

AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award studentship - **'Theatre Without Walls: Rethinking Engagement, Participation and Social Impact in (Post)Pandemic Scottish Theatre'**

Applications are invited for a full-time PhD studentship funded by Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC), via the Scottish Graduate School of Arts & Humanities (SGSAH) (<https://www.sgsah.ac.uk/>)

Start date: 1st October 2022. (The award cannot be deferred to a subsequent academic year.)

End date: 31 March 2026

Application Deadline: 12 noon (BST), 26 May 2022

Interviews: 10 June 2022

Theatre Without Walls is hosted by the National Theatre of Scotland's Creative Engagement Department, in collaboration with Theatre Studies at the University of Glasgow. The supervisory team comprises Paul Fitzpatrick, Director of Creative Engagement at NTS, and Dr Cristina Delgado-Garcia, Dr Eirini Nedelkopoulou and Prof Dee Heddon from Theatre Studies at the University of Glasgow. The student will be expected to spend time at both the National Theatre of Scotland and the University of Glasgow, as well as becoming part of the wider cohort of doctoral researchers in the University of Glasgow's College of Arts, and the SGSAH. We particularly welcome applications from Disabled People, people of colour, and other under-represented groups in the creative industries sector.

Project Overview

This doctoral project aims to assess the National Theatre of Scotland's (NTS) commitment to dismantling barriers to creative participation, equity and justice – to being a 'theatre without walls' – during and for (post)pandemic times. Seeking to enhance the NTS engagement processes and practices, the project examines the potential relationships between the hyper/local and national in the field of ethical and equitable community engaged practices. It asks: **'How can artist-led co-creation, participation and social impact be theorised anew within the remit of a national organisation after the pandemic?'**

Context

The concept of a 'theatre without walls' has enabled the NTS to promote itself as a theatre that is ostensibly nowhere and therefore, by implication, everywhere. This is not only a matter of geographical reach: the organisation is committed to challenging barriers, championing theatre that engages communities and supports social change – a theatre for everyone. The combination of 'national' and 'inclusive' generates significant challenges for artistic and institutional practice. Community-engaged arts tend to be geographically hyper/local and, within this, they focus on communities of shared identity or interest. This practice is in tension with the organisation's national remit and aspirations. COVID-19 has also brought into sharper relief ongoing systemic inequities and exclusions and the need for arts and culture to contribute to post-pandemic recovery. This requires that the NTS dynamically rethinks and expands on its mission to reach out to communities that have been significantly affected by the pandemic and to (re)build trust and interest.

This doctoral project brings together a comprehensive analysis of co-created and participatory work in (post)pandemic times, and an exploration of the potential relationships between the hyper/local and national in the field of ethical and equitable community engaged practices.

Research questions

- How can artist-led co-creation, participation and social impact be theorised anew after the pandemic and within the remit of a national organisation?

Candidates will be expected to shape the project as the research develops, but subsidiary questions may include:

- What new artistic strategies for co-creation, collaboration, participation and social impact have emerged following the pandemic and to what extent have these transcended tacit but persistent binaries about socially engaged and participatory arts, including social inclusion vs. aesthetic ambition; participation vs. authorship; hyperlocal/local vs. national/international interest?
- How can we rethink NTS's audiences as a diverse community rather than a unified body of participants/spectators? To what extent can participatory practices facilitate and (re)negotiate audience heterogeneity?
- How can online/networked participation contribute to/expand NTS's post-pandemic engagement strategy? What new strategies for online 'inclusive' participation can be implemented to transcend assumptions about geography, perspective, and identity of audiences.

Methods

At the core of the study is the work of NTS, though this will be located within a wider set of case studies to facilitate knowledge creation and exchange across and beyond the wider theatre sector of the UK. In developing the project, the doctoral researcher will work closely with NTS's Creative Engagement Team. They will also engage with other areas of the organisation, including Artistic Development and Audiences. Please note that the primary research method of this project is not anticipated as being practice based.

Aims

In the context of the (post)pandemic, NTS seeks to radically rethink what community means, where it is located, and the terms of engagement that will drive commitment to equity and social justice and reduce barriers to participation. This PhD project aims to address an enduring tension and actively inform the organisation's future strategy and practice: how to embed artist-led community engagement, participation, and co-creation and still deliver at a national level.

Details of the Award

Funding will cover tuition fees at the home/UK rate, a stipend at the Research Council rate (£16,062 for 2022-23), and a mobility allowance of £550 p/a, full-time for 3 years and 6 months. The College of Arts will waive the difference between the UK and International fees for this studentship, meaning that all students are eligible to have their tuition fees covered in their entirety.

In addition to the stipend and fees, NTS will contribute up to £1,000 per financial year directly to the student to support collaborative research-related expenses of the student.

