

PLAYHOUSE ENSEMBLES DIRECTOR



APPLICATION INFORMATION PACK

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



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



THE LIZ & TERRY BRAMALL
FOUNDATION

QUICK FACTS



3 THEATRES

5 MAIN REHEARSAL & STUDIO SPACES

c193,000

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. In 2025, our production of *Animal Farm* won the **UK Theatre Award** for **Best Revival** and a range of our productions were nominated for **Olivier**, **Black British Theatre**, **Asian Media** and **What's On Stage Awards**. For three consecutive years, Playhouse performers have won **Best Performer in a Musical**, and in 2024 our production of *Oliver!* was named **Best Musical**.

PLAYHOUSE CONNECT



Connect is the Playhouse's programme for engaging people across Leeds and Yorkshire – audiences, communities, and artists – in meaningful, creative, and lasting ways.

- To open our theatre more widely to the city and region
- To generate new audiences and deepen engagement with the work on our stages
- To generate new work for our stages
- To strengthen pathways between participation, performance, and professional practice
- To ensure the Playhouse remains responsive to the needs of our communities and artists in a changing world
- To future-proof our talent pipeline and workforce, helping to retain talent in the city

Connect is delivered through three strands, each with a distinct focus but a shared ambition to make the Playhouse a creative home for everyone:

People's Playhouse – developing audiences and removing barriers of access

Playhouse Ensembles – creating opportunities for communities to perform and celebrate their voices on our stages

Furnace – nurturing and developing artists across Leeds and Yorkshire

Connect also delivers a programme of work for people with learning disabilities.

Leeds Playhouse was set up by and belongs to the people of Leeds and the city region. We believe that theatre has the power to change lives. This is why **Playhouse Connect** is a fundamental part of who we are.

STRUCTURE



People's Playhouse: A welcoming gateway for new audiences – breaking down barriers, opening our doors, and deepening engagement with the work on stage.

- Develop and diversify audiences
- Foster stronger connections between people, our theatre, and the stories we tell
- Position the Playhouse as an open and civic cultural space

Playhouse Ensembles: A platform for Leeds communities to create, perform, and celebrate their voices on our stages.

- Provide accessible creative opportunities across the city
- Develop locally rooted work to feature within our produced programme
- Offer pathways from participation to performance at the heart of the Playhouse

Furnace: A home for artists in Leeds and Yorkshire – nurturing creativity, supporting development, and strengthening the pipeline of talent for today and the future.

- Provide accessible entry points for new and aspiring artists
- Support writers, directors, and makers at every stage of their career
- Build a sustainable, skilled, and diverse artistic workforce in the region
- Foster a thriving creative community centred creating work for the Playhouse

THE ROLE



The **Playhouse Ensemble's Director** will be responsible for leading 10 ensembles in total, including:

- 7 youth theatres,
- a Heydays (Creative Ageing) ensemble,
- and a Theatre of Sanctuary ensemble.

The role holder will take a strategic oversight to the work of the various ensembles and work with freelancers to deliver the sessions. Within this role, you will direct two of the ensembles yourself and manage freelance artists to lead the other ensembles.

The work you enable to happen will respond to the **Leeds Playhouse** mission and programme, the priorities of our key partners and the emerging needs of the city. Therefore, you will work closely with our Artistic team to ensure the work of the ensembles are in line with the organisation's overall artistic vision.

We are seeking a collaborative and creative Director who is rigorous, centres care and supports people to flourish.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Responding creatively to the **Leeds Playhouse** Mission and Programme, creating a dialogue between the **Leeds Playhouse** produced work on the main stages and the work of the ensembles.
- Ensuring the ensembles work is of the highest quality – with meaningful, creative challenge, support, community building, wellbeing and fun part of participants experience.
- Ensuring safeguarding and risk management are of the highest quality across the ensembles, and any issues are raised in a timely manner through the appropriate channels.
- Directing two ensembles, including the flagship 17-21 young company annual production.
- Identifying, contracting and managing freelance artists to lead the other ensembles.
- Identifying, contracting and managing support workers across all the ensembles.
- Working closely with the Playhouse Connect Programme Administrator to ensure all administrative processes are followed correctly.
- Measuring impact – to support telling a meaningful story of the work and making the case for support, data collection – including through creative reflection and consultation.
- Managing the Playhouse Ensemble's budget, including using Sage Intacct (**Leeds Playhouse** financial system) tracking spend, raising and approving purchase orders and timely reporting.
- Supporting the development of a throughline for participants from the first engagement to applying for leadership roles in the organisation or presenting their work on the main stage. Doing this in collaboration with the Connect team, with considered programming of activity, signposting participants and sharing offers.
- Transparent and reflective working practices, seeking to improve processes and learn from challenges.

