



JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: Associate Director

HOURS: 40 hours per week

SALARY: £40,000 per annum

CONTRACT: Fixed-term (18 months)

RESPONSIBLE TO: Artistic Director/Co-CEO

OVERVIEW

The Royal Exchange Theatre is seeking a highly experienced Associate Director to support our Artistic Director / Co-CEO, Selina Cartmell. This is a unique opportunity for an experienced theatre director to join a fast-paced artist-led team with an exciting programme of ambitious artistic projects planned over the 50th anniversary year and beyond.

The successful candidate will play a key role in the delivery and development of world-class theatre and productions. They will support the creative team to create, develop, coordinate and evaluate existing and new projects; programming a year-round repertoire of dynamic and impactful work both on and off our stages. Our ideal candidate is a highly-driven creative who is passionate about the classics, new work and shaping a new artistic chapter at the Royal Exchange. The Associate Director will also work closely with the New Work Associate and producing team offering a range of opportunities for artists and our talent development programmes. They will also collaborate with other relevant partners and envision how this grows in response to the changing needs of the sector

The postholder will also be a highly valued, respected and critical artistic voice, working closely with the Artistic Director to develop exciting ideas that inform the programme and the new artistic identity of the theatre as it celebrates its 50th Anniversary in 2026.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

ARTISTIC

- Take an active role in the planning, execution and review of the programme of produced work across the Royal Exchange Theatre spaces including the discussion of ideas, partners and creative teams.
- Contribute to the realisation of celebrations for the Royal Exchange Theatre's 50th Anniversary in 2026 and beyond.
- Actively engage in the Theatre's artistic output, directing plays as appropriate.
- Work with the Artistic Director and Producing and Production teams to evaluate and guide produced work.
- Attend read throughs, rehearsals, dress rehearsals and previews in order to support the director, company and creative team throughout a production's life cycle.
- Contribute to the Theatre's new work and artist development programme and provide mentoring and support to participants .

- Work with the Artistic Director to mentor and support Assistant Directors and trainee directors and develop a more formalised forum and pathway for emerging directors and artists across our spaces.
- Support the Artistic Director in commissioning and nurturing new plays and ideas.
- Seek out and propose directors who would benefit from research and development opportunities.
- Work on the dramaturgical development of commissioned work and others in development.
- Create and make work as a director and develop as an artist through the period of the residency.
- Advise the Artistic Director and producer on programming opportunities for received work.
- Alongside the Company Manager, caretake productions for the duration of their run, including understudy and cover arrangements.

MANAGEMENT, STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP

- Represent and deputise for the Artistic Director externally and internally as required.
- Contribute to creation of the 2026-2029 Business Plan, and other strategy documents and funding applications.
- Work with the Artistic Director and Producer on scheduling .
- Support the Fundraising team in identifying opportunities for funding, contribute to bids and support reporting requirements.
- Support the Communications team, including on copywriting and proofreading for brochures, press releases and publicity materials.
- As an advocate for the Royal Exchange Theatre ensure high standards in all aspects of the company.
- With the support of the Artistic Director, lead on the development of mentoring alumni, programming suitable content (live and digital) and implementing key projects.
- Contribute meaningfully to the work on equality, inclusion and diversity at a national level and play a role in the re-shaping of work around diversity, in line with NPO practice.
- Actively promote good practice in well-being.
- Help to ensure Royal Exchange Theatre is engaging with artists and organisations from a broad range of backgrounds.
- Manage project budgets as appropriate.
- Keep up to date with developments in artist development and maintain a network of contacts locally, nationally and internationally with industry professionals.

GENERAL DUTIES

- Represent Royal Exchange Theatre externally at events and meetings including press nights and cultural sector networks and contribute to the company's views and position on public policy.
- Actively seek out talent and promote the opportunities for the Royal Exchange Theatre.
- Foster new partnerships with creative organisations including writing agencies, universities, and broadcasting companies and international co-producers relevant to the strategic plans of Royal Exchange Theatre.
- Undertake any other reasonable duties to fulfil the objectives of the Theatre.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Skills and Experience

- Experience of directing productions of quality and ambition and directing your own work at mid to large-scale (five professional productions minimum).
- Considerable experience of associate directing at a mid and large-scale level.
- Practitioner and mentoring experience in a theatre environment.
- Strong knowledge of the theatre-producing process.
- Thorough knowledge of the dramatic literature canon, as well as 21st century work.
- Excitement about finding new ways to revive plays or create new adaptations of existing works .
- Interest in creating work that reaches out to new audiences and reflects the diversity of the Greater Manchester and UK.
- Ability to articulate fresh ideas and vision.
- Excellent inter-personal skills with ability to relate to and communicate effectively with a wide range of people.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with clear evidence of the ability to be articulate, engaging, logical and inspiring.
- Ability to manage a busy and diverse workload, with constantly changing priorities, within a dynamic environment.
- Strong understanding of the dramaturgical process.
- The ability to work collaboratively and form effective partnerships internally and externally.
- An affinity for the mission, vision and work of the Royal Exchange Theatre.
- A genuine and demonstrable commitment to broadening of cultural diversity and access across all areas of the theatre.
- Knowledge of UK theatre landscape - particularly in the Greater Manchester area
- An energetic and self-motivated approach to work.
- A demonstrable interest in Artistic leadership .

Desirable Skills and Experience

- Experience of cultural policy and practice in the UK, and specifically in relation to producing theatres and/or the performing arts.
- Experience of current creative learning practice.
- Experience of working with professional emerging theatre artists and supporting their development.
- Experience of working with broad and diverse range of artists and communities.
- Experience of working with writers (both experienced and emerging) and on new work.
- Ability to create work for a variety of theatre spaces and audiences with professionals and non-professionals.
- Experience of working to develop artists and companies.