



Youth  
Theatre  
Arts  
Scotland



# Tread the Board

Board Recruitment Pack 2023



# A Message from the Chair



Thank you for your interest in becoming a Board Member/Trustee of **Youth Theatre Arts Scotland** (YTAS). I am proud to be the chair of YTAS, the national development agency and umbrella body for Scotland's youth theatre sector. This is a small, in-touch, pioneering organisation that punches well above its weight!

We're looking for applications to increase the size of our Board by three people. We want to hear from candidates from all walks of life, irrespective of level of experience, personal circumstances or characteristics. First-time Board Members are welcome. If you're passionate about our work and determined to develop your board acumen, we'll provide training and mentoring to help you help us.

Since 2004, YTAS has led and supported a sector which is broad and diverse. It is also motivated by a passion for collaboration and sharing achievements. Many of the youth theatre groups, individual professional artists and volunteer facilitators who make up the Scotland's youth theatre sector are also members of YTAS. More than 100 of them in fact. This network encompasses small youth theatre groups, large national organisations, those who receive funding and those who are run by volunteers. And what's more, they are all led by creative and inspiring people who are dedicated to providing a safe, inclusive and rewarding experience which improves the lives of young people in Scotland.

Youth theatre is an ideal medium to encourage the dreams and visions of young people and to build their self-confidence. We are always striving to find new and exciting ways to let people in and deepen their engagement. We celebrate and encourage ambition, innovation and progression, and strive for quality in all that we do, including the governance of our organisation.

Now is a great moment to join our Board. In recent years YTAS adapted our own activities and developed new ways of supporting Scotland's youth theatre sector through unexpected challenges brought about by the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis. In 2022 we restarted some of the projects and events we had paused during this time, and have also carried forward learning and experience from our new activities, relationships and ways of working. We're now piloting exciting new plans for our organisation and our sector which we intend to build upon for the future.

As some of our current Board Members are reaching the end of their term, we are recruiting new people who have enthusiasm for our work, a willingness to champion the work of YTAS and Scotland's youth theatre sector, and who are committed to carrying out the duties of a Board Member.

To maintain a good balance on our board at this time, we are particularly interested in hearing from people who have skills or direct experience in youth theatre, professional theatre, digital communications and/or public relations/advocacy (see our Person Specification for more details).

YTAS is committed to inclusion and promoting diversity. We welcome interest from people of all sectors of the community, and particularly encourage applications from under-represented communities, including people with a disability, those who are d/Deaf, those from minority ethnic communities, those who are part of the LGBT+ community, non-binary people, those aged 16-25 years and all others who would like their voice to be heard.

This pack will help you understand a bit more about us and the role of a YTAS Board Member. It contains:

- An organisational summary
- A guide to operational structure
- A person specification for the role
- Details of how to apply

We very much look forward to hearing from you.

**Hazel Wotherspoon**  
**Chair, Youth Theatre Arts Scotland**

# Organisational Summary

## Who we are...

YTAS is the national development agency and umbrella body for Scotland's youth theatre sector.

**Our purpose** is to make the lives of young people better through youth theatre.

**Our vision** is for universal access to quality youth theatre activity across Scotland and universal recognition of its impact.

**Our mission** is to support, connect and inspire youth theatre participants across Scotland and the adults who work with them.

We deliver our work through a combination of:

- sector support,
- sector training and development,
- youth theatre events and projects, and
- research and advocacy.

## As an organisation, we value...

**Helping Others** We support, enable and champion.

**Community** We are welcoming. We respect difference, provide inspiration and build collective confidence.

**Collaboration** We work with and connect a rich network of people and places.

**Excellence** We encourage ambition, experimentation and progression. We always strive for quality.

**Joy** We have an upbeat and positive approach.

## Our Impact

We are a recognised leader in Scotland's youth arts scene, supporting and developing a sector which engages 14,000 young people every week. Each year:

- 3,000 young people, professionals and volunteers attend our events and activities;
- 13,000 young people benefit from the training and support we provide the adults who work with them; and
- 20,000 users access our online resources and communications.

## A Climate Aware and Climate Active Organisation

YTAS is a climate aware and climate active organisation. We are proud to be a member of the Green Arts Initiative, an interactive community of arts organisations working to reduce their environmental impact and contribute to a more sustainable Scotland. We are committed to monitoring and reducing our own environmental impact, and to inspiring, encouraging and supporting our sector to act sustainably as we transition towards a climate-resilient and low-carbon economy.

