



**CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
JOB PACK**

**THE**

**ARTS**

**THEATRE**



Our new auditorium

# INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Thank you for your interest in this post.

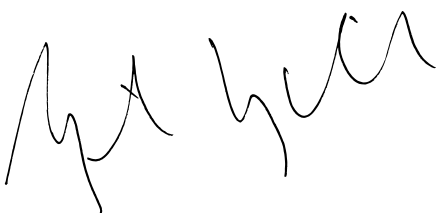
The Arts Theatre was positioned to advance the cultural participations of Cambridge and the University from the very outset. 90 years after the original opening and 80 years since the untimely death of our founder, John Maynard Keynes, The Arts Theatre is now midway through a contemporary and equivalently ambitious reset. Keynes championed a radical and beautiful idea: that the arts are not merely an ornament of prosperity but one of its core purposes. It followed that a base characteristic of a truly successful city was the extent and depth of its cultural offer.

Today, as Chairman, I am proud to say that this foundational legacy is being reasserted. Indeed, our ambitions have now broadened in extending across Cambridgeshire and working eventually towards a national presence in performance and new writing. Measured, careful steps just as Keynes would have insisted but informed by a similarly clear sense of purpose.

The appointment of a new Chief Executive comes at a significant moment. The wonderful transformation of our 664-seat auditorium is complete and the artistic programme re-established. Plans for building a new 200-seat studio on the roof are well advanced, with the intention of commencing building early next year for completion in the autumn of 2028. We have introduced in-house produced work to our programme and are proud that the highly acclaimed *Easy Virtue* directed by Trevor Nunn was the first home-produced drama for many years, with other productions in the pipeline. Our annual pantomime is produced in-house and most recently *Sleeping Beauty* signified the reawakening of the Theatre last Christmas and went on to be awarded Pantomime of the Year!

We are now seeking an exceptional new CEO to build on the established momentum. Someone with vision, ambition, excellent leadership skills and a clear sense of purpose. Cambridge needs The Arts to be bold, visionary, expert and inclusive. We are seeking candidates who will match the commitment and passion of the Trustees in leading the organisation forward.

This is an extraordinary opportunity and we very much look forward to your application.



Nigel Hugill

# ABOUT THE ARTS THEATRE

The Arts Theatre Cambridge is a revitalised theatre for today and tomorrow – presenting outstanding productions while creating new opportunities for artistic exploration, creative discovery, learning and participation.

For nearly 90 years, it has been a place where audiences gather to laugh, reflect, discover and connect through live performance. Established in 1936 by economist and Arts Council founder John Maynard Keynes, The Arts Theatre has been vital in the careers of Ian McKellen, Emma Thompson, Trevor Nunn, Tom Hiddleston and Olivia Colman, among countless others, while landmark productions and performances have helped establish its reputation as one of the UK's leading regional theatres.

The Arts Theatre is the only commercially operated presenting theatre within 50 miles, serving Cambridgeshire and the surrounding area, welcoming more than 150,000 visitors each year. It presents a broad programme of high-quality drama, dance, comedy, musicals and family shows from across the not-for-profit and commercial sectors, alongside a growing programme of creative learning and community engagement.

A transformational redevelopment is now creating renewed opportunities for artists, audiences, schools and communities alike: combining a beautiful award-winning auditorium with plans to build a bold new 200-seat studio theatre dedicated to emerging talent, experimentation and participation.

The Arts Theatre's ambition to develop a producing strand will allow the quality of our artistic offer to be strengthened, while creating work that originates in Cambridge. Through carefully chosen co-productions, commissions and in-house productions, the company will have greater creative influence over the work presented, with deepened relationships with artists and audiences.

Rooted in Cambridge and open to all, The Arts Theatre is building on its heritage while investing in the future: a welcoming theatre that champions creativity, celebrates storytelling and helps shape the next generation of theatre-making.



The Marlowe Society's production of *Twelfth Night*, Jan 2026



*Songs of the Bulbul*  
by the Aakash Odedra Company, Jul 2026



The Arts Theatre's  
family pantomime  
*Sleeping Beauty*, Dec 2025



The Arts Theatre's production of *Easy Virtue* by Noel Coward, Feb 2026

# MISSION & VALUES

At The Arts Theatre Cambridge, we are driven by the mission to unite communities, inspire creativity, and celebrate the transformative power of live performance. We are a dynamic, inclusive space where diverse stories come to life and are shared with audiences from all walks of life.

Our new vision has already begun and we are establishing The Arts Theatre as a vibrant cultural hub that champions creativity, diversity, and innovation. We strive to be a welcoming space where both seasoned and emerging artists can showcase their work, connect with the community, and inspire future generations.

## **Our Brand Narrative**

Cambridge is where centuries of discovery have helped us understand our lives, and where centuries of art and creativity have helped us fill those lives with more meaning and joy.

