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Spending Review 2025 Representation

Driving Growth: Investment & Innovation in British Theatre

Who We Are

The Society of London Theatre (SOLT) & UK Theatre are the membership organisations for the UK's leading theatre producers, managers, owners, and operators. Our members include commercial and subsidised organisations, and not-for-profit independent charities.

Theatre Skills Drive Our Creative Industries

From Shakespeare to Andrew Lloyd Webber, theatre is one of Britain's most defining and influential art forms. Many of the UK's most globally recognised and decorated actors, producers, directors, writers, and technical professionals began their careers on the stage. It is common for household names such as Sir Ian McKellen, Dame Judi Dench, John Boyega, Stephen Daldry, and Phoebe Waller-Bridge to discover, refine, and showcase their talents in theatre before making their mark across film and high-end television.

Theatre remains the bedrock of the UK's creative talent, both on and offstage. Playwrights such as James Graham and Lucy Prebble develop their craft in theatre before transitioning to major platforms such as the BBC or HBO, often returning to the stage to further push artistic boundaries.

This dynamic exchange underscores the deep interdependence between the UK's creative industries, where theatre serves as a vital training ground, continuously fuelling and being enriched by film, high-end TV, and even the video gaming sector.

Delivering on Growth in Labour's Mission Driven Government

We are eager to collaborate with the Government to secure the future of theatre and unlock its full potential in delivering its mission. As a cornerstone of the creative industries, our sector is a proven driver of economic growth.

With theatres located in communities across the country, we not only fuel the economy but also break down barriers to opportunities. Our members achieve this through enhancing creative



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education through participation and outreach work and by providing training and pathways to highly skilled jobs in a globally recognised industry.



Summary of Spending Review Proposals

1. Restore Public Investment in Arts

The UK now ranks among the lowest in Europe for government spending on culture and was one of the few nations to cut per capita funding between 2010 and 2022.¹ Public investment supports risk-taking and promotes a rich and inclusive cultural offer, which has led to the UK's global reputation as a major hub of creativity and innovation.

We therefore call on Government to restore public investment in the arts to unlock the economic, social, and cultural benefits outlined in this representation.

2. Invest £500M in Performing Arts Infrastructure over Four Years to Unlock Additional Investment

We call on Government to invest £500 million over four years in theatre buildings and venues to address urgent repairs and prevent closures. This funding would unlock at least another £500 million in additional private investment, delivering value for money, driving growth, supporting regional and social equity, and creating jobs.

3. Invest £1.5M to Pilot the Theatre for Every Child Programme

A £1.5 million pilot for our Theatre for Every Child programme in three areas of deprivation would enable the Government to meet its commitment to increase children's access to culture and deliver on its mission to break down the barriers to opportunity.

4. A National Wealth Fund Loan Guarantee Scheme for Energy Efficiency Adaptations

The NWF could act as a guarantor for 70-80% of loans provided by commercial banks to theatres. Venues would repay loans with interest, minimising the likelihood of government losses.

5. Additional Mechanisms to Increase Capital Investment in the Performing Arts

A sustainable investment system for theatre buildings must address the full needs of the ecosystem. It should include tailored mechanisms for publicly subsidised, not-for-profit, and commercial venues to maximise the impact of investment while mitigating risks. We propose a range of additional mechanisms to incentivise capital investment in performing arts infrastructure.

¹ The State of the Arts, Campaign for the Arts & University of Warwick, 2024



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Background

British theatre is an economic powerhouse. The sector generates a turnover of £4.4 billion per annum, contributes £2.39 billion in GVA, and directly generates 230,000 FT jobs. For every £1 spent on a theatre ticket, an additional spend of £1.40 is generated in the local economy.

It is vital to the UK's thriving creative industries and key to Global Britain, supplying talent to British film and television, driving inbound tourism, and exporting productions worldwide.

Theatre is a source of social good, promoting learning, wellbeing, empathy, resilience and confidence. Our members' venues provide free play spaces for children, homework spaces for older children, and serve as designated warm spaces in winter. Despite navigating standstill funding, many of our regional theatres continue to play such an important civic and social role.

