages and to support reading for pleasure;
- To enhance people's wellbeing and pride in community;
- To provide unbiased access to sources of trusted information;
- To continue to position reading at the heart of what we do;
- To develop new, inspiring library spaces;
- To create spaces and opportunities that enhance children's lives; and
- To contribute to the digital skills agenda.

Warm, safe and accessible spaces for all, our libraries are champions of reading, learning and literacy, providing unbiased access to trusted sources of information. Our events and activities help reduce social isolation, improve wellbeing and provide opportunities to have fun, learn and discover.

It has become clear that events, activities and other services have an increasingly important role in bringing new and existing users into our libraries. We are excited to be working closely with our council partners on plans to further develop our libraries as community hubs.

Over the past 10 years, Awen has led refurbishments of Betws, Sarn, Pencoed, Bridgend and Pyle Libraries, thanks to funding from Welsh Government and the support of Bridgend County Borough Council. We have ambitions to improve Aberkenfig and Porthcawl Libraries over the next five years.

In November 2024, Maesteg Library and the county borough's Local History Library reopened in its new Maesteg Town Hall home, allowing for more events, simultaneous activities, meetings, classes and workshops. It also offers an architect-designed children's library.

There were over **382,000 visits** to Awen libraries in 2024-25.

Over **327,000 books were borrowed** in 2024-25.

We welcomed over **4,000 new library members** in 2024-25.

Over **69,000 digital and audiobooks were downloaded** in 2024-25.

83% of users say the library has ***made a difference to their life***.[1]

