

UK Theatre Business Plan Update

Summary of work June 2019 - January 2021



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Advocacy

What we have done

- Produced template letters for members to write to their local MPs to join national lobbying with local lobbying.
- Open letter written by UK Theatre and SOLT from 158 parliamentarians to the Prime Minister.
- Convened and chaired 8 working groups for Government.
- Lobbied direct to the Government contributing to the £1.57b government support package received by the Arts and Culture sector.
- Gave evidence to the Lords Economic Affairs Committee evidence session on Employment and COVID-19.
- Gave evidence to the House of Lords Communications & Digital Committee – Oral Evidence (non-inquiry session): COVID-19 and the Performing Arts.
- Gave evidence to Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee’s Inquiry into the impact of COVID19 on DCMS sectors.
- Campaigned for the continuation of the Job Retention Scheme and Self-Employed Income Support Scheme for the sector while lockdown continues.
- Campaigned for the extension of the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme for those who have been unable to claim.
- Written to the Chancellor to request technical changes to Theatre Tax Relief to incentivise the sector.
- Requested extension of VAT reduction for ticket sales.
- Requested extension of Business Rates to non-theatre based companies.
- Organised an APPG for Theatre Evidence Session on the impact of COVID on the theatre sector.
- A series of weekly meetings with the Local Government Association, inviting members to discuss impact at a local level and what more Local Authorities can do.

Measures of success

- Usage and engagement with online content.
- Engagement with the APPG for Theatre.
- Our communications to members demonstrate evidence of UK Theatre’s advocacy to Government and the wider sector.
- Members and all stakeholders report better coordination with Creative Scotland, Arts Council Wales and Arts Council England.

Data, Research and Analysis

What we have done

- Commissioned audience confidence research conducted by MHM with 120 participating venues, supporting government lobbying & venue recovery planning.
- Set up an audience research group.
- Provided funding and data for the Oxford Economic Research Report into the impact of COVID on the creative industries.
- Conducted 20 member surveys on the impact of COVID.
- Provided resources and financial support for the British Repertoire Report.

- Responded to two government consultations on data transparency and data collection and given oral evidence to one of these.

Measures of success

- Delivery of a clearly defined timeline and action plan for data analysis and research.
- Positive feedback from members and the industry.
- Publication of reports and analysis authored by SOLT and UK Theatre.

Diversity and Inclusion

What we have done

- Created an [online resource](#) focussed on improving representation within the theatre sector.
- Supported [Speak Listen Reset Heal anti-racism conference](#) in partnership with Inc Arts, delivered over 8 sessions with 2000+ attendees.
- Provided strategic and administrative support to help launch [Stage Sight](#).
- Conducted a comprehensive access review of SOLT and UK Theatre.
- Reviewed the UK Theatre Awards judging panel and made changes to improve its representation.
- Supported the UK Arts Councils in their review of the Disability Access Card.
- Promoted UK Theatre Board elections to the wider sector in order to increase awareness and encourage greater involvement from a more diverse range of the membership.
- Formed an [Inclusion and Anti-Racism Working Group](#) to review, discuss and plan for the future of the sector.
- Commissioned a suite of training courses and [webinars](#) on removing barriers for d/Deaf and disabled people in theatre.

Measures of success

- Usage of the Theatre Casting Toolkit, and future diversity planning materials.
- Take up and satisfaction ratings for access training.
- Quarterly, quorate meetings of the Inclusion and Anti-Racism Working Group.
- Improved levels of diversity within the UK Theatre membership, and on the UK Theatre Board.
- Usage of new inclusive recruitment resources.

EU and International Touring/Activity

What we have done

- Responded to the Creative Industries Federation's Call for Evidence on an unsponsored immigration route.
- Responded to the Migration Advisory Committee's Call for Evidence on salary thresholds and a points-based system

- Responded to the Migration Advisory Committee's Call for Evidence on the shortage occupation list.
- Conducted two member surveys on the impact of a new immigration system.
- Held a series of industry briefing sessions on Preparing for Brexit.
- Responded to Public Accounts Committee Call for Evidence on UK Border 2020: preparedness.
- Monitored Brexit developments, including feeding in questions to DCMS on the movement of people and submitting question for Parliament on IP issues arising from Brexit with regard to the US/UK Trade Deal.
- Provided input to the Creative Industries Council's paper on the Immigration White Paper for the Home Office and DCMS.
- Written to the Home Secretary regarding the £30,000 minimum salary threshold under the proposed immigration system.

