

Bradford_ Arts Centre

Business Plan

2026 – 2031

v1.6

July 2026

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Photography:

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Pg 4 – Archive image of Founder Dr Geetha Upadhyaya. Source unknown.

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Introduction

This Business Plan follows the most transformational period in the company's 30+ year history.

2026 sees the organisation established in our reopened flagship arts centre, with a nationally growing reputation as a place of critical support for performing artists, particularly dancers and those working in Indian Classical performance artforms, and as a company that can successfully deliver major strategic funded projects.

We are seen as a safe investment and partner that can be trusted.

Over the next 5 years, we want to 'make everything feel more possible' by providing an inspiring home for creativity, ideas and outstanding dance and performance that reflects the way we live now, all housed inside Bradford's newly restored, historic old Post Office in the heart of the city.

Bradford Arts Centre is located in one of the most socio-economically deprived areas in the UK, but we are **dedicated to making the performing arts accessible to everyone**, with tickets available from £1 for most performances, and studio hire rates set to ensure they are affordable for our local communities and artists. Our audiences and participants are some of the most diverse in the country with around half every year identifying as something other than white British compared to an average of just 15% in England.

This Business Plan also sets out how we intend to maintain our leadership role in the cultural sector, benefiting companies other than ourselves. We are committed to playing a leading role in legacy delivery for Bradford's year as UK City of Culture.

Our building is one of very few funded arts spaces in the district and is a true cultural hub, home to nine other cultural organisations: NPO Dance United Yorkshire; Bradford Producing Hub; Bradford Cultural Voice Forum; BCB Radio; Our Associate Companies (Rhythmosaic Dance, Mobius Dance, Bradford South Asian Festival and Wrongsemble); and MOV Dance Theatre.

Having successfully completed fundraising and delivery of our capital project over the duration of the company's last Business Plan, for 2026-31 our focus shifts to establishing a viable, financially resilient business model for Bradford Arts Centre.

We want to bring people together under our roof to share cultural experiences. At a time when the role of AI is changing the way we live our lives and create art, we plan to remain a people-centred organisation. We are a safe space for performing artists to start, grow and maintain creative careers in uncertain times; a key space for businesses to meet; and a company who knows how to deliver impactful community engagement.

By delivering the Aims set out in this Business Plan, we will achieve our objectives whilst securing the income needed to continue to grow and thrive.



About Us

Bradford Arts Centre was founded in 1993 as **Kala Sangam** (from the Sanskrit – Kala meaning ‘Arts’ and Sangam meaning ‘meeting point’) by Dr Shripati Upadhyaya. Working alongside his wife, the company’s first Artistic Director Dr Geetha Upadhyaya, their dream was to establish a unique organisation that delivered high quality South Asian arts through innovative collaborations that were accessible to people of all ages and abilities. Having formed in Leeds, the company moved to Bradford in 1996. Through the support of Arts Council England, in 2007 the organisation purchased a permanent home in the beautiful Grade II listed St Peter’s House.

Since 2017 the company has built on these solid foundations to grow into a truly intercultural hub for performing arts – particularly dance – in Bradford district. Support for performance artists who come from and reflect Bradford’s diverse communities has increased significantly and now sits at the forefront of everything we do. Within this wider offer we have retained, and grown, our specialist support and programming in Indian Classical dance and wider South Asian heritage performance styles.

The company retains a strong connection with its Founders. In March 2026, Bradford Arts Centre held the sold-out UK Launch of **Kala Sangam Global**, with the two companies becoming International Partners, committed to co-programming and support. We are privileged to have Dr Geetha as Bradford Arts Centre’s Honorary Lifetime President.

Responding to the findings of an independent community consultation, in 2025 the company changed its name to Bradford Arts Centre to try and better reflect its current delivery and make the building more accessible and relevant to its local communities. Initial evaluation indicates that this has been a huge success – with record attendances for our Autumn 2026 season, including more visitors of South Asian heritage than ever before.

“The creative seed sown 30 years ago as Kala Sangam has, with the hard work of the team, grown into a massive oak tree as Bradford Arts Centre.”

Dr Geetha and Dr Shripati Upadhyaya, Founders of Kala Sangam

Our Values



Strategic Context

As we enter the period of this Business Plan, the cultural sector is facing uncertain times. The local and national political landscape is shifting; legacy plans for Bradford's year as UK City of Culture are unclear; and Arts Council England is undergoing changes, with a new NPO round on the horizon.

