



SUPPORTED BY



UNCOVER DISCOVER

Revealing the creativity rippling through Coventry

Job Description

Job Title	PRODUCER
Responsible to	Director
Responsible for	Freelance artists, practitioners, film-makers and event teams
Key Working Relationships	INTERNAL: Director, Associate Director (Projects and Participation, Practitioners, Business Development Manager, Company & Projects Manager, Company Administrator EXTERNAL: Coventry City of Culture Trust, Schools, funders, other local partners including evaluators
Contract	0.5 FTE
Term	Fixed-term until 31 May 2022. Start date to be mutually agreed, as soon as possible in 2021.
Salary	£32,000 per annum pro rata
Hours and working pattern	2.5 days / 18.75 hours per week. Schedule to be agreed. Flexible working possible and preferred. Some evening and weekend work will be necessary.
Location	The work will take place in and around Coventry. Office work generally from home. Meetings and events at various locations in the city.
Probation	3 months
Holidays	28 days per annum pro rata, inclusive of Bank Holidays
Benefits	Travel expenses for programme related work outside of Coventry (commuting to/from home not included). Option to sign up to NEST Pension Scheme.

Purpose of the Post:

- To produce the Uncover/Discover (U/D) programme in Coventry in 2021 and 2022.
- To work alongside the Director of Open Theatre to provide leadership on the development of the programme and its partnerships.
- To represent the Company at a wide range of local, sub-regional meetings connected with developing the programme and its legacy.
- To take responsibility for the delivery of programmes outcomes including City of Culture objectives and requirements of other funders.
- To work with the Director and team of Associates to ensure fundraising and partnership opportunities are maximised.

Responsibilities/Tasks:

- To monitor budgets, staffing and project admin, with the support of U/D Administrator.
- Work in partnership with the Schools/Creative Associate on liaison with all schools, teaching and support staff and families.
- Collaborating with and reporting to other Open Theatre staff.
- Line-management of U/D artists, freelance staff and film-makers.
- Manage the partnership work of the project with Coventry's special schools, arts organisations and other stakeholders.
- Responsible for all scheduling of activities.
- To be aware of, and make appropriate connections with, other aspects of U/D-related Open Theatre work in Coventry as they develop (e.g. Jack's Frogs).
- Produce and manage the final celebration events in Spring 2022 in partnership with the relevant teams and staff from City of Culture and other organisations.
- Recruit and contract suitable freelance artists/practitioners to support the delivery of work.
- Develop strong and effective relationships with key current and potential new stakeholders, funders and potential sponsors.
- Collaborate on fundraising bids and applications for funding.
- Represent the Company and deputise for the Director, if necessary, in events, meetings, conferences etc.
- Ensure all processes are fully compliant with laws and regulations i.e. Consents, GDPR, Safeguarding Policies, identify and clearing of Rights and Licenses as appropriate
- Ensure full engagement across the programme in monitoring and evaluation activity and be responsible for the completion of quarterly and end reports to funders etc.
- Undertake other tasks and activities as requested by the Director.

Person Specification

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE	
<p><u>ESSENTIAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 4 years' experience of working in similar roles in the arts and culture sector • Experience of managing staff and/or freelance workers • Experience in fundraising in the arts/charity sector • Experience of working in education/participatory arts sector • A third level qualification 	<p><u>DESIRABLE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A degree-level qualification • Experience of working with people with learning disabilities • Experience of working in Coventry with a good working knowledge of the City and the network of professionals engaged in arts and other sectors • Experience in managing and ensuring adherence to Health & Safety procedures
SKILLS	
<p><u>ESSENTIAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to prepare and manage budgets • Ability to contribute to and work in accordance with risk assessments • Ability to operate on a strategic level, prioritise, reach deadlines and inspire and focus teams to do the same • Ability to broker effective partnerships with mutual benefit • Excellent communication skills (verbal and written) • Computer literate: Microsoft Office, use of databases, design & creation of systems to facilitate your work, online platforms and file-sharing systems 	<p><u>DESIRABLE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to maintain good records and comply with all data protections protocol • Driving licence and own car • Proven understanding of Arts Council England's Creative Case for Diversity
PERSONAL QUALITIES	
<p><u>ESSENTIAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work well on own initiative and as part of a team • Ability to work under pressure, work to deadlines and complete tasks sometimes with conflicting demands • Ability to generate and effectively manage your own workload • Proven commitment to equality of opportunity in the delivery of arts and cultural projects 	<p><u>DESIRABLE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good sense of humour • Ability to maintain high levels of enthusiasm

You must be eligible to work in the United Kingdom and will be required to undertake an Enhanced DBS check on appointment.

