

N Norwich Theatre



Thank you for your interest in joining Norwich Theatre.

At Norwich Theatre, we believe in the power of Creative Experiences, which we know can have a wide-reaching positive impact.

Our Stages at Theatre Royal, Playhouse, Stage Two, and Beyond – are home to an extraordinary breadth of work, from world-class touring productions, and creative engagement experiences to bold new work developed right here in Norfolk.

We believe in making theatre and the arts accessible to everyone, no matter their background or experience. We work with artists, audiences and communities to create unforgettable experiences and to ensure that Norwich Theatre remains a vibrant, welcoming and relevant part of our city's cultural life.

This is an exciting time to join us. We are ambitious about the future – not only in the work we present on stage, but also in the way we engage with our community, invest in creativity, and support the people who make our organisation thrive.

If you share our passion for creativity, collaboration, and making a difference through the arts, we would love to hear from you. I hope you find this pack inspiring, and I look forward to the possibility of welcoming you to the Norwich Theatre team.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Crocker' with a large 'X' at the end.

Stephen Crocker
Chief Executive and Creative Director
Norwich Theatre



Our Future

This summer, Norwich Theatre will launch its new 2026-2032 strategy, setting out ambitious plans that build on current success. Our work is driven by a commitment to positive change, focused on three core priorities: Bold Work, Social Impact and Creative Endeavour.

Norwich Theatre is an independent cultural organisation with strong regional reach and a growing national profile. We exist to create bold, artistically ambitious work, nurture talent, and ensure theatre remains accessible, relevant and rooted in the communities we serve – using theatre as a force for social impact and civic connection.

As part of our commitment to Creative Endeavour, we will build a resilient, inclusive and future-ready organisation that invests in people, partnerships, infrastructure and financial sustainability – ensuring Norwich Theatre can thrive artistically, socially and economically.

We are committed to investing in people, skills and careers, putting fair pay, access, wellbeing and transparency in place through a new Fair Freelance Charter.

Freelancers are central to the organisation's ability to deliver high-quality work in a rapidly changing cultural landscape. From actors, directors, designers and stage managers to technical specialists and project-based collaborators, freelancers bring essential expertise, flexibility and creative insight to the organisation's productions and programmes.

As expectations across the cultural sector continue to evolve around fair working practices, workforce sustainability and professional development, there is increasing importance in taking a coordinated and strategic approach to freelance engagement.

The Role

The **Creative Freelance Engagement Manager** will lead the organisation's engagement with self-employed artists, practitioners, commercial and creative freelancers across the full engagement lifecycle, from commissioning, contracting to providing relevant support.

The role will ensure organisational practices are consistent, compliant and aligned with relevant industry agreements, recognised union frameworks, promoting positive working relationships with freelancers across all departments. This role will champion an aspirational approach to working with freelancers, raising the bar of best practice within Norwich Theatre, and by extension our sector.

Priority Areas of Focus

Strategic priorities include:

- **Freelance Charter** – Support the implementation of the organisation's new Freelance Charter, ensuring it builds on the commitments around fair and consistent engagement, and reflects evolving needs.
- **Commissioning and Engagement** – Lead and coordinate freelance contracting processes for teams, from commissioning and onboarding through to project completion and offboarding, incorporating welfare support and reflective practice.
- **Information, Communication and Resources** – Develop and maintain a central information resource for freelancers working with the organisation. Ensure freelancers can easily access and process relevant information relating to projects, organisational policies and working processes.

Why this role is needed.....

Nationally, the voice of freelancers is growing stronger. Sector research, including the **Freelancers Make Theatre Work Big Freelancer Survey (2025)**, highlights rising expectations around fair treatment, communication, and professional development, as well as increasing concern about the sustainability of freelance careers.

Freelancers make up approximately 70% of the theatre workforce nationally, yet many experience financial insecurity, inconsistent engagement practices and limited access to development opportunities. At the same time, cultural organisations are increasingly expected to demonstrate fair and sustainable approaches to freelance engagement.

The Big Freelancer Survey highlights the urgency of addressing freelance workforce challenges:

- 44% of performing arts freelancers earn below the National Living Wage
- 70% feel insecure about their long-term career prospects
- Over 60% report feeling undervalued by the sector

Government and sector bodies are also recognising this challenge. The UK government has committed to appointing a Creative Freelance Champion within the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to advocate for the freelance workforce.

These developments underline the importance of cultural organisations strengthening how they work with freelance practitioners.

In 2025 alone, Norwich Theatre contracted over 90 freelancers working across multiple departments. At this scale, freelance engagement is complex and distributed across multiple teams. A coordinated approach is therefore essential to ensure consistency, quality, and compliance.

