



Role Profile

Aardman Managing Director

Aardman is an employee owned company.

This structure ensures the legacy of the company can continue into the future using the imagination and skills of its Partners unhindered by the need to satisfy the desires of external shareholders.

The Aardman founders, Peter Lord and David Sproxton, have stepped-back from majority ownership and from day to day leadership of the studio. The role of Managing Director will succeed David with Peter staying on as Creative Director in the medium term.

Job Purpose:

To sustain and further develop the Aardman legacy of excellence.

Working with the Board of Directors and reporting into the Aardman Employee Trust Board, this role leads the business of Aardman setting strategy, considering new business opportunities, supporting commercial negotiations and ensuring the company delivers profits and builds value in the medium and long term.

Balancing the creative/commercial equation for success is a critical part of the role alongside ensuring the company has the right skills at the right time to deliver its objectives.

The role will adhere to the Legacy and Guiding Principles documents, embedding the values expressed in those documents throughout the company, always ensuring that decisions are made for the benefit of the partners.

To actively, visibly and inclusively engage at all levels with all stakeholders and constituencies within Aardman; to communicate strategy, financial performance, and other critical issues to generate transparency, trust and buy-in with all Partners. To ensure partner well-being is embedded into company culture.

The role will also provide leadership, line management, mentoring and guidance to the Executive Directors to ensure they are equipped to take the group business forward.

Duties & Responsibilities:

- To develop and manage strategic, commercial, creative and operational plans to ensure a sustainable and profitable business as agreed with the Aardman Employee Trust.
- To ensure that the operating objectives and standards of performance are not only understood but owned by the Board Directors and Partners.
- To undertake group business reviews.
- To provide leadership and to ensure that the management structure of the Company is fit for purpose.
- Working with the Finance Director, to closely monitor the operating and financial results against plans and budgets and to take remedial action where necessary and inform the Trustees and Board of significant changes.
- To represent the company at the highest level – both internally and externally – and to support the company's strategic alliances and partnerships.
- To assume full accountability to the Aardman Employee Trust Board for all company operations.
- To maintain regular dialogue with the Board Directors, Partner Representative Group and Aardman Employee Trust Board.

- To provide day to day guidance, line management and support to Board Directors to enable them to achieve business objectives.
- To take an active role in working with the Partner Representative Group, attending all meetings and ensuring a deputy attends when not available. To actively listen to the views of the Partners and to fully engage with them and the Board of Directors in the sharing of appropriate Company information and joint problem solving.

Board Responsibilities:

- To lead the Board of Directors, in achieving the agreed company objectives.
 - To foster good relations amongst Executive Board members and all Partners.
 - To formulate and propose to the Trustee Board for approval a corporate strategy of profitability and sustainability for the company.
 - To monitor the implementation of the group corporate strategy.
 - To be accountable for the overall performance of the company's businesses.
 - To schedule, set agendas and conduct Executive Board meetings effectively, as a legally constituted board.
 - To ensure relevant information is provided to both the Trustee and Executive Boards which is accurate, timely and clear – particularly in relation to company performance in order that sound decisions can be made.
 - To monitor issues effectively and provide appropriate advice and guidance.
 - To direct discussions towards a consensus view and sum up discussions for a complete understanding of what has been agreed, as the board leader and as a joint and several director of the company.
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Responsible to: Trustee Board

Person Specification:

Essential requirements:

- A 'first amongst equals' stance: ethical, engaging and egalitarian with an inclusive and visible style ('not just open-door, more walk the floor').
- Currency and credibility i.e. comprehensive experience in the film/ media /content industry gained at senior management level, with demonstrable track record of contributing to the wider challenges of the business.
- Understanding the landscape i.e. knowledge of key players in the film / media/ content industry (UK & worldwide) with good contacts to consider enhanced/alternative revenue streams.
- A proven ability to marry creative and commerce for success, with a solid understanding of the value of high quality creative work -commercially strong, but creatively empathetic.
- Relationship and communications expert – used to working collaboratively at the highest level.
- Excellent business and financial acumen with good logistical and problem solving skills, must understand P&L's, balance sheets and financial appraisal.
- Strong communicator and motivator - excellent and proven negotiator, with influencing and "sales" skills in order to get internal & external people engaged and motivated to deliver.
- Strong commercial 'radar and instincts' - a good understanding of different markets and drivers/opportunities influencing revenue streams.
- Internal catalyst - must demonstrate the ability to bring imaginative thinking to drive new initiatives to match business need.
- Thought and action leader - 'hearts and minds': Proven ability in making things happen from the nugget of an idea to implementation – should be focussed, robust, used to going out on a limb and extremely driven.
- Shaper and completer-finisher - strong strategic thinker and decision maker with the ability to get people on board and to follow through.
- Charismatic with proven leadership and people management skills – must be able to develop, mentor and empower others. Balanced i.e. inclusive, collaborate and collegiate, but also incisive, decisive and definite.
- Transformative - good change management skills, with a proven record of leading people and organisations through periods of change.