

Youth
Theatre
Arts
Scotland

2025-2028 Business Plan



THE 'NEXT GENERATION' YOUTH STEERING GROUP MANIFESTO, 2023

Created by youth theatre volunteers and early-career practitioners
aged 16-25 from across Scotland.

The Next Generation need...

- help,
- a supportive community,
- encouragement,
- recognition,
- a say in our journey.

We want...

- the chance to make a supportive environment for our peers,
- opportunities to thrive,
- fair compensation,
- to be given power.

We already have...

- talent,
- positivity,
- great ideas,
- a better understanding of things the previous generation don't know,
- a love of theatre.

We don't know...

- how valuable and important we are,
- the difference we make,
- that we're someone else's role model,
- what the next step is.

We don't like...

- being taken for granted,
- unfair treatment,
- being overwhelmed,
- being looked down upon,
- the lack of diversity in leadership.

We love youth theatre because...

- it's a fun and safe place,
- you get to see other young people grow,
- it nurtures and empowers creativity,
- it's a family and a space where you can feel yourself,
- it's valued artistically.

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Executive Summary

This business plan embodies Youth Theatre Arts Scotland's unwavering commitment to advancing the youth theatre sector in Scotland. Rooted in inclusivity, sustainability, and skills development, our plan leverages our existing strategic initiatives and partnerships to empower young theatre makers and enrich Scotland's cultural landscape.

Our plan builds upon the established role, events, and services we have developed over two decades. It sets out a clear strategic vision, embedded values, and how we will ensure broad representation and engagement from children, young people, groups, practitioners, and stakeholders across Scotland.

We are ambitious for Scotland's young theatre makers and the practitioners who work with them. The support they require has been heavily influenced by the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis and we have extended and enhanced the impact of our work for our members and our sector in response. Through the delivery of our plan we will continue to increase and diversify our membership. Our support activities will assist youth theatres to overcome their access and business challenges, while our digital platforms will both promote performances and opportunities to thousands of users and give access to a wealth of curated and created online resources. We will support the needs of local youth theatres and respond to regular guidance requests from our members and partners.

We will provide year-round and targeted training programmes, benefiting professionals and the young people they engage. Our national festivals and conferences will play a vital role in enhancing skills, knowledge and ambition all across Scotland. We will also sustain our leadership in national and international development, facilitating exchange between organisations and artists at home and abroad.

As the sector's intermediary organisation, we will conduct research to identify emerging needs and disseminate insights to our members and stakeholders. Capturing data from an increasingly diverse range of organisations and commissioning case studies focusing on regional youth theatre provision and the impact of EDI and sustainability initiatives will give us, our members and our sector valuable information and insights. We will continue to lead cross-sector, collaborative advocacy and assist government agencies in implementing cultural, educational and wellbeing strategies.

This plan lays out how we will deliver these substantial and wide-ranging benefits with a small, predominantly part-time team, leveraging our expertise, experience and networks to provide unique services that make a big difference.

“I can't understate how grateful I am to have gone to youth theatre and the way that it had such a positive influence on so many different aspects of my life.”

Stephen's case study in 'Evidencing The Long-Term Impact of Participation in Youth Theatre', research undertaken by YTAS in 2023 with the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities

Introduction

We are Youth Theatre Arts Scotland (YTAS), the national development organisation for Scotland's youth theatre sector. We help make the lives of young people in Scotland better through youth theatre.

What We Do: We have a distinctive role as an intermediary body. In this capacity, we serve as a guide, helping Scotland's youth theatre sector navigate an ever-expanding landscape of information, regulations, and processes. Our focus is on facilitating connections, streamlining interactions, and fostering partnerships. And we are dedicated to empowering our sector by providing essential resources, expertise, and services. We advocate for advancement, championing the collective ambitions of our community and helping everyone move forward together.

Where We Came From: We were established in 2004 following the Scottish Arts Council's 'Review of Youth Theatre'. At first, we focused on connecting local groups, but over the past 20 years, our role and activities have grown based on the needs of the sector and feedback from the people we serve. Since then, we have built a strong network, activities, and processes, and built trust in the quality of our work. We are known as a small but effective national organisation because we have a clear vision, strong team, and efficient ways of working. This allows us to successfully manage several national projects at once, from planning to evaluation.

Who We Work With: There are currently over 300 youth theatre groups across Scotland engaging over 15,000 young people every week. Over 100 of these groups and professionals are registered with us as 'YTAS Members'. They are the backbone of our sector, engaging the majority of recorded participants and staff across the country. YTAS works both with and for our members as well as supporting the wider sector's needs. We work to increase access and participation as well as ensuring youth theatre activity in Scotland aspires to the highest standards of practice, providing a safe, inclusive, and rewarding experience for young people.

Each year we directly engage 3,000 young people, youth theatre professionals and volunteers in events and training, and a further 20,000 more through our research and online resources. Our diverse programme supports the work of hundreds of youth groups across Scotland, subsequently benefitting tens of thousands of young people. These groups vary in size and focus, ranging from small community groups to larger ones with their own venues or specialists in diversity and inclusion. We make sure our activities meet the highest standards to raise the expectations of Scotland's young people, groups, and practitioners. Through our experience in research and regional development we work on making youth theatre more accessible and improving training opportunities. We also help our members and partners to understand and articulate the wider impact that youth theatre can have on young people and society.

What is Youth Theatre?

We consider a youth theatre to be any group or organisation which engages children or young people up to age 25 as active participants in theatre arts, where their participation is central to the creative process.

Youth theatre is a specialist artform and youth work practice which focusses on young people's creative, personal, and social development through their voluntary involvement in performing arts. Its activities include creative workshops, training, productions, festivals, and audience development. Youth theatre differs from drama in schools as it prioritises young people's voice and leadership during the creative process, as opposed to that being led by a teacher with a set curriculum.

Youth theatre encourages young people to explore their dreams and visions. Through their involvement in youth theatre, young theatre-makers build skills, confidence, and connections. As they grow older, they can rehearse future challenges and opportunities together, finding a supportive community of creativity and empowerment in youth theatre, alongside their peers.

Scotland's Youth Theatre Sector

We carry out regular research, evaluation, and consultations with Scotland's youth theatre participants, groups and practitioners which provides us with a comprehensive understanding of the changing practices and challenges faced by youth theatres nationwide.

Our **2023 Review of Youth Theatre in Scotland** revealed that:

- There are **over 300 youth theatre groups** and **1,500 practitioners** across Scotland engaging over **15,000 young people every week**.
- **Participant numbers are rising** again across Scotland following the impact of COVID lockdown and a period of sector recovery. Most youth theatres engage school-aged participants (5-18yrs) however over half also work with young adults (19-25yrs) and a third engage early years participants (0-4yrs).
- The number of **paid youth theatre staff** is also increasing across Scotland, most notably for those who've consistently engaged with YTAS over the years. There's also evidence of improvements to staff pay and conditions, which we continue to support.
- A higher percentage of youth theatres are based in priority postcodes when assessed against the **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation** (70% are in the top three quintiles). A third of Scotland's youth theatres provide their **activities for free** and an increasing number of organisations (up to 71%) now offer **financial support**.
- Youth theatres are increasingly gathering and using **data on equalities, diversity, and inclusion** (EDI), enhancing their participant experiences and organisational practices.

