



VAST Chief Executive Recruitment Pack

VAST Services (1920)

March 2026





Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive at VAST. This is a crucial appointment for the charity and comes at an exciting time of change and development across all sectors, both locally and nationally. Our organisation has strong foundations, a sound financial base, effective governance, strong partnerships and an excellent team committed to supporting continued growth.

We already have a clearly articulated strategy to support the VCSE sector in Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire, and this is an exciting opportunity for the right person to lead the next phase of VAST's development.

If you feel like you have the vision, values and drive to take the organisation to the next stage of its development, we would be delighted to hear from you.

About VAST

VAST (VAST Services (1920)) is the recognised Local Infrastructure Organisation for Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire. Through the four functions of local infrastructure, we support, inform, connect, and advocate for Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations to improve the quality of life for local residents.



Purpose, Role, Mission and Values

Our Purpose

The objects for which the charity is established are to promote any charitable



purposes for the benefit of the community within Staffordshire and the West Midlands, with particular reference to Stoke-on-Trent. These are the prevention or relief of poverty, the advancement of education, heritage and health, and citizenship or community development.

In furtherance of the purposes below, but not further or otherwise, the Charity may:

- Promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the objects and to that end to bring together Council representatives of the statutory authorities and voluntary organisations engaged in the furtherance of the above.
- Assist any body or bodies financially or otherwise.
- Obtain, collect and receive monies and funds by way of contributions, donations, affiliation fees, subscriptions, legacies, grants and other lawful methods, and accept or receive gifts of property of any description (whether subject to any special trusts or not).
- Procure and provide information.



- Procure to be written and print, publish, issue and circulate gratuitously or otherwise any reports or periodicals, books, pamphlets, leaflets or any other documents.
- Arrange and provide for or join in arranging and providing for the holding of exhibitions, meetings, lectures and classes.
- Promote, encourage or undertake experimental work.
- Operate a museum and heritage centre.

Our Role

VAST is a Local Infrastructure Organisation that specialises in providing a range of support functions to the VCSE in Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire. enabling them to deliver high quality services that benefit local communities.

VAST also promotes the VCSE sector and advocates on their behalf at a strategic level with a wide range of key stakeholders and encourages and facilitates partnerships and collaboration.

Our Mission

Develop a vibrant and thriving VCSE sector to improve the quality of life of local residents.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission guidance on Public Benefit when planning the activities of the charity.



Our Aims

1. **Support** through capacity building support and volunteer brokerage services.
2. **Inform** through capacity building support.
3. **Connect** by facilitating partnerships and collaboration.
4. **Advocate** by providing leadership and advocacy services.

Our Values

- Authentic
- Proactive
- Innovative
- Responsive

All delivered with integrity and underpinned by these behaviours...



