



ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Who We Are

Operação Nariz Vermelho (ONV) is a Portuguese non-profit association that brings joy to hospitalised children, their families and healthcare professionals through the art of the Clown Doctor. Founded in 2002, ONV operates regularly in paediatric wards of hospitals in greater Lisbon, Porto, Braga, Guimarães, Aveiro, Coimbra and Leiria, with a team of more than 40 professional Clown Doctors – professional artists with specialized formation to act within the hospital environment. The impact of ONV's work is widely recognised by hospitals, families and international partners. We are an active member of EFHCO (European Federation of Healthcare Clown Organisations).

Mission

To bring joy to hospitalised children, their families and hospital professionals, through the art of the Clown Doctor.

Values

Joy · Trust · Genuineness · Freedom · Professionalism · Transparency

The opportunity

ONV is entering a new phase, marked by the growth of its artistic team, the expansion of its presence in hospitals, and a commitment to strengthening the quality of its artistic identity.

We are looking for an Artistic Director who is, at the same time, an experienced leader and a reference artist: someone capable of inspiring a large and geographically dispersed team, of ensuring ONV's artistic excellence, and of actively contributing to the organisation's growth.

This is a demanding role, with high internal and external visibility, requiring both artistic depth and leadership maturity.

The role

The Artistic Director leads a team of more than 40 professional Clown Doctors, based in Lisbon and Porto and currently expanding into new geographies. This person is responsible for ONV's artistic identity: its definition, evolution and quality assurance. They are an active member of the organisation's leadership team, reporting directly to the General Manager.

More than the guardian of ONV's artistic quality, this is the person who embodies it and makes it grow: through example, training, close support of the artists, and a clear vision of what the organisation needs, not only today but for the years ahead.

Main responsibilities

- Actively contribute to the organisation's strategy, culture and growth, in coordination with the Executive Direction.
- Represents ONV institutionally as Artistic Director, both nationally and internationally.
- Participates regularly and visibly in office life, as an active member of ONV's leadership team. Being present at formal meetings is not enough; day-to-day presence matters, as it allows alignment and closeness with the other areas.
- Creates conditions for the artistic team and the office team to feel welcome in their respective workspaces, promoting a culture of exchange and sharing between the two areas.
- Ensures the evolution of ONV's artistic direction, guaranteeing relevance, quality and coherence with the mission.
- Lead and inspire the artistic team, fostering an environment of trust, openness and co-construction.
- Develops and implements the artists' continuous training programme.
- Develops and implements a system for monitoring and evaluating artistic quality, ensuring that all artists are regularly observed and receive structured feedback.
- Defines individual development plans for the Clown Doctors, identifying potential, specific training needs and artistic progression paths.
- Creates and maintains regular forums for alignment and sharing of practices between teams in different geographies.
- Ensures a rigorous audition process, with clear artistic quality standards applied consistently.
- Leads the recruitment, onboarding, and evaluation processes for new artists.
- Works closely with the General Manager and Human Resources (or equivalent) area to define policies on wellbeing, burnout prevention and the artists' emotional safety.
- Collaborates with other areas, namely Communications, Fundraising, Creation and Content, and the Centre for Studies.
- Participates actively in EFHCO and maintains a network of contacts with leading international organisations (Doutores da Alegria, Le Rire Médecin, Rote Nasen, Red Noses International, Cliniclowns, Theodora Foundation, among others).

Profile

Education and experience

- Education: performing arts, theatre, clowning, performance arts or related fields.
- Artistic experience: minimum of 15 years as an artist in contexts of excellence.
- Hospital Clown: experience in hospital settings as a Hospital Clown.
- Team leadership: minimum of 5 years in coordination or artistic direction roles for teams.
- International context: experience in international Hospital Clown organisations (a plus).

Skills and attributes

We are looking for someone who:

- Places ONV's mission at the centre of their decisions as Artistic Director. Advocates for and actively contributes to the organisation bringing joy to an ever-growing number of children and hospitals in Portugal, understanding growth as part of the role.
- Has strategic thinking and the capacity to contribute to defining priorities and to the organisation's growth.
- Has experience leading organisational or artistic change processes, including managing internal resistance and building alignment across teams with diverse cultures.
- Leads by example and authenticity, mobilising people without relying on authority.
- Has proven experience managing conflict in artistic teams and conducting performance improvement processes (including decisions about continuity of collaboration).
- Knows how to set clear boundaries and shared expectations, balancing empathy with accountability.
- Communicates with clarity and openness, even in situations of disagreement.
- Gives and receives feedback professionally.
- Creates healthy, cooperative work environments.
- Has an appetite for people development: training, mentoring and artistic coaching.
- Questions established practices and seeks inspiration both within and outside the organisation.

Differentiating factors

- Organisation: Operação Nariz Vermelho, www.narizvermelho.pt
- Location: Lisbon, with regular travel to Porto and new geographies arising from the expansion plan.
- Contract: employment contract, under a service commission arrangement (comissão de serviço), full-time and on an exclusive basis.
- Reporting line: General Manager
- Expected regular presence at the Lisbon office, as a member of the leadership team.
- Mobility: availability for domestic and international travel.
- Working language: Portuguese (required in the medium term); English (a plus).
- Start date: to be defined according to the transition process.

Terms of the Role

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Application Process

What you should send us

Interested candidates should send the following to anabela.possidonio@narizvermelho.pt:

- Updated CV.
- Motivation video (maximum 5 minutes), including: reasons for wanting to be ONV's Artistic Director; experience and qualities relevant to the role; vision for the first 3 years in the role; long-term vision: how you imagine ONV 20 years from now. (link for download)
- Multimedia records of artistic work, such as video or photography, allowing ONV to get to know the candidate's work. (link for download)
- Letter of recommendation (optional).

Only complete applications will be considered, with all requested materials submitted by 23:59 GMT+1 on 18 July.

Timeline

- Launch: 2 July 2026: publication of the announcement.
- Applications: until 18 July 2026 23:59 GMT+1
- Selection for interview and notification of shortlisted candidates: by 24 July 2026.
- 1st round of interviews: last week of July.
- 2nd round of interviews: first week of September.
- Decision: by the end of September.

Selection panel

Interviews will be conducted by a panel combining ONV's internal leadership with an external perspective from the international Hospital Clown ecosystem:

- 2 members of ONV's Board, representing the Statutory Board.
- ONV's Executive Director, the executive lead and direct counterpart of the Artistic Director.
- Senior EFHCO member, independent perspective from the international Hospital Clown ecosystem.
- External guest: close knowledge of ONV or of the artistic and social field.

Operação Nariz Vermelho

Lisbon · Portugal · 2026