However, our research and consultation has also revealed the following **needs and persistent challenges** faced by Scotland's youth theatre participants, groups and practitioners:

- **Access and Progression:** Youth theatre isn't available everywhere in Scotland, and many communities miss out on its benefits. Cuts to local authority and after-school groups over the past two decades have made it harder for many young people to get involved. This especially affects young people from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as older and talented participants. Ongoing cuts are making things even worse. Whilst there's been progress in gathering and acting upon EDI data, youth theatres tell us they still lack time and knowledge around EDI data collection, utilisation, and ethics.
- **Under-resourced Organisations:** Most youth theatres don't have enough money to keep going or to improve their offer. Staff are stretched thin and don't have the resources to deal with the challenges young people and staff now face, like increased mental health issues. This means they struggle to work with other support groups or address key policy areas such as EDI and the environment. Whilst the emergence of new small groups in some areas helped alleviate some of the impacts of local authority cutbacks, they often need more help themselves because they don't have the same level of experience or resources now required to sustain a contemporary youth arts organisation.
- **Staff Training and Conditions:** Youth theatre employees, freelancers, and volunteers have inconsistent levels of experience and training. This is in part because Scotland doesn't have an established course or qualification for practitioners. Many freelancers don't get paid well or have good working conditions. All of this is affecting the diversity and wellbeing of the youth theatre workforce.
- **Lack of Awareness of Youth Theatre's Impact:** There is limited understanding of the long-term benefits of youth theatre, which has been shown to enhance confidence, wellbeing, resilience, emotional intelligence, teamwork, and leadership skills, benefiting young people well into the future. As a result, these factors often aren't considered by decision-makers influencing young people's lives or investment in the sector. Most youth theatres lack the skills or capacity to address this on their own.

YTAS will respond and seek to address these issues through our services, support, advice and engagement.



SCOTLAND'S YOUTH THEATRES

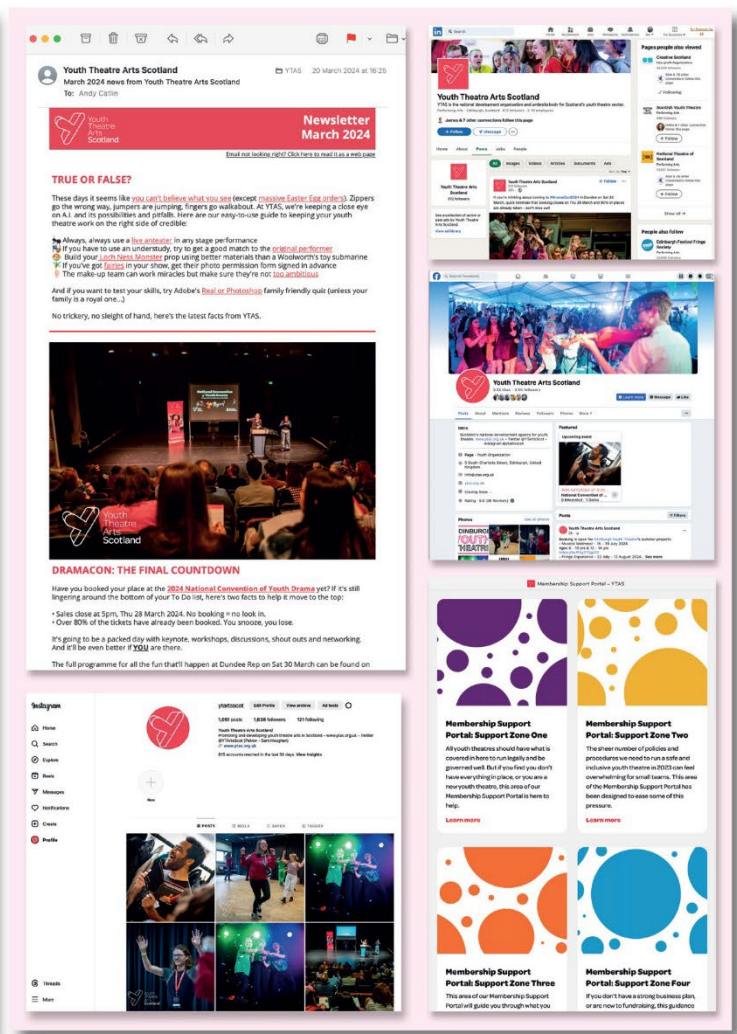
Sector Review 2023

“Scotland’s youth theatre sector is well networked and, through the work of Youth Theatre Arts Scotland, is proactive in its self development.” (TIME TO SHINE, SCOTLAND’S YOUTH ARTS STRATEGY)



SECTOR SUPPORT

Our Membership Support Coordinator now provides year-round, bespoke support to organisations and facilitators across the country.



WEBSITE & COMMUNICATIONS

Our website, newsletter and social media channels engage over 20,000 service users each year.

“The self-directed Membership Support programme will allow us to develop work with young people, connect to the wider sector, share and learn from examples of best practice” (SANCTUARY QUEER ARTS)

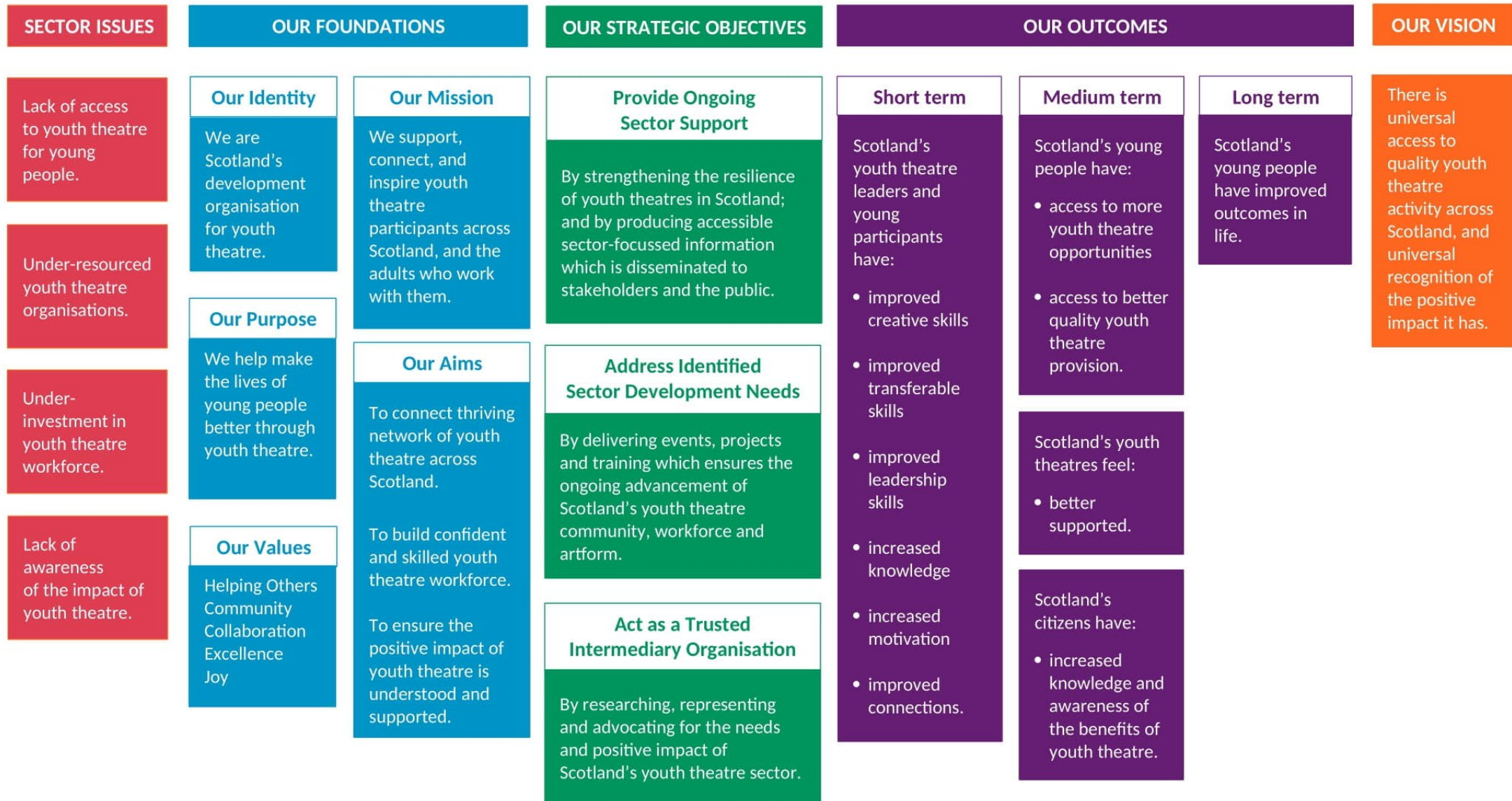


SECTOR GRANTS & BURSARIES

We provide a range of access bursaries and development grants for youth theatres facilitators and groups, like the Polmont Youth Theatre project featured above.