The Creative Freelance Engagement Manager role responds to the national conversation and from our reflections to date. By coordinating how the organisation works with freelancers, we want to not only ensure our practices are consistent and aligned with sector expectations, but that they are supporting advocacy for the raising of those expectations. This role will champion an aspirational approach to working with our freelance practitioners, consciously raising the bar for best practice within our organisation, and by extension our sector.

You do not have to have done this job before

In fact, we think this job is fairly unique. We're looking for someone with a working knowledge of the sector, preferably with experience of being a freelancer - perhaps as a theatre-maker or producer. This will ensure the post-holder is well positioned to understand the needs of freelancers and the complexity of fast paced theatre.

Where this role sits

The Creative Freelance Engagement Manager sits within the Creative Programmes Directorate and reports to the Assistant Director of Impact and Engagement. This is a new role which will operate across the organisation, working closely with Creative Programmes Directorate and wider teams.



Creative Freelance Engagement Manager

Directorate:	Creative Programmes
Reporting to:	Assistant Director – Impact and Engagement
Direct Reports:	None
Hours:	37.5 hrs per week (hours are worked to meet the requirements of the role and some evening and weekend work will be required)

Main Purpose of the Role

The Creative Freelance Engagement Manager will lead the organisation's engagement with self-employed artists, practitioners, commercial and creative freelancers across the full engagement lifecycle, from commissioning, contracting to providing relevant support.

Working collaboratively across departments, the Creative Freelance Engagement Manager will ensure organisational practices are consistent, compliant and aligned with relevant industry agreements, recognised union frameworks and best practice. The role will be responsible for strengthening systems, processes and relationships that support effective freelance engagement, helping ensure freelancers have clear information, a supportive environment and a positive experience in which to thrive when working alongside the organisation.

This role will champion an aspirational approach to working with freelancers, raising the bar of best practice within Norwich Theatre, and by extension our sector.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership and Advocacy

- Support the implementation of the organisation's Freelance Charter, ensuring fair and consistent engagement of freelancers, that reflects evolving needs.
- Maintain awareness of sector developments and industry agreements affecting freelancers, ensuring that Norwich Theatre's ways of working meet industry best practice.
- Support the implementation of organisational strategies relating to creative talent development and sector skills priorities.
- Support the organisation's role within the wider regional creative ecology by strengthening relationships with freelance networks and practitioners.

Commissioning and Engagement

- Lead and coordinate freelance contracting processes for teams, from commissioning and onboarding through to project completion and offboarding, incorporating welfare support and reflective practice.
- Support colleagues across departments to develop clear commissioning processes for freelancers.
- Advocate best practice in providing freelancers with clear project briefs, timelines, budgets and expectations.
- Promote transparent and inclusive approaches to engaging freelance talent, supporting access to diverse, specialist and emerging practitioners.
- Strengthen relationships with regional and national freelance networks to support access to specialist and diverse talent.

Information, Communication and Resources

- Develop and maintain a central information resource for freelancers working alongside the organisation.
- Ensure freelancers can easily access and process relevant information relating to projects, organisational policies and processes.
- Advocate for strong freelance engagement, supporting colleagues across departments to work effectively with all freelancers and ensure expectations are understood and information is shared consistently to improve efficiency.

Administration

- Negotiate terms and conditions with freelancers and agents.
- Ensure completion of relevant DBS checks and Chaperone Licenses.
- Administrate the contract, ensure it's in place, and ensure that the relevant union agreement terms are adhered to.

Skills Development and Sector Awareness

- Work with internal stakeholders to identify skills gaps with freelancers relevant to organisational practise and programme delivery.
- Working with internal teams and external partners where appropriate, support opportunities for reflection and feedback to identify opportunities for learning and professional development relevant to freelancers, including digital delivery, inclusion and sustainable production practices.
- Research and share sector intelligence and emerging practice with freelance practitioners.

Freelance Relationships and Networks

- Build and maintain positive relationships with freelance practitioners working with the organisation.
- Support the continued development of platforms that allow freelancers to contribute insight and feedback into organisational thinking, including through the Creative Advisory Group.
- Develop and maintain connections with regional and national freelance networks, partners and sector bodies.
- Encourage opportunities for collaboration, knowledge sharing and professional connection between freelancers themselves whilst working alongside us.