Furthermore, they provide life-changing skills programmes and transformative community cohesion projects. For example, the Bolton Octagon is currently delivering an entrepreneurship programme for young people, provision for adults who have additional learning needs, a weekly programme for refugees and asylum seekers, and literacy development on behalf of local libraries.

The immersive experience of theatre helps children to learn², whilst structured arts activities can increase cognitive skills across all subject areas³. Children from low-income families who participate in arts at school are three times more likely to get a degree⁴. Watching theatrical performances helps children to develop emotional intelligence⁵⁶

Funding local theatres means investing in skills development opportunities for young people in their own communities, providing local jobs for the next generation on their doorstep. SOLT & UK Theatre research shows that if theatres could access the investment they need, 54% could provide more jobs for their local communities and 62% would increase or improve their outreach work.

British theatre is also leading the way for a sustainable future, pioneering initiatives such as the [Theatre Green Book](#), that embed sustainable practices within productions and organisations.

² <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.3102/0013189X18761034>

³ <https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/key-research-findings-the-case-for-cultural-learning/>

⁴ <https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/key-research-findings-the-case-for-cultural-learning/>

⁵ <https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-021-11233-6>

⁶ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S002210312100038X#bb0050>



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But the British theatre sector is at risk. While some commercial theatres are thriving, many SOLT & UK Theatre members are deeply concerned about their financial sustainability. To bridge this gap, theatres have only two levers to pull: staffing costs—their largest expense—or ticket prices. Unlike other businesses, they cannot simply add more seats or stage additional productions to increase revenue.

Production costs and overheads continue to rise faster than inflation, with energy costs up 120% since 2019. Public investment in the arts has declined by 48% in real terms over the past 14 years. The rise in National Insurance has disproportionately affected our sector. Without serious investment in physical infrastructure in the next five years, nearly 40% of venues risk closure and 40% will become too unsafe to use.



In Full: Comprehensive Spending Review Representation

Proposal 1: Restore Public Investment in the Arts

Restoring public investment in the arts would improve the Government's ability to deliver on its mission to break down the barriers to opportunity.

Likely Effectiveness and Value for Money

The British public are both extremely proud of the arts⁷ and are highly engaged with them, with 91% of adults engaging with the arts at least once a year.⁸ Public investment is an essential part of how theatre and performing arts are funded in the UK and the main reason for the UK's outstanding history and reputation as a creative powerhouse.

The commercial theatre industry works in partnership with the publicly funded sector, ensuring that a wide range of productions are developed and helping public money go further. Furthermore, public investment in the arts supports risk-taking and promotes a more inclusive cultural offer.

However, the UK now has one of the lowest levels of government spending on culture among European countries, and was one of a small minority of countries to reduce total culture spending per person between 2010 and 2022.⁹ The Campaign for the Arts (CFTA) [published research](#) in July 2024 which found that between 2009-10 and 2022-23, per person in real terms:

- Local government revenue funding of culture and related services decreased by 29% in Scotland, 40% in Wales and 48% in England, alongside rising cost and demand pressures on statutory services.
- The Arts Councils' core Government funding decreased by 18% in England, 22% in Scotland, 25% in Wales and 66% in Northern Ireland.

Furthermore, this reduction in public funding for the arts has coincided with the marginalisation of arts subjects in schools, which has resulted in a reduction of cultural provision in schools.¹⁰ [Read](#)

⁷ In 2023, 79% of British people said that they are proud of Britain's achievements in arts and literature, National Centre for Social Research, British Social Attitudes 41, National Identity

⁸ DCMS 'Participation Survey October to December 2023 publication.

⁹ The State of the Arts, Campaign for the Arts & University of Warwick, 2024

¹⁰ Ashton, H. and Ashton, D. (2022) Creativity and the curriculum: educational apartheid in 21st Century England, a European outlier? International Journal of Cultural Policy (published online 20th April 2022).