Strategic Framework

Our Strategic Framework is the logic model which brings together all the core elements of YTAS's work.



Our Values and Commitments

YTAS's values and commitments are deeply embedded in our operations and aspirations. They reflect our dedication to providing quality youth theatre experiences while upholding principles of inclusivity, fairness, and sustainability.

Our Values

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 Commitments

Our youth led approach is guided by our commitment to **children and young people's rights**. We will support the incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots Law by emphasising the role of arts and culture in fulfilling children's rights. We advocate for quality arts experiences that contribute to wellbeing, development, and educational goals. Underpinning this is our leadership over sector **safeguarding and child protection**. We provide guidance alongside national specialist organisations and share our own robust safeguarding procedures which ensure all YTAS staff and volunteers adhere to policies prioritising the welfare of children, safety, dignity, and respect.

We promote a **youth work approach** through our activities and with our members, aligning with the principles and outcomes of YouthLink Scotland (National Agency for Youth Work) which emphasise voluntary participation and recognise young people as the lead partner in learning. Like our own outcomes, a youth work approach focuses on the development of young people's health and wellbeing, effective relationships, skills development, and active citizenship.

We are dedicated to **equalities, diversity, and inclusion** (EDI), actively promoting diversity and inclusion within our organisation and the wider youth theatre sector. Our EDI Policy and Action Plan, guide our efforts to exceed regulatory requirements and integrate EDI considerations into business decisions. We provide sector support, training, and resources to address EDI priorities. This includes committing to **LGBTQIA+ rights**, completing the LGBT Charter Silver Award in 2024 and maintaining safe spaces for all identities.

We embrace **Fair Work principles**, offering effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment, and respect to our staff. We are an accredited Living Wage employer and Parents and Carers in the Performing Arts (PiPA) Charter Partner promoting our family-friendly work environment.

We are committed to **environmental sustainability**, as a member of the Green Arts Initiative and signatory to Creative Carbon Scotland's Green Arts Charter. Our Environmental Sustainability Action Plan outlines our path to achieving net-zero emissions by 2045, with ongoing monitoring and adaptation efforts. We are focused on reducing travel-related emissions and aim to track and minimize waste at our event venues and our digital carbon footprint. We also aim to inform, educate, and support Scotland's youth theatre sector in reducing carbon emissions and increasing environmental sustainability.

Our EDI, Fair Work and Environmental Sustainability Action Plans are all available to review as supporting documents. Later in this business plan, we have outlined how these areas are also themes embedded across our programme.

Our Influencing External Factors and our Competencies

The following points summarise external factors which could influence our plans for 2025-28:

Political	Opportunities abound for YTAS with the UNCRC adoption into Scots Law, updated cultural outcomes in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, and increased opportunities for cross-sectoral advocacy. However, threats include insufficient government investment, volatile social and political climates, and uncertain relationships within the UK and EU.
Economic	Opportunities arise from the SNP's pledge for increased investment in culture, and from improvements to the fundraising landscape long term. However, threats include high competition for resources, changes to the grant funding landscape, local authorities deprioritising culture and low pay across the arts.
Social	Our priorities already align with increased societal awareness and focus on mental health and wellbeing. However, threats include a rise in mental health issues across the sector, limited diversity in our workforce and young participants, and out-of-date public perceptions of youth arts.
Technological	Opportunities exist in digital development and enhanced connectivity. However, threats include digital inequality, and cyber-attacks.
Legal	There are opportunities available from improved legal requirements from charities and statutory advancements. However, capacity constraints could hinder progress across the sector.
Environmental	Opportunities arise from growing awareness and our intermediary position to support sectoral change, while threats from the impacts of climate change pose risks to youth theatre activities.

Taking these factors into account, to accomplish our mission we need to leverage our strengths and opportunities while addressing our weaknesses and threats:

Strengths	Weaknesses
We have a well-established national presence and unique role as the central advocate for Scotland's youth theatre sector. Our strategic priorities align closely with those of our core funder, Creative Scotland. We benefit from extensive networks, the agility and cost-effectiveness afforded by our small size, and skilled staff. These are supported by effective policies and strong partnerships. Our reputation in events and project management, data-driven decision-making, and commitment to EDI further enhance our credibility. We have piloted many of our future plans and development priorities, so are well positioned for continued growth and impact.	We face capacity challenges, with limited staffing, and time constraints of our members, which could hinder our ability to effectively meet current needs. Some funders don't prioritise the size or national/indirect role of our organisation, and we currently lack an effective process to nurture individual donor relationships, all of which limit our financial sustainability.
Opportunities	Threats
We are well placed to capitalise on opportunities for membership development, dissemination of small grants, and fostering access, diversity, and progression within our sector. Societal alignment with EDI, mental health, and wellbeing priorities, offers new avenues for advocacy and development. This can be bolstered to progress integration with educational settings through policy, legislative support and cross-sector collaborations. Our potential for growth and impact could be enhanced by expanding our leadership role, institutional backing, and access to new funding streams.	Our sustainability could be threatened by financial instability. The cost-of-living crisis, low pay, and staff turnover issues across the arts, compounded by the impact of Brexit, cybersecurity risks, digital lag, and the effects of climate change, further jeopardise our organisational resilience and effectiveness.

YTAS's full PESTLE and SWOT analyses are included as supporting documents to this business plan, for reference.



NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF YOUTH THEATRE

Campsite Ceilidh at the National Festival of Youth Theatre in Ayr, July 2022



DIRECTORS' DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, March 2023



CHRYSLIS

'There is a Globe Stuck in my Throat' production by Junges Ensemble Marabu (Germany) at Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, November 2018

"I was lucky enough to attend the NFYT as a participant. It's where I learnt some of my biggest lessons, where I made some lifelong friends, and it is certainly one of the major reasons I went to study at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland after I finished high school.

Bringing a group of young people to the festival a decade later really made me optimistic and excited about the future of Scottish Theatre. There is so much talent on show at NFYT and I can only hope one of my group will take their youth theatre to the festival in 2031." (NFYT 2019 GROUP LEADER)



BUZZ

'Diverse Voices in European Youth Theatre' International Artist Lab events held in Glasgow and Edinburgh, June 2023

Our Programme for 2025-2028

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:

Providing Ongoing Sector Support

Strengthening the resilience of youth theatres in Scotland by providing advice, grants and resources, and by producing accessible sector-focussed information which is disseminated to stakeholders and the public.

