

NOTTINGHAM PLAYHOUSE

Recruitment Pack

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

March 2024



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

NOTTINGHAM PLAYHOUSE
UK'S MOST WELCOMING THEATRE



CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

We are seeking an experienced strategic leader to oversee the finances and operation of Nottingham Playhouse.

The Chief Operating Officer will be responsible for the overall financial leadership of Nottingham Playhouse’s business functions. They will lead on operations, hospitality and facilities, ensuring the highest possible standards are met across the various teams. They will hold a key executive role working alongside the Chief Executive and Artistic Director, providing strategic business support and deputising as required.

The successful candidate will have considerable experience of working at a senior level within a customer facing, high volume transaction business and of successfully leading and managing teams.

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced and approachable financial manager to join a dynamic organisation with a leading regional and national reputation. This role is offered as a permanent, full-time contract with opportunities for development, flexible working and a relaxed working environment.

Nottingham Playhouse is committed to a policy of diversity and inclusion, creating a workforce representative of the diverse communities we work with. Our workforce is currently under representative of certain communities and we are taking positive action for equal opportunities through the recruitment process. We have established a Diversity in the Workforce Working Group to ensure that we are doing all we can to recruit a more representative workforce.

We would like to help you to fully participate in the application process. If you would like the Recruitment Pack, Application Form and Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form in an alternative format, support in completing your application, or you would like an alternative way to apply, please contact us at recruitment@nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk to discuss a suitable format, or ring our Stage Door on 0115 947 4361. Please leave a message with your full name, contact information, your address (if you need paperwork posting to you) and details of your request.

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ABOUT NOTTINGHAM PLAYHOUSE

We create theatre that's bold, thrilling and proudly made in Nottingham.

Awarded Regional Theatre of the Year 2019 by The Stage, Nottingham Playhouse is one of the country's leading producing theatres and creates a range of productions throughout the year, from timeless classics to innovative family shows and adventurous new commissions.

Under the leadership of Chief Executive, Stephanie Sirr MBE and Artistic Director, Adam Penford, we are mounting more varied and ambitious productions, attracting a host of high-profile performers and creatives, garnering increased media attention and commercial interest.

We want our theatre to be a space where everyone feels they belong, and we use our stage to tell diverse stories that reflect our city. Our wide-reaching participation programmes create life-changing experiences for our community and we also support the next generation of theatre-makers in the East Midlands through our extensive Amplify programme.

Nottingham Playhouse is a registered charity (no. 1109342). All of the funds we raise help to ensure we're reaching as many people as possible to give them new opportunities and create lasting memories.

Our building has grade II* listed building status and is home to Anish Kapoor's *Sky Mirror*.

Click [here](#) to watch our introductory video.



WHAT OUR COMMUNITY THINKS

"Honestly, the final few minutes of the first act were some of the most captivating, powerful and heart wrenching I've seen on stage. Incredible!"

– Audience member on *The Madness of George III*

"Nottingham Playhouse has a very special place in my heart. At the age of 16, my school placed me at the theatre for my work experience... Without [them], I wouldn't have the career I do now."

– Indhu Rubasingham, Artistic Director of Kiln Theatre

"The actual performance was an incredible experience. Firstly, just to be on the Nottingham Playhouse stage was a dream for all of us. But to be a part of such a powerful, visceral production was an absolute privilege."

– Lisa Chamberlain, on her experience as a member of our community ensemble during Gary Clarke Company's production of *COAL*.

NOTTINGHAM PLAYHOUSE IN 2024

We have lots of exciting programming scheduled for 2024, starting with a thrilling adaptation of Philip K. Dick's *Minority Report*. This is followed by a gripping, intimate revival of *The Children* and an exploration of sisterhood and creative expression in new commission *Liberation Squares*. The spring season concludes with *Punch* by James Graham, a fascinating new play about toxic masculinity and the incredible power of forgiveness.

This summer, *The Trials* gives a voice to the young people who have no choice but to live with the consequences of climate change. Our highly anticipated, brand-new production of *Dear Evan Hansen* premieres in September and marks the first time that the Broadway and West End phenomenon will tour the UK and Ireland.

