

Head of Production & Operations

12-month fixed-term contract | Bristol | Full time | December 2026 to December 2027

Run the delivery of hundreds of live events a year, lead four Heads of Department and sit on the senior leadership team of one of the UK's most distinctive creative production companies, for one full annual cycle.

About Bakehouse

Bakehouse Factory is an award-winning creative production company delivering story-led installations and theatrical activations for shopping centres, destinations, councils, brands and cultural organisations across the UK. From our 18,000 sq ft workshop in Bristol, our in-house designers, makers, installers, project managers and performers design, build and deliver everything from roaming performance to walk-through Christmas experiences that welcome up to 45,000 visitors per venue across five to eight venues each season.

The role

Our Head of Production & Operations is taking a year away from the business, and we are looking for an experienced live events leader to take full ownership of the role for twelve months.

You will own the delivery of every live event Bakehouse produces, from confirmed sale through design, build, installation, live operation and de-rig. You will lead our Heads of Installations, Design, Workshop and Project Management, hold the operational calendar, delivery budgets and event safety framework for the business, and sit on the Senior Leadership Team alongside the Managing Directors, Commercial Director, Finance Director and Facilities Director.

This is a real leadership seat, not a caretaker role. You will run the delivery side of the company through a full year, including our peak Christmas season, with the authority and accountability that come with it, and hand it back in good shape.

What you will do

- Lead and oversee the delivery of Bakehouse events from confirmed sale to de-rig, acting as the senior point of decision and escalation and being visible on our largest installs, launches and live periods.
- Plan the operational side of our peak seasons: multi-venue opening schedules, on-site management structures, contingency and incident planning, and senior on-call cover while events are open to the public.
- Line manage and develop four Heads of Department and the Assistant Production Manager, coaching them to lead their own teams and budgets.
- Through the Head of Project Management, make sure every project has a capable PM, PM capacity is planned ahead of peaks and the project lifecycle is followed consistently.
- Lead the company's approach to event safety and compliance: Event Management Plans, RAMS, crowd management, safeguarding, licensing, venue conditions and CDM on builds and installs.
- Be the senior operational contact for key clients and venues alongside our Client Services team.
- Oversee design sign-off and the master delivery schedule across design, workshop and installations, so that what is sold can be built, installed and operated safely within budget and timeline.
- Sense-check the sales pipeline against delivery capacity with the Commercial Director and Client Services, and flag resourcing needs early.
- Take senior responsibility for delivery budgets across all live projects, reporting monthly to the Finance Director.

- Report operational status, risk, capacity and budget performance to the Managing Directors and board as a full member of the SLT.
- Improve and document the systems that hold delivery together and prepare a full handover for the returning Head of Production & Operations.

Who we are looking for

A senior live events leader from experiential, attractions, theatre, festivals or large-scale public events who has run a full calendar of public-facing events, ideally across multiple venues at once. You have provided senior operational leadership when an event opens to the public, you understand how a build becomes an install becomes a live operation, and you know where each stage goes wrong.

You have led Heads of Department rather than just teams, held company-level delivery budgets and held senior leadership positions. You are calm, structured and direct, you build trust quickly with an established and close-knit team, and you can step into a running operation without needing the founders behind you. You are comfortable with the shape of a fixed-term role: absorbing quickly, leading decisively, documenting as you go and handing over cleanly.

You will bring:

- Significant senior experience (typically seven years or more) delivering live, public-facing events, including at least three years at Head of Operations, Production Director, Head of Events or equivalent level.
- Experience running a full season of concurrent events across multiple venues, with responsibility for on-site operations, resourcing and live incident management.
- Proven experience leading Heads of Department and multi-disciplinary teams spanning project management, installation, design and fabrication.
- Strong working knowledge of event safety, including Event Management Plans, RAMS, crowd management, licensing and safeguarding, and practical awareness of CDM 2015.
- Senior oversight of company-level delivery budgets and experience working with finance on coding, reporting and reconciliation.
- A confident senior client-facing manner, excellent judgement under pressure and the ability to hold difficult conversations well.

It would be a bonus if you have:

- Experience of public-space activations, Christmas grottos or timed-entry family attractions, and of working with centre management.
- Experience of theatrical or performer-led events and working alongside creative, casting and costume teams.
- IOSH Managing Safely, NEBOSH General Certificate or equivalent.
- An understanding of scenic construction and installation processes and how they affect live delivery timelines.

What we offer

A senior seat in a company that is growing, creative and close-knit, and a year in which you will lead the delivery of some of the most-visited family experiences in the UK. You will work with a talented in-house team of designers, makers, installers, project managers and performers, and with clients across shopping centres, destinations, councils and brands.

Salary: Negotiable dependent on experience

Contract: 12 months fixed term, full time, December 2026 to December 2027, with a structured handover at the start and end of the contract.

Location: Bristol (7 Clothier Road, Brislington), with travel to venues across the UK, including early mornings, evenings and weekends during install, live and de-rig periods.

Reporting to: Managing Directors.

How to apply

Please send a CV and a short covering letter jemma@bakehousefactory.co.uk by midnight Sunday 11th October. First interviews will be held w/c 12th October.

Bakehouse Factory is an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from everyone and are happy to make adjustments to our recruitment process on request.