Nearly ninety years ago, our founder believed that a trailblazing city deserved a groundbreaking theatre. We stay true to his vision today.

Many generations of amazing performers, writers and producers have found their calling here. We want to give courage, confidence and opportunity to future generations of schoolchildren and students, and all of our communities.

Many audiences have laughed, cried and discovered a lifelong love of theatre here. We want to share that gift with thousands more.

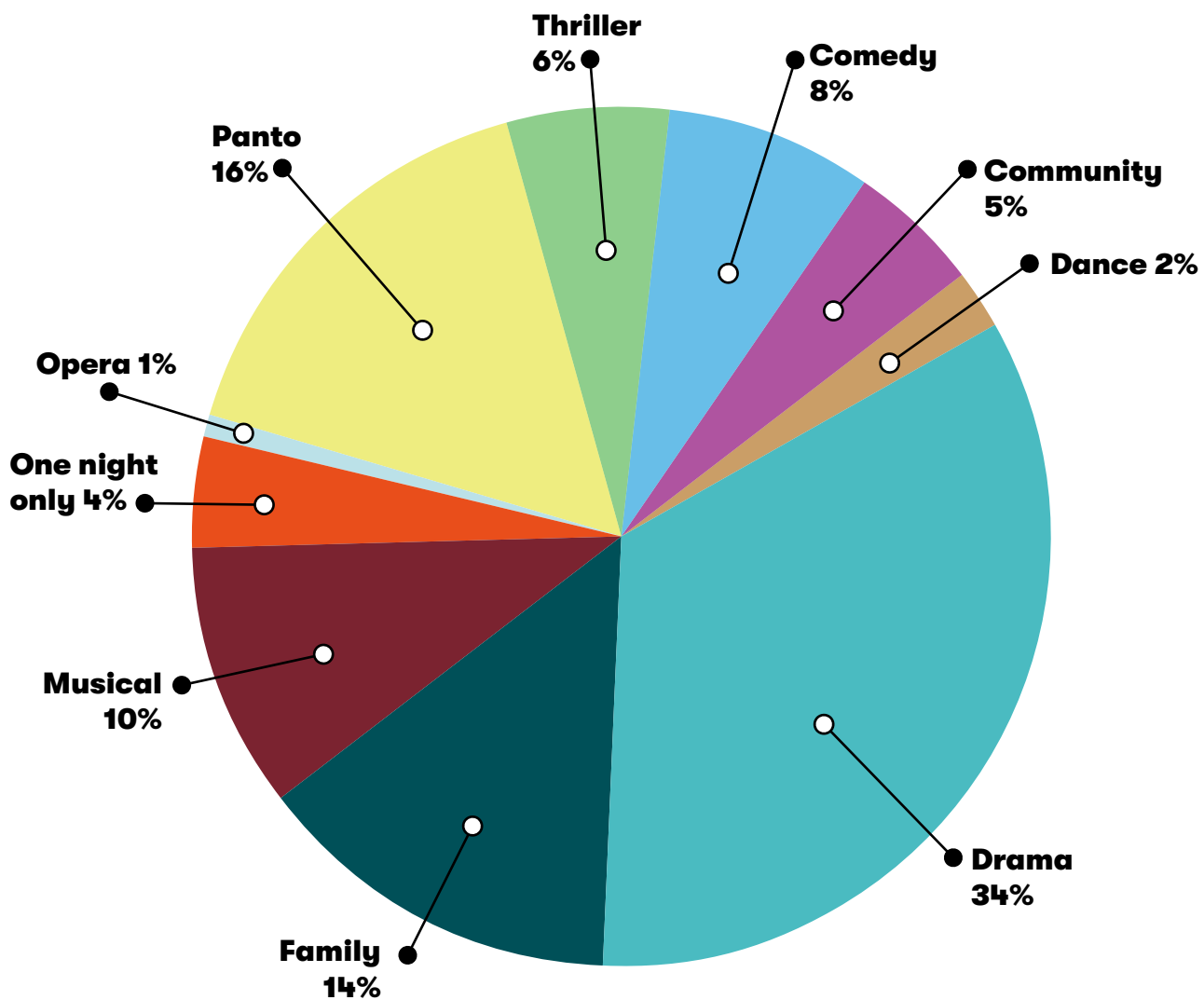
We have rebuilt our main space and will be adding a second, with help from the city and individual donors. We aim to repay that support – with intrigue, with inspiration, and with imagination.

**[Watch our film here.](#)**

# CREATIVE PROGRAMME

The Arts Theatre Cambridge currently operates primarily as a receiving house, presenting a broad range of touring productions and visiting work from both the commercial and subsidised sectors while balancing artistic ambition with financial sustainability. This predominantly presenting model has enabled us to build a diverse, high-quality programme and establish the Theatre as a valued regional hub for live performance.