[SOLT & UK Theatre's response to the 2024 Curriculum and Assessment Review](#) in which we detailed our members' calls for an arts rich education to improve access to drama and theatre and meet workforce needs.

Restoring public arts funding will lead to the following benefits:

a. Generating growth

Public investment in the arts would boost the UK's fast-growing creative industries. As detailed in [McKinsey & Company's 2023 report](#), engagement with the arts significantly impacts the UK economy by producing valuable goods and services and supporting numerous businesses and jobs. The sector comprises approximately 139,000 enterprises, including creators, distributors, promoters, and arts educators.

Furthermore, theatres and performance venues make localities good places to live and work, something that employers of all sectors look for when identifying areas to establish new centres of growth.

Our members' activity also attracts foreign direct investment, with notable examples including major international premieres (*Stranger Things*, *The Devil Wears Prada*) taking place in the UK due to our favourable rates of theatre tax relief.

b. Strengthening civic pride and sense of belonging

Public funding for arts helps to ensure that people from all walks of life get an opportunity to share their experience or tell their story to the world. At the most basic level it means that more people are seen and heard and work that would not otherwise be made is produced and enriches our cultural offer.

Cultural institutions such as theatres and performing arts venues have a particularly important role to play in building civic pride as they are tangible centres that unite communities in a shared appreciation of their localities, culture and heritage. The stories that are told in theatres powerfully shape the everyday lived and felt experiences of people within those communities.

c. Benefits to health, well-being and resilience:

There is mounting evidence on the role that the arts can play in improving public health and is therefore key in addressing a range of conditions such as anxiety, depression, dementia, and Parkinson's disease. Engagement with the arts also enriches the fabric of local communities. Studies have shown that participation in arts programmes correlates with reduced levels of criminal behaviour, for example.



Children and young people say that engaging in cultural and creative activities, such as drama and music, helps them to "relax and de-stress". Whilst 93% of 16 - 18-year-olds say studying an arts subject had positively influenced their well-being¹¹.

Research also shows that children who have the opportunity to participate in drama develop their resilience and ability to empathise with others. This is particularly important at a time when one in five children has a mental health problem.

Our members run a range of participation and outreach initiatives, with many working strategically to ensure that their programmes reach marginalised children who are less likely to access theatre and performance outside of school, such as ATG's [Creative Learning & Community Partnerships](#) and the RSC's [Associate Schools Programme](#).

d. Opportunities to develop skills for life across the UK

Participation in performing arts includes building relationships, problem solving, working as a team and public speaking or oracy. Skills and experiences that stand children and young people in good stead, regardless of their career path. There is evidence to suggest that engagement in performing arts at an early age helps to develop resilience. These skills are increasingly sought after by employers from all sectors and industries. Meaningful public investment ensures that skills training opportunities and jobs are spread across the UK, providing career paths in every region and city.

e. Providing spaces for experimentation which enriches Britain's cultural offer

The innovation that results from this freedom of expression provides a steady stream of diverse and exciting creative works. Public funding provides emerging creatives with the time and space to develop their work and take their practice to the next level. This is important for all art forms. In the case of theatre and the performing arts, opportunities to share works in progress or put on 'scratch nights' are a crucial pathway into the sector.

These spaces are often described as the R&D workshops of the screen sector because this is where ideas are tested and challenged. Creative work that goes through this iterative process is nurtured and well honed, meaning that it stands a better chance of being successful and more likely to attract finance from the commercial sector. This leads to successful stage to screen transfers such as the development and eventual success of Richard Gadd's 'Baby Reindeer' which started at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

¹¹ [Children's views on well-being and what makes a happy life, UK: 2020 - Office for National Statistics](#)



f. Cultural capital/soft power:

Public investment in the arts has resulted in the UK's world leading cultural offer. British theatre drives global engagement through exportable productions and licensing. *The Phantom of the Opera* has captivated over 140 million people in 183 cities across 41 countries since 1986. *The Play That Goes Wrong* has reached audiences in 57 countries since its 2014 West End debut, generating multiple spin-off productions and television series. In 2023, *SIX the Musical* entertained 2.6 million people across, the UK, U.S., and South Korea, while the original cast album has been streamed over 1 billion times.

