

Tread the Board

Board Recruitment Pack 2025



Youth
Theatre
Arts
Scotland



A Message from the Chair



Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of Youth Theatre Arts Scotland (YTAS).

YTAS plays a unique and vital role in Scotland's cultural life – supporting young people, empowering practitioners, and connecting youth theatres across the country. This is an exciting moment for our organisation with a new Chief Executive, stable funding and a clear strategic plan in place. As we move into our next chapter, we're looking for new board members to build on this momentum and shape the future of YTAS with vision, care and ambition.

We're looking for applications to increase the size of our Board by up to four people. We want to hear from candidates from all walks of life, with or without previous experience. If you're passionate about our work and determined to develop your board skills, we want to hear from you.

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.

Now is a great moment to join our Board having recently secured multi-year funding from Creative Scotland. In recent years YTAS adapted our 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. Now is a great moment to join our Board having recently secured multi-year funding from Creative Scotland.

Due to some board members reaching the end of their terms, 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 effectively 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 organisational leadership, corporate governance, HR and/or finance (see our Person Specification below for more details).

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 of Director
- Details of how to apply

We very much look forward to hearing from you.

Liam Farrow
Chair, Youth Theatre Arts Scotland

Organisational Summary

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 are a registered Scottish charity and a recognised leader in Scotland's youth arts scene, providing support to young people, youth groups, and their leaders through a combination of...

- **Youth Theatre Projects**
The National Festival of Youth Theatre, Emergence Festival.
- **Training and Professional Development Opportunities**
National Convention of Youth Drama, Interchange, Regional Hubs, Next Generation project.
- **Information and Advocacy Services**
Continuous research, support, and advocacy responding to local, regional, or national need.

What 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.

You can find more information about our work at www.ytas.org.uk

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. In a typical 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 website resources.

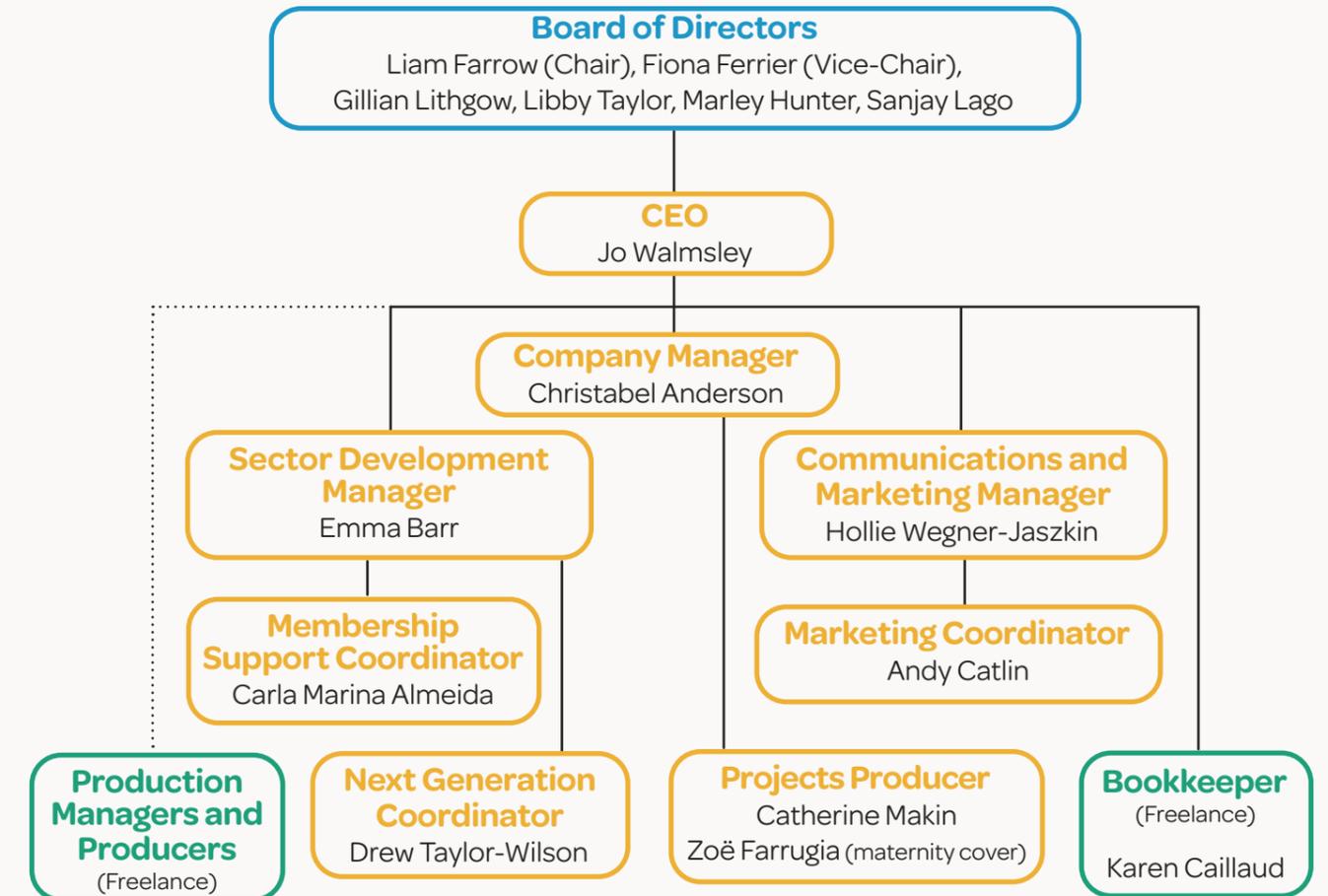
A Climate Aware and Climate Active Organisation

