



**CITY VARIETIES**  
MUSIC HALL · LEEDS

*The*  
**GRAND**  
Theatre & Opera House Leeds



## YOUTH THEATRE PROGRAMME DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

### ROLE DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

**Job Title:** Youth Theatre Programme Director

**Department:** Learning & Engagement

**Responsible to:** Head of Learning & Engagement

**Responsible for:** x2 Learning & Engagement Officers and freelance artists

**Contract:** Permanent, full-time (subject to probation)

**Salary:** £34,804, based on 37hrs per week (Tue-Sat)

Subject to enhanced DBS and checks against the Children's Barred List and we will carry out online vetting.

### ABOUT LEEDS HERITAGE THEATRES

**"Where creativity thrives, and stories unfold"**

Leeds Heritage Theatres (LHT) is the custodian of three of the city's most iconic venues:

- **Leeds Grand Theatre:** A cornerstone of the city's cultural life and a landmark of Victorian elegance, the Grand hosts world-class drama, musicals, opera and dance.
- **City Varieties Music Hall:** Known for its rich music hall heritage, today the City Varieties offers a vibrant programme of comedy, cabaret, spoken word and live music.
- **Hyde Park Picture House:** One of the world's last surviving gaslit cinemas is home to independent, international and archival cinema, offering a unique and enriching film experience.

Together, these venues make a vital contribution to the cultural life of Leeds.

As a charitable organisation, our vision is to be a hub of creativity, celebrating the work of local, national and international artists and the human connection of arts and culture. Our work will be underpinned by excellence, skill, inclusivity, collaboration, learning and generosity, and will be visible at home in Leeds but also regionally, nationally and virtually. Our physical and digital sites will be places of congregation, engagement, excitement and welcome. We will always be future-facing and outwards-facing, whilst recognising our heritage and our history.

Learning is central to our purpose and Strategic Plan. Our Learning & Engagement (L&E) programme supports children, young people and communities to develop skills, confidence and creative voice, while creating clear pathways into further learning, training and employment in the cultural sector.

The Youth Theatre Programme Director is part of the L&E Leadership team, working closely with the Education Manager and the Engagement Manager. Each role leads a specialist area to deliver the programme and L&E Strategy:

- Engagement Manager: Focusing on audiences, communities and access for children and adults, providing first point connections with LHT
- Education Manager: Focusing on structured learning and impact through schools, Further and Higher Education, providing greater depth for learners
- Youth Theatre Programme Director: Focusing on creative training and progression for young people, providing advanced training routes

## **ROLE PURPOSE**

The Youth Theatre Programme Director is an exciting role that combines creative delivery with strategic oversight. This senior role is responsible for the strategic development, delivery, and growth of LHT's creative training programmes, including Leeds Grand Youth Theatre (LGYT), Leeds Actors in Training (LAIT), LHT Unwrapped and a range of drama/theatre clubs.

As part of the Learning & Engagement leadership team, you will provide strategic oversight of creative training, contributing to organisational resilience, and ensuring that our work is led by our values of creativity, integrity, inclusivity and passion.

Directing and producing annual shows, the postholder will expand accessible, inclusive pathways for young people to engage in high-quality creative training and performance opportunities at our venues and in communities across Leeds.

The role places learning and participation at the heart of creative practice, ensuring a sustainable programme for young people up to the age of 25, engaging a wide range of participants representative of the city.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Strategic Leadership**

- Lead the vision, development, and delivery within your specialism of LHT's creative training programmes.
- Contribute to and implement LHT's Learning & Engagement Strategy and wider organisational Strategic Plan across the programmes you lead on.
- Ensure your areas of responsibility are delivered in a way that is inclusive, accessible, and representative of the diverse communities of Leeds.
- Provide clear planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting for the programmes you lead on, ensuring their sustainability.
- Lead on research and evaluation frameworks to evidence impact and inform future strategy.
- Act as a senior internal and external advocate for the work of LHT, the Learning and Engagement team, and in particular the programmes which you lead on, including Youth Voice and Youth Theatre practice.

