

STORYHOUSE



Wardrobe & Costume Manager Recruitment Pack

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Welcome from the CEO

Storyhouse is one of the UK's foremost cultural charities; its home in Chester incorporates a library, theatres, and a cinema. It is also an acclaimed theatre producer and runs the country's most successful regional open-air theatre in the city's Grosvenor Park, as well as the innovative Moonlight Flicks open-air cinema each year.

Storyhouse plays an important part of cultural life in Chester and continues to be a beacon of inspiration for many other cities and towns for the role it has played in social and economic regeneration, its successful and unique integration of world-class theatre, cinema, and library facilities, as well as its bold, exciting, diverse, and award-winning programming.

It is also a great place to work. We offer a flexible and supportive working environment, value experience as well as skills and qualifications, and work to ensure everyone in the organisation is aware of our equality and diversity commitments. We want to support all staff to fulfil their potential and enjoy a happy and healthy workplace.

We hope you decide to join us,

Annabel





Our Story

You can find a bit about who we are on our [website](#), discover more about our innovative home and how it came to be in [this case study](#) by Arts Council England, or read about our renowned library in this [blog](#) by the DCMS's library team.

Above all, Storyhouse is a creative community. As a diverse cultural organisation, our home is one of the country's most successful cultural buildings housing a cinema, theatres and a library. Last year we welcomed 800,000+ people through our doors. We are both a community hub and combined arts producer.

Our library attracts international recognition, known for its seamless integration, and boasts the longest opening hours of any UK public library.

In 2023-24, we supported 5,768 young people to connect and create, ran 180 free rhyme-time sessions, created 423 magical performances indoors and outdoors, sold 108,298 theatre tickets and hosted a total of 1,618 cinema screenings.

Visits are roughly split into thirds between event attendances, library users, and wider participation. We enjoyed the support of over 14k volunteer hours and 1,328 different individuals were involved in making and supporting our work.

Grosvenor Park Open Air Theatre, which we founded in 2010, is the UK's largest regional open-air theatre, welcoming over 25,000 people every summer.



This House is Your House

We've become a vital part of the region's cultural landscape and a place of safety and support for our communities - especially for young people, giving them a space where they can reimagine their place in the world.

Over 40 community groups use us as a base for creative activity each month, including LGBTQIA+ and disability groups, refugee integration activities, mental health support sessions, and groups combatting social exclusion by age.

We work extensively with young people and provide a range of different programmes, from youth theatre and our young company, to young leaders, young programmers, and our many schools and education programmes. Throughout our work we collaborate with local partners throughout to ensure we are reaching the people that would usually have the least opportunity to participate.

Across everything we do, we work to give people the power to build their own creative communities through inspiring stories and shared creative experiences: [this house is your house.](#)

As we blend theatre, library, restaurant and cinema services, we share inspiring stories and stage creative events which empower people to nurture their creativity and bring together communities. Through our work, we hope to build a more connected, inclusive and creative community network.

The more open we are to the true and rich diversity of our communities, the more vividly we fulfil our purpose. More engagement from more of our communities will make more of Storyhouse.

We are committed to creating a team which is representative of our communities and to bringing together those with a variety of skills and experiences to help shape what we do and how we work.



A Midsummer Night's Dream, 2023, Mark McNulty

Our Strategy...

Storyhouse is about to enter an exciting new phase in our evolution as we look to develop our programmes, based on a new strategic plan, to deliver world class arts and meet community needs.

Our Vision:

Here at Storyhouse, culture is owned by everyone.

Our Mission:

We work every day to be a creative home for our communities.

Our Values:

LISTEN CLOSELY.

True empathy takes effort. So we work hard to understand different points of view.

LOOK AROUND.

Opportunities can be spotted by anyone, anywhere, at anytime. So we always have our eyes, ears and minds wide open.

SPEAK UP.

Not everyone's stories have been told. So we use our voices to amplify those that haven't been heard.