We believe the need for Bradford Arts Centre and our delivery is stronger than ever.

Bradford Arts Centre is situated in one of the most economically deprived wards in the city – 80% of the local population are least engaged with arts and culture. 66% of communities local to us identify as something other than White, with 59% of people living locally of South Asian heritage. Levels of violent crime in our area are more than double the national average, and average household income is just £29,000. The engagement we offer makes a real difference.

In 2025, Bradford experienced an incredible year as **UK City of Culture**, with Bradford Arts Centre's reopening acting as a milestone moment. The year demonstrated the district's capacity to deliver landmark cultural events and helped raise the profile of this organisation. However, the local cultural sector has emerged from the year in an uncertain position. Halfway through 2026, legacy plans for the year are unclear, key sector support organisations are at risk of closure (BPH), and many organisations and freelancers are facing challenges in continuing to operate and maintain careers. The aims set out in this Business Plan hope to address some of this need, ensuring that our local cultural sector thrives and grows and we remain relevant to the people that use our spaces.

Bradford Arts Centre is an **Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO)**. Following the publication of the Hodge Report in December 2025, key funder Arts Council England is reviewing its ways of working and released a new Strategic Framework in May 2026. Our delivery at Bradford Arts Centre continues to align well with the Arts Council's new priorities. We aim to be successful in securing an increase to our NPO funding through our application to the 2028+ NPO portfolio to cover increased core operational costs and enable us to deliver our ambitious targets for supporting local, diverse performance artists and dancers.

The company is a Regularly Funded Organisation (RFO) by **Bradford Council**. Support for culture within the Local Authority has been strong for the last decade, but the political makeup of the Local Authority changed significantly in May 2026 and the council faces difficult upcoming budget decisions. Culture remains a key pillar in BUILT DIFFERENT, but current RFO funding agreements run only to March 2027. We believe there is a strong case for continued support for Bradford Arts Centre in line with the priorities of ALL political parties. We will seek to establish positive relationships with the new Leader and Portfolio holder for Culture and make sure to highlight our impact on our local communities and communities across Bradford in those areas the new administration has identified as receiving less public funding over recent years.

Bradford— Arts Centre



The redeveloped Bradford Arts Centre

In October 2025, Bradford Arts Centre opened its doors to the world following a major 18-month, £7.6m capital redevelopment.

The project has transformed our building, removing barriers to access throughout and creating new spaces for artistic, community and corporate use. For the first time we have the available space to meet our ambitions for delivery, and room to grow further to meet local demand.

We exceeded the original targets of the project, creating: five new dance studios; a new ground floor state of the art 170 seat theatre; two new lifts; refurbished toilets throughout, including a Changing Places facility; a new meeting / conferencing space; a new main entrance, accessible entrance and foyer; and radio studios and offices for BCB Community Radio.

Our reopening season saw record attendance for a diverse programme that featured the World Premieres of six new pieces, all of which were created in the company's new dance studios. This included three Indian Classical dance works, LGBTQ+ contemporary dance, co-created performance with the Roma community, and an innovative theatre piece based on the experience of growing up in Bradford in the 1990's.

Corporate demand for our rooms has been strong since reopening, with previous bookers returning and new bookers being attracted to the building. Since reopening we have continued to invest in our corporate spaces, continuing to improve our conferencing offer. We now have the space, staff and capacity to host major events such as the launch of Bradford Council's new Economic Strategy 'BUILT DIFFERENT'.

As outlined elsewhere, whilst areas beyond our control are more uncertain, the redeveloped Bradford Arts Centre sees us entering the period of this Business Plan with the **potential and opportunity to significantly grow our business across all strands of delivery**. We have high quality spaces available – both artistic and non-artistic. It is now up to us to fill them with profitable activity. Following Counterculture's organisational review we have the right staffing structure in place, with roles filled by exceptionally skilled people, to deliver this.

Bradford Arts Centre is cited as a nationally significant example of how cultural capital investment can drive regeneration, and the company is now recognised by major funders as an organisation that can successfully deliver multi-million pound projects.

