



SOUTH ASIAN ACTION PLAN 2023/24

Context

In 2021 the National Theatre of Scotland made a commitment to proactively develop deeper relationships with Scotland's South Asian communities and artists, in recognition that our South Asian communities are an important but often overlooked community in Scotland, despite being our largest people of colour community.

Our first step was to establish a South Asian Steering Group for an initial phase of discovery, which established that:

- These conversations have been going on for over 20 years, and very little has changed in the Scottish theatre sector.
- In order to make any real, sustained cultural change for the sector and for South Asian artists and audiences, there needs to be a significant increase in the number of South Asian led works produced in Scotland, across all scales, themes, venues, audiences etc.
- National Theatre of Scotland cannot make any significant impact on our own. The challenge is sector wide and needs to be addressed by the whole sector.
- It was generally agreed that, for change to happen, it needs to happen at all levels and access points simultaneously: artist development, workforce development, community engagement and audience development.

Any future strategy/programme will need to consider how it addresses all these intersecting areas in tandem.

Learning from our actions in any one year will inform and determine actions in future years.

Priorities

We established three key priorities for the theatre sector in Scotland:

1. **Development of sustainable connections with our South Asian communities**
2. **Development of ideas for South Asian productions**
3. **Development of existing South Asian audiences for theatre, and those who are 'theatre curious'**

Action Plan

2023

Action 1: We will use its leadership, and collaborative power to share their learning with other organisations and find ways to proactively work in partnership to co-drive these priorities over the next 5 years. (Priorities 1-3)

Action 2: We will conduct an internal audit of what we currently offer communities, artists, future workforce and audiences and establish how those opportunities can be specifically targeted at/tailored for South Asian artists/communities etc on an ongoing basis. We will ask our peers to do the same. (Priorities 1-3)

Action 3: We will work with our steering group members to identify and become actively connected with a range of Glasgow's South Asian community groups. (Priority 1)

Action 4: We will work in partnership with our sector partners and steering group, design a long term programme that will develop communities/audiences/artists/workforce in tandem – seek external dedicated funding for that programme. This programme will be the backbone of our actions over the next 4-5 years.(Priorities 1-3)

Action 5: We will issue an open call for ideas from South Asian artists for large scale theatre commission. (Priority 1-2)

Action 6: We will continue to proactively seek out and meet South Artists and prioritise approaches from South Asian artists looking for development and producing support through our year round open ideas portal <https://www.nationaltheatrescotland.com/for-artists/submit-your-ideas> for support through our usual commission and decision making channels.

Action 7: We will issue a call out for ideas for a short digital film to mark South Asian Heritage Month 2024. (Priorities 1-2)

2024

Action 1: Delivery of our long term development programme

Action 2: Explore working with tertiary and higher education to identify placement, internship and mentoring opportunities for young South Asian people interesting in careers in the arts. Seek funding for these opportunities.

Action 3: Develop relationships with organisations/platforms who can help us reach into South Asian communities in the recruitment of core and temporary staff and show teams.

Action 4: Identify platforms and partners for productions of the new South Asian led ideas from our development slate from 2025.