Funding, Income Generation and Audience Development

What we have done

- Ran the annual [Business Resilience conference](#); focussing on examining business models, funding and finance.
- Ran [The Secret to Maximising Earned Income](#) training course.
- Ran [Theatre Tax Relief webinars](#) with entertainment specialist accountancy firm Nyman Libson Paul.
- Conducted a member survey on the use and value of Theatre Tax Relief.
- Provided a webinar for members led by civil servants on the government's Job Retention Scheme and Self-Employed Income Support Scheme.
- Formed a UK Marketing Communications Working Group.
- Launched #MISSTHEATRE Theatre Tokens campaign to promote the theatre industry nationwide.
- Launched #BackOnStage social media campaign.

Measures of success

- Satisfaction rates and feedback for relevant UK Theatre courses and conferences.
- Regular data collection of sales and audience data.

Legal, Employment Relations and Risk Management Services

What we have done

- Concluded revision of the UK Theatre/Equity Designers Agreement
- Started work on re-drafting the UK Theatre/Equity Commercial and Subsidised Agreements
- Developed a 'holding agreement' with Equity, covering UK Theatre commercial shows, to assist members with the initial impact of existing shows shutting down.
- Issued clarification and guidance on the application of the force majeure clauses that existed in the collective agreements.

- Developed a 'Suspend and Extend' agreement with Equity to provide a framework to retain existing artists through re-opening and beyond via contract extensions.
- Agreement reached with BECTU to facilitate BECTU staff to be placed on furlough and practical guidance was given to members on how to utilise the scheme.
- Temporary change agreed to the UK Theatre/Equity Subsidised Theatre Agreement to deal with failure to produce and cancellation situations caused by Covid-19.
- Published joint guidelines with the Writers' Guild for the application of the UK Theatre/WGGB Agreement while theatres are closed and during the recovery process.
- Concluded Covid-19 variation agreements to the following collective agreements, to remain in place until April 2022: UK Theatre/Equity Commercial Agreement, UK Theatre/Equity Subsidised Agreement, UK Theatre/MU, UK Theatre/BECTU, UK Theatre/Equity Designers Agreement, UK Theatre/Equity Directors Agreement, UK Theatre/Equity Choreographers Agreement.
- In concluding the above agreements, we regularly arranged Zoom discussions and updates with the respective committees, and arranged webinars to advise members of the details and practical implications of the variation agreements.
- Responded to member queries on the collective agreements. In cases of issues of particular complexity or difficulty, we often arranged Zoom discussions so that the matters could be discussed more fully.
- Amended the UK Theatre/Equity Commercial Theatre contract template to reflect the terms that have been amended by the variation agreement.
- Handled legal queries from over 230 UK Theatre members.
- Advised members 1-2-1 on around 100 legal matters, covering areas including employment, consumer issues (ticketing and refunds), commercial contracts (including force majeure), immigration, tax and intellectual property.
- Responded to BEIS' Good Work consultation on measures to address one-sided flexibility.
- Closely participated in the working group on new HMRC employment status guidance for performers, stage management and creatives (published September 2020).
- Responded (jointly with FST) to consultation on Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill.
- Responded to Law Commission of England & Wales consultation on Hate Crime.
- Submitted a response to the PRS consultation on Tariff LC (Live Classical).
- Responded to DEFRA Call for Evidence on non-elephant ivory trade (in respect of musical instruments).
- Circulated an e-alert to members regarding the use of eGates (electronic passport gates) at airports by Tier 5 workers.
- Provided input to the Creative Industries Federation on the Tier 4 student visa route for feeding back to the Home Office.
- Produced [guidance notes](#) on the collective redundancy consultation procedure and on potential alternatives to redundancy.
- Drafted a standardised force majeure clause for members to use in venue agreements to make it easier to operate in Covid-19 circumstances.
- Launched '[See It Safely](#)', a campaign to support theatres as they reopen and boost consumer confidence in returning to venues.
- Created '[Managing COVID-19 Safely](#)' training courses and ran 11 courses for 160 participants.
- Provision of risk management consultancy on managing COVID-19 safety issues.
- [Off Stage](#) conference focusing on technical and backstage aspects of theatre.
- Delivered IOSH managing safely training.

Measures of success

- Usage and satisfaction ratings for the Legal service.
- Usage and satisfaction ratings for the Employment Relations service.
- Dialogue with all unions perceived (by all parties) to be streamlined, and both strategic and supportive in tone.
- Successful development and usage of best practice guidance.
- Delegate numbers and satisfaction ratings for safety training and events.

