



Press Release

Monday 19 December

PAULA STRINGER ANNOUNCED AS FACTORY INTERNATIONAL'S NEW CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Factory International, the organisation behind Manchester International Festival (MIF) and the city's landmark cultural space Aviva Studios, has today announced that Paula Stringer has been appointed as Chief Operating Officer. She joins John McGrath, Artistic Director and Chief Executive, Low Kee Hong, Creative Director, and Scott McVittie, Chief Commercial Officer on the Factory International Executive Team.

Paula Stringer has had a significant career in the arts and media and joins Factory International from her current role at BBC News where she is Director of Business. She brings senior leadership experience across broadcasting, live events and the charity sector, with a career focused on supporting creative ambition through strong, people-centred and sustainable ways of working. At BBC News, she leads business and production teams across a 24/7 global operation, working closely with editorial and creative leaders to support delivery at scale.

Previously, Paula was Chief Executive of Christians Against Poverty, leading the organisation through significant change. Before that, she held senior operational roles at the BBC, including Controller of Production for BBC Sport, overseeing the delivery of major global events such as the Olympics, Wimbledon and the World Cup.

Based in Manchester for nearly 30 years, Paula has a deep connection to the city and a strong belief in the power of culture to bring people together, create opportunity and deliver lasting public value.

John McGrath, Artistic Director & Chief Executive said: *'I am delighted to be welcoming Paula Stringer to the new role of Chief Operating Officer at Factory International. With a wealth of experience delivering extraordinary content in high-pressure environments, and leadership experience including true social purpose, she has an ideal combination of the values and knowledge we need as we enter the next stage of our development.'*

Paula Stringer said: *"I am thrilled to be joining Factory International as Chief Operating Officer. Factory International is a really special organisation — ambitious, creative and rooted in the North, with an influence and reputation that reaches far beyond it. The work it makes possible really matters, both culturally and socially, and is something that matters to me."*

I'm northern born and bred and have spent the last three decades working in and around Manchester. Across that time — in broadcasting, charity and creative organisations — my work has focused on helping complex, creative environments deliver big ambitions with sustainability and with care. The chance to bring all of that experience together in a place that means a lot to me personally is an amazing opportunity.

Most of all, I'm looking forward to working with the people at Factory International. The talent, commitment and creativity of the teams is clear, and I'm excited to listen, learn and work together to support brilliant work now and into the future."

Moira Sinclair, Chair of the Board, Factory International said: *"Factory International delivers a heady mix of a locally connected and nationally significant cultural offering - a venue, a festival and a programme to bring artists together, create opportunity and platform a wide range of voices and stories. To deliver such an ambitious vision, we also need a leadership team with passion, expertise and an understanding of our city and so I am delighted that Paula is joining us. She has a wealth of experience and passion for Manchester that will be invaluable to the organisation."*

Rebecca Ball, Area Director North, Arts Council England said: *"We're delighted to hear that Paula will be joining Factory International as Chief Operating Officer. She brings extensive experience in leadership roles across different sectors and we're looking forward to working with her as the organisation continues to implement its ambitious creative plans."*

Dave Moutry, Director of Culture and Creative Industries, Manchester City Council said, *"I am delighted with the appointment of Paula Stringer to this vital role at the heart of Factory International's leadership team. Paula brings substantial knowledge, experience and skills to the organisation and I know that she will be a great asset to both Factory International and the wider cultural ecology in the city."*

-ENDS-

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Download images [here](#).

NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Factory International

Factory International is the organisation behind Manchester International Festival and the city's landmark cultural space, Aviva Studios.

Factory International commissions, produces and presents a year-round programme of original creative work and special events at Aviva Studios, online, and internationally through its network of co-commissioners and partners. It also stages the city-wide Manchester International Festival (MIF) every other year.

Factory International builds on the legacy of Manchester International Festival, one of the world's leading arts festivals, and the first to be entirely focused on the commissioning and producing of ambitious new work. Staged every two years in Manchester since 2007, world-renowned artists from different art forms and backgrounds create dynamic, innovative and forward-thinking new work in venues and spaces across Greater Manchester.

PUBLIC SECTOR FUNDERS



Aviva Studios
Water Street, Manchester M3 4JQ
factoryinternational.org

Aviva Studios was designed by the world-leading practice Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), with Ellen van Loon as lead architect – their first major public building in the UK. Its development was led by Manchester City Council, with backing from HM Government and National Lottery funding from Arts Council England.

Ultra-flexible in design, the building is based around large, open, adaptable spaces that can be constantly reconfigured, enabling artists to develop and create large-scale work of invention and ambition of a kind not seen anywhere else in the world. A unique canvas to make, explore and experiment, audiences can enjoy the broadest range of art forms - from major exhibitions and concerts to intimate performances and immersive experiences.

Factory International plays an important role in the lives of Greater Manchester residents, bringing jobs, skills, training and creative opportunities. Through the Factory Academy, Factory International is training the creative workforce of the future, while its pioneering creative engagement and artist development programmes create year-round opportunities for local people to get involved, from participating in flagship commissions to shaping the organisation through involvement in its public forums.

Factory International is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

factoryinternational.org

About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. Our vision, set out in our strategy *Let's Create*, is that by 2030, we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish, and where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. Between 2023 and 2026 we will have invested over £467 million of public money from Government, alongside an estimated £250 million each year from The National Lottery, to help ensure that people in every part of the country have access to culture and creativity in the places where they live. Until Autumn 2025, the National Lottery is celebrating its 30th anniversary of supporting good causes in the United Kingdom: since the first draw was held in 1994, it has raised £49 billion and awarded more than 690,000 individual grants.

Visit [our website](#) to learn more about our work.

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