1.1. Provide and develop our Membership Support	<p>1.1.1. YTAS Members</p> <p>We will increase our current membership (of 100+ youth theatre organisations and individuals) using established partnerships with the Scottish Community Drama Association and the National Operatic and Dramatic Association for amateur groups; YouthLink Scotland and Youth Scotland for youth work groups; and Education Scotland for extra-curricular groups. We will also aim to diversify our membership and develop more youth theatres that specialise in supporting young people with protected characteristics and/or from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p>
	<p>1.1.2 Membership Scheme</p> <p>We will relaunch our membership categories with refined expectations around business practices. This will be underpinned by our newly established additional membership support, guidance and resources.</p>
	<p>1.1.3 Membership Support</p> <p>We will reestablish our Membership Support Coordinator role, associated activity and online resources portal following a 2023-25 pilot. The Coordinator role will continue to provide direct and bespoke support to our members, helping us to deliver a more dynamic approach in engaging with youth theatres and to capture a thorough and grassroots understanding of our sector's challenges and needs. Each year, over 200 support sessions will be held with 40+ youth theatre organisations to develop their business practices. Areas covered will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations: everything a youth theatre should have to run safely, legally and be governed well. • Policy and Access: guidance on the policies and procedures a youth theatre should have in place and how to make youth theatre as accessible as possible. • Your Team: guidance on best practice when working with employees, freelancers, and volunteers. • Business Development and Fundraising: guidance and tools which supports youth theatres in business planning, managing money, marketing, fundraising, evaluation, and sustainability. <p>Additional fundraising guidance and support will also be sustained for YTAS members as part of this work.</p>

1.2. Provide regular sector updates and information using our website and comms channels	1.2.1 Sector Website We will and provide year-round updates and information for Scotland's youth theatre sector profiling c.500 youth theatre performances, events and opportunities, and engaging c.20,000 unique users and c.80,000 pageviews annually.
	1.2.2 Guidance Toolkits and Resources We will continue to curate a platform of bespoke guidance 'Toolkits' and resources which support Scotland's youth theatres to learn and implement best practice; support the development their workforce; minimize risks by meeting governance, legal compliance, and quality standards; understand relevant policies and translate them into actionable strategies.
	1.2.3 Sector Newsletter We will build upon the high open rate of our fortnightly newsletter to increase and diversify our membership, promote shared values, and advance key areas of sector development. We will increase and diversify our c.600 subscribers.
	1.2.4 Social Media We will refresh our social media targets to help raise awareness and participation in youth theatre and our services. We will increase the number and level of engagement of our c.6000 followers.
1.3. Provide and support targeted sector small grants	1.3.1 Member Grants and Bursaries We will continue to award access bursaries for all our events, projects and training and seek funds to provide targeted grants to our members which enable them to develop their work around EDI, Fair Work, environmental sustainability, artform and workforce development.
1.4. Provide a service for bespoke needs and requests	1.4.1 Bespoke Advice, Guidance and Support We will continue to respond to c.100 individual requests each year for advice, support and/or collaboration. In some instances, this will include providing long-term support and expertise for several key events, festivals, and training opportunities across Scotland hosted by our members and partners, and which align with our mission and values.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:

Addressing Identified Sector Development Needs

Delivering events, projects and training which ensures the ongoing advancement of Scotland's youth theatre community, workforce and artform.

2.1. Annually host national sector events and symposia	2.1.1 National Festival of Youth Theatre (NFYT) We will plan and deliver the 16th and 17th iterations of this inclusive participatory festival in July 2026 and 2028 . Each festival will host c.20 youth theatre groups from Scotland and further afield. C.200 young participants plus their youth theatre practitioners will take part in a programme of performances, workshops, and social events.
	2.1.2 Chrysalis This established artform development festival of ambitious performances by young theatre-makers was cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to continued interest and demand from UK and international youth theatres for Chrysalis to return, we will seek to reintroduce the event to our programme. The Chrysalis festival showcases emerging talent, sparks critical debate and challenges perceptions of youth theatre. We will work in partnership to host the event and refresh the festival's design and promotions, linked to our increased international reach. We aim to connect our director's development activity into the festival and include youth programmers on the Chrysalis selection panel.
	2.1.3 National Convention of Youth Drama We will deliver this national conference for youth theatre practitioners in March 2026 and 2028 . The event attracts cross-sector interest and input on key topics influencing the work of youth theatre es across the country. Each event will include a series of presentations, discussion groups and networking opportunities for c.100 youth theatre practitioners.
	2.1.4 Interchange We will deliver the 17th iteration of this skills development weekend in March 2027 . The event is aimed at adults who use drama and theatre in their work with young people and focusses on developing new practical skills for the effective delivery and management of youth theatre. The weekend of workshops, CPD, and networking will engage c.70 youth theatre practitioners from different backgrounds, ages and stages of their careers.

<p>2.2. Deliver a year-round programme of Sector Training</p>	<p>2.2.1 (Online) Knowledge and Skills Exchange</p> <p>Each year we will deliver online training sessions for youth theatre groups, practitioners and partners which focus on key sector updates or knowledge and skills exchange.</p> <hr/> <p>2.2.2 (In-person) Regional Training Hubs</p> <p>Each year we will deliver several in-person Regional Training Hubs to help address regional gaps in provision or opportunities for development identified through our sector research and consultation work. The planning, delivery, and legacy of each Hub will be co-produced with YTAS members, partners, practitioners and stakeholders local to each region. This co-design will sustain the benefits of the training unique to each region. We will encourage and support partner organisations to host follow-up events with regional contacts to progress regional network development. This could include planning support, sharing contacts, marketing or help accessing other YTAS or national opportunities.</p> <hr/> <p>Our online and in-person sector training will engage c.300 youth theatre practitioners each year and will benefit c.30,000 young people with whom they work. The training will cover a range of topics under the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Concepts: developing creative practice for all the artforms under the umbrella term we call ‘youth theatre’. • Youth Theatre for Everyone: investigating all areas of access and inclusion, not just ticking boxes. • Next Generation: empowering the leaders of tomorrow. • Youth Theatre Foundations: running a safe, efficient organisation through policy, legislation, and best practice. • Money Matters: managing finance, balancing budgets, and getting really good at fundraising.
<p>2.3. Strengthen sector pathways for training and careers</p>	<p>2.3.1. Next Generation Programme</p> <p>We launched this leadership and employability programme in 2024, and its current funding will enable us to continue to deliver it until July 2026. Next Generation aims to address the current gap in youth theatre practitioner training provision in Scotland. It engages c.50 youth theatre volunteers and early-career practitioners (typically aged 16-25) and focusses on developing the fundamental knowledge, confidence and creative skills a youth theatre practitioner needs. The programme is guided by a Youth Steering Group and offers a 12-month cycle of training, mentoring, peer support and work experience activities which can be undertaken in participants’ own settings. It includes a new accredited ‘Ready for Youth Theatre’ course (SCQF level 3) jointly delivered by YTAS and Youth Scotland.</p>