With an increase in scale, space and capacity, the new Bradford Arts Centre building presents an opportunity for the next five years to be the most exciting and significant in the company's 30+ year history.

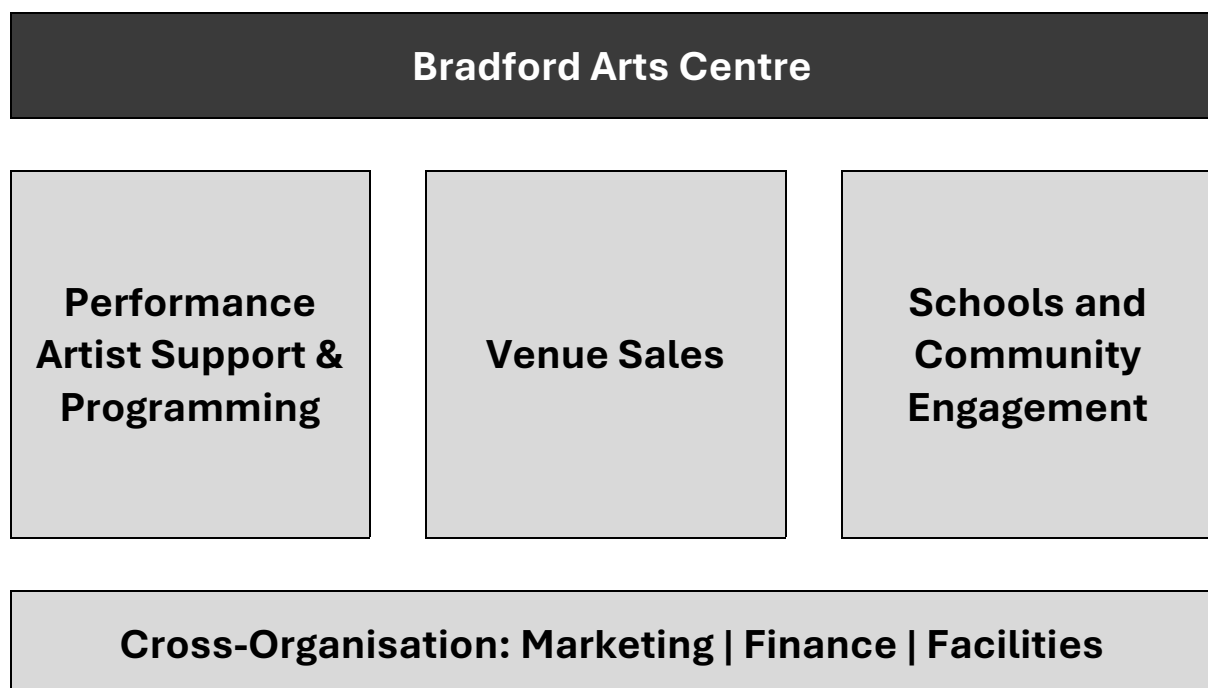
Bradford Arts Centre's Three Pillars

The process of delivering both the major capital redevelopment of the company's arts centre, and the rebranding from Kala Sangam to Bradford Arts Centre, presented an opportunity for the organisation to review, refine and clarify its core delivery.

This exercise has been supported by a number of strategic reviews/evaluations carried out by independent consultants – including a Brand Report by Out of Place (June 2023), a Structure and Leadership review by Counterculture (June 2025) and a full capital and revenue project evaluation by The Audience Agency (June 2026). It has also been informed by the company's experience of operating the redeveloped space since October 2025, and in response to sector need and legacy plans following Bradford 2025.

We will be specific about who we are and what we do, and clear about what we do NOT do (for instance visual arts). This clear focus will strengthen both our 2028 NPO application and our ability to play a leading role in legacy delivery following Bradford's year as UK City of Culture.

For this Business Plan, the company will focus on Three Pillars for its business, led by specific teams and each supported by our cross-organisation departments:



The company enters the 2026-31 period facing significantly increased costs – particularly in utilities/running costs and the financial impact of increases to National Minimum Wage and cost of living inflationary rises on payroll.

This Business Plan sets out the purpose for each Pillar and the company's aims for 2026-31, but the primary aim across the business is to grow and maximise income. **Each Pillar will cover its costs and contribute to core income, allowing us to rebuild company reserves post-capital and maintain and then grow staffing levels to match our ambition.**



Performance Artist Support and Programming

Building on the company's incredible 30 years of artistic delivery under the Kala Sangam name, Bradford Arts Centre has established itself as THE support organisation for performing artists in Bradford district, and those working nationally in Indian Classical dance.

