

Workforce Development Programme – Assistant Director

In partnership with The Regional Theatre Young Director Scheme (RTYDS) Assistant Director Bursaries.

Open Clasp is looking to invest in and engage an early career assistant director to our new Workforce Development Programme. Along with three facilitators and three writers, you will step through a programme that introduces you to Open Clasp's ethos and methodology, taking a closer look at how we engage with our community and co-create award winning work.

This new opportunity for an early career assistant director has been made possible through the Regional Theatre Young Directors Scheme www.rtyds.co.uk

Our award-winning associate director, Laura Lindow, will mentor you from the programme, to workshops, rehearsals and performance, making three new pieces of theatre for the company's programme in 2022.

We want our workforce to be representative of the communities that we work with and engage. To apply, you must be a woman (Open Clasp is exempt under the Equality Act 2010 Schedule 9, Part 1). We are particularly keen to receive applications from women who face barriers within the theatre industry including disabled women, women who experience racism, working-class women and women who are part of the LGBTQ+ community. **Applicants must be based in the North East of England.**

Outline terms and conditions:

We are offering a contract to fulfil the following commitment;

- Attend a 4 day intensive programme in our methodology at West End Women and Girls Centre, in Newcastle upon Tyne from the 24th – 27th January 2022 (mandatory);
- 1 day of peer observation and reflection (28th Jan '22);
- 31st January to 25th March observing/being part of workshops with women's groups (typically two or three days a week dates tbc);
- £75 Childcare support payment available
- April to early May - mentored in the process of feeding back on scripts and dramaturgy, attending production meetings with the creative teams, being part of the casting process and attending auditions. (dates tbc.)
- 16th – 28th May rehearsals for 3 small productions (hybrid of live and digital)
- 31st May – 1st June – Performance
- Holiday pay will be approx. £44.87 p/w

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- All applications will be considered on merit and in accordance with our equal opportunities policy.

This application pack includes a programme overview, person specification and a page about Open Clasp. Please also see www.openclasp.org.uk for further information about the company and our work.

How to apply

- Please read the Programme Overview and Person Specification and Information on Open Clasp.
- Send us an up-to-date CV and either a cover letter, video, audio or BSL.

Your cover letter should tell us why you would like to undertake this programme with Open Clasp, how you identify with the communities we work with and demonstrate how you want to grow your knowledge, skills and experience for the role of assistant director.

Your video, audio or BSL should be sent to recruitment@openclasp.org.uk via WeTransfer or a Dropbox link it should be a maximum of three minutes and address the following three questions;

1. What do you think your role is as an assistant director?
2. Tell us about a project you are particularly proud of.
3. What interests you in working with Open Clasp and why do you want to be part of this programme?

However, you choose to apply, please refer to the Role Description and Person Specification.

- You will also need to complete an equal opportunity monitoring form which will be removed before short-listing to make the process fair.
- If you would like any further information, have any specific requirements, or would like to discuss any aspect of the role in confidence, please contact Executive Director, Ellie Turner on 07818067122.
- When you are ready please email your application to recruitment@openclasp.org.uk. Please put **WDP Assistant Director** in the subject line or post it to Recruitment, Open Clasp Theatre Company, The Stephenson Building, 173 Elswick Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 6SQ. Please mark your envelope "Private & Confidential"
- Applications must be received by the deadline of **12pm on the 29 November 2021** to be included in the recruitment process.
- Interviews will be held at West End Women and Girls Centre on Tuesday 11th January.

Programme Overview

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As Open Clasp's nation-wide reputation grows and partnerships with grass-roots organisations, women's organisations and national charities strengthen, the company is urgently being called upon to create theatrical and trans-media work that holds the lived experiences of women often ignored by society. This vital work makes change on a social, cultural and political level by being the best theatre it can be and using Open Clasp's robust distribution and engagement model.

For us to meet this demand, we need to connect and engage with writers, facilitators and directors who can inspire and **want** to make great and urgent art with those who experience barriers to accessing it. This programme is an opportunity for Open Clasp to support artists who can grow with us and change the world, one play at a time.

We will aim to improve the assistant director's skill level, experience, employability and confidence in the directing role as a result of this programme. Skills will include dramaturgy, working with co-creators through workshops, liaising with stage management and creative teams, live and digital theatre, observing how the organisation works with academics in participatory action research and directing skills in a rehearsal room. As the director, Laura Lindow, will be directing three small productions, the assistant director will have rehearsal room time independently of the director, building confidence and skills through supervising line runs, blocking and other tasks.

Level of Experience

To give you some sense of what we are looking for in terms of what we expect you will have done in your career so far.

This is an opportunity for an early career assistant director who has not had much opportunity to be in a professional rehearsal room. You may have finished college or a BA, or taken non-traditional routes into the industry, but you won't have assisted as a director professionally to date.

You will be able to support a team in creating safe and welcoming spaces for people new to theatre or the arts.

You will have skills and experience that you can offer to the other artists on the programme and will be happy to share your experience, skills, knowledge through workshops, working with a mentor, and participating in discussion.

Your skill set and experience may cross over the roles on offer here, for example, you could be a writer and a director or director and a facilitator. If that is the case, it is of equal interest to us and you should have a conversation with us before you apply.