## **Creative Programme Development & Delivery**

- Ensure the delivery of high-quality programmes, aligned with industry good practice, providing inclusive and accessible creative training, building confidence, wellbeing and connection.
- Embed year-round performance opportunities within LHT festivals, events, and public programming.
- Support the integration of youth performance work into LHT's wider artistic offer.
- Design, develop and deliver workshops, intensives, rehearsals and performance projects, including:
  - Leeds Grand Youth Theatre (LGYT)
  - Leeds Actors in Training (LAIT)
  - LHT Unwrapped (creative holiday provision)
  - Drama and theatre clubs across venues and community settings
- Be available for term-time rehearsals on Saturdays and Wednesday evenings.
- Lead on key creative projects across the programme, such as directing/producing end-of-year and showcase productions for LGYT and LAIT, ensuring high artistic standards and positive participant experience.
- Work with Officers, Technical and Communication teams to produce and promote performances.
- Design, develop and deliver new creative opportunities and progression pathways for participants such as drama drop-ins during school holidays, considering play-in-a-week models, masterclasses and open access sessions to widen the reach.

## **Partnerships & People**

- Build and sustain strategic partnerships with youth, education, community, arts organisations and sector partners.
- Develop outreach strategies that widen participation and remove barriers to engagement.
- Establish clear pathways into programmes for under-represented groups.
- Identify, develop, and maintain external partnerships at a local and national level, representing LHT as required. In your role, this may include the Federation for Drama Schools and Conservatoires, facilitating access to information sessions, auditions and local activity in our spaces.
- Recruit, manage, and support colleagues as required and in line with LHT policies and approaches. When required, identify the need for freelance roles and external partnerships, in line with budget and internal governance requirements. Manage such arrangements as required.
- Foster a collaborative and high-performing team culture.
- Communicate clearly and sensitively with a range of stakeholders, which may include colleagues, freelancers, participants, parents/carers and partners.

## **Leadership & Development**

- Foster a culture of collaboration, creativity, and continuous professional development.
- Lead, support, and develop Learning & Engagement Officers, freelance practitioners, and volunteers working across our creative training programmes.
- Recruit, brief and mentor freelance artists and facilitators, fostering a collaborative and supportive working culture.
- Ensure effective planning, communication, and delivery across the programme team.

## **Governance, Safeguarding and Risk Management**

- As a key member of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Team, ensure consistent application and compliance with safeguarding policies, child performance legislation and duty of care.
- Any of the manager roles in the team may be required to act as LHT's Designated Safeguarding Lead, where you will review and implement policy, practice and training, supporting a team of DSLs and reporting to the Safeguarding Trustee. These additional duties attract an additional payment. At this time the postholder for this role will not be asked to act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Oversee programme budgets, scheduling, resource planning and financial management within agreed parameters
- Complete risk assessments and ensure compliance with health & safety, licensing and statutory requirements.
- Strengthen organisational resilience and reduce risk through clear decision-making and leadership structures.
- Monitor and evaluate programme outcomes, ensuring quality and impact.
- Support funding applications and reporting where required.

## **Equality, Diversity and Sustainability**

- Actively address historic and structural inequalities in the cultural sector through inclusive, anti-discriminatory and intersectional practice.
- Ensure creative training programmes are welcoming, accessible and reflective of the diversity of Leeds.
- Support and deliver LHT's Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **Essential**

- Significant experience leading creative training programmes for young people
- Proven experience in programme design, delivery, and strategic development.
- Strong track record of directing or producing theatre work with young people
- Experience in leading, motivating and managing staff, freelancers, or volunteers
- Experience in managing budgets
- Understanding of safeguarding and working with young people up to age 25
- Demonstrable commitment to inclusion, diversity, and access in the arts
- Strong partnership-building and stakeholder engagement skills
- Excellent organisational, leadership, and communication skills

### **Desirable**

- Experience working within a large-scale or multi-site arts organisation
- Knowledge of the Leeds cultural and community landscape
- Experience of contributing to organisational strategy and governance
- First Aid qualification and/or chaperone licence (or willingness to obtain)

### **Key Competencies**

- Strategic thinking and leadership
- Creative vision and artistic direction

- Partnership development and collaboration
- Team leadership and people management
- Inclusive practice and community engagement