

# KAY MELLOR FELLOWSHIP 2027

**LEEDS**   
**PLAYHOUSE**

## **APPLICATION INFORMATION PACK**

**THIS FELLOWSHIP IS SUPPORTED BY LEEDS PLAYHOUSE,  
ROLLEM PRODUCTIONS, BBC WRITERS & LEEDS CITY COUNCIL**

If you require this Recruitment Pack in a different format, please contact  
the HR & Learning team on 0113 213 7280 or [recruitment@leedsplayhouse.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@leedsplayhouse.org.uk)

# QUICK FACTS



**3 THEATRES**

**c175,000** AUDIENCE PER

YEAR

**OVER 19,500 PEOPLE**

CONNECTED THROUGH PLAYHOUSE CONNECT

**10M+** TURNOVER

- Restaurant & café
- Two bars
- Conferencing and events
- Public gallery space

**THIS SHORT FILM WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT WE'RE ALL ABOUT.**

# WHO WE ARE



**Leeds Playhouse** has been one of the UK's leading producing theatres for 55 years. We are an award-winning cultural hub, a place where people come together to share stories, spark creativity and experience world-class theatre in the heart of Yorkshire. At the heart of our purpose is a belief in the transformative power of theatre. We are driven by a social mission – to create work that speaks directly to the people of Leeds, reflects their lives, and opens up new possibilities for everyone who calls this city home.

Our productions, projects and partnerships are rooted in the belief that culture should be accessible to all, and that theatre can be a catalyst for change. The Playhouse has a proud history of inclusive practice, community connection and civic responsibility. We work closely with people across our region to ensure our work is representative, relevant and resonant. Our commitment to inclusivity is embedded in everything we do, from our artistic programme to our participation work and building design.

This warm, open approach has been recognised nationally. In 2022, **Leeds Playhouse was named Most Welcoming Theatre at the UK Theatre Awards, a testament to our**

commitment to creating an accessible, inclusive and creative space at the heart of the Leeds City Region. Our productions continue to receive national acclaim, including the Olivier-nominated *Animal Farm*. For three consecutive years, Playhouse performers have won **Best Performer in a Musical**, and in 2024 our production of *Oliver!* was **named Best Musical**.

# THE KAY MELLOR FELLOWSHIP



## WHAT IS THE KAY MELLOR FELLOWSHIP?

**The Kay Mellor Fellowship** is a year-long paid opportunity for a writer based in Yorkshire and the Humber to develop their writing for stage and screen.

**The Kay Mellor Fellow** will spend twelve months on attachment with **Leeds Playhouse** and **Rollem Productions**. During the 12 months they will:

Work in tandem with **Leeds Playhouse** and **Rollem Productions** to create a new stage play and a TV pitch. This can be the same idea created for two forms or two separate ideas that best suit the forms individually.

Receive a place on the **BBC Writers Voices** writer development programme where they will hone their skills and industry knowledge through a range of workshops, masterclasses, panels and industry talks.

# THE KAY MELLOR FELLOWSHIP



## WHY WE CREATED THE KAY MELLOR FELLOWSHIP

**Kay Mellor** was a prolific, award-winning and highly respected writer and director for stage and screen who was born, bred and lived in Yorkshire. Her work was consistently ensemble led, Northern in character and gave voice to people often under-represented on our stages and screens, particularly women and those from working class backgrounds. Kay was a huge supporter of early career artists, especially across Yorkshire, supporting them through the work of her production company **Rollem Productions** to develop their creative skills. Kay also had a long relationship with **Leeds Playhouse** as a writer and patron.

**Leeds Playhouse** is the largest producing theatre in the **Leeds City Region**, serving a population of 3 million people. The Playhouse works to develop artists from across Yorkshire through its Furnace Programme and is especially committed to developing

new

writers and under-represented voices from West Yorkshire.

**In 2019, Leeds Playhouse and Rollem launched the inaugural Kay Mellor Fellowship, the recipient of which was Bradford writer Kat Rose-Martin.**

# IN MEMORY OF KAY MELLOR



In memory of Kay, who died in May 2022, **BBC Writers, Leeds City Council, Rollem Productions** and **Leeds Playhouse** have joined forces to run three further years of the **Kay Mellor Fellowship** with the first fellowship undertaken in 2024 by Bradford writer **Kirsty Taylor** and the 2025 fellowship undertaken by Wakefield writer **Jasmin Mandi-Ghomi**. After taking a pause in 2026 to give time for **Leeds Playhouse's** new Artistic Director, **Tom Wright**, to settle in we are now welcoming applications for the **2027 Kay Mellor Fellowship**.