Looking ahead to Christmas, our legendary pantomime reaches new heights with *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Younger children can look forward to a brand-new retelling of *The Ugly Duckling*, for which the writer, composer and director are all being selected through an open call-out.

OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

The essence of who we are is to **create wonder in Nottingham**. We believe that, through theatre, being transported to different worlds broadens our horizons, that by being positive, relevant and devoted we provide an experience, not just a stage. At Nottingham Playhouse, we give a voice to untold stories and cultivate life-changing experiences. Our theatre is a place where everyone belongs, a place of entertainment, heart and joy.



NOTTINGHAM PLAYHOUSE

Our vision is to create high quality art that is truly accessible and representative of both our heritage and our rich diversity. We aim to be a nationally recognised destination theatre, a producer of “must see” work and a venue that welcomes everybody to be entertained, surprised, delighted and challenged by work that is bold, brilliant and

relevant. Working in partnership with exciting artists and companies regionally, nationally and internationally, we create theatre that puts Nottingham Playhouse on the map.

We exist for the benefit of the people of our region – be they audiences, participants or artists. As a publicly-funded organisation we commit to ensure that our demographic of opportunity reflects the demographic of our catchment – including gender, ethnicity, sexuality, socio-economic standing and disability – to be not just world-class but also truly inclusive in all areas of operation, including to recruit and pay fairly. To strengthen our actions we have established a Diversity in the Workforce Working Group to ensure that we are doing all we can to recruit a more representative workforce.

In January 2021 we launched an Anti-Racism Action Group to look at the wider culture and environment at Nottingham Playhouse. The group advises the Executive and Nottingham Playhouse Board of Trustees on matters of diversity, inclusion and equality, with the aim of ensuring that we are a safe and fully representative organisation, which reflects the full breadth and richness of diversity within our community. We have created an on-line system for Reporting Racist Incidents.

A core value of Nottingham Playhouse is to proactively create and support opportunities for cultural participation for all ages, for all backgrounds. We also work in supportive partnership with a very wide range of stake holders to cement our position as an organisation with a strong artistic vision that includes the development of artists.

Nottingham Playhouse is a founder member of [Ramps on the Moon](#), a member of [PiPA](#) (Parents and Carers in Performing Arts) and a [Family Friendly theatre](#). We are committed to the [UK Theatre/SOLT Ten Principles](#) to encourage safer and even more supportive working practices in theatre and have signed up to the [Old Vic Guardians initiative](#). Find out more about Nottingham Playhouse by visiting our [website](#) or our [YouTube channel](#).



ABOUT NOTTINGHAM

Nottingham is known internationally for its links to the fabled Robin Hood, who called nearby Sherwood Forest home. It is home to a thriving cultural scene including Nottingham Playhouse, Nottingham Contemporary, Theatre Royal and Concert Hall, Broadway Cinema, Motorpoint Arena Nottingham, Lakeside Arts Centre and New Art Exchange.



Today the city is a prosperous metropolis and is the 6th largest city in the UK with the 7th largest economy in the UK. Whilst Nottingham's emergence as one of the UK's largest urban areas can be linked to the Industrial Revolution, today the city's key industries include culture, digital media, sciences as well as retail and leisure.



The city boasts an excellent array of shops, restaurants, and attractions and is renowned for its thriving music scene. It also has a proud sporting history. The city was named as England's 'first City of Football' in 2014, pipping Manchester to the number one spot and Nottingham Forest have recently returned to the Premiership.

House Prices

Nottingham has emerged as a 'saver friendly' choice for buyers. Buying a house in or around Nottingham is comparatively affordable and particularly in family-friendly places like Beeston, Sherwood, Wollaton and West Bridgford.

According to [Zoopla](#), the current average house price in Nottingham as at January 2024 is [£259,130](#). This is great value when compared to similarly-sized cities across the UK; the average cost of a house in London in the same period is [£733,749](#)!

Living in Nottingham is therefore an enticing option, with the average price of a detached home currently at £369,576, semi-detached at £234,132, terraced houses at £178,467 and flats at £287,103.