## What We're Working On Just Now

Our activities in 2023 include:

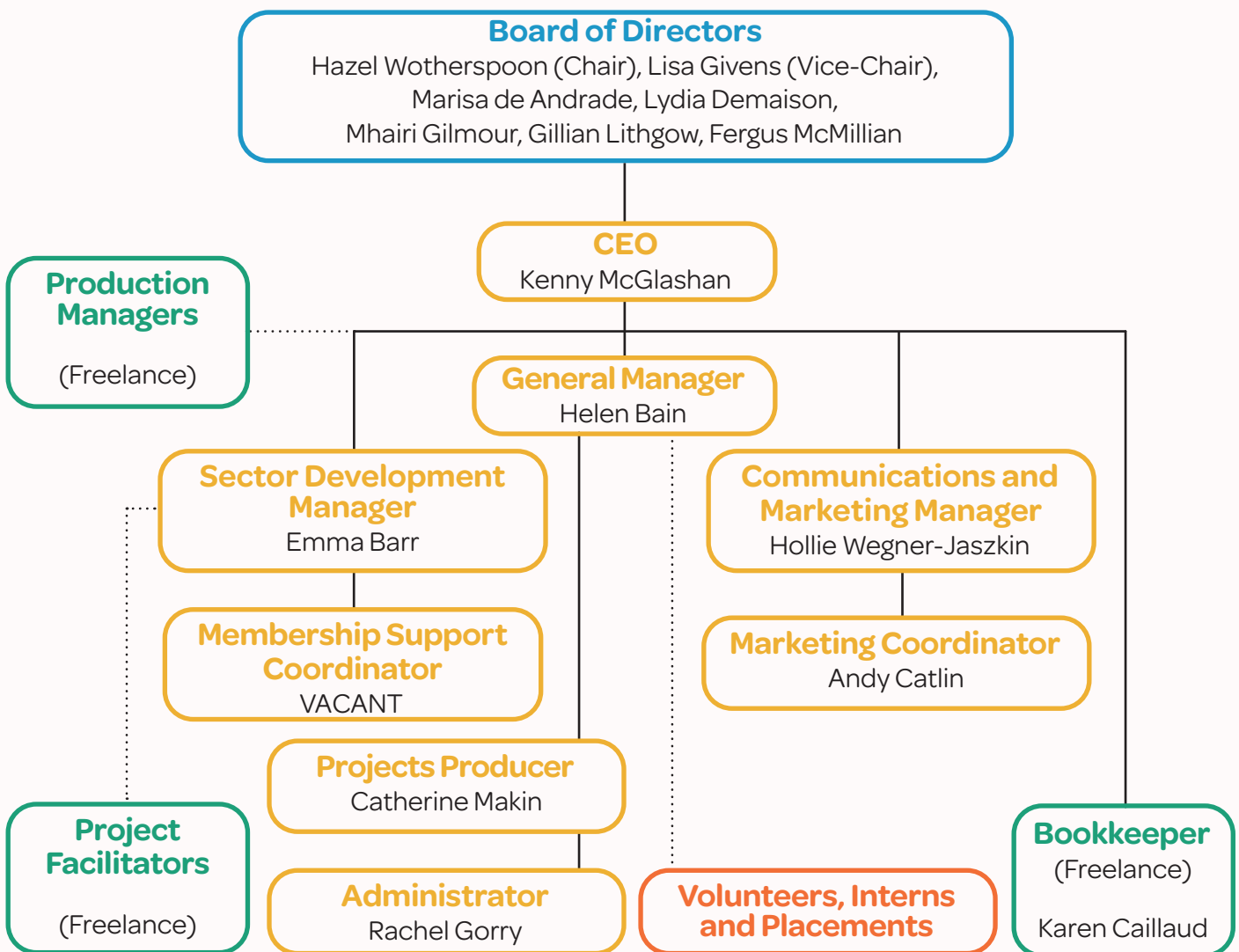
- Undertaking our third **Youth Theatre in Scotland Sector Review**. This is a research project involving a national mapping exercise. The findings will give us an up-to-date picture of our sector and inform how we plan and focus our future activities and support.
- Continuing to share the findings of our 2022 research into the **Long-Term Impact of Youth Theatre Participation**.
- Establishing a brand-new digital Membership Support Hub and recruiting a new post of Membership Support Coordinator. These things will allow us to support our members as they improve and develop their business practices.
- Programming online and in-person national and regional sector training events for youth theatre leaders and practitioners.
- Completing our multi-year **BUZZ Network** project in collaboration with four European partner organisations in Norway, Belgium, Ireland and Germany.
- Planning our three-day residential **National Festival of Youth Theatre** 2024.
- Preparing our next multi-year funding application to Creative Scotland.