Theatre's role in tourism is significant, with 24% of international visitors to London attending a West End show. West End attendance in 2023 reached 17.1 million, surpassing Broadway's 12.3 million.

Attractive tax reliefs make the UK a prime destination for foreign direct investment, encouraging major US-brand stage adaptations like *Back to the Future the Musical* and *Stranger Things* to premiere here, employing British talent and generating ongoing economic benefit to HM Treasury through licensing and tours.

Beyond productions, members export technical expertise and craft, from Theatre Royal Plymouth's [set building contract](#) for the Sydney Opera House to GBA's refurbishment of the Lyric Theatre on Broadway.

Proposal 2: Invest £500M in Performing Arts Infrastructure over Four Years to Unlock Further Investment

A £500 million investment in theatre buildings and performance venues over four years would deliver significant value for money, drive economic growth, and promote regional and social equity. This funding would also contribute to macroeconomic stability by creating jobs and generating wider sectoral benefits. Crucially, we anticipate that this investment would unlock at least an additional £500 million in capital funding from alternative sources.

This proposal aligns with the National Theatre's [Scene Change](#) recommendation for "a leveraged capital scheme, aimed to appeal to a new generation of benefactors and corporates, which would bring in a philanthropic match to the government expenditure."

By leveraging their convening power, the government and sector leaders could engage a new wave of philanthropists, particularly those committed to sustainability - both in reducing carbon footprints and ensuring long-term financial resilience.

Evidence Base

SOLT & UK Theatre [conducted research](#) to understand the need for investment in theatre buildings and what that investment could achieve. Our key findings are:

- 1 in 5 venues require at least £5m each in the next 10 years just to continue current operations.
- Without significant capital investment in the next five years, nearly 40% of venues risk closure and 40% will become too unsafe to use.

Likely Effectiveness and Value for Money

Modernising theatre buildings would improve their functionality, accessibility, and appeal. The benefits include an increase in audience numbers, ticket revenues, and overall profitability.

Well maintained and accessible theatres would support delivery of the Government's mission to break down barriers to opportunity by enable wider participation in the arts, boosting social and community well-being.

Economic Growth

Well-maintained venues would attract audiences, boosting local economies and tourism. The increased economic activity around theatres in hospitality and retail would result in higher VAT and income tax revenues. Theatres generate substantial local economic benefits – for every £1 spent on a ticket, £1.40 is generated in the local economy.

Additionally, job creation in construction and arts sectors would lead to higher National Insurance contributions.

SOLT & UKT research shows that if theatres can access the investment they need:

- 54% could provide more jobs for their local communities and 62% would increase or improve their outreach work.
- 100% of venues would improve their environmental sustainability.
- 57% would increase the variety of programming.
- 100% of buildings built in the Victorian period would be able to increase accessibility for audiences.



Maximising Tax Relief Benefits: The UK theatre industry has been boosted by the UK's favourable theatre tax reliefs. We now need to ensure that there are sufficient venues to host the productions being developed further increasing economic output and tax receipts.

SOLT & UK Theatre estimate that at least £163 million was invested into theatrical productions in 2021-22 as a result of £38 million of Theatre Tax Relief. This is a return of over 4 to 1 for the public purse.

Context: Research commissioned by SOLT & UK Theatre indicates that the direct turnover of London's theatre ecosystem equated to £1.1 billion and an estimated GVA of £602 million in 2019. It was responsible for 39,340 workers. This represents 29% of the direct workforce of the UK theatre ecosystem. Its contribution to the direct turnover is 57.7%.

[Read our 2024 research on the pivotal impact of TTR.](#)

Job Creation: Renovations and new projects would provide jobs in construction, arts, and related industries such as catering, set design, and event management.

