

TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT





Welcome Message

Our organisation has evolved profoundly over the past ten years, reflecting our commitment to excellence in African theatre. We seek to enhance our governance with new trustees who bring specific skills and experiences, contributing to our mission of fostering a thriving theatre community. It's an exhilarating opportunity to influence the future of Utopia Theatre, particularly as we integrate youthful perspectives into our Board for the very first time.



Mojisola Kareem **CEO/Artistic Director**

As we open this chapter, we invite passionate individuals with a zeal for cultural advancement and innovation in the arts. Your involvement will not only shape the direction of our theater but also enrich the cultural dynamics of our community. Ideal candidates will possess insight into current cultural trends, a strong ethical compass, and the enthusiasm to drive change. With your vision, we aim to bridge generational divides and lay new foundations for inclusivity and diversity in the performing arts.



Inspire a Revolution in African Theatre

Since 2015, we have commissioned commissions - 7 new plays: Iyalode of Eti, David Oluwale, Here's What She Said To Me, Anna Hibiscus' Song, Macbeth, How Far Apart and Pied Piper of Chibok, We have also produced and toured 6 including Devising London Tales and All Our Goals, with a combination of professional and community actors in more than 30 locations both in the UK and internationally.



Mission

Our mission is to actively engage African communities, facilitate the development of emerging artists and foster dialogue and creative exchanges.



Our Company

Utopia Theatre is a National Portfolio Organisation formed in 2012 to create exceptional world-class African theatre with imaginative flair for the British and international stage. Utopia Theatre produces plays and re-imagines classics in a way that demonstrates their contemporary relevance and appeal to a new audience and regular theatregoers. The company synthesises African and Western performing traditions to celebrate the meeting of different cultures, with programmes aimed at developing and promoting writers and performers from the African diaspora. Utopia Theatre is dedicated to demonstrating the rich cultural heritage of Africa's theatre canon, and in so doing, dispel stereotypes and encourage authentic voices from the African Diaspora.



Our 10 years of impact and influence

Founded by CEO and artistic director Mojisola Kareem, the charitable organisation aims to empower and engage African communities, support emerging artists and inspire the next generation. Utopia Theatre also uses African theatre as part of storytelling in schools and communities and hosts digital theatre.

Utopia Theatre launched its own Youth Academy and opened a Creative Hub in 2023. The Youth Academy runs performing arts classes and workshops for 9 to 19-year-olds alongside a programme of mentoring and training for young people of African and Caribbean descent, as well as those from other minority groups. Its colourful, vibrant Creative Hub is home to a range of activities for emerging artists and the wider community; filled with music, fun and art to provide a real sense of belonging and a place where creativity can flourish.

Our Works

Anna Hibiscus' Song

At Utopia Theatre, we recently celebrated a significant success with our production of "Anna Hibiscus' Song" at the Playhouse in Sheffield. This adaptation of Atinuke's beloved book brought the vibrancy of Africa to life on stage, complete with golden lighting and the rhythms of African drums.

Praised for its heartwarming narrative and immersive set design, the show perfectly captured the joy and love within a family, connecting with audiences of all ages. A testament to our dedication to inclusive storytelling and our ambition to continually create theatre that inspires, educates, and connects communities.



The Creative Hub and Performance Lab



Utopia Theatre's Creative Hub in Sheffield's city centre is a vibrant cultural venue offering a space for African and Caribbean cultural celebrations. It is an inspiring location for hosting various events and activities such as workshops, meetings, screenings, rehearsals, exhibitions, dance classes, readings, performances, presentations, fitness classes, and open mic events. This multi-functional space reflects Utopia Theatre's commitment to fostering creativity and community engagement, inviting collaboration and cultural exchange.

Utopia Youth Academy



We are proud of Utopia Youth Academy, which offers performing arts classes and workshops to empower young people aged 9-19. With a focus on African oral storytelling and performance techniques, the academy nurtures creativity and confidence. It's an inclusive space where vulnerable youths can develop valuable skills for their futures. By joining our team, trustees will support a program that removes barriers to creative careers and mentors the next generation of artistic talent. This commitment to youth development is a testament to Utopia Theatre's dedication to community and cultural enrichment.

DEATH AND THE KING'S HORSEMAN

BY WOLE SOYINKA

Our Ambitious Next Phase

Set in Nigeria in the late 1940's and based on a true story, *Elesin*, the king's horseman, is tasked with carrying out a sacred ritual upon the death of the king. He is overtaken by the allure of earthly desires. A thought-provoking resonant theatrical experience showcasing music and dance forms, deeply rooted in the culture and spirituality of the Yoruba people.