We are a registered Scottish charity and a recognised leader in Scotland's youth arts scene. You can find more information about our work at [www.ytas.org.uk](http://www.ytas.org.uk)



# Guide to Operational Structure

## Our Organisational Structure



## Legal and Financial Status

Since YTAS is a company limited by guarantee, and Scottish charity registered with OSCR and HMRC, all Board Members serve in an official capacity as both company directors and charity trustees. When we use the umbrella term 'Board Member', we are referring to both of these roles together.

We have received core funding from Creative Scotland since 2005.

## Location and Affiliations

In 2020, YTAS decided to become a remote-working organisation. This decision provides more flexibility for our staff, who live in different regions of Scotland, and also reflects the national remit of our work.

YTAS is a member of Culture Counts, the Federation of Scottish Theatre, YouthLink Scotland, the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, The Touring Network, Together (the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights), the Scottish Mentoring Network, Amateo and ACOSVO. In 2023 we became a



charter partner for both PiPA (Parents & Carers in Performing Arts) and LGBT Youth Scotland. We are an accredited Living Wage employer and our work is supported and promoted by our patron, the Scottish actor Sam Heughan.

## Governance

YTAS is governed by a voluntary Board which meets quarterly. It is the responsibility of the Board to monitor the performance of the organisation and to provide advice and suggestions as appropriate. The Board aims to maintain a range of lay experience to balance membership from within and outwith Scotland's cultural sector.

The Board has delegated the overall responsibility for the day-to-day running of the organisation to the CEO. This includes fundraising, staff management, marketing and project development. The CEO attends all Board meetings and is responsible for informing the Board on all issues pertaining to the running of the organisation, including finance and any activities being undertaken to achieve organisational objectives.

It is the responsibility of the Board to agree the strategy of the organisation. The CEO is responsible for formulating the strategy and setting a budget to achieve this strategy. This budget must be endorsed by the Board.

The membership of the Board is reviewed annually and its current composition is...

Hazel Wotherspoon (chair)	Chief Executive, Regional Screen Scotland
Lisa Givens (vice chair)	Chief Executive, Toonspeak Young People's Theatre
Marisa de Andrade	Programme Director, School of Health in Social Science, University of Edinburgh
Lydia Demaison	Director of HR, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
Mhairi Gilmour	Arts Practitioner
Gillian Lithgow	Depute CEO and National Programmes Director, YouthLink Scotland
Fergus McMillan	Head of Equality and Diversity, Skills Development Scotland



# Person Specification and Key Responsibilities

YTAS's Board is made up of talented individuals. They are passionate about the contribution the arts make to Scotland's cultural, social and economic life. They are confident champions of our organisation and of youth theatre as an art form. And they are always ready and willing to network on behalf of the organisation.

No specific level of education and/or experience is required. Training and mentoring will be provided to new Board Members.

YTAS is committed to inclusion and promoting diversity. We welcome interest from people of all sectors of the community, and particularly encourage applications from underrepresented communities, including people with a disability, those who are d/Deaf, those from minority ethnic communities, those who are part of the LGBT+ community, non-binary people, those aged 16-25 years and all others who would like their voice to be heard.

## We're always looking for people with...

- an enthusiasm for and commitment to the work of YTAS
- a willingness to act as a champion of our organisation and Scotland's youth theatre sector
- an understanding of governance
- leadership qualities and skills
- strategic vision
- excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- a commitment to carry out the duties of a Board Member, and
- a preparedness to support YTAS staff using your personal and business skills and experience, as appropriate and if convenient.

## We're currently looking for people with experience or skills related to...

- **youth theatre** as a manager, facilitator, freelance artist, volunteer or participant (aged 16+);
- **professional theatre** as a CEO, Artistic Director or similar of a venue or theatre company;
- **digital communications**, ideally with third-sector experience; and/or
- **public relations/advocacy** such as with experience as a policy officer.

The key responsibilities of a Board Member are...

## Attendance and Availability

- To attend four YTAS Board meetings per year (currently being held online via Zoom in January, March, September and November) and to ensure that decisions taken at meetings are implemented. In-person attendance is also required at an additional Staff and Board Away Day. This is usually held in June, in either Edinburgh or Glasgow.
- To attend other key events run by YTAS if you are able to. These include the National Festival of Youth Theatre, the National Convention of Youth Theatre and other Sector Training events.
- To provide advice and support to YTAS staff as appropriate and if convenient.