Application and Recruitment Process

Applications should be emailed to info@opentheatre.co.uk and consist of:

1. **Covering letter** which addresses the Job Description and Person Specification (maximum 1000 words)
2. **Curriculum Vitae**
3. **Contact details for 2 referees** (one should be your current or most recent employer/commissioner). Please indicate whether or not we can contact each referee without your prior consent.

Deadline: Monday 4th January 2021, 5pm

First-round interviews will be held on Monday 18 January 2021. We hope these will be in-person, but may need to be online. Interviews will consist of a short prepared presentation, questions from a panel and a short task to be completed on the day.

Should second-round interviews be necessary they will be held w/c 25 January 2021.

Open Theatre recognises the long-term systemic barriers which have prevented black artists & cultural workers from thriving in the industry.

As part of our commitment under the *More than a Moment* initiative to combat these barriers, we are operating a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for any applicants from black* backgrounds who meet the Essential Criteria in the Personal Specification.

* We have adopted the Black Ticket Project's definition of 'Black': as of Black African, Caribbean, Afro-Latinx and African-American heritage, including those of mixed-Black heritage who identify as such (*More Than A Moment*).

Background Information 1 – OPEN THEATRE

www.opentheatre.co.uk

EXTRACTS FROM OPEN THEATRE'S BUSINESS PLAN 2018/19

VISION

To make the West Midlands a centre of best practice and excellence for young people with learning disabilities to access and make meaningful creative contributions to the cultural life of the region and beyond as artists, leaders, facilitators and enablers.

This requires shared conventions for understanding and shared commitment to developing practice and a willingness to work towards treating learning disability arts as distinct from broader disability arts. If the creative case for diversity is truly about creating *great art for everyone* then where are our learning disabled artists, performers, and leaders? We need to develop different kinds of access and practice to those currently developed through the disability arts and the arts sector as a whole. If YPWLD who do not operate or learn in 'neurotypical' ways cannot gain entry to arts training providers/courses or access opportunities lead by arts practitioners with experience of working with young people with learning disabilities, then how can we ever meet the challenge with the Creative Case? Those left outside of our mainstream systems for nurturing and growing artistic talent are not devoid of talent, creativity or ideas but devoid of opportunities to grow as artists, producers, facilitators, makers and enablers.

Mission

Open Theatre creates projects and pathways to attract new investments, partners and networks to develop, promote and sustain the creativity and artistry of young people with learning disabilities. We aim to provide life-changing adventures through the arts to unlock voices not heard and faces not seen, enabling their personal development, unlimited creativity and stories to be shared and valued.

VALUES

ENTERPRISE - Make change happen to create positive influence and impact

AUTHENTICITY - Ruthless honesty through a genuine approach to seeking, encouraging and modeling truthfulness

CREATIVITY - To seek out and unlock the creativity in every person and encounter

EMPATHY - To connect with other people and inhabit their work in order to create together and empower

JOY - To see joy as a fundamental enabler in life and as a force that can empower and change lives

OVERVIEW

In 1997, Open Theatre set up *The Shysters* in Coventry to develop new theatre aesthetics derived from the creativity of YPWLD. Through an ensemble approach, a unique methodology of non-verbal physical theatre was generated to release the actors' creativity. '*Who you are, is what matters*', was the phrase used to sum up the core of the practice. This approach created '*deep and meaningful interventions in the lives of YPWLD*' (ACE Report 2010) and

change-making in creative practice and in people's lives continue to underpin all aspects of the company's work. In this way the Creative Case for Diversity has been at the heart of the work of the company for 20 years.

Significant changes to the arts funding landscape in 2011 and a recognition that only a few YPWLD were benefiting from the company's work meant that new models were needed to reach out to many more YPWLD, to include and integrate them in the wider world of the arts and connect with new audiences. In response, the company re-positioned its operation base to Birmingham, developing its longstanding partnership with Birmingham Hippodrome, whilst also retaining its connections in Coventry.