Quality, Compliance and Organisational Practice

- Support colleagues across departments to maintain clear and consistent approaches to working with freelancers.
- Work with Finance and People and Culture colleagues to support consistent processes relating to contracting, payment and compliance awareness.
- Help ensure freelancers receive relevant organisational policies and guidance required to undertake their work safely and responsibly.
- Support opportunities for reflection and learning following projects, encouraging constructive feedback and shared learning across teams.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Support the collection of insights relating to freelance engagement across the organisation for continuous improvement in organisational practice.
- Monitor patterns of freelance engagement and report on freelance engagement, skills development and sector partnerships.

Organisation-Wide Responsibilities

- To demonstrate and promote our core values of Creativity, Impactfulness, Honesty, Kindness, Inclusivity and Bravery.
- To seek to advance Norwich Theatre's vision "To make all of our Creative Experiences have wide reaching positive impact."
- To ensure you are always an ambassador for Norwich Theatre's mission: "We deliver creative experiences through Bold Theatre that speaks loud and clear, driving Social Impact that touches lives and communities, underpinned by Creative Endeavour that sees growth and change."
- To comply with all Norwich Theatre policies including Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety, IT, Data Security and Protection.
- To undergo any training necessary to fulfil the duties of this role and to develop its contribution to the organisation.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Experience and Knowledge	• Experience in negotiating terms and conditions with freelancers and agents • Experience of relationship management with freelancers in the arts • Knowledge of UK Theatre agreements and industry working practices • Experience of developing or improving processes and systems • Understanding of current challenges affecting freelancers and others within the creative industries • Experience of monitoring, evaluation and reporting	• Experience in commercial and freelance contracts • Up to date broad knowledge of the UK cultural landscape • Experience of co-creation or collaborative programme development with freelance practitioners • Experience of working within a producing or theatre environment • Knowledge of safeguarding procedures DBS requirements and safer working practices • Experience of coordinating projects, programmes or creative activity involving multiple stakeholders
Skills	• Excellent written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills with the ability to build positive working relationships with key stakeholders • Ability to influence and advocate for effective working practices • Strong organisational skills with the ability to prioritise workload and manage competing deadlines • Confident problem-solving and decision-making skills • Ability to manage sensitive information with professionalism and discretion • Budget monitoring and administrative coordination skills	• Experience of developing guidance, resources or communications for freelancers or creative teams • Confidence in facilitating meetings, workshops and feedback sessions
Attributes	• A commitment to fair, inclusive and supportive approaches to working with freelance practitioners • An interest in theatre, live performance and the wider cultural sector • Empathetic, approachable and able to build trust with a wide range of people • Proactive, adaptable and solutions-focused • Calm, resilient and well-organised under pressure	• Commitment to sector sustainability

This description is not exhaustive & may change to meet the needs of the organisation. The post holder may be required to perform duties outside of this as operationally required, but within reasonable scope of this role at the request of the relevant manager or director.

About us

Norwich Theatre is a leading arts organisation in the UK, the largest in the East of England, presenting a vibrant programme of live performances and creative engagement activities to entertain, enrich and inspire audiences of all ages and backgrounds. We are a creative force and culture hub at the heart of Norwich and Norfolk, working with local, national and international partners to create and share extraordinary theatre experiences as well as host the best touring productions the UK and the world have to offer.

Every year, over 400,000 people visit our venues, Theatre Royal, Playhouse and Stage Two. Whether you watch a show, take part in our activities or relax in our restaurant and bars, these spaces are for you.

We are an independent charity with no regular public funding, and rely on a share of ticket sales, one-off grants, fundraising/ membership schemes and other commercial activities to deliver the work we do. On average we only keep 20p in every £1 spent on tickets. Any surplus funds generated each year are reinvested into our artistic and creative programmes and support our work with the community to keep inspiring future generations.

At the core of our organisational values is a profound belief that we should: "inspire a sense of the magic of theatre in all those who work here or who visit to see our performances, take part in our activities or spend time in our buildings."

A commitment to brilliant experiences underpins everything we do and shapes how we work as a team, the partners we collaborate with and the way in which we welcome our visitors. Fundamentally, we believe that our work and our buildings should be for everyone.

At Norwich Theatre, we believe in the power of arts and culture to nurture society and regenerate communities. As a creative force and cultural ambassador for Norwich and Norfolk, we deliver inspiring and wide-reaching artistic programmes both on and off our stages. We work with established and early career artists/ theatre-makers/companies from all backgrounds and disciplines to create and present bold and ambitious artistic projects and creative experiences.

Sitting alongside our artistic programme, our creative engagement activity is crucial to achieving our vision as it connects with an exceptionally diverse mix of people, it encourages creative development and supports social and emotional wellbeing.

Every year, more than 5,000 people of all ages and backgrounds engage with our award-winning Take Part programme and community engagement activities.