- Participate in the Artistic Team meetings and ensure ensembles work feeds into wider programming and artistic strategy.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Supporting the Playhouse Connect team in the delivery of our key strategic objectives, as detailed in key performance indicators.
- Adhere to and implement the policies and procedures of **Leeds Playhouse** as detailed in the staff policies, including but not limited to:
 - Safeguarding
 - Health and Safety
 - GDPR and data protection
 - Access & Inclusion
 - Environmental sustainability
- Contributing to **Leeds Playhouse's** Plan for Change and intentions to become an anti-racist organisation.
- Working with all other departments to ensure that the people of Leeds have access to the resources **Leeds Playhouse** has to offer.
- Playing a role in the life of the company and working across departments to develop a positive and engaged organisational culture.

The duties and responsibilities set out are not exclusive or exhaustive. The post-holder may be required to undertake other reasonably determined duties and responsibilities within the organisation which are appropriate with the level of the role without changing the general character of the post. The post-holder would be given appropriate training and equipment to carry out any duties of this kind.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

The role of Playhouse Ensemble's Director will be managed by the Director of Playhouse Connect and will work closely with the People's Playhouse Producer, Furnace Producer, Playhouse Connect Programme Administrator and the Associate Artistic Director.

You will manage freelance artists, makers, support workers and volunteers. You will be supported with 2.5 days per week of Playhouse Connect Programme Administrator time, and be responsible for task management (though not line management).

KEY INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

The work of Connect touches every part of the organisation, and as such building and maintaining positive relationships across **Leeds Playhouse** will be an important part of this role.

- The Audiences team, including but not limited to Front of House, Marketing and Communications, Box Office – to ensure that ensemble's sharing's and productions are delivered safely and effectively, and that paid for programmes are put on sale in a timely way.
- Building Operations and Facilities team – to ensure the safe and smooth running of regular sessions, sharing's and performances.
- Fundraising and Development – to build a case for support and report effectively on funded activity.
- Producing and Programming – to ensure creative alignment, and ensure the safe and smooth running of sharing's and performances.
- Production – to ensure the safe and smooth running of regular sessions, sharing's and performances.

KEY EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Playhouse Ensemble's Director will:

- Be a point of integration for participants who have come through the work of People's Playhouse to engage in ensembles, as such some work with community groups and schools may form part of this role.
- Remain connected to national good practice through formal and informal networks such as the National Association of Youth Theatre's (NAYT) .

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL:

If you do not demonstrate that you meet all these criteria, you may not be shortlisted:

- You have a substantial and proven track record of experience of directing community theatre projects, including with young people.
- You have a substantial and proven track record of designing and facilitating workshops and programmes of work with young people aged 8-21.
- You are creative and innovative and develop your own practice.
- You have excellent communication skills – are clear, approachable and friendly with participants, artists and freelancers, support workers and other colleagues, partners and funders.
- You have experience of working successfully as part of a team and can identify how you contribute to that success.
- You are organised and self-motivated with strong administrative skills.
- You have good time management skills and can effectively prioritise your work and manage multiple projects at one time.
- You have experience of managing budgets, including effective record keeping.
- You have experience of evaluating the impact of the work you do and collecting data to support writing reports to funders and partners.
- You are IT literate, comfortable at using Microsoft Office packages (Excel, Word, Outlook) and have either a good knowledge of, or an active interest in learning more about, the uses of different software to support effective working.
- You are committed to safeguarding vulnerable people. You will have experience of working in an environment which has a strong emphasis of safeguarding children and young people and/or vulnerable adults.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

DESIRABLE:

If we need to choose between candidates who meet the essential criteria, we may take these factors into account:

- You have directed professional productions, or you have experience of directing non-professional adults in community work.
- You have experience of designing and facilitating workshops, programmes of work with non-professional adults.
- You have experience of working with people seeking sanctuary.
- You have experience of working with people with learning disabilities.
- You have experience of using accounting software, **Leeds Playhouse** will use SAGE Intacct (from September 2026).
- You have experience of using CRM software, **Leeds Playhouse** use Spektrix.