2.3. ctd. Strengthen sector pathways for training and careers	<p>2.3.2. New Youth Theatre Qualifications</p> <p>In partnership with Youth Scotland, we will establish two further accredited vocational courses for emerging and established professionals which address the current lack of any qualifications in youth theatre delivery available in Scotland. These new qualifications will help increase the diversity, professional skills, and peer support of practitioners working with youth groups across the country. The Professional Development Award (PDA) in Youth Theatre (SCQF level 6) and Leading in Youth Theatre enterprise module (SCQF level 9) will both be completed by professionals over 4-6 months in their own settings as part of their existing delivery or organisational development duties.</p>
	<p>2.3.3. Directors Development Programme (DDP)</p> <p>We will seek to deliver a Directors Development Programme aimed at youth theatre practitioners who are ready to challenge their creative practice and become more confident professional artists and directors. Directors will be selected to take part in a five-month career development programme offering training, mentoring and peer support alongside the opportunity to develop and showcase a new piece of work. The programme will build upon previous DDP success (in 2019, 2021, and 2022-2023) with expert input and established partnerships. Between 2025-2028 DDP will connect with developments across our national and international events and training, including Chrysalis and the BUZZ Network.</p>
	<p>2.3.4. Improved Support for Freelancers</p> <p>We will work in partnership with other arts and theatre organisations to progress Fair Work principles for freelancer practitioners, establishing new supports, guidance and opportunities. Doing this in collaboration offers multiple benefits to professionals, organisations, and different sectors by sharing resources, best practice, raising standards and expectations. For YTAS, part of this work includes how youth theatre freelancers will help inform and promote our network and services nationwide.</p>
	<p>2.3.5. Improve Drama Training Pathways</p> <p>We will work with a range of partners to review and improve the awareness, knowledge and skills of learners coming into and out of the youth theatre sector. We will focus on key transition points when learners consider going into further or higher education drama courses as well as students going into professional theatre and community arts industries. We recognise the need for a long-term approach to increase the access, diversity, confidence and skills of Scottish pupils and students forging new careers and ambitions in the evolving arts landscape. Through this work we hope to signpost information, resources, training and placements benefitting targeted learners, communities and YTAS members.</p>

<p>2.4. Sustain our leadership role advancing international development opportunities for the sector</p>	<p>2.4.1 Developing International Collaboration and Training</p> <p>We will continue to work with our established international partners to build upon our leadership of the ‘BUZZ Network’ which advanced cross-border exchange between youth theatre organisations and artists through funding from Creative Europe (2018-23) and Four Nations Fund (2024). YTAS will become a key ‘Associate’ partner on Creative Europe funded ‘BUZZ Network’ activity, between 2026-29.</p> <p>We will also sustain our partnership with other leading UK youth theatre organisations, working together on the additional challenges we now face in collaborating with our peers across Europe as a result of Brexit. As well as the benefits to the partners involved, our international work will provide international exchange opportunities for professional artists and access to online information and tools which support the development of international best practice.</p>
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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:	
Acting as a Trusted Intermediary Organisation	
Researching, representing, and advocating for the needs and positive impact of Scotland’s youth theatre sector.	
3.1. Increase knowledge and influence through Research and Advocacy	3.1.1. Research
	3.1.2. Advocacy

3.1 ctd.	<p>3.1.3. Influencing Cross-Sectoral Working Groups, Developments, and Policy</p> <p>We will continue to regularly attend year-round meetings and respond to calls for submissions from the network groups we are a member of on behalf of our sector, including: SCVO's Intermediaries Network; YouthLink's National Voluntary Youth Organisations of Scotland; Culture Counts; Federation of Scottish Theatre; Arts, Culture, Health and Wellbeing Scotland; Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights); Green Arts Initiative; Culture for Climate Scotland's 'Springboard' cohorts; The Living Wage Foundation, amongst many others.</p>
3.2. Deliver, monitor, and review Action Plans for EDI, Fair Work and Environmental Sustainability	<p>3.2.1. Improving our Knowledge and Practice</p> <p>Our staff will engage in regular training related to EDI, Fair Work and environmental sustainability as well as collaborating with cross-sector specialists who can help develop our in-house knowledge, policies and processes. We will share the learning we gain and key statistics with our board, members, and interested stakeholders. Our periodic Sector Review research will include questions related to EDI, Fair Work and environmental sustainability and our fundraising and advocacy will help extend our support and development for the sector.</p>
	<p>3.2.2. Improving our Sector Support, Training and Resources</p> <p>We will develop our bespoke advice and support for YTAS members to include key elements of EDI, Fair Work and environmental sustainability practice and impact. This will include providing specialist training, digital toolkits and resources, offering bursaries, and supporting the exchange and promotion of best practice.</p>
	<p>3.2.3. Improving our Events and Partnerships</p> <p>We will ensure our training, events and projects are as accessible as possible. This will include promoting, monitoring, and supporting the participation of individuals with protected characteristics and/or specific access requirements. We will regularly theme elements of our training events for practitioners around EDI, Fair Work and environmental sustainability and ensure our principles are applied across all our projects. This will include monitoring the waste and travel of our training, events, and projects; promoting sustainable transport options, event materials and suppliers; and gathering and monitoring relevant related data. We will also continue developing our strategic partnerships with organisations and groups who can help support our sector's ongoing application and commitment to EDI, Fair Work and environmental sustainability, including promoting and adapting the Theatre Green Book for community arts venues and organisations.</p>

Programme Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation

Each year our programme will directly benefit c.2,000 young people, youth theatre professionals and volunteers as well as impacting a further 13,000 young people they work with. Our online resources will reach c.20,000 more.

Impact on children and young people: Research carried out in 2022 into the long-term impacts of participation in youth theatre concluded that it enhanced confidence, wellbeing, resilience, emotional intelligence, teamwork, and leadership skills. By delivering events and training for young people, by nurturing and supporting the sector's work, we can have a significant and lasting impact on Scotland's children, young people and their communities.

Impact on the youth theatre sector: Research carried out through our 2015 Membership Review identified YTAS's role as a vital 'informer, link, and umbrella' organisation providing support and guidance that strengthens Scotland's youth theatre arts infrastructure. We also serve as a 'curator, resource provider, and expeditor', offering accessible resources and opportunities to enhance experiences for youth theatre participants and practitioners. Additionally, we are recognised as 'thought leaders, informers, and promoters', targeting key areas for development to improve access, progression, and ambition in the sector.

Impact on cultural life in Scotland: The work of YTAS and the sector also benefits Scotland's broader theatre, youth arts, and cultural sectors by fostering collaboration among young people and practitioners across various art forms. Investing in youth theatre is therefore an investment in Scotland's future artists, audiences, and advocates.

Our Sector Review research and continuous sector support, consultation and collaboration has provided us with comprehensive data on youth theatre activity and demographics in Scotland, along with detailed feedback from both young people and professionals, forming a solid foundation for evaluating our activities and sector development. Our established evaluation processes will help us understand and demonstrate our impact effectively.

During the pandemic, we enhanced our monitoring and evaluation processes, building on previous work with Evaluation Support Scotland. We now have a streamlined evaluation pathway, which is a structured process for clarifying outcomes, collecting evidence, analysing data, and implementing changes to improve project and organisational effectiveness. Our evaluation pathway is linked to our Strategic Framework, enabling us to align evidence with our values and inform our impact.

We will collect both quantitative and qualitative information through participant and activity databases, surveys, feedback sessions, and observations from staff, facilitators, and partners. This data will be reviewed during debrief and planning meetings to guide future improvements and strategy. Insights gained will be shared with and scrutinised by our Board, sector, and funders to shape future activities and developments collaboratively.

Our focus is on evaluating the short-term impact of our activities on youth theatre practitioners and participants, including improved skills, connections, knowledge, and motivation. We will ensure youth theatres feel better supported and that young people have access to higher-quality opportunities. Through research, communication, and advocacy, we aim to increase awareness of the benefits of youth theatre, ultimately improving outcomes for Scotland's young people.