Skills Development: Our case study on [Theatre Royal Plymouth](#) shows how investment in buildings fosters skills hubs and employment opportunities. However, currently the theatre's workshop is forced to turn away high profile and financially lucrative UK and international projects due to the lack of physical space available.

Wider Macroeconomic Implications

Economic Stability: A thriving arts sector diversifies regional economies, reducing reliance on single industries and improving resilience.

Employment: Theatres support jobs across multiple sectors such as hospitality and tourism. This investment would help to stabilise employment in regions heavily reliant on these industries.

Sectoral Impacts

Creative Industries: Theatres are a key part of the UK's creative economy. This investment would strengthen the infrastructure on which the wider live events and creative industries rely and contribute to their growth.

Supply Chains: Theatres and performance venues rely on a wide network of artists, technicians, and suppliers of equipment and services. Investment would benefit these interconnected industries.



Distributional Impacts

Social Equity: Investment could prioritise underserved communities, increasing arts access in lower-income areas.

Accessibility: Renovations could improve compliance with disability access regulations, enabling more people to enjoy theatre productions.

Locational Impacts

Allocating capital investment funds to underrepresented regions could help to address geographic disparities in cultural infrastructure and opportunities.

Renovated theatres often stimulate broader local development, attracting new businesses, improving footfall, and revitalising high streets.

Proposal 3. Invest £1.5M to Pilot the Theatre for Every Child Programme

In October 2023, SOLT & UK Theatre launched the [Theatre for Every Child](#) Campaign with the aim of ensuring that every child attends a professional theatre production by the time they leave school. To secure improved access to our cultural capital and sustain our world-leading theatre reputation, we must ensure all children have the opportunity to experience theatre.

Despite the significant work our members do to engage young people, both parents and teachers have reported a decline in school visits, which is disproportionately affecting schools in deprived areas with rising transport costs being an additional barrier to schools and families. In 2019/20 only 26% of 5-10 years old and 54% of 11–15-year-olds engaged in theatre and drama activities.

This means that an increasing number of children are missing out on the benefits of theatre and its unique ability to offer a live shared experience of a story well told, particularly beneficial in an increasingly digital world. Theatre can also benefit children by promoting well-being, confidence and boosting education attainment.

SOLT & UK Theatre want to support the Government in delivering on its commitment to increase children’s access to culture, which can be used as a mechanism to deliver on Mission 4 to break down barriers to opportunity.



Our policy costing work suggests that to provide annual funding for approx. 800,000 children a year to visit the theatre, covering transport, theatre tickets and teacher supervision would cost a maximum of £42.33 per child, or a total cost of £34m¹² per year.

However, given the current challenging fiscal environment we propose a more affordable interim measure in the form of pilot projects to test the viability of our proposals and develop a programme that could be rolled out nationally when economic conditions allow.

We look forward to working with HMG to find practical solutions to support more children to access theatre. We propose identifying three towns or communities within three regional mayoral areas to act as pilot areas over the period of year at a cost of £1.5 million. We set out assumptions for the pilot below, which if flexed could reduce the cost of the pilot.

Pilot Areas	Three areas of deprivation chosen by regional mayoral areas, to be established in collaboration with the Department for Education
Age of Children	14
Number of Children Involved	37,000 (which is 5% of total 14 year old population in England)
Length of Pilot	1 academic year
Number of Theatre Visits	One
Cost of Pilot	£40 per theatre visit (travel plus ticket) 40 x 37,000 = <u>£1.5 million</u> <i>This can be flexed by attracting match funding and/or changing the number of children involved</i>

Our members have a wealth of expertise in learning and participation methodologies which are well placed to break down barriers to opportunity. SOLT & UK Theatre and our members look forward to supporting DCMS and DfE to find ways to bring schools and theatres together to help make this a reality for all children, in particular those who are currently least likely to attend.