Membership and Member Communications

What we have done

- Undertook a skills audit of the UK Theatre Board to ensure a range of skills to support the business plan.
- Distributed 94 newsletters with updates on government lobbying, industry support and recovery planning information.
- Produced 21 webinars for the whole sector focussed on government lobbying, sector support and recovery planning information.
- Collated a [library](#) of relevant Government schemes and advice relating to Coronavirus.
- Produced a [Coronavirus Guidance Support Factsheet & FAQ](#).
- Created a [Coronavirus Updates and Guidance](#) webpage on the UK Theatre website.

Measures of success

- Membership numbers and satisfaction ratings – overall and in all categories.
- Improved levels of diversity within the UK Theatre membership, and on the UK Theatre Board.

Theatrical Content: Touring, the Regional Producing and Presenting Model, and Digital Distribution

What we have done

- Published the [Producing, Presenting and Touring Handbook](#).
- Produced and delivered a [Marketing Touring Shows](#) training course in partnership with the Arts Marketing Association.
- Produced the revised Code of Conduct – Get-ins, Fit-ups, and Get-outs, now signed off by BECTU and the Health and Safety Executive.
- Launched 'Theatre Tokens Presents...': three live streamed events, in partnership with Theatre Royal, Bury St. Edmunds.
- Commissioned The Space to host a webinar on live streaming on [Theatre Means Business](#).

Measures of success

- With industry leaders and the Arts Councils, development of actions to support new financial models and best practice within touring.
- Development and usage of guidance materials.

- Delivery and satisfaction ratings for research and analysis to monitor developments in touring.
- Delegate numbers, make up of delegates and satisfaction ratings for the Theatre and Touring Symposium.
- Successful development and usage of digital guidance and resources.
- Successful development and usage of a standard agreement for digital rights, pay scales and royalties.
- Clearly defined plan for further research into digital.
- Clearly defined actions to develop the link between streaming and new audiences.

Training and Events, including UK Theatre Awards

What we have done

- Created TheatreMeansBusiness.info, a digital platform to support the sector with its recovery planning and resilience, developed and launched in-house.
- Created and delivered 19 webinars in partnership with agencies, consultants and members:
 - 1603 (number of) live participants
 - 1474 (number of) views of recorded webinars
 - All webinars recorded, captioned (several with BSL interpretation) and publicly accessible as an ongoing resource
 - Promoted 43 webinars delivered by external partners
- Delivered 17 courses and 4 conferences.
- Delivered in house training courses for Creu Cymru.
- Delivered events at Edinburgh Fringe.
- Trialled one paid for webinar.
- Moved the AGM and Annual Review online as a webinar.
- Designed and produced new branding and marketing materials for the training and events programme.
- Moved event booking to Eventbrite to provide members with a smoother experience.
- Updated the training and events newsletter to provide a better reader experience.
- Investigated a range of digital experiences for marketing including short films and Google Analytics.
- Ran #UKTAwards Twitter campaign an alternative to the live UK Theatre Awards, generated 752,504 impressions.

Measures of success

- Delegate numbers and satisfaction ratings for training and events overall, and for specific courses, conferences and events.
- Review of the training and events programme to result in clearly defined objectives (linked to those resulting from the workforce research).
- The diversity of trainers, facilitators and contributors to UK Theatre courses and events.
- Attendance and satisfaction ratings for the UK Theatre Awards.
- An integrated approach to diversity across the UK Theatre awards.

Workforce and Wellbeing

What we have done

- Raised £5 million and provided financial support for the sector through the creation of the [Theatre Artists Fund](#).
- Created a [library of wellbeing resources](#) on the UK Theatre website.
- Ran #InspiringFutureTheatre campaign on Twitter.
- Delivered an [Introduction to Trans Awareness](#) training course.
- Delivered training on [Mental Health Awareness for Company Managers](#).
- Facilitated Children's Mental Health Workshops for Chaperones.
- Brought together theatre charities to enable ongoing information sharing and best practice for the sector.
- Created [TheatreSupport.info](#), a central hub of mental health and wellbeing resources.
- Formed an industry [Wellbeing Committee](#) to develop and steer work to improve the mental health of the sector.
- Produced a sector survey on Mental Health and Wellbeing in collaboration with Mind.

Measures of success

- Usage of the Theatre Helpline (current and proposed functionality).
- An established, long term future for the Theatre Artists Fund.
- Uptake and satisfaction ratings for wellbeing webinars.
- Quarterly, quorate meetings of the Wellbeing Committee.
- Theatre involvement in Discover! Creative Careers Week.