Meeting the needs of Bradford's performance artists (particularly dancers) and artists working in Indian Classical dance, is the key driver for all our artistic delivery. Led by the CEO and Programme and Artist Development Manager, the arts centre has developed a national reputation as a place of critical support for performance artists who are reflective of Bradford's multicultural communities – particularly those working in dance.

The staff team are supported by a diverse Artist Advisory Group which meets three times a year to share best practice and have oversight of artistic delivery.

With the introduction of our Programming Strands, attendances at our performances have risen by more than 70% over the last decade. Bradford Arts Centre remains **the only regular touring venue for Indian Classical dance in the North of England**.

This strand of the business is funded through Arts Council NPO (£386,049 p.a. – confirmed until March 2028) and CBMDC RFO (£30,000 p.a. – confirmed until March 2027).

Programming Strands

In 2018, the company established three Programming Strands aimed at increasing its relevance to Bradford's communities and cultural sector. All artistic work we support – from performance artists beginning their careers with our support, to work programmed in our theatre – should align with at least one of these strands:

This Is Bradford

Putting Bradford Arts Centre at the heart of arts delivery in the city, we offer rehearsal space, development support and performance opportunities to local artists and companies. We also bring work to Bradford which addresses societal issues for the city or is relevant to one of its many communities.

South Asia Now

We programme work by South Asian artists/organisations or that showcases art forms from South Asia. A priority is placed on presenting work which develops the art form and/or is created by British people of South Asian heritage.

British Diversity

To ensure we are at the forefront of what it means to live in modern Britain, we support the creation of work which looks at cultural heritage in the context of modern Britain. This strand also covers work that fuses together different artforms, styles and cultures.

Performance Artist Support and Programming Aims for 2026-31

Bradford Arts Centre will **remain THE support organisation for performing artists in Bradford district**, providing accessible studio space for the creation of new work at affordable rates, performance opportunities in our theatre space and tailored development support for artists. Honouring the company's founding as Kala Sangam, central to our delivery will be **support for South Asian heritage performance artists, with a particular focus on those working in Indian Classical dance**.

We will **enable excellence, supporting local and national (where relevant) performing artists to create outstanding work**. We will support people to create work that is authentic to them – whether that be tried and tested, or performances that look to the future. We will continue to ensure our support engages with artists across Bradford district, especially those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The support we provide will **enable the artists we work with to sustain financially viable careers**.

Alongside studio space and organisational development support, we will **continue to offer commissioning that grows opportunities for South Asian dance artists** including the Kala Sangam Commission (bi-annual commission for a performance artist working in Indian Classical artform), the SAMANATA Commission (annual commission for South Asian LGBTQ+ artist in partnership with Jaivant Patel Company and South East Dance) and a Bradford Arts Centre Choreodrome commission (in partnership with The Place).

We will be **the strategic lead for the development of dance in Bradford**. Working with partners including CBMDC and Bradford Culture Company, we will **play a leading role in delivering a successful legacy for Bradford's year as UK City of Culture**, ensuring legacy delivery helps increase Bradford Arts Centre's financial resilience. Where needed, we will step in with expertise, support and delivery to ensure Bradford's cultural ecology continues to thrive.

We will **present two programmes of performances in our theatre each year**. Dance will be the most programmed artform and we will ensure each of our Programming Strands are well represented every season. By delivering a diverse programme, we aim to **ensure all Bradford's communities see themselves reflected in at least one of the performances we put on each year**.

We will remain **dedicated to making our performances accessible** to Bradford's communities, **maintaining affordable ticketing**. Our audiences will continue to be amongst the most diverse in the UK, with around **half our audience each year identifying as something other than White British**.

Our Board of Trustees and Artist Advisory Group will continue to have oversight of all artistic activity to **ensure relevance, best practice and that a range of diverse voices are included in artistic decision making**.

Recognising the challenging funding climate we are faced with, we will **maximise income from artistic activity, whilst continuing to ensure our offer is fair and affordable to our local performance artists**. We will secure standstill NPO funding for 2028-31 at minimum, with an ambition to increase the level of ACE investment we receive to better reflect the operational demands of the redeveloped Bradford Arts Centre.