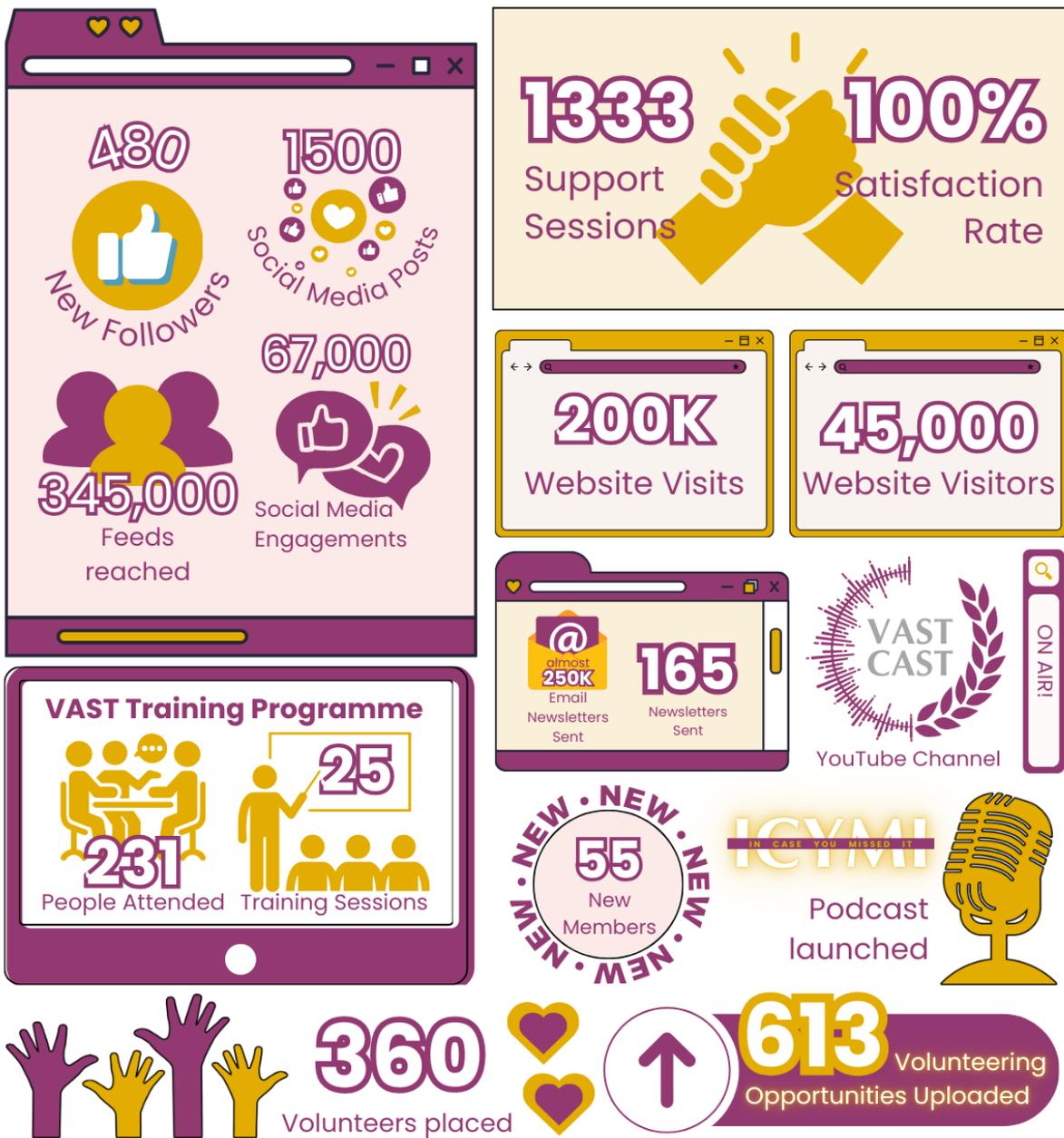
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Achievements & Performance (2024/25)





Key Objectives from our Strategic Plan

1. To be the recognised voice of the VCSE sector in our chosen geography.
2. To be a first-choice provider of services, and a centre for innovation to the VCSE Sector.
3. To have adequate resources to sustain and grow both our organisation and the local VCSE sector.

The lasting impact of the cost-of-living crisis following so closely behind the pandemic means that there is still less appetite for the purchase of non-essential services and budgets are being tightly managed even for essential services.

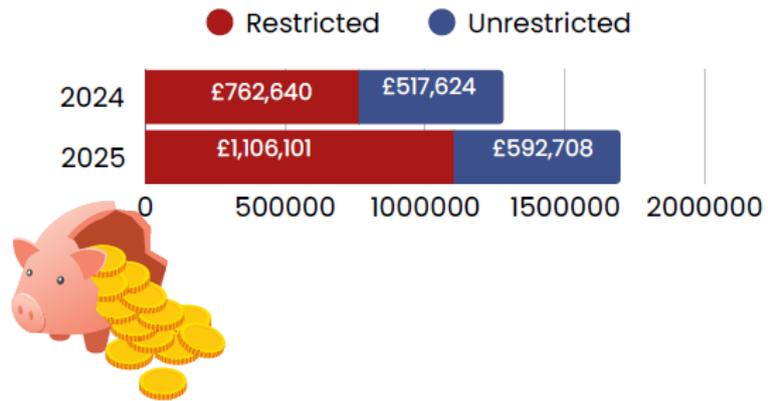


Financial Snapshot (Year Ended 31 March 2025)

Income: £1,727,896
 (2024: £1,289,088)



Expenditure: £1,698,809
 (2024: £1,279,904)





Governance and Structure

VAST is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

A Board of Trustees meets quarterly and oversees Finance and General Purposes, Remuneration, Board Recruitment and Risk sub-committees.