NATIONAL CONVENTION OF YOUTH DRAMA
Dundee Rep, March 2024



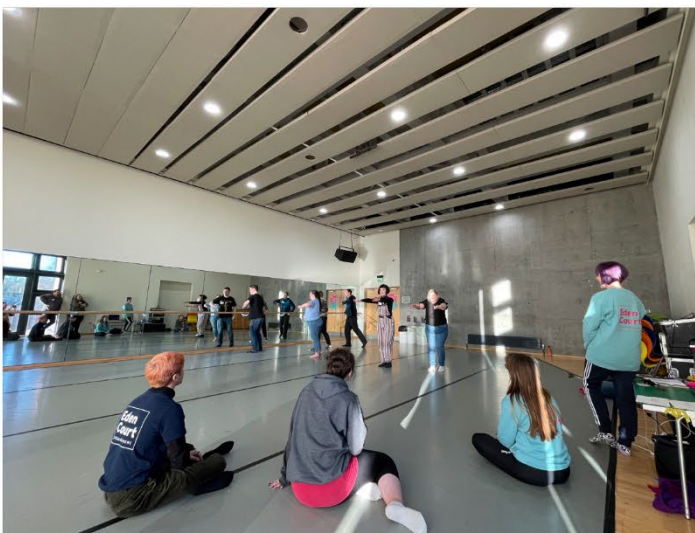
INTERCHANGE
Skills development weekend at Perth Theatre, March 2022



SECTOR TRAINING – REGIONAL HUBS
'Supporting Neurodiversity' workshop at Theatre Royal Dumfries, November 2023

"I always come away from a YTAS Sector training event feeling more informed, but also very importantly energised and reminded that I am part of a curious and inclusive community." (PARTICIPANT ON YTAS'S SECTOR TRAINING)

"YTAS is a key reason people in the sector know each other so well! (They are) an invaluable way for the sector to develop, particularly useful for freelancers who often work alone and can feel detached." (MEMBER FEEDBACK)



SECTOR TRAINING – REGIONAL HUBS
'Let's Get Moving' workshop at Eden Court, Inverness, January 2024



NEXT GENERATION PROGRAMME
'Developing a Youth Manifesto' session at Festival Theatre, Edinburgh, March 2023

Themes Across our Programme

The following five themes inform how we will plan, deliver and evaluate our whole programme.

1. Engagement and Collaboration

We have designed our programme to engage thousands of young people, professional and voluntary youth theatre practitioners and sector stakeholders. Activities will take place year-round, in venues across Scotland and online, catering for a broad diversity of needs. Our engagement is underpinned by our commitment to safeguarding and children's rights, enacted through our policies, operations and sector leadership.

Our events, programmes and services will support hundreds of youth theatre organisations across Scotland. They represent a rich diversity of models and engagement, ranging from small voluntary-run community groups to large regional youth theatres with their own venues and diversity-led EDI specialists. Our Sector Review has confirmed that their work benefits tens of thousands of children and young people on a weekly basis.

'Collaboration' is one of our organisational values. It is a key tool we use to drive learning and innovation for Scotland's youth theatres. The ideas, content, and practice our programme explores are developed with and for our members and service users. Through research and consulting with them, we can offer relevant support which addresses their priority needs. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, this has increasingly led to more direct and ongoing assistance for our members as well as long-term partnerships with a range of partners.

An example of this are the working groups we established for our Regional Hubs, Next Generation Programme, and LGBT Youth Scotland Charter. The groups ensure direct input from young people and practitioner in shaping our programmes and decisions. The Regional Hub networks, formed in underserved areas, continue to operate following collaborative planning and training sessions. Our Youth Steering Group oversees the Next Generation programme and the development of new qualifications. The LGBT Sector Working Group created tailored guidance and toolkits for practitioners. We will replicate these successful models in other aspects of our 2025-28 Programme moving forward, with steering groups planned for Chrysalis, member and freelancer support, and in educational settings.

Partnership working is one of our strengths. It helps make our events and training relevant, impactful, and accessible. We have dozens of strategic, referral and delivery partners, and our 2025-28 programme outlines several leading venues, artists, and organisations we will connect with for their expertise. We are committed to collaborative learning in areas like EDI and environmental sustainability where we will share knowledge and practice with our sector.

2. Quality and Ambition

'Excellence' is one of our organisational values. We have developed high standards and effective management processes across our work, building upon 20 years of successful delivery. Our reputation as a small but efficient and influential national organisation is built upon our clear strategic vision, dynamic staff and board, and effective working processes. These underpin our approach to programme delivery, with events and activities which provide high quality experiences and outcomes for Scotland's youth theatre participants, groups, and practitioners, and help raise standards across the sector.

Our commitment to quality and ambition is also bolstered by our regional development experience, our expertise, and our research. We will take responsibility for improving access and training pathways with our sector, as well as guiding stakeholders to better appreciate the impact youth theatre can have on young people's lives and on society. Through our dedication to excellence and our commitment to fostering innovation, we will elevate the work and ambitions of Scotland's youth theatre groups and practitioners.

In addition to our ongoing focus on quality and ambition, our 2025-28 programme features new activities aimed at expanding our ability to identify and disseminate ambitious, high-quality practices: reestablishing our Chrysalis festival; Directors Development Programme; Next Generation programme, and youth steering group; and sustaining our leadership roles in cross-sector working and international youth theatre networks. Feedback has shown that these projects are transformational for participants, with long-lasting impacts evident in creative development, career progression and employment in the sector.

“Marvel how youth theatre has changed and see how the future looks through their eyes”
(THE GUARDIAN, ON CHRYSALIS)

“A landmark showcase of British theatre’s most promising new artists” (THE LIST, ON CHRYSALIS)

“Chrysalis is an event that challenges the perception of young people’s theatre and puts it on an equal with professional theatre, proving how innovative, entertaining, challenging and high quality it can be.” (PERFORMING COMPANY)

3. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

Since 2018, EDI considerations across the planning, delivery and evaluation of our work have been formalised in an EDI Action Plan. This document provides a detailed roadmap to achieving outcomes specific to EDI. Both our EDI and Fair Work Action Plan have actions and developments integrated from our 2024 LGBT Charter Silver Award and Parents and Carers in the Performing Arts (PiPA) Charter. The EDI Action Plan is renewed annually, and progress is monitored and reviewed bimonthly at staff meetings.

Our outcomes specific to EDI below are closely aligned with our organisational outcomes, as described in our Strategic Framework (page 5). They have been determined in response to the data from our sector research and consultation which identified challenges faced by our sector in advancing EDI priorities, namely, an inequality of opportunity for participation and advancement among youth theatre participants and practitioners with protected characteristics; and a lack of time, resources, knowledge and skills required to address EDI issues and priorities.

Outcomes specific to EDI (aligned to our Strategic Framework)

- Scotland’s youth theatre practitioners have increased knowledge; increased motivation; improved skills; and improved connections which enable them to better address EDI priorities.
- Scotland’s youth theatre participants and practitioners with protected characteristics have increased opportunity to participate and progress in youth theatre, and improved access to better quality youth theatre provision.

How EDI is Evident as a Theme in our Programme

Our EDI Action Plan clearly sets out how we will ensure our own organisational knowledge and practices in relation to EDI are up to date and of a high standard, and how we will support Scotland’s youth theatre sector to do the same. Our Programme will therefore see us...

- Improve our own EDI knowledge and practice.
- Provide specific EDI-themed sector support, training, and resources.
- Provide access bursaries to attend our events and participate in our projects.
- Award small development grants related to EDI.
- Ensure all our events and spaces are inclusive and as accessible as possible, online and in person.

- Provide access to safe spaces at all our events, both online and in person.
- Apply best EDI practice in our work on events and with partners.
- Ensure the principle of inclusion is embedded in all our activities and in our membership.
- Diversify our membership and support the EDI developments and activities of our members.

In addition, we will continue to use the following approaches which we have designed and developed since 2018 to promote and ensure inclusion across our programme and membership:

Membership Expectations: We will ask our members to sign up to the following agreed Membership Values Statement: *'We agree that every young person in Scotland should have unrestricted access to a quality youth theatre experience and should not encounter barriers to access. We are not exclusive in our attitude, and we strive to remove all barriers to our activity to promote participation which reflects and celebrates the diversity of Scottish culture'.*

Safe Spaces: We will promote our commitment that all YTAS events and spaces, in person or digital, are safe spaces where all identities are welcome. Highlighting our zero-tolerance policy towards any bullying across all our services, events, and communications. This includes but is not limited to transphobia, homo or biphobia, racism, ableism, sexism, or class discrimination.