# IS THIS FELLOWSHIP FOR YOU?

To apply, you must:

- Be based in Yorkshire and the Humber.
- Have written between one and three professionally produced plays for theatre. By professionally produced, we mean that everyone was paid Equity or ITC minimum rates.
- Have an idea for a new, full-length play to be written over the course of the Fellowship and an idea that could be developed as an idea for television – this could be the same idea or two separate ones.
- Have an interest in and passion for learning about writing for television, but no prior credits as a writer for film or television.

We particularly encourage applications from artists currently under-represented in dramatic writing, including women; Deaf, disabled & neurodivergent people (including hidden disabilities and people with chronic illnesses); people from the African Diaspora; South, East and South east Asian people; people who are LGBTQIA+; people from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds and people who identify as working class or face barriers due to socio-economics.

# STRUCTURE OF THE FELLOWSHIP

The next **Kay Mellor Fellowship** will run for 12 months from December 2026. During the 12 months the Fellow will:

- Spend 12 months on attachment with **Leeds Playhouse** and **Rollem Productions**.

Develop a fully formed TV pitch and the first draft of a stage play.

## **Have the opportunity at Leeds Playhouse to:**

- Have an idea for a new, full-length play to be written over the course of the Fellowship and an idea that could be developed for television – this could be the same idea or two separate ones.
- Have access to desk space in the Artist's Room at **Leeds Playhouse** (but will not be required to work exclusively from the Playhouse.)
- Attend rehearsals, final run-throughs, dress rehearsals and other performances.
- Have the opportunity to read, assess and feedback on scripts for the Playhouse's Artistic Planning team.
- Observe the workings of all departments within **Leeds Playhouse**.
- Read and see as many professional productions as possible of other writers' work both **at Leeds Playhouse & elsewhere**.

# STRUCTURE OF THE FELLOWSHIP

## Have the opportunity at Rollem Productions to:

- Develop skills in creating a TV Script, series outline and pitch document.
- Attend and participate in story conferences for TV drama and comedy series.
- Observe read throughs and filming days on set.
- Have access to desk space at **Rollem Productions** (but will not be required to work exclusively from **Rollem Productions**).

## Have the opportunity at BBC Writers to:

- Join the BBC Writers Voices cohort running from December 2026 to July 2027.
- Attend a range of industry and craft workshops.
- Build a peer network of emerging writers also exploring writing for the TV medium.
- Work with the **BBC Writers** team to define and develop a new series idea to outline stage.

# KEY TERMS

# FELLOWSHIP

## BURSARY

£10,000 for the year will be paid to the recipient. (NB: The recipient must be registered as self-employed and is liable for any tax payable on the receipt of this bursary.)

## EXPENSES

- For all BBC Writers activity, travel and expenses will be covered by BBC Writers.
- No further expenses will be paid, but financial support is available for covering any access requirements.

## LOCATION

It is expected that the Fellow is based in Yorkshire and the Humber and will live within commuting distance of Leeds where both **Rollem Productions** and **Leeds Playhouse** are based. This is because of our commitment to the local artistic ecology; people willing to commute or relocate from further afield are not eligible for this training opportunity.

## HOURS

This is not a full-time role, and it is expected that the writer will undertake other paid work outside of the fellowship. We will work together to agree working hours and timetables.

# KEY TERMS FELLOWSHIP

## LINE MANAGEMENT

The writer will be line-managed and mentored by staff in the artistic development teams **at both Leeds Playhouse and Rollem Productions.**

## RIGHTS

### The Play

The writer will grant Leeds Playhouse a first option to acquire a licence to present the UK Premiere of the play for six months after the completion of the Fellowship.

### The Pitch

- The writer will grant **Rollem Productions** the exclusive right to pitch the idea to broadcasters for one year after the end of the Fellowship with the aim to secure development funding for the writer's concepts.
- BBC Drama will be given the first look at the pitch before it is shared with other broadcasters.
- The writer will own the IP.
- If **Rollem Productions** is successful in securing interest from a broadcaster / development funds, any scripts or further development materials will be commissioned from the writer under a separate writer's agreement with additional writer fee.

### Credits

The Playhouse will publicise the Fellowship in all programmes printed during the period of attachment. Where a production arises from any play(s) written under the Fellowship, a similar credit will be given.

# KEY TERMS FELLOWSHIP

## TIMELINE

**1 JUL 2026** – Applications Open

**1 AUG 2026 10AM** – Applications Close

**AUG – SEP 2026** – Scriptreading and selection

**OCT 2026** – Shortlisting

**NOV 2026** – Interviews

**LATE NOV/EARLY DEC 2026** – Fellow announced

**THE KAY MELLOR FELLOWSHIP  
IS SPONSORED BY:**



**LEEDS**   
**PLAYHOUSE**

**B B C**  
**WRITERS**

# HOW TO APPLY FELLOWSHIP

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Complete the form that can be found [here](#)

- Email one pre-existing script to [kaymellorfellowship@leedsplayhouse.org.uk](mailto:kaymellorfellowship@leedsplayhouse.org.uk)

- Complete the Inclusion and Diversity monitoring form [here](#). Information submitted here will not be seen by the fellowship panel.