## 2026 Programme by Genre





*Pride and Prejudice (Sort Of)*, performing Nov 2026

We have longstanding relationships with many of the UK's leading theatre companies and producers bringing critically acclaimed productions, enduring classics and bold contemporary work to audiences in Cambridge and the wider region.

Alongside our presenting programme, we continue to produce and support work rooted in our community and city. Our annual award-winning pantomime remains a much-loved part of the Theatre's calendar and an important introduction to theatre for many local families. We also produce Cambridge University Marlowe Society's annual student production and the triennial Greek Play, alongside a longstanding partnership with Cambridge Operatic Society, who present a community production on our stage every year.

As part of the opening season earlier this year, we returned to in-house drama producing with a critically acclaimed production of Noel Coward's *Easy Virtue*, directed by Sir Trevor Nunn, which delighted audiences and critics alike.

Looking ahead, we see significant opportunities to develop a more mixed presenting and producing model, particularly through the creation of a new studio theatre. The studio will provide an intimate and flexible space for emerging artists, experimental work and productions for young audiences, complementing the larger-scale programme in the main house.



*The Cat in the Hat*, May 2025

# AUDIENCES

The Arts Theatre welcomes more than 150,000 audience members each year across 380 performances, attracting people from Cambridge, the East of England and beyond. Our audiences represent a broad range of ages and backgrounds, with strong loyalty and repeat attendance across our programme.

We are committed to growing and diversifying our audiences, ensuring The Arts Theatre reflects the communities it serves. As part of our wider transformation, we have refreshed our Audience Development Strategy focusing on broadening access, deepening engagement and diversifying audiences.

At the same time, we remain focused on balancing accessibility with financial sustainability, ensuring the Theatre continues to thrive as a leading cultural organisation for Cambridge and the wider region.

*“ We’ve already visited the Arts more times this year than ever before. The programme has been fantastic.”*

*“ We SO enjoy the atmosphere, the buzz, of coming to the Arts Theatre and a live performance from wonderful actors. Thank you!”*

*“ A great asset to the community.”*

*“ The whole atmosphere and staff were so welcoming and friendly – and the show was superbly entertaining and engaging.”*

*“ Amazing transformation of the theatre – we shall be back!”*

# CREATIVE LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT

Our newly created Creative Learning and Engagement programme is establishing the Theatre as a place for connection, learning, and sharing culture and ideas. It engages children, young people, students and communities through arts participation activities that foster skills development and enhance wellbeing and creativity.

Our work is structured around three interconnected strands:

## **Schools**

We are building deep, sustained partnerships with schools to ensure that all young people in the local area can experience live theatre and develop cultural confidence.

We are working towards every primary-aged child in Cambridge experiencing live theatre before secondary school.

## **Creative Careers and Artist Development**

We are developing programmes that equip young people with creative skills and open up career pathways into the arts, particularly in technical and offstage roles where industry shortages are most acute.

We deliver a much-in-demand programme of careers talks, backstage tours and skills workshops to demystify creative industry roles.