Accessible and Inclusive Events: We will take action to support youth groups and individuals with protected characteristics to engage with our training, events, and projects by:

- Delivering Regional Hubs to remove barriers to access and respond to shifting needs.
- Regularly review and update the accessibility of information we publish and application documents.
- Reaching out to targeted groups and contacts to support and encourage attendance.
- Making adaptations to our festivals and events to cater for different access requirements.
- Ensuring the accessibility of pre- and post-event materials.

Digital Access: We will provide free access to a range of opportunities, training, information and guidance through our website and comms channels. We will also expand the enhancements we have made to make our digital platforms more accessible and share what we have learnt with our members.

4. Fair Work

In 2021, we started learning about the Fair Work Framework and how it affects employers and workers in Scotland. Since then, we have grown our knowledge in this area and have focussed on understanding and articulating what the Fair Work principles mean, initially for our organisation, and then for Scotland's youth theatre sector. In 2024 Fair Work considerations across the planning,

delivery and evaluation of our work were formalised in our first Fair Work Action Plan. This document provides a detailed roadmap to achieving outcomes specific to Fair Work. Both our EDI and Fair Work Action Plan have actions and developments integrated from our 2024 LGBT Charter Silver Award and Parents and Carers in the Performing Arts (PiPA) Charter activity. Our Fair Work Action Plan will be renewed annually, and progress is monitored and reviewed bimonthly at staff meetings.

Our outcomes specific to Fair Work below are closely aligned with our organisational outcomes, as described in our Strategic Framework (page 5). They have been determined by the results of employee consultations and baseline assessments we have undertaken as a Fair Work Employer and Parents and Carers in the Performing Arts Charter Partner. In addition, data from our sector research and consultation reveals that youth theatre groups and practitioners are challenged by a lack of time, resources, knowledge and skills required to address Fair Work issues and priorities. They are also limited by the current shortage of clear and consistent data to evidence the impact of Fair Work improvements.

Outcomes specific to Fair Work (aligned to our Strategic Framework)

- Scotland's youth theatre practitioners have improved access to information; improved access to resources; and improved access to support relating to Fair Work priorities.
- Scotland's youth theatre workforce is better equipped to adopt Fair Work principles; feels better supported to address Fair Work priorities; and is more resilient.

How Fair Work is Evident as a Theme in our Programme

Our Fair Work Action Plan clearly sets out how we will ensure our own organisational knowledge and practices in relation to Fair Work are up to date and of a high standard, and how we will support Scotland's youth theatre sector to do the same. As an intermediary body with members across the country, we are uniquely placed to inform, educate, and support Scotland's youth theatre sector in understanding and adopting Fair Work principles, and implementing lasting improvements within the youth theatre workforce. Our Programme will therefore see us...

- Improve our own Fair Work knowledge and practice.
- Provide Fair Work-themed sector support, training, and resources.
- Apply Fair Work principles in our work on events and with partners.
- Undertake actions which help to resolve sector low pay and precarious work.
- Provide access to workforce and talent development opportunities.
- Support the Fair Work developments and activities of our members.

5. Environmental Sustainability

In 2015, we joined Culture for Climate Scotland's Green Arts Initiative to learn from and collaborate with colleagues in the cultural sector on how to reduce our environmental impact. Since then, we have grown our knowledge in this area and have focussed on understanding and articulating what carbon reduction, climate resilience and climate justice mean, initially for our organisation, and then for Scotland's youth theatre sector. We have developed bespoke tools for monitoring the travel emissions we cause and have worked hard to promote and enable sustainable travel, particularly in our international work. In 2024, long-standing climate-related considerations across our planning, delivery and evaluation were consolidated into our first a new Environmental Sustainability Action Plan.

This document provides a detailed roadmap to achieving outcomes specific to environmental sustainability. In addition to outlining actions relating to ensuring sustainability in our programme, it also includes our carbon management plan, under the subheading 'Actions Towards Net Zero, and our climate adaptation plan, under the subheading 'Adaptation and Mitigation'. The consolidation of this information simplifies our operation approach to working with this Action Plan, namely, renewing it annually, and monitoring and reviewing our progress bimonthly at staff meetings.

Our outcomes specific to environmental sustainability below are closely aligned with our organisational outcomes, as described in our Strategic Framework (page 5). They have been determined by the data from our sector research and consultation which reveals that youth theatre groups and practitioners in Scotland are challenged by a lack of time, resources, knowledge and skills required to address environmental sustainability issues and priorities.

Outcomes specific to Environmental Sustainability (aligned to our Strategic Framework)

- Scotland's youth theatre practitioners have improved access to sector environmental sustainability training, events, and resources.
- Scotland's youth theatre practitioners have increased knowledge; increased motivation; improved skills; and improved connections which enable them to better address environmental sustainability priorities.
- Scotland's youth theatres have reduced their impact upon the environment.

How Environmental Sustainability is Evident as a Theme in our Programme

Our Environmental Sustainability Action Plan clearly sets out how we will ensure our own organisational knowledge and practices in relation to climate-related issues are up to date and of a high standard, and how we will support Scotland's youth theatre sector to do the same. As an intermediary body with members across the country, we are uniquely placed to inform, educate, and support Scotland's youth theatre sector in reducing its carbon emissions and increasing its commitment towards environmental sustainability. We will use our 'Resources' web portal as well as online and in-person events to implement this approach. Our Programme will therefore see us...

- Maintain and improve our own environmental sustainability knowledge and practice.
- Embed a commitment to deliver climate action and climate justice across our organisation.
- Achieve net zero emissions by 2045.
- Enhance our own climate resilience.
- Provide sector support, training, and resources related to the climate emergency, sustainable practices and climate adaptation.
- Inspire and support our sector to improve environmental sustainability practices and climate resilience.



ADVOCACY

Children's and Youth Arts Advocacy workshop held in Dundee, March 2024



LGBT YOUTH SCOTLAND CHARTER PROGRAMME

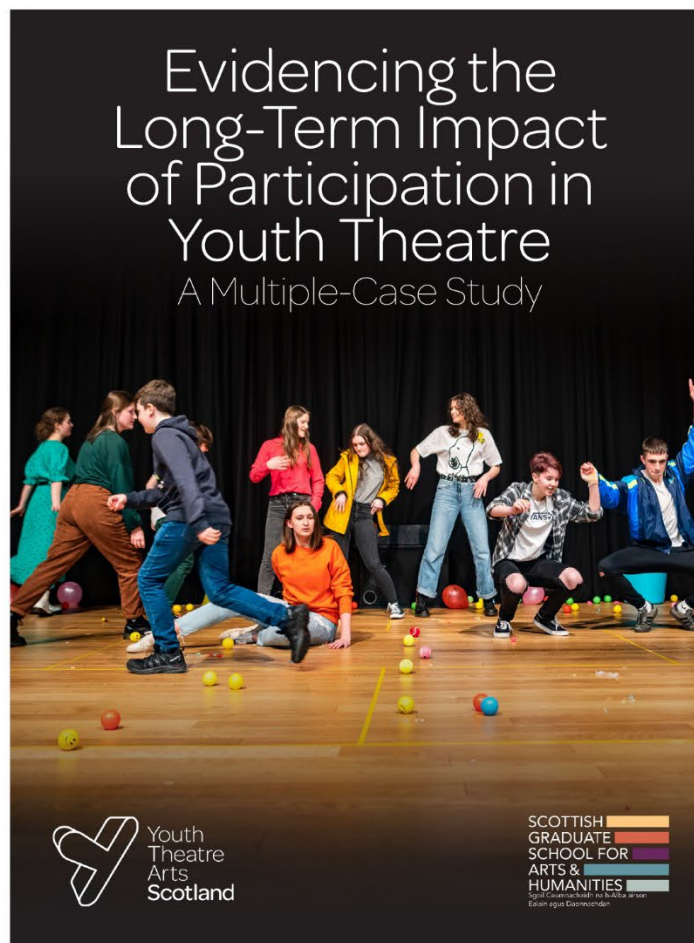
Consultation and dissemination workshop held in Dundee, March 2024