Rental Prices

If you are considering renting, Nottingham is currently offering renters a choice of around [1,554 properties](#). The average rent is £795 pcm for a one-bedroom and £1,101 pcm for a two-bedroom property, around 70% lower than the [average in London](#).

Public Transport and Walking

Public transport is plentiful and affordable using Nottingham City Transport buses, East Midlands Trains and the Park and Ride system with NET Trams. Nottingham also has numerous new and well-maintained cycle paths, an e-scooter system and a car share system.

As a city with a small footprint, walking is a great way to get around! Nottingham is full of fascinating history to soak up while you walk. Enjoy a stroll along the popular canals and take in stunning views of the city. There are also several fantastic walking locations that neighbour the city. For the best walks in Nottingham check out www.AllTrails.com.

Working

Nottingham is the East Midlands' leading commercial, retail, financial and business centre. The city plays a huge role in the UK's national and regional economic growth. The retail sector, in particular, is pivotal to the city's economy and one of the major employers.

The city also has a reputation for being particularly enterprising. In 2011 the Nottingham Enterprise Zone focused on expansions for new business sectors including aerospace, rail and automotive industries.

Many large companies have their main offices in Nottingham, including Boots, Vision Express, Specsavers, Experian, Capital One, Loomis and Speedo. The UK's biggest bioscience innovation, BioCity, is also located in Nottingham. This hub of science-based companies is home to around 80 individual firms.

With so many different industries based in Nottingham, it is not a surprise that the city was one of the top 10 cities in the UK for job growth from 2004-2013.

Education

Nottingham has a diverse education system, with currently over 144 schools and colleges in the city providing education to students from primary school age up to college and sixth form.

Of its 89 primary schools, the best include Welbeck Primary School, South Wilford Endowed CofE Primary School, St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Old Basford School and Haydn Primary School. All of these schools have received the coveted 'Outstanding' review from Ofsted.

5 of Nottingham's 33 secondary schools have also been awarded Ofsted 'Outstanding', including Bluecoat Wollaton Academy, Fernwood School, Nethergate Academy, Oak Field School and Rosehill School.

Universities

Nottingham is a popular University city, catering to over 60,000 undergraduate students between its two universities [Nottingham Trent University](#) and the [University of Nottingham](#). Both institutions have outstanding reputations, with the University of Nottingham being a member of the esteemed Russell Group.

Restaurants

Nottingham is home to a huge number of cafes, pubs and restaurants to enjoy a fantastic meal, from the Michelin starred [Restaurant Sat Bains](#) and [Alchemilla](#) to independently owned restaurants and well known chains.

Partake in Nottingham's rich history by dining at England's oldest inn, [Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem](#), or underground in one of the city's 800+ ancient caves (the largest cave network in the UK) at [Hand & Heart](#). Above ground, the [Malt Cross](#) is the only Victorian Music Hall in the country that operates as its original design intended, providing food, drink and live music.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Job Description

Responsible to: Chief Executive, Artistic Director

Key working relationships: Artistic Director, SMT, Board of Trustees, Chair of Risk & Audit Subgroup

Responsible for: Finance Manager, Operations & Theatre Manager, Commercial Manager, HR Manager, ICT Manager

Job Purpose:

- To play a key role in the senior management team of Nottingham Playhouse, contributing to the creation and delivery of business objectives and plans.
- To be responsible for overall effective financial leadership related to the operation of Nottingham Playhouse and all associated activities including capital projects.
- To lead the delivery and financial control of the Finance operations of Nottingham Playhouse Trust Ltd, working closely with the Finance Manager and team.
- To lead operations, hospitality and facilities, working closely with the Operations & Theatre Manager and Commercial Manager.
- To ensure that the highest possible standards of operations are achieved within the allocated resources across finance, HR and operations, working closely with the HR Manager.
- To provide strategic business support to the Chief Executive.
- To deputise for the Chief Executive as and when necessary in their absence. To occasionally deputise for Artistic Director.