Venue Hires

Whilst our artist support, performance programme, schools engagement and work with communities is the company's charitable purpose, visitors to Bradford Arts Centre each year are actually most likely to be visiting for non-cultural activity. These income streams are vital, providing a strong financial platform for the organisation to deliver its charitable aims.

The redevelopment of Bradford Arts Centre transformed our ability to host non-cultural activity – turning our beautiful, heritage building into an inspiring, welcoming and inclusive place for businesses to host conferences, meetings, training days or corporate events. We can now offer an increased range of spaces at prices that are competitive but also good value for bookers.

Ahead of reopening, Bradford Arts Centre's Board of Trustees appointed Counterculture – cultural sector consultancy specialists – to review and advise on the company's staffing structure to ensure the organisation had the capacity to successfully operate and grow revenue streams at Bradford Arts Centre.

This work resulted in the reorganisation of the venue management side of the business, led by a new Head of Operations position. Although this structure has been in place for less than nine months, its positive impact has already been felt. This has been further strengthened by the appointment of a new, ambitious Venue Sales Manager in March 2026, following the previous postholders retirement. We enter this Business Plan period well placed to maximise and grow non-cultural income.

Alongside venue hires, Bradford Arts Centre is home to a number of tenant organisations who provide regular income and help contribute to our aim for the building to be a vibrant, cultural hub. There remains office capacity at Bradford Arts Centre, which presents an opportunity to increase income – in this area, we retain our aim to only house companies which work in either the cultural or charitable sectors.

With completion of kitchen refurbishment works due for Summer 2026, we anticipate a further key tenant will be in place by Autumn 2026, with a preferred operator already appointed for our Third Floor café space.

Key Tenants

BCB

BCB (Bradford Community Broadcasting) is Bradford's community radio station which uses engagement with Radio as a tool for personal development, community empowerment and social change. The company moved into a bespoke office/studios suite in January 2026 that was built for them as part of the redevelopment.

Dance United Yorkshire

Resident at Kala Sangam / Bradford Arts Centre for over a decade. An Arts Council NPO, DUY positively changes the lives of marginalised and hard-to-reach people through high-quality dance training and performance.

Venue Sales Aims for 2026-31

Bradford Arts Centre will become THE space in Bradford for corporate meetings, training and small/medium scale Conferences. Historic venue hires pre-redevelopment were largely targeted at – and dependent on – the Local Authority and Third Sector. We will maintain this activity where possible in a landscape of reducing budgets and **grow our hires within more corporate sectors.** Where needed, we will work with partners like Bradford Cathedral to upscale our delivery and service bookings that we wouldn't be able to on our own.

We will complete the refurbishment of the building's commercial kitchen in Summer 2026 and then have an operator in place, opening to the public in Autumn 2026. We will work with the operator to **make sure our café is a successful, viable business, drawing footfall into Bradford Arts Centre and servicing our conferencing need with high quality food and drink.**

We will be a respected landlord, offering tenants a service that ensures they want to stay at Bradford Arts Centre. We will maximise occupancy, finding new tenants from the cultural or charitable sector to **fill available office space and maximise income.** We will look to support our Associate Companies and BPH to increase their income streams, and therefore the financial contribution they can make to Bradford Arts Centre.

Led by the Venue Sales Manager, we will **expand our hire offer, further increasing revenue streams.** This may include widening our offer to businesses – for instance to include Corporate CPD. We will identify new potential hire areas (such as weddings) and implement them where commercially viable.

By integrating the Marketing Department into the operational management side of the business, we will **increase the reach and visibility of our venue hire offer,** developing effective marketing strategies to secure increased commercial hires. We will test new methods of marketing, evaluating and developing new strategies dependent on results. These will be set out in a Marketing & Audience Development Plan that responds to this Business Plan.

We will continue to **embed the new staffing structure and team members into their roles,** using the January 2027 annual appraisals as a moment to reflect and make further changes if required. We will ensure that Bradford Arts Centre is seen as a professional environment, with all facilities staff trained and supported to **offer excellent service.** As new ways of working are embedded, we will review our operational systems, putting new ones in place if required to further grow income or improve quality of experience for bookers and visitors.