## **Theatre of Sanctuary**

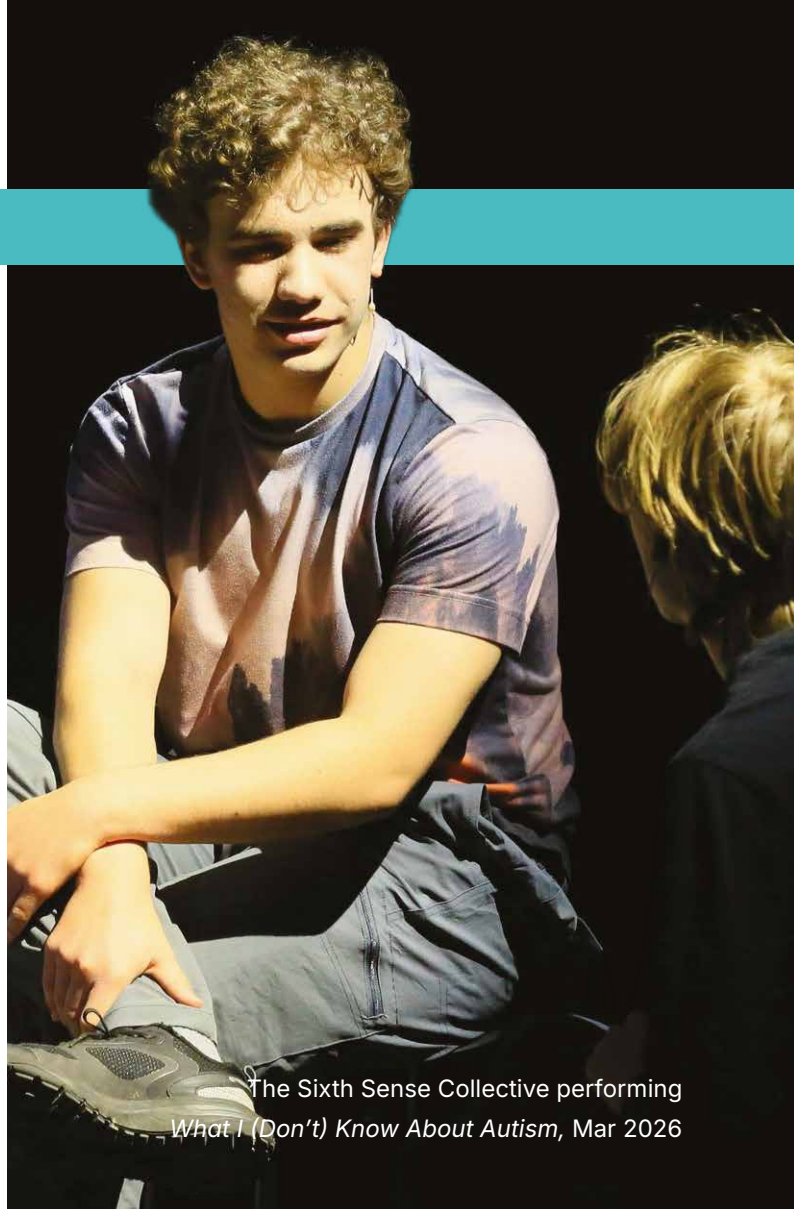
We are working towards becoming a Theatre of Sanctuary, ensuring that displaced people and those seeking refuge are welcomed and meaningfully engaged with our work.

We provide access to workshops, performances and community-led activities in partnership with local support organisations.

Interwoven with the three strands is a commitment to ensuring that the Theatre is accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities.



Local city primary school theatre trip



The Sixth Sense Collective performing  
*What I (Don't) Know About Autism*, Mar 2026



Bedazzle Arts production of *A Christmas Carol*, Dec 2025



Architectural drawing of the redevelopment project



Architectural render of the studio theatre

# REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

We are undergoing an ambitious redevelopment of our theatre – a once-in-a-generation project that is not only transforming our physical space, but also reimagining how we connect with audiences, artists and our wider community.

The redevelopment is being delivered in two phases. Thanks to the remarkable generosity of Lord David Sainsbury through the Gatsby Charitable Foundation and Dame Susie Sainsbury through Backstage Trust, we have now successfully delivered the first phase.

Phase One, completed in January 2026, restored and revitalised our historic 664-seat auditorium. Works included major upgrades to the technical infrastructure, improved sightlines and acoustics, enhanced audience facilities and significantly improved backstage areas for visiting companies. The refurbishment has ensured that the Theatre remains a high-quality presenting venue capable of welcoming leading touring productions for years to come. The project has already received significant industry recognition, winning the award for Best Conservation, Alteration or Extension of an Existing Building (over £3m), as well as the Craftsmanship Award, at the 2026 Greater Cambridge Design and Construction Awards. The project has also been shortlisted for other building awards.

Plans for Phase Two see the creation of a new studio theatre on the building's rooftop. Designed as a flexible and multi-configurable performance space, the studio will fundamentally reshape what The Arts Theatre can offer. It will provide a dedicated home for smaller-scale productions, new writing, artist development, rehearsals, participation work and creative experimentation.

The studio will enable the Theatre to expand opportunities for emerging artists, students and local communities, while strengthening relationships with universities, schools and cultural partners across the region. It will also allow the Theatre to produce and co-produce more of its own work, creating greater artistic flexibility and resilience within an increasingly challenging touring landscape.

Together, these two phases represent far more than a physical redevelopment. They mark a fundamental reimagining of The Arts Theatre as a dynamic, future-facing cultural institution – one that is rooted in its heritage, but designed for the artists, audiences and communities of tomorrow.

Construction responsibility, including managing associated budgets, timelines and continued risk assessment for the studio will rest with the Project Director who reports to Victoria Beechey, current interim Co-CEO and Executive Director. Victoria will continue her permanent role of Executive Director following appointment of the new CEO.