In the online form, as well as standard questions (for example, about yourself and your journey as a writer) you will be asked:

How does your writing resonate with the themes, values or passions of **Leeds Playhouse and Rollem Productions?**

What impact would the **Kay Mellor Fellowship** have on your professional and personal success and what have the barriers been so far?

### Provide either:

· A detailed 800-word outline for an original full-length stage play with the potential to be developed for television.

or

· Two separate original concepts - one for a full-length stage play and one for a television project - with each outline approximately 600 words.

### **DEADLINE 1 AUG 2026 10AM**

Submitted scripts and ideas will be considered by a team of script readers from **Leeds Playhouse, Rollem Productions** and external artists, with the shortlist judged by a selection panel led by **Tom Wright**, Artistic Director at **Leeds Playhouse** and **Gaynor Mellor**, Creative Director at **Rollem Productions**.

For an informal conversation or to get support in making your application please contact [kaymellorfellowship@leedsplayhouse.org.uk](mailto:kaymellorfellowship@leedsplayhouse.org.uk).

# PREVIOUS KAY MELLOR FELLOWS



## KAT ROSE-MARTIN

The inaugural **Kay Mellor Fellow** was **Kat Rose-Martin**, who developed a TV pitch 'Whipped' and stage play 'Cheap as Chips' based on the same idea, exploring the nature of exploitation in working class communities and the right of women to take up space in the world. Since the end of the fellowship, Kat has developed a number of further pitches for **Rollem Productions** as well as being commissioned by **Leeds Playhouse** to develop 'Cheap as Chips' into a full production.

### Kat said:

*"The Kay Mellor Fellowship is an incredibly unique opportunity because you get to develop your writing for both TV and theatre, learning the similarities and differences between the two mediums. It was life changing for me. The bursary kept me in the industry when I was in a financial tight spot, it helped me develop long standing relationships with both **Leeds Playhouse** and **Rollem**, and it opened so many doors to agents and further opportunities. Kay was and is an inspiration. She put Northern voices on the stage and screen and let down the ladder to support and nurture so many new writers. I'm proud to be a tiny part of her legacy, and thrilled that this scheme is continuing so go for it, grab the bull by the horns and apply."*

# PREVIOUS KAY MELLOR FELLOWS



## KIRSTY TAYLOR

Our **Kay Mellor Fellow** for 2024 was **Kirsty Taylor**. Through her poetry, spoken word and playwriting, Kirsty has always been a champion of her home city of Bradford, showcasing and giving voice to its unheard stories. During her time with **Rollem Productions, Leeds Playhouse** and **BBC Writers**, Kirsty developed 'Birth Mum', exploring stories of adoption and severance from the perspective of birth families, working with local birth mother groups to research and develop both a play and TV pitch which tell the stories of how and why children get taken into care, with authenticity, intricacy and integrity.

### Kirsty said

*"The **Kay Mellor Fellowship** is a real luxury in that you are given the money and time to develop one of your passion projects, with proper support and guidance. The **BBC Voices** programme has been a major highlight. I'm learning so much about the tv industry as well as creative skills and techniques to develop my writing. I've really valued the structure that it has given me."*

# PREVIOUS KAY MELLOR FELLOWS



## JASMIN MANDI-GHOMI

Wakefield-based British-Iranian playwright **Jasmin Mandi-Ghomi** is our current **Kay Mellor Fellow**. During her fellowship year, Jasmin is developing stories exploring the meaning of home, delving into the thriller genre, and being inspired by her Yorkshire and Iranian heritage, while continuing to hone her unique voice as a playwright for both stage and screen.

### Jasmin said:

*"**The Kay Mellor Fellowship** has been invaluable to me. Being given the chance to explore and develop my writing alongside **Rollem Productions** and **Leeds Playhouse** has really helped me hone my skills and evolve into being both a playwright and a screenwriter. I feel incredibly lucky as a northern writer to have had the opportunity to develop my writing career right here in my hometown and to have been a part of making sure our stories are told. Having the time, support, and money to explore your own ideas is such a privilege and I am so thankful to have been given that over the course of this fellowship."*

# THANK YOU

## FIND US AT

**PLAYHOUSE SQUARE,  
QUARRY HILL, LEEDS LS2 7UP  
LEEDSPHAYHOUSE.ORG.UK  
0113 213 7700**

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