Duties include:

Operational

- To lead the finance function, demonstrating excellent budgetary control procedures and financial disciplines are adhered to, ensuring all legal obligations are met.
- To review income targets, monitor performance, review pricing levels and ensure that opportunities to maximise efficiency and support commercial activity are acted upon.
- To analyse financial information and report on financial performance including but not restricted to management accounts, cash flow, financial accounts, spend per head, income/expenditure trends and cost centre analysis and to recommend corrective actions as appropriate.
- To ensure monthly Finance reports for Nottingham Playhouse Trust Board are generated and to attend Board meetings to present the report to Board members.
- To oversee the annual audit process and the preparation of the Statutory Accounts.
- To monitor sales and streams of earned income in all areas of the theatre operation and to ensure all necessary action is taken to ensure maximum return is gained from each, particularly focusing on FOH Income, Hires, Production Income and all strands of Overhead Income.
- To monitor expenditure in all areas of the theatre operation and act to minimise expenditure through competitive tendering etc.

- To oversee all areas of insurance, facilities management, security and health and safety, ensuring all areas of the business are compliant, in-line with statutory requirements and all training needs are met.
- To oversee the theatre's hospitality and events provision, monitor performance against targets and support the Commercial Manager in developing strategies to increase income and financial return.
- To oversee, with the Operations & Theatre Manager, all commercial contracts for facilities and operations and manage contracts to ensure delivery and service is maintained, holding service providers to account.
- To ensure all financial reporting obligations for our principal funders and stakeholders are met and are both on time and accurate.
- To be responsible for the management and update of Nottingham Playhouse's Risk Register.
- To lead the theatre's business continuity and disaster recovery planning supported by the Operations & Theatre Manager.
- To ensure compliance with all statutory, legal and financial reporting requirements including those relating to the Charity Commission, the Companies Act and issues of governance.
- To act as Company Secretary and ensure the financial and legal obligations of the theatre are adhered to.

Budgeting

- To develop, in conjunction with the Chief Executive, rolling 3 year budgets, financial models for the business, together with accompanying risk assessments and contingency plans.
- To prepare budgets and cost benefit analyses of activities as required
- To assist senior managers in the preparation of budgets for business plans, co-productions, one off projects and so forth.

Strategic

- To play a proactive role in business and programme planning.
- To develop, implement and support, in conjunction with all departments, initiatives for generating additional earned income from the broadest possible range of sources and to continually review the cost/benefit of existing sources of earned income to the organisation.
- To continually seek and assess the feasibility of new streams of income and to develop and exploit these so that they generate a return.
- To develop links and contacts locally, regionally and nationally and to use these proactively to increase income generation and maximise business performance.
- To benchmark income/expenditure against comparable organisations for the purposes of improving business performance
- To benchmark financial performance against other comparable organisations and to analyse and disseminate the results as appropriate.
- To identify new sources of income and to apply for these where appropriate in particular with regard to public funding.

Other

- To line manage the Finance Manager and ensure that an efficient and effective financial control and reporting system is operated within the Playhouse.
- To lead and, where appropriate, project manage key projects on behalf of Nottingham Playhouse

- To represent Nottingham Playhouse at networking meetings where appropriate across the City and region.
- To manage the relationship with NCC Building and Maintenance personnel, ensuring that they fulfil their responsibilities as Landlord in respect of the repair and maintenance of the building. To develop timelines and maintenance plans in conjunction with the Head of Operations and NCC personnel.

General

- To maximise income and minimise expenditure at all times
- To always act in the best interests of Nottingham Playhouse
- To take positive action to promote Diversity and Inclusion in all aspects of the work of Nottingham Playhouse. Engaging fully with all initiatives to promote diversity within Nottingham Playhouse
- To abide by Nottingham Playhouse policies such as Health & Safety, Diversity and Inclusion, Safeguarding, Data Protection, Environmental Sustainability etc.
- To support Nottingham Playhouse in achieving its Carbon Literacy and sustainability strategy
- To maintain confidentiality in all areas relating to Nottingham Playhouse
- To carry out such other duties as may be reasonably expected of the post.