1. Based on 2023 Adult User Survey

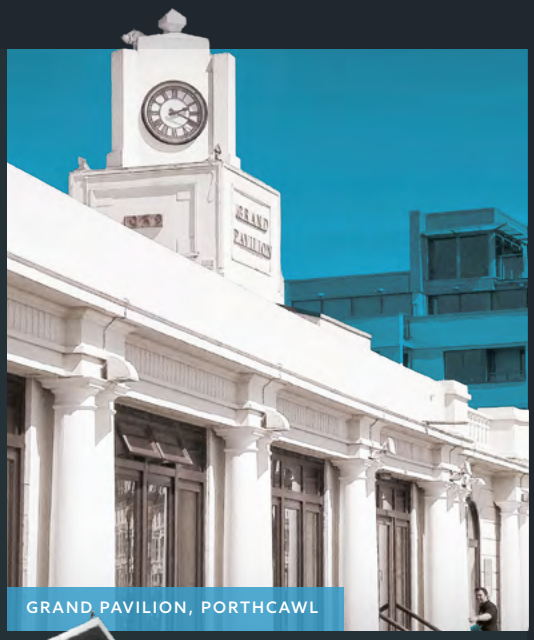




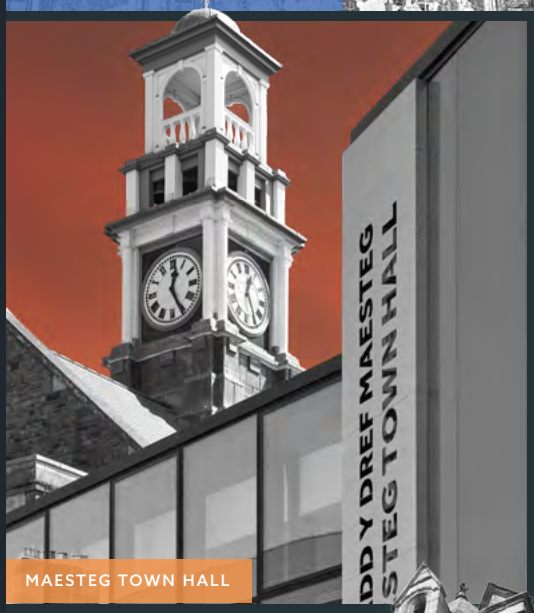
THEATRES



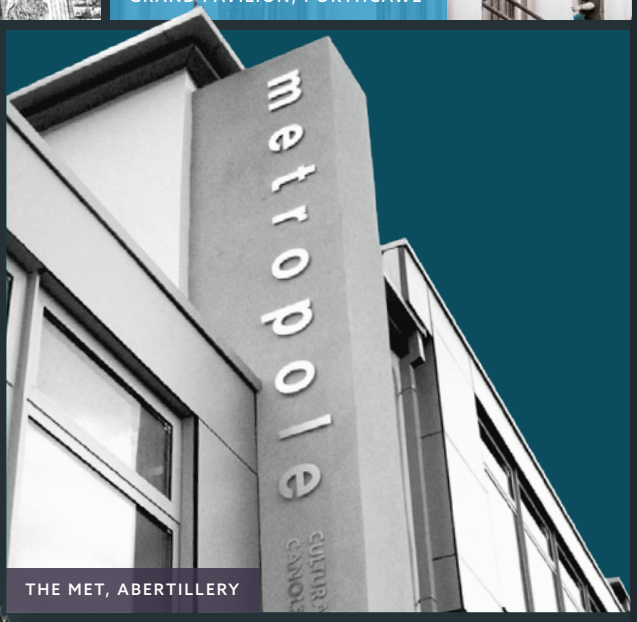
BLAENGARW WORKMEN'S HALL



GRAND PAVILION, PORTHCAWL



MAESTEG TOWN HALL



THE MET, ABERTILLERY



Y MUNI, PONTYPRIDD



BRIDGEND YOUTH THEATRE

THEATRES

Our theatres are much-loved spaces, at the heart of the community, bringing people of all walks of life together to enjoy shared and enriching experiences both on and off the stage. We operate these theatres in partnership with Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend and Rhondda Cynon Taf local authorities.

awen Neuadd y Gweithwyr Blaengarw
Blaengarw Workmen's Hall

BLAENGARW WORKMEN'S HALL

Nestled on a hill at the top of the Garw Valley, Blaengarw Workmen's Hall is a much-loved community venue offering workshops and classes alongside a professional programme of drama, comedy, live music and more.

awen Pafiliwn y Grand Porthcawl
Grand Pavilion Porthcawl

GRAND PAVILION, PORTHCAWL

The Grand Pavilion is temporarily closed for an ambitious £26 million redevelopment. This once-in-a-generation opportunity will safeguard this iconic seafront building for many years to come, ensuring it retains its position as a flagship regional arts and cultural venue.

awen Neuadd y Dref Maesteg
Maesteg Town Hall

MAESTEG TOWN HALL

Major investment of £10 million has restored Maesteg Town Hall to its former glory, retaining its rich heritage alongside modern facilities including a glass atrium, Y Bocs Oren studio theatre and cinema, public library, purpose-built children's library, local history library and café.

the met

THE MET, ABERTILLERY

Tucked away in Abertillery town centre, The Met is a hidden gem of cultural opportunities; an accessible venue presenting a vibrant mix of live music, cinema, family entertainment, theatre and community group performances to the Blaenau Gwent community.

awen Y Muni

Y MUNI

With its stunning gothic architecture, this newly renovated, fully accessible venue in Pontypridd town centre offers a charming setting to experience an eclectic mix of live music, comedy, open mic nights, family entertainment and community hires, thanks to its recent £6 million redevelopment.

BYT

BRIDGEND YOUTH THEATRE

Our NODA-nominated youth theatre company supports creative industry career pathways by providing high quality training in performing arts, offering exposure to industry professionals, creating regular performance opportunities and building confidence, skills and teamwork.

Over 72,500 people attended events or participated in activities at our venues in 2024-25.

Since 2015, we've helped secure **over £35 million** for major cultural and heritage redevelopments.

Over 10,900 people attended Welsh language or bilingual events in 2024-25.

We issued almost **200 tickets** to Hynt card users in 2024-25.

Over 14,500 people attended or participated in Creative Wellbeing projects in 2024-25.





COMMUNITY CENTRES

Awen manages two community centres, Awel y Môr in Porthcawl and Betws Life Centre. These are well used venues offering affordable spaces for a whole range of social and fitness groups, events and activities.

ABOUT awen



ABOUT AWEN

Our Purpose

Awen exists to ***'make people's lives better'*** by providing opportunity for people and communities to experience, enjoy and be inspired together, by culture. We engage with over one million people every year.

Our Vision

Our strategic vision, which will shape our organisational priorities for the next five years, is to: create culturally vibrant communities where everyone feels they belong. You can download a copy of our strategy here: bit.ly/awenstrategy

Our Values

Our values – creative, collaborative, empowering and fair – underpin everything we do. They define what we believe and how we behave. They guide our daily decisions and actions.

Our Impact

We define our social impact not only by the number of people we engage with, but the value of those engagements; the rate of positive change that happens because of us doing something.

Our Strategy

Awen launched its new five-year strategy on 1st October 2025, marking the tenth anniversary of the date the registered charity commenced operations. At the heart of the strategy is a goal to create places and experiences that give people a sense of purpose, identity, expression and most of all a sense of belonging.

Our Strategic Strands

The strategy outlines our priorities under five main outcomes. These have been informed by the delivery requirements of our major funders – Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend and RCT local authorities and Arts Council of Wales – alongside creative and organisational priorities that will ensure the future success of Awen Cultural Trust.

1. **A Healthy Environment**
   A healthy environment where future generations will benefit from a cleaner, more resilient and better understood planet.