## Advocacy

- To talk about YTAS at every opportunity and to network on behalf of the organisation where possible.
- To promote YTAS to the widest possible audience including press, funders, arts venues, sponsors, politicians, government representatives and strategic bodies.

## Financial Management

- To set the financial strategy of YTAS with the CEO.
- To ensure that YTAS's financial dealings are prudently and systematically accounted for, audited and made publicly available.
- To ensure that YTAS operates in accordance with company and charity law.
- To ensure that YTAS's assets are safeguarded and are well managed and maintained.

## Management

- To ensure that YTAS has appropriate policies and procedures which comply with current employment and equal opportunities legislation.
- To approve the staffing structure and to take part in recruitment as required.
- To outline terms and conditions for other staff and to annually review levels of pay.
- To ensure the safe and efficient use of premises for both staff and the public.

## Additional information

Board Members serve a term of three years, with the opportunity to stand for re-election for a second term.

YTAS will reimburse all reasonable out-of-pocket board-related expenses (e.g. travel, subsistence, accommodation and/or childcare).





# What People Say About Us

*"I think I can honestly say that my six years as a YTAS Board Member were some of the most rewarding, productive and fun ones of my life so far!*

*For me, being on the Board of an organisation that supports something I am passionate about, and having that opportunity to share my own skill set, provide support and advice, and seeing it help the organisation develop and grow, has been so beneficial to my own development, that I would encourage EVERYONE at some stage in their life to become a Board Member.*

*Everyone has something to bring to a Board table, but it is what you take away that I think you will be most surprised by, as the transferable skills, networking opportunities and training events I attended over the years have been invaluable.*

*It can be easy to get stuck in a rut, fear change or feel some things are not for us, but in a year when everything seems to have turned upside down, I would say go for it, challenge yourself, share your skills and learn some new ones. Oh, and as a Board Member, you will also get to see some amazing theatre!"*

## **Gillian Gourlay**

Education and Communities Manager, National Theatre of Scotland

*"Becoming a Trustee of Youth Theatre Arts Scotland gave me the chance to be a decision-maker instead of an adviser, and brought me into contact with a wide range of creative people I would never have encountered in my day job. It offered me an excellent insight into the challenges and rewards of working with a small organisation that makes a front-line difference for children and young people. I learned about strategy, finances, communications, HR... and how to run and critique a theatre workshop! This is a vibrant organisation where as a Trustee you will help to support the able staff of the organisation to deliver products in which you will share their excitement."*

## **Elsbeth Hough**

Unit Head, Directorate of Lifelong Learning & Skills, Scottish Government

*"Scotland's youth theatre sector is well networked and, through the work of Youth Theatre Arts Scotland, is proactive in its self-development."*

## **Creative Scotland**

in the national youth arts strategy publication *Time to Shine*

*"The clear focus on who we are as people, rather than just what we do as a job role makes YTAS a unique and special organisation to work for."*

## **Former YTAS employee**

# How to Apply

If you would like to apply to join our Board, please complete our Board Application Form.

We are happy to accept your application either:

- in writing, or
- in video or audio format (limited to a total of 10 minutes).

If you choose to record your answers, please provide a web address where we can access your file or submit it by email.

Please email this to our CEO, Kenny McGlashan, at [kenny@ytas.org.uk](mailto:kenny@ytas.org.uk) no later than **9am, Monday 26 June 2023**. We are not able to accept CVs.

## What Happens Next

If we decide to take your application forward, you will be invited to an informal meeting with the YTAS staff team and Board Members. This will be followed by the opportunity to observe a Board meeting so that you can meet the other Board Members and find out more about what the role involves.

At the end of this process, if all parties agree, we will officially invite you to join the Board where you will be legally subscribed as a Director of Youth Theatre Arts Scotland with Companies House.

## Equal Opportunities

Please consider completing our voluntary and anonymous Equal Opportunities Monitoring Questionnaire at <https://forms.office.com/e/jpifJ4AHhk>. We will use the information we collect to:

- make sure that no applicant receives less favourable treatment because of age, disability, race/ethnicity, religion/belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex/gender, gender reassignment or sexual orientation; and
- understand who we are reaching and appealing to. This will help us improve our recruitment practices so that a wider variety of people know about our opportunities, and feel more comfortable applying to join our Board.

## Any questions?

If you have any questions about the application process, the structure of the Board or the work of Youth Theatre Arts Scotland, please contact our CEO, Kenny McGlashan at [kenny@ytas.org.uk](mailto:kenny@ytas.org.uk) or on **07779 646550**. Kenny can also put you in contact with current Board Members if you would like to learn about their experience of the role.



Photography: Andy Catlin

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