Day-to-day management is delegated to the Chief Executive, supported by the senior management team.

Our registered address: The Dudson Centre, Hope Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 5DD.

Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

VAST is committed to ensuring that our recruitment processes are accessible to everyone. If you require any reasonable adjustments at any stage of the application or interview process, please tell us and we will make every effort to accommodate your needs.

How to Apply

Please apply by sending a CV and a personal statement explaining why you meet the criteria and are the right fit for the role (maximum 2–3 pages) to jobs@vast.org.uk.

Closing date: Monday 6th April 2026 (midnight)



Further information: informal enquiries can be directed to the current Chief Executive, Lisa Healings on 01782 683030 or by emailing lisa.healings@vast.org.uk.

Equity, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EEDI) and Equal Opportunities Statement

VAST is committed to fostering a workplace culture where equity, equality, diversity and inclusion are central to everything we do. We believe that our strength comes from the diversity of our people, partners and communities, and we are dedicated to creating an environment where everyone feels valued, respected and able to thrive.

We recognise that people have different experiences, needs and barriers, and we are committed to advancing equity by providing the support, adjustments and opportunities individuals require to participate fully. We also promote equality of opportunity by ensuring that no applicant, employee or volunteer is treated less favourably based on any protected characteristic.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, VAST is committed to ensuring that all stages of our employment practices – including recruitment, selection, development and progression – are free from unlawful discrimination. We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and lived experiences, including those who are underrepresented in leadership roles across the voluntary and community sector.

We are dedicated to removing barriers, designing inclusive processes, and continually improving our practices to reduce the impact of bias and support fair outcomes for all. This includes welcoming requests for reasonable adjustments during the application and interview process,



enabling candidates to demonstrate their skills and strengths on an equitable basis.

At VAST, everyone is welcome. We celebrate difference, champion inclusion and work to ensure that all individuals feel a genuine sense of belonging as part of our organisation.



Job Description

Chief Executive

Job Title	Chief Executive
Salary	£55,000 - £70,000 per annum
Hours	37 hours per week (Full Time)
Benefits	5% Pension Contribution, 22 days annual holiday + 3 concessionary days & bank holidays (pro-rata for part-time staff)
Location	The Dudson Centre, Stoke-on-Trent
Special Conditions	Ability to travel in and around Stoke-on-Trent, with occasional weekend/evening work.
Responsible to	The Board of Trustees

Job Summary

The Chief Executive will provide the professional, strategic and leadership expertise required to direct and manage VAST, ensuring the organisation achieves its strategic aims and objectives. The postholder will lead the organisation's staff and volunteers and ensure that the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector in Stoke-on-Trent can contribute fully to strategic planning, regeneration, inclusion and the wellbeing of local people.



The Role

The role encompasses strategic leadership across the Four Functions of Infrastructure:

Leadership & Advocacy

Providing the means to gather the thoughts, needs, and experiences of the sector and local communities, bringing them to the attention of policy and decision makers; influencing conversations at a strategic level; representing and advocating for local VCSE sector organisations, diverse groups, and marginalised or hard to hear communities.

Partnership & Collaboration

Creating accessible and inclusive opportunities by driving effective collaborative working through the building of networks and partnerships between local organisations and strategic partners.

Capacity Building

Promoting and supporting the development of a resilient and diverse VCSE sector.

Volunteering

Establishing tailored volunteering support services to VCSE sector groups and individuals, encouraging and nurturing high-quality, accessible, and inclusive volunteering opportunities.



Role and Responsibilities

Leadership

Provide strategic leadership on behalf of VAST and the wider VCSE sector.

Engage with key partners to increase sector impact and influence.

Lead the development and delivery of the organisation's long-term strategy in partnership with the Board.

Identify emerging trends, opportunities and challenges and position VAST to respond effectively.

Promote innovation, best practice and continuous improvement across all activities.

Collaborate with partner agencies and local VCSE organisations to coordinate services, identify gaps and address unmet needs.

Promote good practice within VAST as a model for other VCSE organisations.

Lead the Leadership Team to ensure effective planning, delivery and evaluation of VAST's services and programmes.