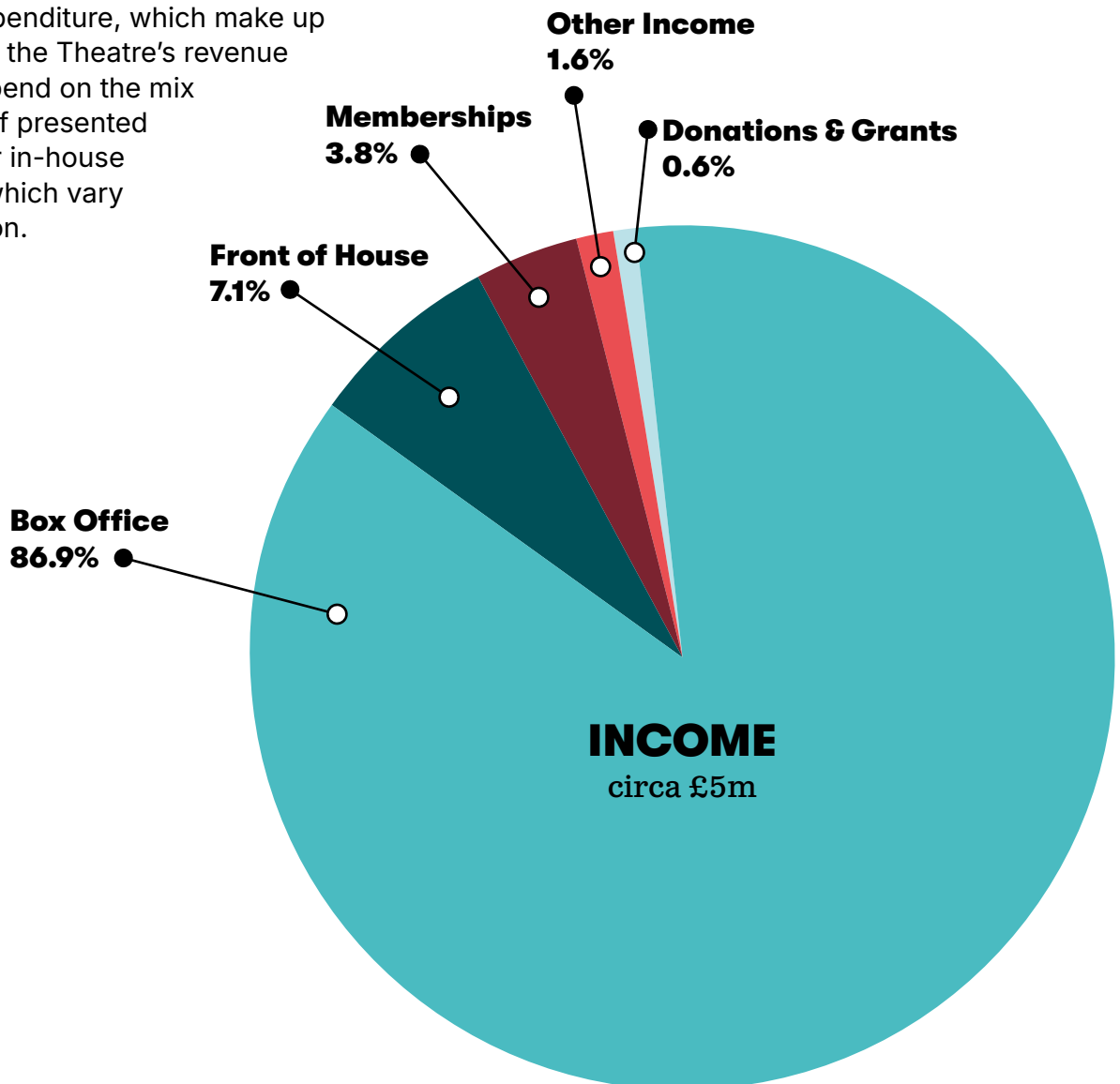
# FINANCES

The Arts Theatre Cambridge is a registered charity and is funded by a combination of box office income, fundraising from individuals, trusts and foundations, corporate sponsorships and other commercial revenues.

As a regional theatre that receives no regular statutory funding, The Arts Theatre has operated independently for more than two decades as a commercial receiving house.

The annual levels of box office income and production expenditure, which make up the majority of the Theatre's revenue and costs, depend on the mix and success of presented shows and our in-house productions, which vary for each season.