STAND UP.

Debate and discussion make things better for us all. So we don't shy away from a challenge.

REACH OUT.

Diverse perspectives solve the hardest problems and make the best decisions. So we seek them out, and invite them in.



A Midsummer Night's Dream, 2023,
Mark McNulty



Our Resources

Storyhouse is a medium-sized charity with approximately 140 staff and a gross revenue of over £7 million per year. The charity is financially stable, with a number of steady revenue streams, including a 30-year lease and contract for services with the local authority (Cheshire West and Chester) and NPO funding from Arts Council England for 2023 to 2026. Revenue from commercial activities is also essential to the charity's financial stability, and over 57% of its revenue is earned.

Storyhouse runs two wholly owned commercial trading subsidiaries: Storyhouse Production Company Limited - creating and staging Storyhouse Originals theatre productions - and Storyhouse Catering Company Limited - providing a range of catering, retail, cinema, receiving theatre and commercial services.

Despite our financial stability, like all other charities our resources are being eroded by rising costs caused by inflation and higher energy prices, and as a result of the continued cost of living crisis, demand for free-to-access services (such as warm spaces) is increasing.

Our Building

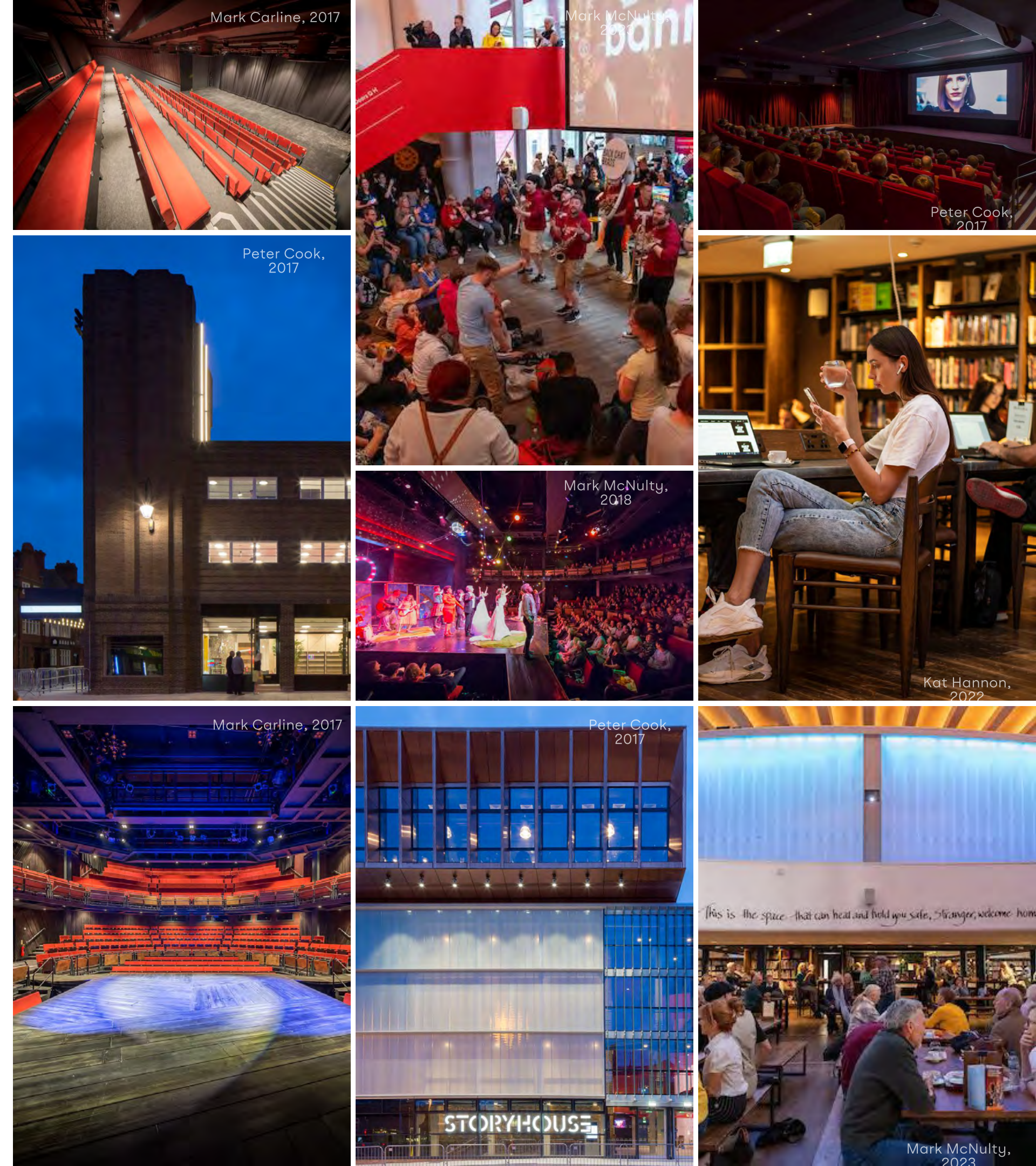
The original parts of Storyhouse were constructed as an art deco Odeon cinema in 1936, and have been restored, extended and renovated into a library, two state of the art theatres, a cinema, restaurant, and two bars.