2. **Vibrant Places to Live and Work**
   Vibrant places to live and work with growing local economies, a proud sense of identity and where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their potential.

3. **Engagement and a Sense of Purpose**
   Everyone has the opportunity to feel engaged and live with or develop a sense of purpose, with access to skills, support and help when they need it.

4. **Healthy Communities**
   Healthy communities where everyone has the chance to lead healthy lives.

5. **A Sustainable Organisation**
   A sustainable organisation, with Awen viewed as a responsible, fair, trusted employer and a partner of choice.

Our Commitment to EDI and Belonging

We are committed to fostering a workplace where everyone feels valued, respected and able to belong. We promote equality of opportunity in all that we do and welcome applications from people of all backgrounds. We are dedicated to creating an inclusive culture where individual differences are celebrated and everyone can thrive.

JOB OUTLINE

Job Title:

Head of Libraries, Theatres and Communities

Basis:

Full Time

Salary:

£69,637 - £71,792

Status:

Permanent

Accountable for:

- Libraries Managers
- General Managers (Maesteg Town Hall, The Met, Y Muni)
- Technical and Production Manager
- Creative Producer
- Creative Wellbeing Manager

Your Role:

You will provide artistic, strategic and operational leadership for Awen's libraries, theatres and community centres and associated creative programmes. You will lead the development of a cohesive portfolio that: enriches communities; supports wellbeing; increases access and participation; delivers high quality visitor experiences; and strengthens Awen's social impact.

You will lead and empower managers and teams to deliver excellent experiences, nurture creativity and uphold Awen's values. With responsibility for financial performance, compliance and service excellence, you will ensure strong budget management, robust evaluation and high standards of safety, accessibility and inclusion. Working collaboratively across Awen and by building meaningful partnerships, you will influence sector development, identify opportunities for innovation and growth, and ensure our offer responds to local needs and national priorities.

In this role, you will:

- Develop and deliver a strategic vision for libraries, theatres, community venues and creative programmes that align with Awen's mission, values and community purpose.
- Play a key role in Awen's capital development programme, supporting the successful re-opening of the Grand Pavilion, Porthcawl and seeking opportunities to continually enhance our portfolio of facilities.
- Lead strategic planning and service development, ensuring strong focus on social impact, inclusion, learning, community needs and financial sustainability.
- Provide senior leadership with expert insight, guidance and challenge on cultural policy, sector trends, opportunities and risks.
- Lead the development of business plans, business cases and transformation projects that strengthen sustainability, service quality and commercial outcomes across libraries, theatres and cultural venues.
- Strengthen Awen's contribution to local economic impact and regeneration through partnerships, destination initiatives and community focused activity.
- Contribute actively to the wider leadership of Awen as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Ensure cultural services deliver high quality, customer focused, inclusive and compliant operations.
- Lead the development of inspiring, creative and accessible programming aligned with Awen's strategy and community purpose.
- Embed robust monitoring, evaluation, learning and data informed decision making across services to support continuous improvement and innovation.
- Lead statutory reporting requirements, including the Welsh Public Library Standards and Arts Council of Wales Multi-year Investment outcomes.
- Build and maintain strong partnerships with local authorities, arts organisations, funders, education providers, community groups and regional/ national bodies; representing Awen at a local, regional and national level.
- Represent Awen at sector forums, networks and conferences to enhance visibility, influence and collaboration.
- Secure external income through grants, sponsorship and strategic funding partnerships, and drive charitable and commercial initiatives that increase participation, engagement and revenue.
- Lead the integration of libraries within partner councils' community hub networks to improve community access to services and opportunities.
- Provide inspiring and supportive leadership to managers and teams, fostering a culture of creativity, collaboration, inclusion and ongoing professional development.
- Ensure staffing structures, workforce capability, succession planning and performance management support high quality delivery – creating the conditions for others to thrive.
- Hold strategic and operational responsibility for budgets, ensuring strong financial planning, forecasting, cost control, compliance and value for money.

General duties and responsibilities of this role are:

- To be responsible for your own safety and that of other staff and any member of the public who may be affected by your acts and omissions at work.
- To participate in any training and development activities to maintain own development or to enhance competence within job role.
- To uphold and integrate our purpose and values in all that you do, observing and promoting Awen's four values at all times – Creative, Collaborative, Empowering and Fair.
- To ensure that activities are completed in accordance with Awen's commitment to equality, diversity and Inclusion and in line with best practice and legislation.
- To actively challenge discrimination and stigma in the workplace.
- To be responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk.
- To look after your own physical and psychological wellbeing wherever possible.
- To support the psychological and physical wellbeing of our colleagues/team and encourage an empathetic and inclusive culture.
- To be responsible in helping us achieve our sustainability ambition by contributing to reduce your individual carbon footprint and working towards the organisational objectives in line with the Awen sustainability strategy.
- To comply with Awen's policies and procedures.
- To be required to undertake other tasks/duties that are reasonably assigned to you and are within the capability and grade of this role.