"For more than ten years, Sheffield-based Utopia Theatre has been championing the wide range of benefits associated with making culture more accessible and inclusive. I've proudly been Chair of the board for just under three years, during which time we've staged countless compelling productions and events, welcoming so many people who previously felt theatre, drama - even the arts as a whole - wasn't for them"

- **Maxine**

Chair, Board of Trustees



Trustee Vacancies



We are thrilled to announce the search for four dedicated individuals to join our Board of Trustees. This pivotal time in our journey also marks the introduction of youth Board members, amplifying the voices of the next generation within our governance

What We Offer

- A chance to shape the strategic direction of a dynamic theatre company
- Opportunities to connect with the arts community and contribute to cultural vitality
- Engagement with a diverse and passionate team dedicated to making a difference in the arts

We Are Looking For Trustees With Expertise In

- Strong connections in Sheffield
- Property development or acquiring business premises
- Safeguarding and wellbeing policy and practice
- Strong connections in film, television, and recorded media
- Fundraising, accounting, financial, and business management
- Commercial and business law
- Digital/technology
- Human resources





Responsibilities and Expectations

Board of Trustees

Responsibilities:

- **Strategic Leadership:** Provide valuable insights and guidance in setting the theatre's long-term strategy, including artistic direction, community outreach, and financial planning.
- **Governance and Oversight:** Ensure that Utopia Theatre adheres to its mission and upholds the highest standards of integrity and accountability. Monitor the effectiveness of policies and practices.
- **Accountability and Compliance:** Uphold legal, ethical, and fiduciary responsibilities, ensuring the theatre's activities are transparent and in compliance with laws and regulations.
- **Fiscal Management:** Oversee the financial health of the theatre, approve annual budgets, and monitor expenditures and financial reports.

Expectations:

- **Time Commitment:** Dedicate sufficient time to fully engage with the responsibilities of the role, including attendance at all board meetings and thorough preparation for discussions.
- **Active Participation:** Contribute actively in meetings, committees, and special events. Offer expertise in specific areas such as legal, finance, or technology to strengthen the board's collective skills.
- **Training and Development:** Engage in ongoing learning and development opportunities relevant to board governance and the arts sector.
- **Support and Mentorship:** Provide support and advice to the Managing Director and other staff, contributing to the theatre's strategic development and operational needs.



Responsibilities and Expectations

Participation in Meetings

Responsibilities:

- Engagement in Decision-Making: Play an active role in decision-making processes, ensuring they are well-informed and aligned with the theatre's goals.
- Collaborative Working: Work in concert with other board members, valuing diversity of thought and fostering a cooperative atmosphere.

Legal and Fiduciary Duties

Responsibilities:

- Ethical Standards: Maintain high ethical standards, manage conflicts of interest appropriately, and uphold confidentiality.
- Risk Management: Identify and manage potential risks to the organisation, including financial, reputational, and operational risks.

Expectations:

- Preparation and Involvement: Come to meetings well-prepared, having reviewed all necessary materials, and be willing to engage in strategic discussions.
- Professionalism and Respect: Exhibit professionalism and respect for colleagues, staff, and the theatre's stakeholders in all interactions.

Expectations:

- Integrity and Accountability: Act with integrity and be accountable for decisions and actions taken as a board member.
- Due Diligence: Exercise due diligence in reviewing and approving significant organisational changes and financial transactions.

FAQs

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- **Who is eligible to become a trustee at Utopia Theatre?**

You must be at least 18 years old to serve as a registered Director. Appointment to our Board of Trustees follows our established procedures and governance documents.

- **What kind of individuals is Utopia Theatre looking to recruit as trustees?**

We're seeking individuals who resonate with our mission of making culture accessible and inclusive, particularly those with strong connections in Sheffield. We value diversity and are looking for skills in safeguarding and wellbeing, film and television, fundraising, accounting, digital/technology, and human resources.

- **What does the Board of Trustees do?**

The Board guides our strategic direction, governs the organisation ensuring accountability, and upholds the values and mission of Utopia Theatre. They handle nominations and governance, finances and risk management, and make executive decisions.

- **Are trustees at Utopia Theatre compensated for their role?**

Our trustees are voluntary and do not receive payment for their service. The role offers other forms of reward, such as community impact, personal growth, and the fulfillment that comes from advancing the arts.

- **Do I need any formal qualifications to become a trustee?**

There are no formal educational qualifications required. The most crucial quality we seek is a genuine passion for the arts and our mission. We also welcome youth voices on our board to ensure a diverse range of perspectives.

- **How can being a trustee at Utopia Theatre benefit me?**

Being a trustee can significantly enrich your experience and CV. You'll gain insights into strategy, governance, HR, finance, marketing, fundraising, and more. It's an excellent opportunity to build your skill set while contributing to the vibrancy of the arts in Sheffield.

- **What is the commitment like for a trustee at Utopia Theatre?**

Trustees typically attend board meetings 3 - 4 times a year, which usually take place online but can also occur in person. Preparation for these meetings involves reviewing agendas, reports, and engaging in relevant training for your role. Trustees are also expected to actively participate in fundraising and community engagement.

More Information

If you are interested in becoming a member of our Board of Trustees and make visible impact on our community, please send an updated CV and Covering Letter to info@utopiatheatre.co.uk

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