We will **continue to maintain and invest in our building to ensure we are presenting the very best environment for all users.** To begin this, we will ensure that the 12-month snagging completion process (September 2026) is completed to our satisfaction and to a high standard of finish.

We will **develop effective ways to increase data collection from business attendees to try and accurately capture demographics for all building users.** Alongside this, we will develop further ways to **funnel business attendees into our cultural offer** – particularly as audience members.



Schools and Community Engagement

Bradford Arts Centre enters this Business Plan period having just delivered the company's most significant and successful community engagement project in its history.

Led by the Head of Community Engagement, £400k of revenue funding associated with Bradford Arts Centre's capital redevelopment enabled the organisation to deliver a 2-year, cross-district programme of heritage-focussed community engagement, leading and managing a consortium of 4 arts organisations, employing 5 project-funded staff and reaching thousands of people. The project gave communities across Bradford a strong voice in shaping the cultural offer at Bradford Arts Centre – their creative work can be seen on our walls throughout the newly redeveloped building.

Our work with Bradford's schools continues to increase year-on-year. Our annual Schools Takeover sees us engage over 700 Key Stage 2 children from Barkerend and Bradford Moor in a range of arts activities. These two districts have some of the lowest educational attainment in the country – only half of residents in both wards have 5 or more GCSEs. As the only annual engagement with funded arts and cultural activity these children experience, this activity is critical to securing their creative and cultural lives. It provides a unique opportunity for them to develop their creative interests and experience culture as part of everyday life.

Our Head of Community Engagement and Education and Outreach Officer continue to contribute to and help steer strategic legacy planning for CYP delivery post-Bradford 2025, playing a leading role on Bradford's Local Cultural Education Partnership (BCEP).

As part of our programme of community engagement, we host a range of public classes at Bradford Arts Centre in a diverse variety of performance artforms including Kathak, Dhol drumming, Bollywood and Contemporary Jazz.

Our two-year Arts & Heritage Project clearly demonstrated that Bradford Arts Centre has the skills, experience and trusted relationships to deliver projects of significant scale, reach and impact. Funding for this project came to an end in March 2026.

Bradford Arts Centre was redeveloped to be relevant and accessible to all our local communities, but the reality is that most people living locally to our arts centre have little disposable income, and our local schools face extreme budget pressures.

At the point of implementing this Business Plan, the company finds itself in a position where all activity under this Pillar is currently loss-making. To protect this essential activity, the central priority for our Aims under this Pillar is to address this to enable us to continue to deliver this critical work.

Schools and Community Engagement Aims for 2026-31

Having seen the positive impact made by embedding ourselves within our local, diverse communities over the last two years, and the incredible feedback we get from participants in our schools activity, we will **secure funding and earned income to match our ambitions for this Pillar, covering core staffing costs in the process.**

Specifically, we will:

- **Successfully fundraise to deliver multi-year community engagement projects** of a scale similar to our 2024-26 Arts & Heritage Project. To support the stability of this area of work, we will also aim to **secure Trust & Foundation funding to specifically cover the core staffing costs for roles that deliver this work.** We aim to deliver activity both within Bradford Arts Centre and offsite within communities.
- **Increase the level of financial contribution by the schools involved in our Annual Schools Takeover** and explore partnership working to deliver this activity to **reduce costs**, with the aim to make this key annual delivery at minimum break-even.
- **Develop a Classes strategy in 2026-27 with clear SMART targets to return a profit** (including covering associated costs such as staffing, PRS etc) within the duration of this Business Plan.

We will **design a programme of activity that is accessible to our local communities but maximises income.** Where Grant-funded activity allows us to offer activity that is 'free' to access, this will only be delivered away from Bradford Arts Centre within community settings to comply with HMRC rules following our redevelopment. At Bradford Arts Centre, we will ensure that all activity provides income to the company (primarily either by charging room hire or participants directly), but that price points are set at a level to be affordable to our local communities.

To ensure our delivery under this Pillar aligns with Bradford Arts Centre's clear 2026-31 artistic focus, we will **review our delivery under this Pillar to ensure our offer prioritises performance artforms.**

We will **embed talent development pathways into our ways of working** with schools and communities, helping to identify new, diverse talent, and supporting people into careers and further study of the performing arts.