This is not a complete statement of all duties and responsibilities comprising this post, which may have to be varied to meet the changing needs of the business.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Person:

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA ARE INDICATED AS (E)

- A values-driven leader who inspires confidence, collaboration and creativity. (E)
- Strong strategic thinker with the ability to translate vision into meaningful action. (E)
- Excellent interpersonal, influencing and communication skills, with the ability to inspire, motivate and build strong relationships as well as present at senior level. (E)
- Resilient, adaptable and able to negotiate complexity with sound judgement and fairness. (E)
- Possess integrity, personal credibility and gravitas which inspire commitment, enthusiasm, and confidence. (E)
- Positive approach to support colleagues and teams to achieve common aims and objectives. (E)
- Excellent team working ethics and able to work with colleagues at all levels of the business and challenge constructively. (E)
- Commitment to the values, aims and objectives of Awen Cultural Trust. (E)
- Passionate about the role of culture in community wellbeing and regeneration. (E)
- Demonstrates strong personal values, showing integrity, creativity, collaboration and respect, with a commitment to inclusion, diversity and creating a culture where people feel valued, heard and able to contribute. (E)

Qualifications, Skills, Abilities and Experience:

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA ARE INDICATED AS (E)

- Degree level qualification or equivalent experience, with a proven track record of leadership and delivery in culture, theatres, libraries, heritage, education or a related sector. (E)
- Significant leadership experience across cultural services such as theatres, libraries, arts, heritage or related fields. (E)
- Proven track record in strategic planning, service transformation and organisational improvement. (E)
- Demonstrate experience managing multi-site teams and delivering high-quality customer experiences. (E)
- Strong financial acumen, including budget setting, forecasting and cost management. (E)
- Demonstrable success in income generation, external funding, partnership development and stakeholder engagement. (E)
- Ability to analyse and use data to inform decisions, evaluate impact and support continuous improvement. (E)
- Experience in project management and leading complex programmes of work. (E)
- Understanding of compliance, safeguarding and risk management within cultural settings. (E)
- Strong understanding of cultural sector trends, challenges and opportunities – ideally in the context of South Wales. (E)
- Ability to motivate and inspire teams through periods of change. (E)
- Full driving licence and access to own car for work purposes. (E)
- Flexible approach to working hours, including occasional evenings and weekends for performances or community events. (E)
- Ability to communicate in Welsh would be highly desirable but an understanding and empathy of the role of the Welsh language in culture is essential.
- Understanding of charity sector governance.

WORKING AT AWEN

Our people are our success, and we believe in rewarding staff fairly for the role undertaken and providing a wide range of benefits to help all aspects of your life.

ANNUAL LEAVE

We know how important it is for our staff to take a break away from work and that is why we offer 30 days paid holiday , increasing to 35 days after 5 years' service (this is in addition to the eight days annual public holidays).

PENSION

We will match an employee contribution of 6% with an employer contribution of 6%.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

This role is likely to be a hybrid model of working, where your location choices could include any of our venues, working from home or any other suitable location. You will be required to attend on site meetings as part of your role.

HEALTH ASSURED

You will receive access to Health Assured, the UK's largest employee assistance programme, where you can access tools and support to lead a healthy and happy life.

OTHER BENEFITS

- Mileage paid at 45p per mile.
- Access to Awen Learn, a digital learning site with around 250 modules
- Salary sacrifice schemes
- Discounted membership across Halo Leisure facilities in Bridgend County Borough
- Free parking at Bryngarw Country Park, Brynmenyn
- Inspire Awards to recognise the commitment and dedication of our staff
- 20% discount at our cafes.
- 10% discount on purchases at B-Leaf and Wood-B.

HOW TO APPLY

If you would like to have an informal discussion with Richard Hughes, Chief Executive, before applying, please email richard.hughes@awen-wales.com to make arrangements.

APPLY ONLINE:

https://cezanneondemand.intervieweb.it/awen-wales/en/career

CLOSING DATE: Sunday 12 April 2026

INTERVIEWS: Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 April 2026

awen Ymddiriedolaeth Ddiwylliannol Cultural Trust

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Rhif cofrestru TAW / VAT registration number: 224 3341 44
Rhif gofrestredig / Company number: 09610991

Mae Ymddiriedolaeth Ddiwylliannol Awen wedi'i chofrestru yng Nghymru fel cwmni cyfyngedig drwy warant.
Awen Cultural Trust is registered in Wales as a company limited by guarantee.