



Our Vision

We change the way people see theatre, each other and the world around them.

Our Mission

Our historic building, once the world's biggest cotton exchange, was taken over by artists in 1976. Today we are an award-winning cultural charity that produces new theatre in-the-round, in communities, on the road and online.

Exchange remains at the heart of everything we make and do. Now our currency is brand new drama and reinvigorated classics, the boldest artists and a company of highly skilled makers - all brought together in a shared imaginative endeavour to trade ideas and experiences with the people of Greater Manchester (and beyond).

The Exchange's unique auditorium is powerfully democratic, a space where audiences and performers meet as equals, entering and exiting through the same doors. It is the inspiration for all we do; inviting everyone to understand the past, engage in today's big questions, collectively imagine a better future and lose themselves in the moment of a great night out.

The Royal Exchange Theatre sits at the heart of Manchester's culturally dynamic city centre. We are one of the largest and most compelling producing theatre companies in the UK commissioning, creating, and developing original and ambitious theatre in our two permanent theatre spaces - a 750 seat in-the-round space and a 90-seat flexible studio space – as well as throughout the building, across the city and beyond. We have additional space in the Northern Quarter area of the city, Swan Street, which houses our Production Workshop where we design and build all our theatre sets. As well as the workshop, Swan Street also contains another rehearsal/studio space and the theatre's vast Costume Hire Department housing thousands of its on-stage costumes.

We are a vibrant and resilient cultural charity¹ and company limited by guarantee² turning over c.£8m per annum. We currently generate 43% of income from the box office, 16% from other earned income streams and 9% from fundraising from individuals, business sponsorships and trusts and foundations³. Government revenue grants account for 27% of total income, of which Arts Council England National Portfolio funding is 91%. We are proud to be one of the Arts Council's major artistic partners in the English Regions and to be a champion of their Creative Case for Diversity⁴.

All our work is original, conceived and made here, in our theatre and workshop in Manchester, for, by and with the community that we serve and represent. We are the major producer of theatre in Greater Manchester (GM) with work on stage over 40 weeks of each year. We generated a Gross Value Added (GVA) of £31m for our city region in 2016—17⁵, a return of almost £12 on each £1 of public subsidy invested.

Our work is distinctive due to our unique theatre space and the exceptional artistic leadership of Sarah Frankcom, and her sector-leading commitment to risk-taking, diversity and supporting the next generation of creative talent. We are the co-founders of, and home to, the Bruntwood Prize for Playwriting, Europe's biggest prize for new writing. Our pioneering programme of creative learning and engagement has also gained a high profile within our sector.

Annual attendance at plays in the North West is estimated at 1,550,304⁶ and RET's market share is 8.8%. In 2016 our productions played to over 200,000 people here, 77% of available capacity; 185,000 people across the globe engaged with RET work digitally in cinemas, TV, BBC iPlayer or radio. Our database has over 61,000 customers active in

¹ Charity Number: 255424

² Company Number: 927203

³ Based on 2017—18 budget

⁴ Creative Case for Diversity is Arts Council England's commitment to promoting and embedding diversity throughout the work they fund

⁵ New Economy Foundation for Association of Greater Manchester Authorities

⁶ Audience Agency

the last two years. Our achievement is recognised in national media and in 2016 we were the Stage Newspaper's Regional Theatre of the Year.

Our unique auditorium suspended within a vast Grade II listed trading hall of the Royal Exchange building is one of the most remarkable theatre designs of the 20th Century. It is a breath-taking must-see for local people and visitors to the region, and we welcome over 250,000 visitors per year in addition to our paid theatregoers.

The Company is led by a joint Executive of the Artistic Director, Sarah Frankcom, and the Executive Director, Mark Dobson, who report to the board of Trustees, chaired by Ben Caldwell. We employ/contract the services of up to 500 people each year. Of these c140 (96 FTE) are in permanent positions, and another c350 are employed on short term contracts as actors, stage management, creatives, technicians etc. There are 116 volunteers across the organisation.