The larger theatre is an 800-seat proscenium arch stage. With state-of-the-art facilities, its auditorium spreads across three tiers: stalls, circle and gallery. This same theatre converts into a 500-seat thrust stage (with the audience wrapping around three sides of the stage). In this format, the auditorium spreads across two tiers, with intimate seating putting the audience right in amongst the action.

On top of the building sits the Garret Theatre and Bar. This 150-seat black-box theatre is a flexible, fully-equipped performance, rehearsal, or workshop space. It is designed to be full of work made by local creative companies, individuals, and community groups, as well as a space we hire to companies and individuals.

The 100-seat boutique cinema is designed to honour the original Odeon's history as a cinema in 1936. With red velvet, soft, sunken seating, it is a beautiful event space.

The library spreads right through the building, with a dedicated family-friendly area (with wet play, storytelling room, and arts and crafts) in The Den and extensive book-stocks covering the walls throughout Storyhouse offering opportunities for studying, learning, and research.



The Role

The wardrobe and costume manager will form a vital part of the Storyhouse Production Team . The in-house Production team works across several shows, festivals and events throughout the year. As a team we work on a wide range of productions including schools tour, youth theatre shows, commercial musicals , new plays and adaptations of classics as well as immersive site-specific events.

This role would be integral to creating and delivering productions on a variety of sizes and scales, working alongside the Producers to put together and manage freelance teams when necessary to work on projects. This role needs someone who is happy to do solo work on smaller projects. The wardrobe and costume manager needs to be enthusiastic about working with new teams on a regular basis. As the sole full-time member of the wardrobe and costume team confidence in understanding all aspects of costuming in order to create excellent freelance teams and realistic budgets is essential.

This role requires someone who can delegate to a team whilst also being a skilled costume maker alongside them. Being a good communicator and someone who can create and maintain good working relationships is vital. The costume and wardrobe manager works closely with creatives such as directors and designers. Ideally we would also like someone who is passionate about skill sharing to volunteers and people who are just entering the industry.

We are a compact, agile, focused production team with big ambitions. The wardrobe and costume manager needs to be passionate about achieving the artistic vision within set parameters.