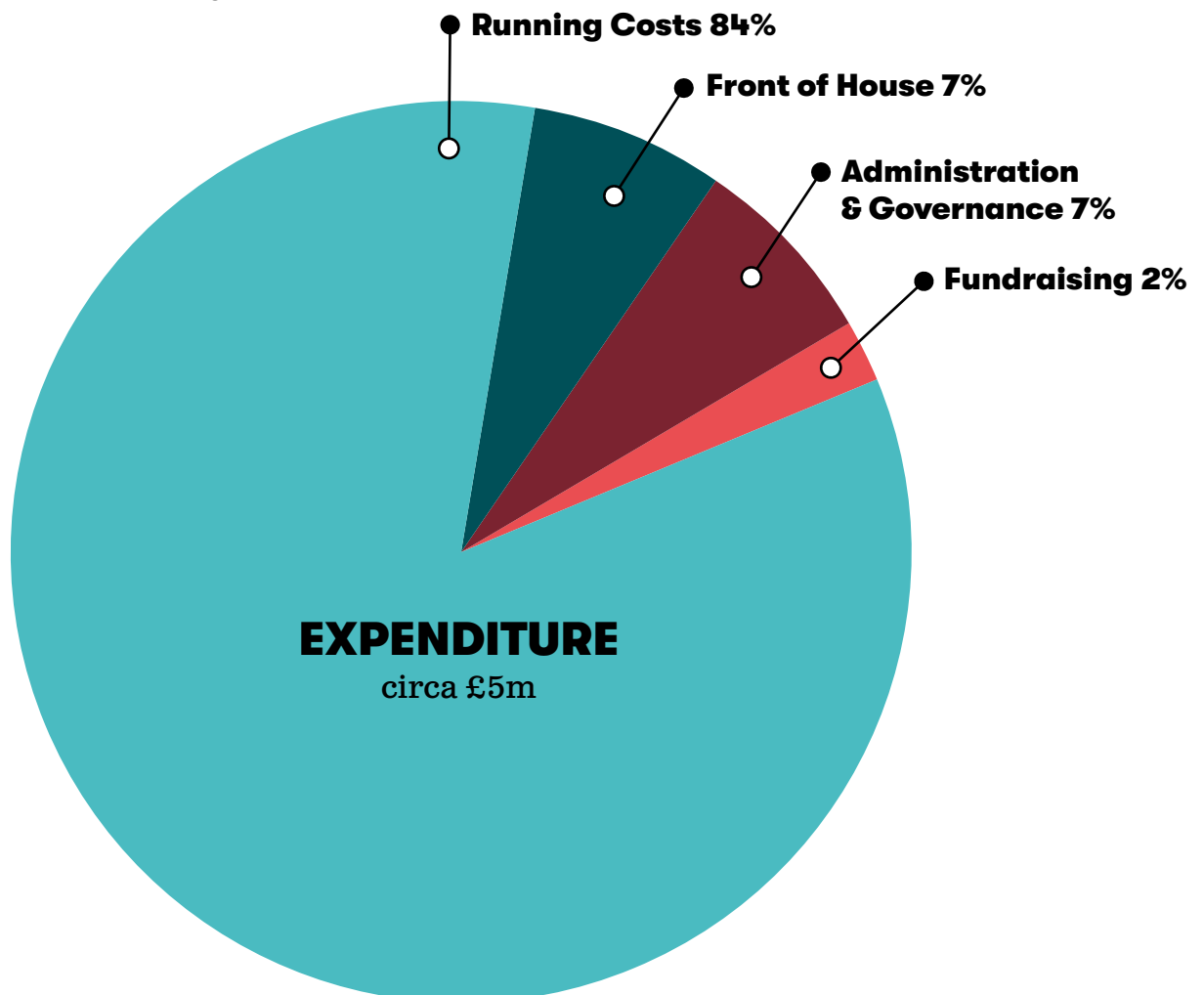
In 2024, the Theatre received transformational gifts from Lord David Sainsbury, through the Gatsby Charitable Foundation, and Dame Susie Sainsbury, through Backstage Trust, enabling the successful completion of the first phase of the redevelopment project to refurbish the auditorium.



Plans to raise the funds needed for the 200-seat studio on the roof of the Theatre are well under way. The necessary expansion of the fundraising function has led to a significantly enhanced supporter base which we are confident will yield revenue in the future.