The job description will be subject to review on a regular basis to reflect the changing requirements of Nottingham Playhouse and the developing skills of the post holder. We acknowledge that this is a wide-ranging job description and recognise that the post holder will require support, such as training, in some areas, which will be provided.

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Person Specification

We use these criteria in the shortlisting process, so it is important to explain how you meet them in your application form. Give us examples of what you have previously done that shows us how you could be right for the role.

Essential Criteria	Assessed at	
	Application	Interview*
Experience of operating at a senior level within a comparable, customer facing, high volume transaction business and of successfully leading and managing teams.	✓	✓
A demonstrable record of implementing strong financial management, controls and procedures, of leading a finance function and of influencing senior management across organisations, ensuring all legal obligations are met.	✓	✓
Experience of setting/monitoring budgets and working within financial parameters.	✓	✓
Significant experience of analysis and reporting on financial information and financial performance including but not restricted to management accounts, cash flow, financial accounts, spend per head, income/expenditure trends and cost centre analysis.	✓	✓
Experience in overseeing the annual audit process and the preparation of the Statutory Accounts.	✓	✓
A demonstrable record of commercial acumen including ensuring strong spend per head is maintained	✓	✓
Demonstrable experience of working in a professional theatre or other visitor attraction at a senior management level	✓	✓
Significant experience of staff line management including appraisals, training/development needs assessment and managing issues.	✓	✓
Experience of strategic planning.	✓	✓
An approachable and diplomatic communicator, with the ability to communicate effectively at all levels within and outside the organisation.	✓	✓
Understanding of Health & Safety issues and the impact on a public facing venue.	✓	✓
Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion.	✓	✓
Ability to work under pressure and to deadlines.	✓	✓
Ability to motivate, galvanise and support a diverse team of managers to deliver their best work.	✓	✓
Proven track record of delivering significant measurable business improvements.	✓	✓
A strong interest in the Arts and an understanding of the issues faced by the sector	✓	✓
Excellent use of written and oral English in reports, presentations, and day-to-day communication.	✓	✓
IT skills, including working knowledge of Microsoft Office Word, Excel, Outlook.	✓	✓

Desirable Criteria

- Qualified accountant with a minimum of five years post qualification experience.
- Experience of direct or indirect buildings management
- Health and safety training
- Charity finance management experience
- Experience of working with creative teams.
- Experience of working with UKT/union agreements.

*Aptitude for the role may also be assessed through a task or test during the interview stage.

Nottingham Playhouse is committed to developing and nurturing its employees. Candidates do not need to have every skill on the Person Specification but should be able to demonstrate their potential ability to learn them with the appropriate training and support.

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Terms and Conditions

- Salary: £60,000 - £65,000 per annum, dependant on experience
Payable monthly in arrears by credit transfer
- Hours: 37½ hours per week. Monday to Friday. One hour for lunch.
Normal office hours 9.30am – 6.00pm. Due to the nature of the role some evening, weekend and Bank Holiday working will be required.
- Overtime: No overtime is payable. Reasonable time off in lieu may be given for authorised extra hours with the permission of the Chief Executive or Artistic Director.
- Contract: Full Time, Permanent contract
- Probation Period: 6 months
- Notice Period: 6 months in writing by either party
- Flexible working: This post is suitable for Flexible Working arrangements
- Place of work: Will normally be Nottingham Playhouse. However from time to time the Chief Operating Officer will be required to travel, regionally and nationally.
- Holiday: 5.6 weeks per annum (i.e. 4 weeks pa plus bank holidays)
The Holiday year runs 1 April – 31 March
- Pension Scheme: Contributory staff pension, 5% employee and 4% employer
Nottingham Playhouse workplace pension scheme is provided by NOW:Pensions
- Other Absences: In line with the UKT/BECTU agreement and House agreement (e.g. illness, maternity)

Non-Contractual benefits:

In addition Nottingham Playhouse offers a number of discretionary benefits including

- Free and/or discounted tickets for performances including Press Nights
- Free Playhouse Pass membership
- Discounts on our bars offer
- Opportunities for Flexible Working
- Day off on your Birthday
- Free to use Employee Assistance Programme provided by Care First
- Discounted travel on Nottingham City Transport Buses
- Discounted parking at Mount Street and St James NCP
- Training
- Cycle to Work scheme

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DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESS

Nottingham Playhouse is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity and creating a workforce representative of the diverse communities we work with. We believe that theatre belongs to everyone and want to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to be involved. We want to work with people from diverse backgrounds, who will bring different skills and experiences to help us to achieve this.