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

In 2013, the company initiated *The 4in5 Research Project* which revealed more than 7,000 YPWLD living in Birmingham were aged between 16 and 25 years with Special Education Needs (SEN), and only 5% had access to any kind of cultural offer to develop their own skills in the arts. However, it also revealed that initiatives were often short term, under-resourced and limited in scale and investment. The research uncovered that Birmingham has the largest number of special schools per head of population per city across the country, and that number is still growing. We have, by implication, the potential of working with a very large number of YPWLD across both cities.

ARTS & CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The arts and cultural landscape of both Birmingham and Coventry city are rich and diverse in companies, theatres, cinemas, art centres, galleries, conservatoires and concert halls, festivals and training providers. These offer arts programmes and spaces filled with artists, creators and enablers contributing to the cultural life of the region as well as nationally and internationally. However, the experience, knowledge base and confidence to conduct projects which engage with YPWLD within these arts organisations is limited and in short supply. The 4in5 research highlighted the significantly limited opportunities for YPWLD to access bespoke projects led by appropriately trained professionals and also the lack of suitable pathways to access professional arts training.

Both Birmingham and Coventry have a thriving youth arts scene which currently does not include YPWLD.

FINANCIAL CLIMATE

There has always been limited strategic influence and investment to structure and co-ordinate practice in order to disentangle learning disability arts from the generic disability arts agenda. This continues to be the case today. Open Theatre's experience and consultations within the sector over the last 25 years, coupled with the recent shift in legislation with the introduction of the *Children and Families Act 2014*, demonstrates that interest in learning disability arts practice is growing and the power base is beginning to shift to young people and their families. However, there is a climate of diminishing public resources to make the power shift real. The Company's focus is to re-shift this balance in cultural, strategic, practical and philosophical ways.

SOCIETY & 'MAINSTREAMING'

Over the last five years we have conducted research (through what might be called the (Brum-Lab) into ways to increase access to our work reaching more YPWLD and also ways we can influence the wider world to become more appreciative, accepting, accessible and respectful towards YPWLD and their innate creativity and individuality. We have recognised that in order to truly impact on the lives of YPWLD we must also make changes in the world we all live in. In the past five years we have also recognised that we must work with others and within the 'mainstream' to effect those changes.

PARTNERSHIPS

OTC is convinced that collaboration and strategic partnerships are fundamental to increasing quality provision for YPWLD. Joined-up provision, and sustained engagement is vital. We are now committed, for the purpose of change-making and truly effective integration of YWPLD, to work at all times with a wide range of partners. Broadly these fall into two categories:

- Partners who are committed to learning *from* us and embedding change in their organisation. With these *Compatible* Partners we support their aims by enabling them to engage with YPWLD in different ways.
- Partners committed to learning *with* us and effecting major change in the world *with* us. These are key *Collaborative* Partners who buy into our specific aims - *together* we develop the activity, the words, the rationale for pushing the work forward.

The longest term and most sustained integration we can effect will be by enabling partnerships between young people with and without learning disabilities to support them working together creatively. With Birmingham as the youngest city in Europe, and youth and diversity being at the heart of Coventry's Arts Strategy and its City of Culture bid, the opportunities for this are there for us to grasp.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Open Theatre believes that Equality and Diversity are not interchangeable but interdependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed. We believe in a vigorous approach to equality and diversity within all aspects of the company operations including the creation, production, performance, marketing, administration and consumption of our work to ensure that the company and our activities are equally accessible to and (as far as possible) reflective of the diversity represented in the West Midlands Region. We recognise the significant historic and contemporary barriers which continue to prevent marginalised communities from thriving in society, and that additional resource and care is required to create environments where everyone is valued, safe & given opportunity to achieve their potential. We are signatories of the *More Than A Moment* initiative, which aims to address longstanding underrepresentation from black creatives in the creative & cultural industries.