An Enhanced DBS Criminal Records screening is also essential for this post.

In line with the Playhouse's Safeguarding Policy, any appointment will be made subject to a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Disclosure information will be treated in the strictest confidence and shall only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. Only relevant information will be taken into account. The Playhouse will not discriminate unfairly against any convictions or other information revealed.

EMPLOYMENT TERMS SUMMARY

CONTRACT

This is a permanent contract. Any offer we make is subject to:

- receipt of 2 satisfactory references
- proof of eligibility to work in the UK
- successful completion of a 16-week probation period
- completion of a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check

SALARY

£32,000 per year.

HOURS

Full-time of 35 hours per week. Evening and weekend working will be required. You should establish your working pattern over five days in discussion with your manager.

There may be occasions when you are required to work outside the normal hours outlined. In recognition of additional hours worked, you are entitled to Time Off in Lieu (TOIL) in line with the Playhouse TOIL policy.

NOTICE PERIOD

8 weeks. 4 weeks during probation.

LOCATION OF WORK

Your main place of work will be **Leeds Playhouse**. You may be required to work permanently or temporarily at other locations in the Leeds City Region. You may be asked to work temporarily in other locations in the UK.

As part of our commitment to flexible working, we may permit or require you to work from home (or from outside our buildings) on occasion.

BENEFITS



PENSION

Auto-enrolment in a Standard Life Pension, unless you opt out, with 3% employer contribution, if eligible.

HOLIDAYS

5 weeks per holiday year, plus Statutory Bank and Public Holidays, rising with length of service.

BENEFITS

- Up to 2 paid wellbeing days a year
- Free employee assistance service
- Corporate gym and swimming discount
- Staff ticket discount
- Staff discount in Playhouse food and drink outlets
- Inhouse counselling services with a BACP counselling professional on site (by referral)
- Voluntary Cash Health Plan (optional)

HOW TO APPLY

Please read the job description carefully before starting your application to ensure that you meet all of the essential criteria and are able to provide evidence in your application to support these areas. Only relevant information will be considered when shortlisting candidates.

Your application will be retained securely for 3 months before being destroyed if you are unsuccessful, and for up to 12 months if you are successful.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this post please complete the online application form and diversity monitoring form which can be found on the job opportunities page, under the job role you are applying for. Data from your diversity monitoring form will not be shared with the recruitment panel.

If you would like to request any adjustments to enable you to apply for this post or to fully participate in an interview, please contact recruitment@leedsplayhouse.org.uk

INTERVIEWS FOR DISABLED CANDIDATES

Leeds Playhouse is a member of the Disability Confident scheme. Subject to capacity, we will interview candidates who identify as disabled who demonstrate that they meet all the essential criteria for the job.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Leeds Playhouse is committed to promoting equality and opportunity in its employment practices. In particular, the company aims to ensure that no potential or actual employee receives more or less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origins, marital or civil partner status, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, or religious beliefs. Disabled candidates will not be treated less favourably on the grounds of their disability.

SAFEGUARDING

The Playhouse is committed to safeguarding, and operates an environment where all staff are expected to report any concerns about vulnerable people, or about the behaviour or practice of colleagues and other people they come into contact with.

THANK YOU

LEEDS 
PLAYHOUSE

FIND US AT

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

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

All photographs are copyright
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Page 2: *Oliver!*, photography by Robling Pix
Page 3 & 4: Heydays session, photography by Beata Pejka
Page 5: *Wendy & Peter Pan*, photography by Marc Branner
Page 12: *A Christmas Carol*, photography by Helen Murray