Role and Responsibilities

Recruit staff as required according to department workload, creating rotas and timesheets for all wardrobe , costumes and WHAM teams

Manage all wardrobe staff and all freelance workers respecting industry standards

Work with the producer to ensure that all staff and freelancers are contracted correctly

Meet and liaise with the Designer to gain detailed insight into the costume requirements for each show

Research, source and/or draft patterns as required for costumes

Purchase or procure all fabrics, accessories and consumables

Make, or oversee the making of, all costume construction

Hire, loan or purchase costumes as required, ensuring all costume hires and loans are cleaned, repaired and returned in good working order on a timely basis

Source and alter costumes from stock

Oversee all fittings and alterations

Attend production meetings and technical and dress rehearsals to ensure all costumes are completed to the Designer's satisfaction.

Take overall responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of costumes and accessories for each production

Role and Responsibilities (continued)

Be accountable for the ongoing maintenance and storage of Storyhouse costume and accessory stocks both onsite and in our offsite storage

To create the relevant paperwork for each closing production, including producing and submitting accounts for each production.

Liaise regularly with the Production Manager regarding the management of budgets and expenditure

To organise the packing up and transfer of costumes to other venues

To carryout costume maintenance when required

Provide any emergency cover for wardrobe, costume and maintenance staff during productions including backstage dressing

Provide the producer with a costume breakdown at white card and final model stage including estimate costings

To stick to an allocated budget and highlight any issues with the budget in timely manner

To maintain and purchase wardrobe equipment and supplies in line with building management protocol

To keep an organised and well stocked wardrobe room

Role and Responsibilities (continued)

Keep an organised and well stocked wardrobe room

Facilitate the hiring of any costumes from Storyhouse store.

Organise or facilitate transportation of costumes and required stock or equipment to the correct location

Work across multiple sites

Work within co-productions with other companies

Manage multiple professional , community based, festival and events in terms of costumes across the organisation

Person Specification

Essential

Previous professional wardrobe management experience in a producing theatre, working with and supporting creative teams.

Previous experience of putting together freelance teams to facilitate productions.

Costume and wig maintenance experience and Theatre costume and WHAM knowledge

Proven skills as a seamstress and good knowledge of making costumes.

Good Knowledge of pattern cutting and drafting.

Excellent communication and organisational skills.

Experience of managing people and working as part of a team.

Proactive, solution focused, energetic and able to remain calm whilst working under pressure

Highly organised with the ability to prioritise and multi-task

Proven experience of managing and working to a budget

Desirable

Passion for the arts and community

Knowledge and experience of costume hire houses and theatre costume stores

A good network of North West based freelance costume and wardrobe people

Knowledge of and commitment to environmentally sustainable production processes

Valid Driver's License

Experience of driving a van

To have an understanding of costumes for outdoor productions

Small scale costume design experience

Opportunity and Staff Benefits

Title: Wardrobe & Costume Manager

Reports to: Head of Producing

Salary: £30,000 per annum

Contract: Permanent, Full time, 40 hours per week worked between hours of 8.30am – 12.00 midnight Monday to Sunday.

You will be required to work further reasonable hours as are necessary for the proper performance of your duties taking into consideration the productions requirements.

Additional hours worked should be balanced against those weeks where the programme of events is less busy when it will be possible to carry out the proper performance of your duties in less than 40 hours. Any agreed overtime will be given back as time in lieu.

28 days annual leave per year, including bank holidays, increasing annually up to a maximum of 5 extra days (pro rata)

Birthday leave

A defined contribution pension scheme

Employee Assistance Programme

Cycle to Work and Travel to Work schemes

Flexible working requests available from day one, hybrid working available after completion of probationary period.

Discounted gym membership schemes and cash health plan

Complimentary tickets and discounts on food and drink

Company sick pay after qualifying service

Application Process

Applicants are asked to submit a cover letter expressing interest in the role and a CV demonstrating relevant experience to peopleteam@storyhouse.com

Applications must be submitted by **5 February 2025**. All applications will be reviewed by a panel and shortlisted candidates invited to interview.

Interviews: week commencing 17 February 2025

If you have any questions or would like an informal chat about the opportunities this critical role presents, please contact: helen.redcliffe@storyhouse.com





GDPR

Personal Data Notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent.

The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

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