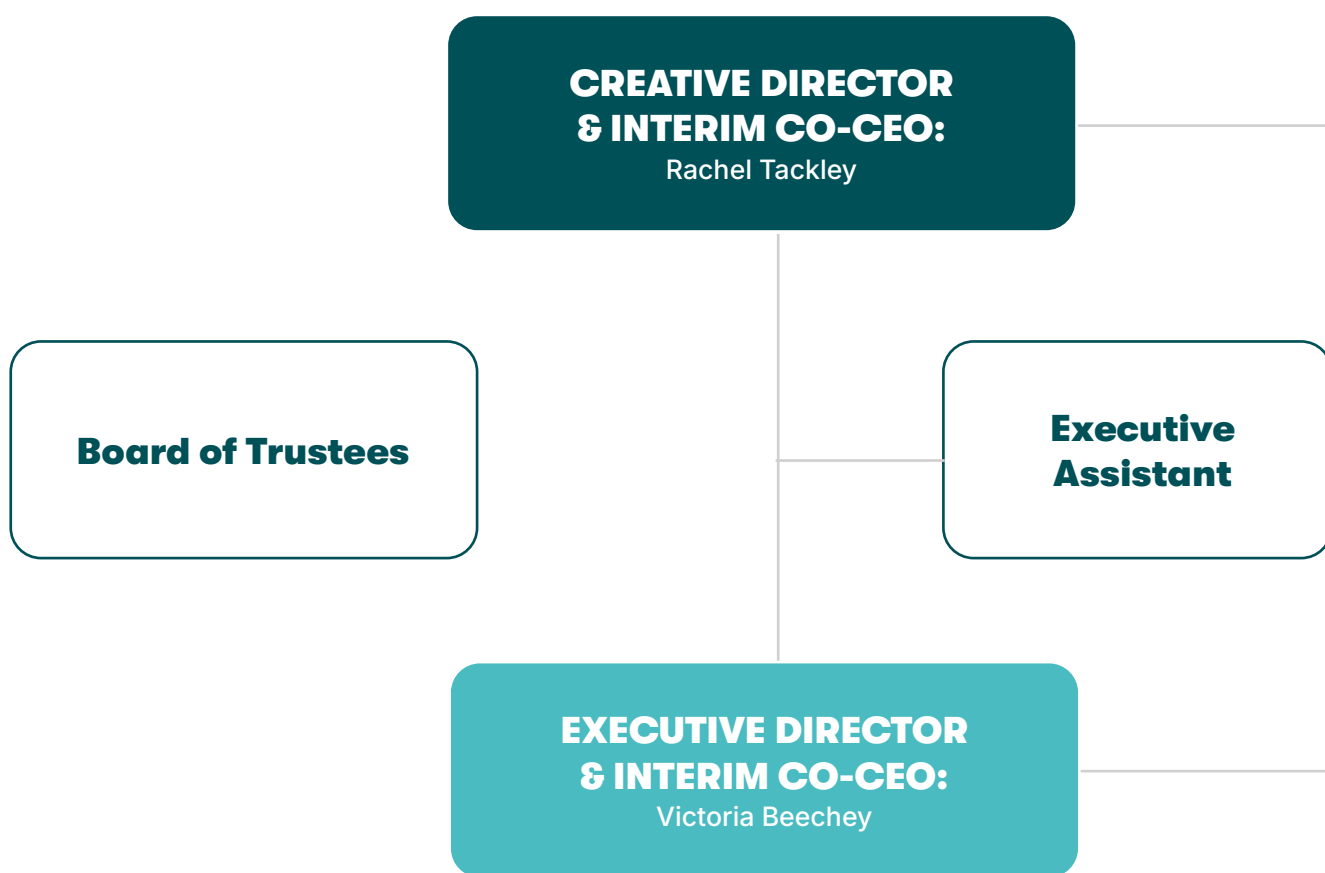
Our new CEO will be inheriting an organisation that has good visibility and accountability across the operations and finances. Nonetheless, the internal and external environment remains challenging, with the need to balance rising costs with artistic ambition and our ongoing commitment to accessible ticket prices, creative learning and community programmes, and as a fair employer committed to supporting its staff.

The Theatre was closed from January to November 2025 for refurbishment. The charts therefore show a breakdown of a typical fully operational year. More financial information will be made available to candidates selected for interview.






# OUR PEOPLE

The Arts Theatre is currently led by the Interim Creative Director and Executive Director who together are Interim Joint Chief Executives, reporting to the Board. They are supported by the Senior Management Team including Head of Finance, Head of Marketing, Head of Communications, Head of Programming, and Head of Operations.



## Key:

-  Reports to Interim Creative Director/Co-CEO
-  Reports to Executive Director/Co-CEO
-  Reports to both Interim Co-CEOs

## **Programming**

Programming & Productions Manager (PT) | Programming & Productions Administrator

## **Creative, Learning & Engagement**

Creative Learning & Engagement Manager (PT)  
Creative Learning & Engagement Coordinator

## **Communications**

Head of Communications (PT) | Development & Communications Assistant

## **Sales & Marketing**

Head of Sales & Marketing | Marketing Manager | Marketing Assistant  
Box Office Manager | Box Office Assistant

## **Fundraising**

Head of Development (Consultant) | Development Manager

## **Technical**

Head of Technical (vacant) | Head of Stage | Head of Lighting & Sound  
Senior Technicians (2) | Technicians (casual) | Stage Door Keepers (casual)

## **Operations**

Head of Operations & Audience Experience | Theatre Manager | Events & Hospitality Manager  
House & Volunteer Manager | Duty Managers & Supervisors (casual)  
FOH Assistants (casual) | FOH Volunteers

## **Finance**

Head of Finance | Finance Officer

# THE ROLE

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### **Key Responsibilities:**

#### **Artistic & Programming Leadership**

- Develop and deliver a bold, inclusive and commercially sustainable creative vision that reflects the diverse communities of Cambridge and surrounding areas.
- Lead on programming and producing strategy and decisions.
- Oversee the further development of in-house producing, including commissioning original work and co-productions, collaborating with artists, producers, and theatre companies.
- Maintain and enhance the artistic reputation of the Arts Theatre locally, regionally, and nationally by virtue of the work that we present and produce, in line with our creative vision.