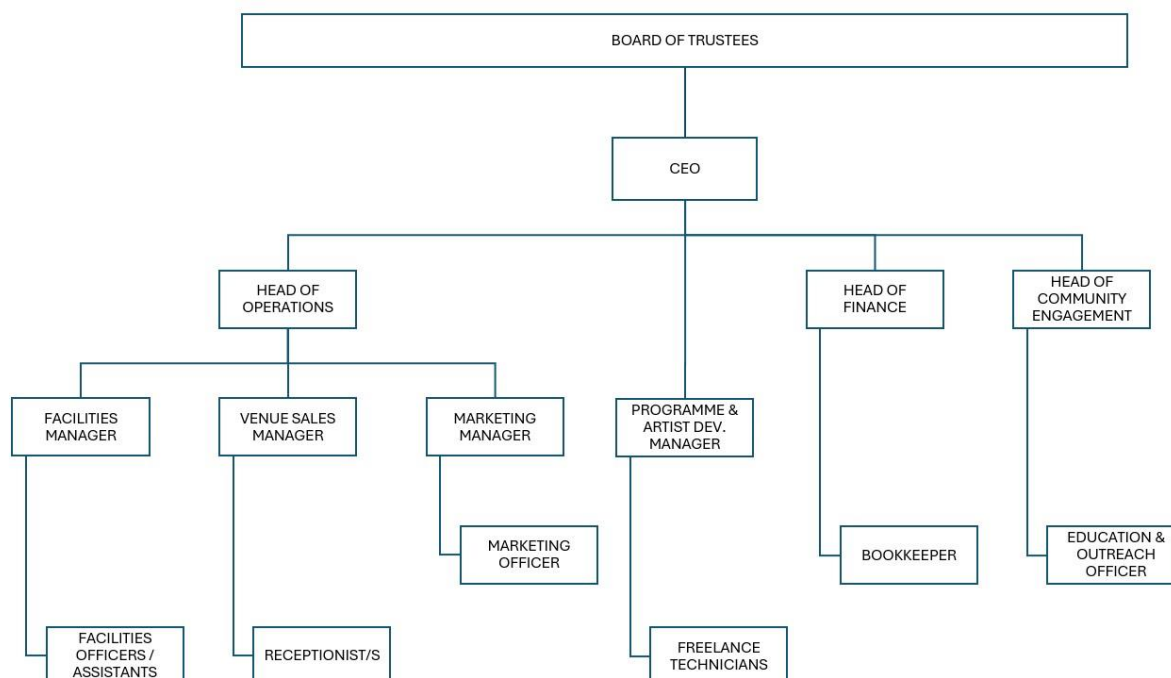
We will **play a leading role in the strategic development of work with children and young people in Bradford district**, supporting and delivering legacy activity following Bradford 2025, and helping to ensure BCEP functions effectively.

As we are successful with fundraising, we will **sustainably grow our staff team to maximise our impact under this Pillar.** We anticipate that any additional staff taken on during the duration of this Business Plan will be fixed-term project funded contracts.



Our People

2026 Company Organigram



Staff

At the heart of Bradford Arts Centre is a dedicated, hardworking staff team led by the CEO.

Following a review by Counterculture in 2025, the company's staff team was strengthened with the creation of two additional Management Team posts (Head of Operations and Marketing Manager), the separation of our Marketing and Programming functions (creating a Programme & Artist Development Manager post), and a permanent Receptionist role. Fixed-term staff funded through the two-year Arts & Heritage project finished their contracts in March 26. This model of working / employment worked exceptionally well for the company, and we aim to repeat this to increase our capacity within both the Artistic and Outreach teams as funding allows.

The company has worked hard to make sure our workforce reflects the make-up of Bradford and the UK. Our Management Team alone includes people of Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu and no faith; people of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian heritage; staff from non-traditional arts backgrounds; LGBTQ+ representation; staff who are neurodiverse; and a staff member who has a disability.

Staff wages are benchmarked against Future Arts Centre's Salary Benchmarking, which annually collates data from 70+ arts centres across England.

Staff are supported with a comprehensive CPD programme. Alongside training, ALL staff are encouraged and supported to go and see artistic activity and performances at other venues, to increase their artform knowledge and help benchmark our delivery against competitors.

Board of Trustees

The company is led by an engaged, committed Board of Trustees.

