

STORYHOUSE



SYC
Facilitator
Open Call



Storyhouse, 2017, Becci Lane

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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





Chester Disability Pride Parade, 2023, Mark McNulty

Our Story

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 850,000 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 2024-25, we supported 6,289 young people to connect and create, ran 190 free rhyme-time sessions, created 423 magical performances indoors and outdoors, sold 187,916 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 17,600 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 28,000 every summer.

You can find even more 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.



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 the community - 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 £6 million per year. The charity is financially stable, with a number of steady revenue streams, including a 20-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

Storyhouse is delighted to be seeking a facilitator (freelance role) to work with the Storyhouse Young Company during the training phase of their 2026 programme.

Storyhouse Young Company (SYC) is a free training scheme for 18–25-year-olds who are interested in developing their performance skills.

This is an exciting opportunity to work with a diverse group of emerging young artists and develop an ambitious and exciting curriculum for our actor training programme.

We are interested in meeting bold creatives with innovative ideas to take ownership over this project and put their stamp on this training programme.

The facilitator will work with the company for 16 weeks before handing the company over to a professional director to work on a production.

The role will be based at Storyhouse, Chester and will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure criminal records check through the Disclosure and Barring Service.



About Storyhouse Young Company (SYC)

SYC runs from January 2026-May 2026 and consists of two phases:

Phase One: 16-weeks of training with a facilitator

Phase Two: 4-weeks of rehearsals with a director

Phase One sessions will take place on Tuesday evenings from January 13.

Key Dates:

15 & 16 December: SYC Company Auditions

13 January: Phase One begins

27 April: Phase Two begins

18 May: Show Week



About SYC (continued)

SYC plays a vital role in fostering a vibrant and thriving arts scene in the Chester. SYC is committed to nurturing local talent and providing opportunities for aspiring actors. Our free acting programme provides a unique training opportunity for young people in the borough to develop their skills, gain exposure and potentially kickstart their careers.

Each year, Storyhouse conducts auditions to select a group of talented young actors from a variety of backgrounds who will form the core company for a production. It is important that the text chosen for the SYC production is sufficiently challenging, critical and reflective of our Storyhouse programming. In 2023, SYC performed 'The Trials' by Dawn King, in 2024 they performed 'Shoot/Get Treasure/Repeat' by Mark Ravenhill and in 2025 they performed scenes from Caryl Churchill's 'Love and Information'.

SYC company members are also offered the opportunity to audition for our Trainee Actor Programme to gain real-world experience by participating in the professional acting company at Grosvenor Park Open Air Theatre during the summer season.

Funding for the SYC programme comes from Couch funding and donations from our wonderful audiences.



Gangs of New York (Tr
Actor), 2024, Mark Mo

Role and Responsibilities

You will

- Design and deliver an informative and engaging curriculum that explores a variety of theatre practitioners and techniques (such as Stanislavski's naturalism, Brecht's Realism, etc) that prepares the young people for a rehearsal period and production with a professional director
- Lead facilitate weekly, 3-4 hour workshops with up to 16 young people, aged 18-25, which are accessible yet appropriately challenging
- Work with the Children & Young People Programme Manager to ensure the programme is in line with Storyhouse values
- Liaise with the SYC Director to ensure that the training phase of the programme is relevant to the final production
- Mentor and support the Assistant Director/Facilitator in sessions to ensure they are developing their skills and feel supported
- Work with the Pastoral Support Lead to identify any young people who may benefit from further support
- Ensure that SYC is accessible for a range of young people with diverse skills and experience from a variety of backgrounds
- Ensure that Storyhouse safeguarding policies and procedures are adhered to and upheld
- Identify progression routes for young people following on from the course
- Act in accordance with Storyhouse's policies and procedures, and undertake any training as required by Storyhouse.
- Act as a role model for other staff and contribute to the life of the organisation as a whole
- Carry out any other duties as may be required as part of the role.

Skills & Experience

A passion for working with young people from a range of backgrounds and with a breadth of needs, experiences and abilities

Ability to work as a team, in collaboration with both staff and young people

Excellent communication skills and the ability to communicate with a range of people and ages

Well organised

Knowledge of safeguarding and child protection

Passionate about creating opportunities for young people to thrive

Awareness of the issues affecting young people's lives

Experience designing and delivering a curriculum or programme

A knowledge of a variety of theatre practitioners and techniques

Experience facilitating workshops with young people

Experience collaborating with other creatives

Experience motivating and supporting young people

Experience working with a diverse range of young people and supporting any access requirements

Experience working with an Assistant and mentoring and supporting their development

Terms

Title: SYC Facilitator

Reports to: Children & Young
People Programme Manager

Fee: £2360

Total fee inclusive of planning,
preparation and travel.

This includes 16 weekly
sessions, SYC auditions, planning
meetings with line manager, and
at least 2 meetings with the SYC
Director to ensure the content of
the training is relevant.



Trainee Actors, 2024, Mark
McNulty

Application Process

We welcome applications from both individuals and companies.

Applicants are asked to submit a cover letter expressing interest in the role and a CV demonstrating relevant experience here: www.storyhouse.com/jobs/

We are particularly interested to learn about your ambitions for the SYC 2026 curriculum. Please outline this briefly (no more than one paragraph) in your cover letter along with any experience that you might wish to highlight.

The deadline for applications is 10am on Friday 21 November.

Interviews will take place at Storyhouse on Wednesday 26 November, questions will be sent in advance. There will also be a practical workshop element to the interview process.

For an informal discussion about the role or support in the application process, please contact Bryony.



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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