#### **Strategic Leadership & Management**

- Lead the overall strategic direction of the organisation in consultation with the Board of Trustees.
- Act as the public face and lead ambassador and advocate for the Theatre, fostering relationships with stakeholders, funders, and the wider arts and business communities.
- Foster a culture of innovation, inclusion, and excellence across all areas of the organisation.
- Champion accessibility and inclusion in all aspects of the Theatre's work.
- Lead a culture that enshrines staff engagement, development and training.

#### **Capital Project Involvement**

- Ensure that the capital project aligns with the artistic and operational vision of the organisation.
- Stakeholder management of capital project (shared with project team).

#### **Organisational & Financial Oversight**

- Ensure the financial health and sustainability of the organisation, overseeing annual budgets, funding strategies, and financial reporting.
- Lead the senior management team and oversee all departments, including programming, operations, finance, technical, communications, marketing, development, and creative learning and engagement.
- Work with the Board to ensure strong governance and compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements.

## **Audience & Community Engagement**

- Champion accessibility and inclusion in all aspects of the Theatre's work.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with the local community, educational institutions, artists, and cultural organisations to ensure a thriving creative engagement strategy.
- Lead the development of audience engagement strategies to ensure that the Theatre continues to be welcoming to all and truly reflects its community.

## **Person Specification**

### **Essential Skills, Experience and Attributes:**

- Extensive experience at a senior level within complex cultural or arts organisations.
- Proven experience of delivering high-quality, innovative artistic programming and producing.
- Strong financial acumen with experience of managing multi-million-pound budgets and funding streams.
- Proven ability to lead and inspire teams, fostering a culture of collaboration and accountability.
- Excellent communication and advocacy skills with the ability to represent the organisation at the highest levels.
- Experience working with boards, trustees, and public funders.
- A clear understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the arts and a track record of embedding these values in practice.
- Extensive networks within the UK theatre industry and funding landscape.
- Extensive experience working with commercial partners and touring producers.
- Personal values that enshrine integrity, the value of teamwork, the importance of innovation and a passion for excellence.

### **Desirable Skills, Experience and Attributes:**

- Strong regional or national profile in the arts or cultural sector.
- An understanding of the cultural and educational landscape of Cambridge and the surrounding region.
- Demonstrable experience of managing or playing a key role in delivering major capital or redevelopment projects.

# TERMS & HOW TO APPLY

## TERMS

A competitive remuneration package will be offered, in addition to a range of staff benefits, including:

- 5% employer pension contributions
- Enhanced annual leave, starting at 25 days per year, increasing by one day per year up to 30 days (plus bank holidays)
- Private healthcare provision
- Enhanced maternity and paternity pay and leave.

## Probationary Period

6 months' probation

## Notice Period

6 months (1 month during probationary period)



*Operation Mince meat, performing Nov 2026*

## How to Apply

Your application should include your CV and a cover letter outlining your suitability for the role, including relevant experience in artistic/creative leadership and organisational management. Please include in your letter a brief statement (no more than 400 words) that describes your vision for the transformed organisation in the current context of Cambridge as well as regional theatre. The cover letter should be no longer than two pages.

If you would like an informal and confidential conversation about the role or the company before applying, you are welcome to contact Donna Munday, our external recruitment consultant, at [donnajmunday@googlemail.com](mailto:donnajmunday@googlemail.com).

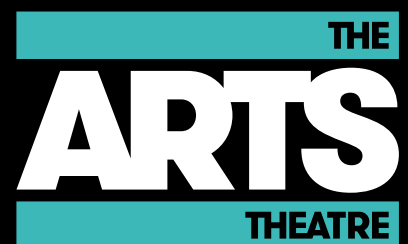
The Arts Theatre Cambridge is committed to reflecting the diversity of the community we serve. We welcome applications from all backgrounds and communities, particularly those currently underrepresented in leadership roles within the arts.

**Applications should be submitted to Donna Munday at [donnajmunday@googlemail.com](mailto:donnajmunday@googlemail.com). Applications must be received by Friday 1pm on 7 August 2026.**

First round interviews will be held in the week of 24 August.  
Second round interviews will be held in the week of 14 September.

If you have periods of unavailability over the interview periods, or have any access requirements for the interview, please share further information within the body of the email that contains your application.





*Photographer Credits: Tim Soar, Martin Bond, Richard Hubert Smith, Ian Olsson, Manuel Harlan, Pamela Raith, Hugo Glendinning, Angela Grabowska, Mihaela Bodlovic*