Since 2018, following best practice guidelines, a Model Board structure was put in place with distinct roles based on areas of expertise and experience relevant to Bradford Arts Centre's delivery.

The company has had a relatively stable Board membership since 2018, but in 2025/26 several Trustees stepped down for personal reasons or as they reached the end of their term.

With two Board members in their final cycle as Trustees, a priority for the duration of this Business Plan period is to deliver a managed turnover of our Board. A Board skillset audit and review of our Model Board positions will be conducted in October 2026, to ensure we are recruiting Trustees with the appropriate skillsets to oversee future delivery.

A recruitment round has already taken place in 2026, overseen by new Chair, Deepak Sharma, who has been in post since January 2026. Two Trustee appointments were made at July 2026's Q1 Board meeting.

In 2022, the company's Board became South Asian-led for the first time since 2006 and has remained so until the present day. To ensure our Governance reflects the make-up of the country we live in, throughout the recruitment process we will maintain the diversity of our Board, ensuring it continues to reflect our local communities. Whilst appointing people with the necessary skillsets we aim to ensure our Board remains South Asian-led for the duration of this Business Plan.

The organisation's Board of Trustees meets, at minimum, on a quarterly basis. The Board's Terms of Reference were updated in 2023.

As of July 2026, the composition of Bradford Arts Centre's Model Board is:

Chair	Deepak Sharma
Finance (Treasurer)	<i>Position Vacant</i>
Business Management	Debbani Ghosh
Artistic (Indian Classical)	Rashmi Sudhir
Artistic	James Wilson
Schools and Education	Tanja Tolar
Community Engagement	Dr Sufyan Abid Dogra
HR	<i>Position Vacant</i>
Marketing	<i>Position Vacant</i>
Legal	<i>Position Vacant</i>

Finance

Alongside the company's last decade of growth and transformation, the organisation's financial performance has been strong. Between 2019/20 and 2024/25, the company posted a modest surplus outturn each year. It is anticipated that 2025/26 will show a deficit, with the Trustees designating £54,000 of reserves in 2024 to enable the completion of capital works.

The company operates with robust financial systems and controls, with a dedicated two-person finance team. Strict payment control is maintained, with sign off on all payments required by budget holders and co-signatory mandates for all banking processes.

Forward budgets and quarterly Management Accounts are presented to the Board for review and sign-off. To ensure further financial robustness, **a priority for 2026/27 is the appointment of a Chartered Accountant as Treasurer to Bradford Arts Centre's Board**, following the resignation of the previous postholder in 2025 in line with the end of their term. Annual accounts are independently prepared and audited by KJA Chartered Accountants (following Charity Commission SORP).

The charity is confident moving into 2026-31, with a clear focus and achievable Aims, but there are uncertainties and pressures which may impact budgets.

With less than 12 months operating Bradford Arts Centre, the full increase of operational costs of the building is still estimated – particularly utilities costs, which are due for renegotiation in 2027 within a market that continues to fluctuate wildly. Increases to National Minimum Wage have also placed pressures on our staffing costs, squeezing our pay bands – although staff pay remains closely aligned with Future Arts Centre benchmarking.

2026/27 sees us entering the last year of our current funding agreement with CBMDC, and a reapplication is also due for Arts Council NPO funding from 2028 before the end of the 2026. We are confident that Bradford Arts Centre's delivery continues to meet the aims of both funders and future budgets assume receiving at least standstill funding from 2028.

Our financial target for 2026-31 is to maintain an operating budget close to break-even or with modest surplus each year within this period. As set out under each of our 3 Pillars, we have plans in place to increase income across all streams of the business to enable us to achieve this.

We remain **committed to Fair Pay for artists and practitioners**, following recommended Equity rates. We ensure we pay all freelancers promptly, well within payment terms. Our payroll is fully outsourced to Bradford Community Payroll (including NEST Pension enrolment), who ensure our compliance with current legislation.

The company's Reserves Policy set an aspirational target level of Unrestricted Reserves as the amount that would cover a minimum of six months estimated operational and responsible closure costs of Bradford Arts Centre. As of April 2026, this **target level for unrestricted reserves was set at £535k**. The budgets that accompany this Business Plan aim for the Company to maintain its free reserves at current levels (c.£180k)