Nottingham Playhouse has identified that our workforce is currently under representative of certain communities, particularly people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual heritage, indigenous to the global south and or have been racialised as ethnic minorities and we take positive action for equal opportunities through the recruitment process. We have an Anti-Racism Action Group and an Access Working Group to create a programme of change to deliver increased representation, and to advise the Executive and Nottingham Playhouse Board of Trustees on matters of diversity, inclusion and equality.

We actively encourage applications from the Global Ethnic Majority and Disabled people. Applicants who identify as from the Global Ethnic Majority and/or as Disabled on the Equal Opportunities Monitoring form will be guaranteed an interview for workforce vacancies if they meet the minimum criteria on the job person specification. We are committed to ensuring that interview panels are as representative as possible, whilst comprising the relevant skills and experience to assess candidates' suitability for the role.

We are a Disability Confident employer, recruiting and supporting disabled people in the workplace.

If you would like the Recruitment Pack, Application Form and Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form in an alternative format, or support in completing your application, please contact us at recruitment@nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk or ring our Stage Door on 0115 947 4361. Please leave a message with your full name, contact information, your address (if you need the paperwork posting to you) and details of your request.

We welcome proposals to consider for flexible working on hiring. We are part of the Parents in Performing Arts (PiPA) campaign and welcome applications from people who have caring responsibilities and anyone looking for a positive work/life balance.

We are open to discussing the possibility of flexible working. While we can't necessarily guarantee to give you your exact proposal, we do promise to carefully consider your request and explore what is practical for the role.



HOW TO APPLY

Please download and complete the Application Form and Equal Opportunities monitoring form that you will find on our website. Please note we will not accept a CV in place of the application form.

Filling in the application form

Please ensure that you complete all sections of the application form in full. The first page of your application form will be separated from the rest of your application in order to **anonymise the shortlisting process**, to help to eliminate unconscious or conscious bias. Please do not put your name elsewhere in your application.

As you fill in the application form, please explain how you think you meet the **job description and person specification** for the role. The information you provide will be used for the shortlisting process. It is important in your application to give us examples of what you have previously done that shows us how you could be right for the job and why you're enthusiastic about joining Nottingham Playhouse. You do not have to have previously undertaken all of the duties in the job description but you should tell us about your potential ability to do them.

Data and monitoring

As part of recruitment procedures Nottingham Playhouse collects and processes personal data relating to job applicants. We are committed to being transparent about how and why we collect, use and keep personal data secure. Please see Nottingham Playhouse Recruitment Privacy Notice on the website for full details.

The Equal Opportunities monitoring form will be separated from the application and will not be available for the persons preparing the shortlist with the exception of obtaining information about disability required to make reasonable adjustments for interview. Data obtained from the forms will be used solely for monitoring purposes and no one individual can ever be identified.

Submitting your application

Please submit your completed Application Form and Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form by email to: recruitment@nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk

*Please send as a **Word document or PDF**. Do not send as a Mac Pages file, Zip file or use file sharing services such as One Drive or Dropbox.*

Or by post, marked Private and Confidential, to: **Recruitment, Administration Office, Nottingham Playhouse, Wellington Circus, Nottingham, NG1 5AF.**

If you require an alternative way to make your application, please contact us at recruitment@nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk to discuss a suitable format, or ring Stage Door on 0115 947 4361. Please leave a message with your full name, contact information and details of your request.

Deadline for applying

Closing date for applications: **Wednesday 1 May 2024 at 12noon.**

Interviews (may be subject to change): Monday 13 May 2024

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application. We will contact you by telephone or email if you are shortlisted for interview.

Thank you for your interest in Nottingham Playhouse and we look forward to receiving your application.