¹² Based on 800,000 children a year visiting the theatre, including transport, theatre tickets and teacher supervision would cost a maximum of £42.33 per child, or a total cost of £34m per year. This figure assumes that theatres charge £25 per ticket

Proposal 4. National Wealth Fund Loan Guarantee Scheme for Energy Efficiency Adaptations

This proposal aims to unlock commercial bank lending for theatres by using the National Wealth Fund (NWF) as a guarantor, mitigating risk and enabling venues to access affordable finance for capital investment, production development, and business growth.

The NWF could act as a guarantor for 70-80% of loans provided by commercial banks to theatres. Venues would repay loans with interest, minimising the likelihood of government losses. The guarantee would not count as direct government spending, as no funds are disbursed unless a borrower defaults.

Benefits include:

- Minimal Impact on fiscal aggregates
- As a contingent liability, loan guarantees do not immediately impact borrowing or deficit levels.
- Theatres remain responsible for repayments, meaning HMT spending only occurs in cases of default (low in the arts sector).
- The policy would align with fiscal rules, as guarantees differ from direct subsidies or grants.
- The scheme would crowd in commercial capital, allowing banks to lend more without high-risk exposure.
- Attracts institutional investors to the arts sector, fostering long-term financial sustainability.

Previous research we have carried out suggests that the scheme would provide a 100% return on investment from between 9 to 13 years due to savings depending on energy price variation.

This fund could be adapted to group venues according to age and type of maintenance need as opposed to which sector they fall within. Many of our members venues are Victorian, Post-War and Millenium era buildings and share many of the challenges faced by churches, town halls and libraries.



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Proposal 5: Additional Mechanisms to Increase Capital Investment in the Performing Arts

A sustainable investment system for theatre buildings must address the full needs of the ecosystem. It should include tailored mechanisms for publicly subsidised, not-for-profit, and commercial venues to maximise the impact of investment while mitigating risks.

Building on the measures outlined above, SOLT & UK Theatre propose the following mechanisms to enhance capital investment in performing arts infrastructure.

Facilitating Access to Private Investment			
Name	Purpose	Applicability	Deployment / Delivery
Blended Finance	To use public investment to attract other sources of finance for cultural infrastructure projects	Applicable to all cultural organisations	Via blended capital impact funds
RIBA Stage 2 Support	To use expertise and public investment to reach a crucial stage in infrastructure development	Applicable to all cultural organisations	Propose partnership with RIBA and other key stakeholders to explore appropriate solutions
British Business Bank	To support SMEs	Applicable to all SMEs	In partnership with the Dept for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Fiscal Support to Enable Inward Investment			
Name	Purpose	Applicability	Deployment / Delivery
Business Rates	To bring subsidised members in line with other cultural assets and a more efficient system for commercial members.	Applicable to all cultural organisations	Valuation Office Agency
VAT Relief	To support financing of cafés, restaurants and bars in cultural organisations.	Applicable to all cultural organisations	Consultation with members is ongoing and details will follow ahead of the CST
Tax Reliefs	Three time-limited reliefs on building projects: Historic Buildings Relief, RAAC Repair Relief, Accessibility Installation Reliefs.	Applicable to all cultural organisations	All 3 reliefs should be an extension of the Land Remediation Relief to ease the legislative process Policy along with initial guidance should be announced in the 2025 Spending Review.

Changes to Reduce Friction			
Name	Purpose	Applicability	Deployment / Delivery
Streamlining of Processes	Improve or extend existing process to limit the number of funding applications organisations have to engage with.	Applicable to all cultural organisations	Review of public investment in the arts

Upskilling the Sector to Maximise Investment Impact			
Name	Purpose	Applicability	Deployment / Delivery
Networking opportunities to upskill performing arts sector in capital investment project management.	Effective management of capital investment project management requires expertise that is lacking in the performing arts sector.	Applicable to all cultural organisations	This could include networking opportunities, roundtables, webinars, job swaps for theatre CEOs or Finance Directors leading capital investment projects.



About the UK Theatre Sector

The Theatre Ecosystem

British theatre is a complex, networked ecosystem. Its different parts are inextricably linked through increasing cooperation and co-dependence which has accelerated due to rising costs and the persistent and structural impact of the pandemic.