A copy of our Equality & Diversity policy is available to prospective candidates on request, please email info@opentheatre.co.uk

Background Information 2 – UNCOVER/DISCOVER

Uncover/Discover is an exciting multi-art-form, creative project for Coventry and Warwickshire Special schools and colleges across September 2020 – April 2022 in partnership with Coventry City of Culture 2021. It is an ambitious, multi-faceted programme of creative work for young people with learning disabilities. Uncover/Discover focuses on revealing the creativity rippling through Coventry.

Partnering with other Coventry arts organisations, Creative Multilingualism and Thames Festival, the various streams will link into subjects across the curriculum and will develop students' creative, linguistic and social skills, confidence and link to their city. The project's legacies – or ripples - will be felt well beyond 2022.

The programme has received a large portion of its funding from partners Coventry City of Culture Trust. Other funders already contributing include Coventry City Council and the University of Oxford.

The programme strands are:

Rivers of the World/Story of Water support

Open Theatre Company (OTC) will support Thames Festival to deliver their Rivers of the World and Story of Water, including brokering the relationship with the 8 Coventry Special Schools, recruiting, training and mentoring artists.

Water, Water Everywhere

OTC will deliver workshops in all 8 special schools/colleges from Spring 2021 – Summer 2022 delivering sessions 1 day per week in each school, every week of the school year, exploring the theme of 'water'. The practitioners will lead this work with emerging artists with learning disabilities working as assistants, all of whom will be mentored throughout the duration of the project. This strand is modelled on OTC 'Something in the Air' project. It will lead to celebratory events in each school in Spring 2022 involving parents and local communities. Much of this work will be documented and shared as widely as possible digitally.

Frogs and Suchlike

Spring term 2021 will feature an arts week in each school bringing in other Coventry-based artists/arts organisations within the theme of 'what lives in water'. Arts weeks will also happen in the Autumn term 2021 and Spring Term 2022. This will enable an exploration of other art forms and the creation of a range of products that will eventually end up as part of exhibitions in April 2022. Artforms could include animation, puppetry, spoken word, film-making, photography, circus, movement etc.

River City Detectives

This strand will take young people out of schools to explore local rivers and canals and other watery areas, to document and make film about adventures in these locations. One of the aims of this strand is to encourage more use and care of our rivers and waterways – the films are intended to make these areas feel more accessible and inspiring places to visit and enjoy. We will work with the various trusts associated with water (Wildlife/Canal etc), as well as

Historic Coventry and other partners on this strand, and aim to gain significant funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for it. The students will curate the footage for the film and devise the scenes, and local young filmmakers with learning disabilities will be integral to the film-making process. This strand will culminate in a one-off large scale outdoor digital event in Coventry City Centre, hopefully in the Burges in April 2022 (provisional date).

[THE PRODUCER WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH THE COMPANY'S FUNDRAISERS TO APPLY FOR NLHF SUPPORT FOR THIS STRAND]

Other Elements

This is an indicative list of additional responsibilities of the Producer:

- Regular and extensive communication and collaboration with City of Culture teams regarding marketing, programming and engagement. This will include prompt delivery of copy, images and other resources as well as signposting and forwarding of relevant content as it emerges throughout the project.
- Working with all schools on communication with their wider communities via social media, email, school newsletters and websites.
- Facilitating reciprocal marketing support with existing partners across the city, county of Warwickshire and region (including but not limited to Belgrade Theatre, Ego, Imagineer Productions, Warwickshire County Council, ThinkForward, MBD, Birmingham special schools and theatres including Birmingham REP, Birmingham Hippodrome and mac Birmingham).
- Working with the families of the young people with learning disabilities involved either directly or through the schools/colleges.
- Sharings and mid-way events (such as sharings in schools) which will help to build interest in the culmination event.
- Collaboration across other OTC projects in Coventry including the development of public art in Jack's Frogs and new partnerships that we are developing with organisations such as Historic Coventry and Warwickshire Wildlife, as well as continuing and strengthening existing relationships with arts and cultural organisations such as Imagineer Productions, the Belgrade Theatre and The Herbert Art Gallery and Museum.

Legacy

OTC are committed to creating artistic and cultural offers for young people with learning disabilities in Coventry for the next ten years, working within Coventry City Council's Arts and Cultural Strategy and to achieve our strategic aims as stated above. As such Uncover/Discover is the starting-point and catalyst for this longer-term work.