Given the aim of the research informing NTS's future policies and work, the project is being offered on a full-time basis only.

As a collaborative award, students will be expected to spend time at both the National Theatre of Scotland and the University of Glasgow.

Eligibility

This studentship is open to both Home and International applicants. To be classed as a home student, candidates must meet the following criteria:

- Be a UK National (meeting residency requirements), or

- Have settled status, or
- Have pre-settled status (meeting residency requirements), or
- Have indefinite leave to remain or enter

We want to encourage the widest range of potential students to apply for this studentship and particularly welcome applications from Disabled People and people of colour as they are currently underrepresented across both doctoral research in the arts and the wider arts sector.

Applicants should normally have a 2:1 Honours Undergraduate Degree or equivalent international qualification and should have completed or be completing at the time of application a Masters' degree in a relevant discipline (e.g., Theatre Studies, Drama, Cultural Policy, Community Practice). Applicants without a Masters' qualification (awarded or pending) are invited to provide information about relevant professional experience, skills and knowledge.

Application Process

- Please download and complete the Application Form.
- Secure two references.
- Attach your completed Application Form and two references in one single email to recruitment@nationaltheatrescotland.com using subject heading CDA.
- Deadline for submission is 12 noon (BST) on Thu 26 May. Late applications will not be considered.

Guidance for Applicants

Qualifications

1. We expect candidates to have completed or to be studying towards a Postgraduate Master's qualification in a relevant subject. If you are not in this position, you must use the 'Relevant professional experience' section to provide evidence that the training and development you have received is equivalent to that obtained through a Master's course in a relevant subject and, therefore, prepares you to continue to doctoral study.
2. Non-standard and/or unclassified qualifications
We recognise that some applicants will have completed degrees which are non-standard or unclassified (i.e., Pass/Fail only) or, for contextual reasons, an Ordinary rather than an Honours Degree. Where this is the case, you should still complete the qualifications section.

3. Relevant professional experience (300 words maximum)

This section is intended to provide a level playing field for applicants with unrelated or no Master's qualifications (awarded or pending) but who have demonstrably relevant professional experience. **It should only be completed by candidates who:**

- Do not have and are not studying towards a Master's degree or equivalent.
- Are returning to Master's study after a considerable break in higher education.
- Have gained a Master's degree more than five years previously.
- Have a Master's degree that is not in a relevant subject.
- **AND** have significant professional experience, which is relevant to this project.

Whilst we do not wish to discriminate against applicants who may not previously have had the opportunity to study at postgraduate level, you should be aware that a doctoral degree is rigorous training at the highest academic level. If you are completing this section, you should provide evidence that any training and development you have received is equivalent to that obtained through a Master's course and therefore prepares you to continue to doctoral study.

4. Personal Statement (300 words)

We are keen to know why you are interested in this particular PhD project. We would also like to know what you hope to gain from undertaking a PhD, and this PhD specifically, and why you should be selected.

5. Preparedness for proposed doctoral project (300 words maximum)

Please demonstrate how your previous study (Undergraduate / Masters) and / or professional experience have prepared you for **this particular doctoral project**. This might include reference to your UG and Master's programmes of study and your dissertation topics, specific and appropriate methodological training and/or expertise (e.g. proficiency in a relevant language, particular IT skills etc.), work based learning or employment in a relevant occupation, etc.

6. Training needs (300 words maximum)

While your project is likely to build on and extend existing skills, it is expected that you will develop new skills during their programme of study. If appointed, you will have the opportunity to discuss in more detail and with your supervisors your training needs. Here, we

invite you to reflect on what skills you think the project, as you perceive it, will require, and what skills you will need to develop to ensure that you are able to complete it successfully. You may also be keen to develop additional professional skills, beyond those required for the completion of the doctorate. As you will be funded by SGSAH, you will be expected to access their resources throughout your doctoral study. You can find information about the range of training offered by SGSAH. Please see further information here [https://www.sgsah.ac.uk/e t/](https://www.sgsah.ac.uk/e_t/)

7. Referees

As well as providing the details for your two referees, please remember to submit their references with your application.

Next Steps

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview on the morning of 10th June. Interviews will be held at the National Theatre of Scotland's premises in Glasgow, or online, according to the preference of each candidate. We are not able to cover any travel costs.

Shortlisted candidates may be invited to submit an example of recent academic writing (e.g., Masters chapter or undergraduate dissertation where the applicant does not have a MA qualification) in advance of the interview.

The successful candidate will need to formally apply to the University of Glasgow's PhD programme and this will require submission of qualification certificates and transcripts.

Questions

If you have any questions about this opportunity, please email Deirdre.Heddon@glasgow.ac.uk