The sector comprises of producers and producing organisations, and the venues that house them. Some producers and organisations receive public investment from Arts Councils and Local Authorities, but this often represents only a small portion of their turnover, which is mostly generated through ticket sales, sponsorship, philanthropy, membership schemes and some commercial endeavours.

Theatres may be owned or managed privately, by local authorities, not-for-profits, or charities. Many venues that receive public funds also undertake commercial activity in addition to selling tickets, such as renting space and hospitality in their buildings.

Commercial producers raise over £100 million per annum in fresh capital from individuals to invest in the development and production of theatre across the country. They are also the primary source of content for many regional and not-for-profit venues. A single pantomime may represent up to 20% of the annual box office for a regional presenting venue.

The sector also directly generates employment via services providers such as set builders, costume makers, sound and lighting hire companies, transport and storage companies, ticketing, marketing, accounting, and legal firms.

The Local Impact of British Theatre

Theatre is an economic powerhouse, a source for transformative social good and embedded in communities up and down the country. Theatres, service providers, or their workforce are found in every constituency in the UK.

For individuals, theatre attendance promotes wellbeing, empathy and confidence and can boost educational attainment. Cultural infrastructure is also vital to local business, with a thriving theatre boosting high streets.

Our members deliver a range of community outreach and access schemes, including free/subsidised performances for schools, skills development initiatives and space for up-and-coming artists and community groups.



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The National Theatre's learning activity is now present in every local authority across the UK either in-person or digitally. In Leicester, over 28,000 people take part in the Curve's free and low-cost community and learning programmes annually. 230 elders take part in regular sessions with Curve includes Memory Cafes for people living with dementia.

Birmingham Hippodrome offers free Young Community Drop-In Sessions for anyone aged 14+ to feel welcome, provide a creative outlet, and connect with others.

The Global Impact of British Theatre

Producers also export shows globally. *Phantom of the Opera* has been on stage since 1986 and has been seen by over 140 million people in 183 cities across 41 countries. *The Play That Goes Wrong* has been produced or licensed in 57 countries since its West End debut in 2014.

SIX the Musical played to 2.6 million people last year in the UK, U.S. and South Korea, with productions planned in Canada, Japan, Australia, and the Netherlands. The original studio cast album has been streamed over six hundred million times.

Theatre has also increasingly attracted foreign direct investment to the UK. New stage adaptations based on major American brands are increasingly developed and premiered in the UK, employing British creative teams, artists, and technicians.

Recent examples include *Back to the Future the Musical*, *TINA: The Tina Turner Musical*, and Netflix's *Stranger Things*. These generate ongoing economic benefits to HM Treasury via income from replica productions, licensing, and overseas tours.

Facts and Figures

- 91% of UK adults engage with the arts at least once a year, with 74% attending an arts event such as an exhibition or theatre performance.
- For every £1 spent on a theatre ticket, an additional spend of £1.40 is generated in local economies.
- The performing arts sector generates £2.39 billion in GVA and is directly responsible for 230,000 FTE jobs.
- The global gross revenue of *Phantom of the Opera*, *Mamma Mia!* and *Cats* is over \$13.6bn, exceeding that of each of the James Bond (\$7.8bn) and *Wizarding World (Harry Potter)* (\$9.7bn) film franchises.



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- The average West End ticket price has decreased in real terms by 9.26% since 2019.
- In the West End, most tickets sold are under £55, with nearly a quarter below £30. Less than 5% exceed £150.

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Our Vision and Mission

Our Vision, and the world we want to see, is a dynamic, sustainable and world class theatre sector. Our Mission, and what we do as an organisation, is to champion theatre and support our members to thrive.

Contact Details and Further Information

Contact the Policy, Research and Advocacy Team: publicaffairs@soltukt.co.uk

Visit our websites: [Advocacy Resources - UK Theatre](#) & [Advocacy Resources - SOLT](#)

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