CROSS SECTOR WORKING

YouthLink workshop on tracking Youth Work Outcomes held in Dundee, March 2024

“As a lead organisation in the Scottish Performing Arts landscape, YTAS sets an example for a fairer, more accessible, diverse and dynamic industry.”
(PARTICIPANT ON YTAS'S SECTOR TRAINING)



Youth Theatre in Scotland Sector Review 2020

In September 2020 we conducted the Youth Theatre in Scotland Sector Review, where we asked the sector to tell us more about the youth theatre activity they run. This helped us capture the big picture of the sector, and identify the ways we can develop further.

[Learn more](#)



Sector Review 2015

We wanted to review the information that we held about the youth theatre sector in Scotland, to inform our understanding of stakeholders and explore ways to best engage with the youth theatre sector in Scotland.

[Learn more](#)

SECTOR RESEARCH

Examples of the research YTAS has undertaken in recent years

“YTAS continues to be the go-to for updates, information, training and good practice to maintain quality, safety and an overall fun environment in Scotland's youth theatres.”
(PARTICIPANT ON YTAS'S SECTOR TRAINING)

Finances: Developing our Capacity and Resilience

YTAS has had a strong track record of good financial management since our organisation was established in 2004. We are adept at setting and delivering balanced budgets, attracting significant external funding from a range of sources, and developing prudent reserves. Growth has been managed carefully by the senior staff and Board to balance opportunity, demand for services and risk. The principal aim of all our financial oversight and management is to support our mission and objectives.

We generate income through membership, events, and training services, always considering the economic challenges faced by our users and our funded role delivering public benefit. Many of our services are therefore provided for free or at minimal cost, with bursary options available for access. We have also managed several donor, sponsorship, and crowdfunder campaigns. During the recent years of COVID and a cost-of-living crisis, we faced a decline in donor support. We therefore aim to improve donor stewardship long-term between 2025-28, building on past success with fundraising support.

Our strategic approach to managing financial plans and company resources involves balancing our ambitions as a national support and development organisation with the benefits of maintaining agility as a small charity. Over two decades, this approach has allowed us to develop a range of new activities, processes, and resources, and establish a reputation for quality, efficiency and friendliness.

However, there are fewer funding opportunities now and those that are available are under greater pressure. The trusts and foundations landscape changed hugely due to the cost-of-living crisis, cuts in Council services and reduction in revenues for corporate sponsorship. This means that across the arts success rates for all types of grants have significantly decreased, and many funders have sharpened their focus onto the most vulnerable groups and the most practical programmes.

We often find we are an awkward fit for many funds. YTAS is a small organisation doing a big job but struggles to gain support from some national and international level funds who look for UK-wide impact. We can also be perceived as too high level for many locally focused grants. In addition, some of our projects which focus on the sector's artform development needs, like Chrysalis and the Director's Development Programme, have been challenging to secure support from oversubscribed trusts and foundations.

Thanks to support from The Backstage Trust between 2022-24, we were able to invest in fundraising support for trust and grant applications, with more fund research, more strategic planning, better project plan development and higher submission rates. This made a huge difference to developing our capacity and resilience and we aim to build on this success going forward.

“The Grants for Youth Theatre funding we received (from YTAS) was so beneficial, to not only our young people, but for us to reimagine our creative practices here at Creative Spark. YTAS were so helpful every step of the way and we felt so supported throughout.

It has also given us the confidence to continue to grow and develop as an organisation, this is the result of all the training and support we received and continue to receive from YTAS.”

(JEN McDONALD, CREATIVE SPARK THEATRE ARTS, 2021-22 GRANTEE)

Budget Summary

Income	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Creative Scotland – Multi-Year Funding	£191,533	£225,250	£225,250
Other Grants	£87,000	£125,500	£115,000
Donations and Sponsorship	£10,000	£15,000	£11,000
Earned: Membership	£4,600	£8,000	£9,000
Earned: Training and Conferences	£2,200	£6,250	£2,750
Earned: Festivals	£0	£28,000	£7,500
In-Kind / Partnership Support	£5,000	£31,000	£25,000

Income Total	£300,333	£439,000	£395,500
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Expenditure	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Core Team Salaries, NI and Pensions	£198,758	£206,240	£214,023
Administration and Overhead Costs	£49,100	£61,650	£60,425
Sector Research	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000
Sector Training and Support	£30,895	£43,143	£35,500
Conferences: Interchange and Convention	£8,500	£14,000	£12,500
Festivals: NFYT and Chrysalis	£0	£74,000	£39,000
International Partnership Activity	£2,000	£2,500	£3,000
In-Kind / Partnership Support	£5,000	£31,000	£25,000
Contingency	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000

Expenditure Total	£300,253	£438,533	£395,448
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Balance	£80	£467	£52
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Funds at end of year	£44,756	£45,223	£45,275
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Reserves Target	£58,000	£58,000	£58,000
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Company and Risk Management

Our holistic approach to company and risk management ensures our organisation's effectiveness, accountability, and alignment with our values and objectives.

Operational Management

Our Strategic Framework serves as our company logic model, integrating key elements of our roles and activities. Applied consistently across our planning, operational, and financial management, it ensures clarity and coherence in our operations. From project management to staff contracts, the framework aligns our team activities with organisational objectives. Our commitment to quality and to our values resonates within our team and sector. We have robust policies in health and safety, safeguarding, EDI, and data protection, which support us to prioritise beneficiary engagement and sector support.

Governance

YTAS was established in 2004 and operates as a company limited by guarantee and a charity registered with OSCR. We are governed by a voluntary board of directors/trustees, ensuring solvency, efficiency, and the fulfilment of charitable objectives. The CEO is responsible for day-to-day operations, who reports on organisational matters, including finances and strategic initiatives. These governance structures have proven effective since 2004, with many board members serving their full terms.

Initiatives fostering cohesion between staff, board, and governance duties enhance shared knowledge, confidence, and ambition. Notably, attention to board induction and transparency has been lauded by our funders and stakeholders. The Board undertake periodic training in areas such as governance, risk and finance as well as audits to ensure diverse expertise. We also have dedicated positions for young people aged 18-25 to help amplify youth voice and advocacy on the Board and within Scotland's youth theatre community.

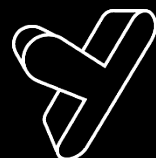
Managing Risk

We maintain a detailed risk register covering financial sustainability, staffing, regulatory compliance, IT systems, support for youth theatre, and reputation management. Our risk management also extends into other aspects of the organisation's work, including event and project planning, monitoring staff wellbeing, our fundraising and marketing strategies, as well as gaining insights from our EDI, Environmental Sustainability, and Fair Work Action Plans. In 2024, we established a more positive and engaging approach to risk management, building upon our existing processes by integrating guidance from Culture Radar and other tools. By doing so we aim to; better acknowledge the potential benefits of managed risk, identify the responsibilities and influence we have over different risks (operational, strategic and external), and improve how our risk management aligns with our Strategic Framework, planning and evaluation processes.

Youth Theatre Arts Scotland

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YTAS is a registered Scottish charity, No. SC035765



Youth
Theatre
Arts
Scotland