Governance & Compliance

- Ensure full compliance with all legislation, regulatory requirements (including charity and company law), contracts and funding conditions.
- Provide the Board with timely, accurate information to support effective governance and decision-making.
- Maintain strong internal controls and risk-management systems.
- Ensure robust policies, systems and processes are in place for human resources, safeguarding, data protection, quality assurance and health & safety.

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People Leadership

- Recruit, develop and retain a talented and motivated workforce.
- Provide inspirational leadership, coaching and support to staff and volunteers.
- Promote a culture of wellbeing, inclusion, and respect in line with VAST's principles around equity, equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Promote a high-performance, values-driven culture, centred on learning, collaboration and impact.

Financial Leadership

- Oversee VAST's long-term financial strategy to ensure sustainability and resilience.
- Lead budgeting, financial planning and resource allocation in partnership with the Finance & Business Operations Director and Treasurer.
- Develop and maintain a diversified income base through grants, contracts, trading and partnerships.
- Build and sustain partnerships that support financial sustainability.
- Ensure appropriate financial systems are in place that meet charitable, legal and funder requirements.
- Ensure the organisation has appropriate resources (human, financial and technical) to deliver strategic and business plans.

Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy

- Act as the primary ambassador for VAST, building strong relationships with statutory partners, funders, community leaders and VCSE organisations.
- Lead the organisation's influencing and policy agenda.
- Strengthen strategic partnerships and multi-agency collaboration locally and regionally.
- Ensure that VCSE sector views and concerns are represented to statutory and commercial organisations.
- Promote the value and achievements of the VCSE sector.

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- Oversee consistent, high-quality communications that enhance VAST's reputation and visibility.
- Represent the organisation and VCSE sector at key forums, boards, partnerships and networks.

Service Development & Sector Support

- Ensure the delivery of high-quality capacity-building, training, volunteering support and advisory services.
- Champion sector development through diversity, inclusion, skills growth, innovation and collective action.
- Evaluate and report on project impact, using insights to inform future service planning.
- Develop and implement an organisational strategy that supports the long-term sustainability of VAST.

General Requirements

- Work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders.
- Actively participate in regular supervision sessions and team meetings.
- Engage in personal training and development to fulfil the professional requirements of the role.
- Maintain a collaborative and flexible approach to work.
- Able to travel locally across the area. Access to a vehicle is highly desirable.
- stay up to date on the latest legislative and governance requirements.

Notes: All jobs are subject to change from time to time and this job description will be reviewed regularly. The job description is a guide to the work that you will be required to undertake and represents a range of responsibilities in line with the grade for the post. This post is subject to a 6-month probationary period.



Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	A good standard of education.	Management qualification or willingness to work towards (e.g. ILM, CMI, MBA)
Experience	<p>Senior leadership experience.</p> <p>Proven track record of strategic planning, organisational leadership and managing change.</p> <p>Experience in partnership development, stakeholder engagement and representing an organisation at a senior level.</p> <p>A good understanding of financial management and the ability to understand and analyse financial reports.</p>	<p>Marketing and income generation.</p> <p>Understanding of local government, health systems and place-based partnership structures (e.g., Integrated Care Systems).</p>

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	<p>Income generation and funding applications.</p> <p>Experience in the VCSE sector.</p> <p>Knowledge of charity governance, funding environments and commissioning landscapes.</p>	
Skills	<p>Visionary leadership with the ability to inspire confidence and motivate teams.</p> <p>Strong communication, influencing and negotiation skills.</p> <p>Commitment to equity, equality, diversity and inclusion and community empowerment.</p> <p>Ability to operate effectively with a Board of Trustees.</p>	<p>Experience leading digital transformation or innovation initiatives.</p>



	<p>Strategic thinker with practical delivery capability.</p> <p>High levels of integrity, resilience and adaptability.</p>	
Knowledge	<p>Charity governance.</p> <p>An understanding of the current VCSE sector landscape in Stoke-on-Trent and the challenges the sector faces.</p>	
Personal Qualities	<p>Values-driven & mission focussed.</p> <p>Strategic system thinker.</p> <p>Authentic & inclusive leadership.</p> <p>Collaborative relationship builder.</p> <p>Influential & credible communicator.</p> <p>Adaptable & resilient.</p> <p>Confident decision maker.</p> <p>Calm under pressure.</p>	