Why us?.....

Our values.....

Creativity

We nurture our own creativity, apply our creative skills to everything we do and respect the value of all forms of creative experience.

Impactfulness

We deliver our work focused on achieving positive impacts for the people and places with which we engage.

Honesty

We are open and honest with ourselves and all those with whom we work.

Kindness

We lead with kindness when working together and with others.

Inclusivity

We listen carefully and always strive to co-create to ensure that we hear the most diverse range of voices and actively break down real and perceived barriers.

Bravery

We are not afraid to challenge ourselves and actively embrace experimentation and innovation in pursuit of our vision.

Diversity and inclusion.....

Theatres should be places which reflect and embrace the diversity of the world we live in, but still so many stories are left untold. We are a Theatre of Sanctuary and have a responsibility to use our platform to create a safe environment for all members of our community to come together and to champion creative voices from all backgrounds.

We are committed to long-lasting and meaningful change, and are always willing to re-examine and challenge our practices and ways of thinking in order to develop creative programmes, practices and policies that support, foster and develop a culture of equality and inclusion both on and off our stages.

We are actively engaged in becoming a more open organisation by creating opportunities for transparent and safe discussions amongst our peers and colleagues and by using our platforms to amplify marginalised voices.

We particularly recognise the under-representation in our workforce of people from the Trans community, people with disabilities, as well as Black, Asian and global majority people. We are also mindful that fair access to working in the arts remains one of the most urgent issues facing our sector today, with those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds still vastly underrepresented amongst the artists and employees of UK theatres.

We are committed to addressing this under-representation and welcome applicants from these backgrounds, identities and experiences.

You can:

- Support us to make a huge difference to the lives of people within our community through the work we do on and off our stages.
- Work in a creative environment that is a key part of our city, county and regional cultural offer.
- Be part of our fantastic culture with people who are incredibly skilled, experienced and passionate about what they do.

Benefits, Flexibility & Wellbeing

Here are the things that we offer to our people:

Learning culture

- Ongoing training and development support both internally and externally
- Professional membership subscription support
- Genuinely inclusive culture which embraces open two-way communication through various forms such as:
 - Forums
 - Regular organisational updates
 - Internal & external coaching and mentoring support

Health & Wellbeing

- Focus on ensuring all our people are able to enjoy a healthy work/life balance supported by our health and wellbeing offering
- Subsidised wellbeing events and activities throughout the year
- Access to an Employee Assistance Programme

Theatre Perks

- Access to complementary show tickets across all three of our stages
- Discounted show tickets
- Generous discounts in our bars and restaurants

Not forgetting

- Enhanced Employer Pension Contributions
- Flexible working
- Enhanced holiday allowances, which increase with length of service
- Eye care vouchers
- And of course, free tea and coffee

Why work in Norwich?.....

Norwich is a city that blends rich history with a vibrant, modern spirit.

Once England's second city, it remains one of the country's most beautiful and culturally dynamic places to live and work. With its medieval lanes, striking architecture and two stunning cathedrals, Norwich offers a unique sense of place and heritage.

But Norwich is far from just a city of the past - it has a thriving creative scene, a flourishing food and drink culture, and an active calendar of festivals and events. As the only city in England set within a National Park, you're never far from nature: the Norfolk Broads, award-winning coastline and wide-open countryside are all on your doorstep, offering an exceptional quality of life.

Living in Norwich means enjoying the best of both worlds: a friendly, close-knit community with a strong independent spirit, and excellent connections to London, Cambridge and beyond. The city is regularly named among the UK's best places to live, thanks to its balance of culture, green spaces, affordability and opportunity.

Whether you're strolling through the historic market, discovering new artists in one of the city's many galleries, or enjoying the buzz of a sold-out show at one of Norwich Theatre's venues, you'll find Norwich a city that both inspires and welcomes you.



Rated the best place to live in the UK by the Sunday Times 2026



Only 90 minutes by train from London, with daily flights from Amsterdam



Unrivalled learning and innovation at Norwich Research Park and two TEF Gold-standard universities



The only English city inside a national park, the Norfolk Broads



Ranked as the highest performing city in the East of England region in the PwX's 2023 'Good Growth for Cities' Index



Norwich named in Britain's top 10 cities to live and work in (The Telegraph)



THO

THORNS ///
Gardening & Leisure

THORNS ///
Electrical & Plumbing

JARROLDS

WILKINSON'S
Tea & Coffee
Merchants

Except cycles

THE BIG
ISSUE
OFFICIAL VEN
For the 100,000 who read
nothing goes on
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