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.



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 Companies House, 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 having most recently been awarded three-year funding from 2025 - 2028.

Location and Affiliations

In 2020, YTAS decided to become a remote-working organisation. This decision has provided more flexibility for our staff team 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, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, Culture and Business Scotland, 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 and 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 outside of 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 at the time of writing the composition of the Board is...

Chair	Liam Farrow	Head of Regional Economic Policy, Scottish Government
Vice Chair	Fiona Ferrier	Performer and facilitator
Directors	Sanjay Lago	Actor, Writer and Facilitator
	Gillian Lithgow	Depute CEO and National Programmes Director, YouthLink Scotland
	Marley Hunter	Youth Theatre Practitioner
	Libby Taylor	Creativity and Inclusivity Practitioner

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.

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 LGBTQIA+ community, non-binary people, 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 Director, 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...

- Organisational leadership e.g. with director-level professional experience and/or managing large teams
- Corporate governance e.g. as company manager or previous board experience
- HR e.g. with experience of core HR functions
- Finance e.g. professional finance skills or demonstrable experience managing large budgets and/or scrutinising financial plans.

The key responsibilities of a Board Director are...

Attendance and Availability

- To attend four YTAS Board meetings per year (online via Zoom) and one in-person Staff and Board Away Day, and to ensure that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.
- To participate in other occasional board-level activity, where you are able to. (e.g. supporting the recruitment process of senior staff)
- 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 Drama, and other Sector Training events.
- To provide advice and support to YTAS staff as required.



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.

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

Learning and Outreach 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

Head of the Family Unit, 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



Further Information

Board meetings

Directors are required to attend four Board Meetings a year. These take place online via Zoom quarterly, normally on a weekday evening between 6-8pm.

In-person attendance is also required at an additional Staff and Board Away Day. This is usually held in May, in either Edinburgh or Glasgow.

Term

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

Expenses

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

How to Apply

If you would like to apply to join our Board of Directors, please send in a CV (no more than two pages) and a cover letter (no more than two pages) setting out how your skills and experience meet the person specifications. Alternatively, you are welcome to submit a short video (max 5 minutes) detailing your relevant experience and skills, and explaining why you are interested in joining the Board.

Please send this by email to our CEO, Jo Walmsley, at jo@ytas.org.uk no later than 9am on Monday 26 January 2026.

What Happens Next

If we decide to take your application forward, you will be invited to an informal meeting with members of the YTAS staff team and Board Directors. This will be followed by the opportunity to observe a Board meeting so that you can meet the other Directors 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 at jo@ytas.org.uk or on **07841829751**.

Jo can also put you in contact with current Board Directors/Trustees if you would like to learn about their experience of the role.



Photography: Andy Catlin

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YTAS is a registered Scottish charity, No. SC035765

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