Role Description As our assistant director you will need to:

- Bring skills, creativity, energy and a passion for activism

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- Build connections and positive relationships with the creative team and the new group of women who's voices are currently under-represented in theatre and society.
- Be an active learner willing to listen, question and adapt your skills to meet the aims and values of Open Clasp.
- Assistant Director will be mentored by Laura Lindow and line managed by the Creative Producer, Carly McConnell
- You will be required to attend fixed sessions at our Newcastle offices, Stephenson Building (West End Women and Girls Centre), Elswick. Any travel and accommodation required by you to deliver work out of Newcastle will be arranged and paid for by the company. Our expenses policy determines how meals and other expenses are managed.

As our assistant director we will give you;

- Knowledge and experience in how Open Clasp's ethos and methodology, engages with our community and co-creates award winning work.
- Mentorship from our award-winning associate director, Laura Lindow, from the programme, to workshops, rehearsals and performance.
- We will aim to improve your assistant director skill level, experience, employability and confidence in the directing role as a result of this placement.
- Skills will include dramaturgy, working with co-creators through workshops, liaising with stage management and creative teams, live and digital theatre, observing how the organisation works with academics in participatory action research and directing skills in a rehearsal room.
- As the director, Laura Lindow, will be directing three small productions, the assistant director will have rehearsal room time independently of the director, building confidence and skills through supervising line runs, blocking and other tasks.

Person Specification

Essential Requirements

1. Commitment to the aims and ethos of Open Clasp Theatre Company.
2. You will be an early career assistant director with a particular interest in directing a piece of theatre for live /digital performance or an audio piece.
3. A desire to advocate for change in the areas of inclusion, diversity and the rights of women and girls to equality and fairness.
4. Strong listening skills, an eagerness to learn and an open mind are essential. As is an eagerness to develop and share ideas as part of a collaborative team.

Desirable:

1. Experience of working in the arts sector and/or within communities. This could be multi-disciplinary.

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2. Experience of working with an arts venue or co-creating theatre with communities.
3. Experience of working within creative teams.

About Open Clasp Theatre Company

Open Clasp makes truthful, risk taking, and award-winning theatre informed by the lived experiences of women and girls, working class women, women disenfranchised in theatre and society, those from minority communities and women affected by the criminal justice system. We are feminist, by feminist we mean fighting for the rights of all those identify as women and girls. It means challenging injustice and being an ally with marginalised communities experiencing discrimination.

Founded in 1998, Open Clasp is part of the National Portfolio of Organisations funded by Arts Council England. We take a special interest in women and girls from the North, shining a light on their experiences through our work. We make space for debate, encouraging our audiences to walk in the shoes of the most disempowered women in society.

Our work is performed in theatres, prisons, village halls, schools, conferences, and community centres including touring to Edinburgh Fringe and off-Broadway to national and international acclaim. It resonates deep into the communities where it is created and outside ensures the under-represented are seen in a new light by both women and men, and those who can make a difference.

Our transmedia approach shapes the work of researchers and leading policy experts. We contribute to regional and national discourse, performing at the Houses of Parliament in 2016 contributing to the Prison Safety and Reform White Paper and are currently on BBC iPlayer in partnership with Women's Aid and Shelter.

Our Values:

- To collaborate with some of the country's most marginalised women and young women, placing their lived experience at the centre of our creative processes.
- Ensure the voices of those women are heard on a national and international scale for social & cultural change.
- Make space for discussion, debate and critical conversations.
- Promote respect, equality and inclusion.
- Reflecting and celebrating the diversity of the North of England.
- Climate and ecological concerns will be reflected in our work to contribute to debates while acknowledging the link between responsibility and disadvantaged communities.

We are:

Catrina McHugh MBE – Joint Chief Executive, Artistic Director and Writer
Ellie Turner – Joint Chief Executive, Executive Director

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Carly McConnell – Creative Producer
Rachel Errington – Finance and Office Manager
Colette Conlin – Project Coordinator
Associate Director – Laura Lindow
Associate Stage Manager – Rachel Glover
Associate Artist – Jessica Johnson



**Better Health
at Work Award**
Bronze Award

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

Open Clasp Theatre Company is an equal opportunities employer. To assist us in monitoring the operation of our equal opportunities policy, and **for no other reason** please answer the following questions. (Tick box where appropriate). These forms will be destroyed once the recruitment process is complete.

DIVERSITY

Can you please let us know your Ethnicity?

please think about what ethnic group means to you, that is, how you see yourself. Your ethnicity is a mixture of culture, religion, skin colour, language and the origins of yourself and your family.

How would you describe your ethnicity? _____

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Can you please let us know your sexual orientation?

- Bisexual
- Lesbian or Gay
- Heterosexual
- Prefer to self-describe
- Prefer not to say

If you would prefer to self-describe, please express yourself here:

DISABILITY

Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Under the Equality Act (2010), a disability is defined as any long-term impairment which has a substantial adverse effect on your ability to carry out day-to-day activities. Examples include conditions which affect your learning, mobility, physical coordination, mental health, speech, hearing or eyesight, as well as conditions such as diabetes and epilepsy which may normally be controlled via medication.

Please tick the box that applies to you.

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If yes, could you provide more details?

Do you need access support for this recruitment process?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please let us know how we can support:

PERSONAL DETAILS

Age Group (please tick)

- 16 - 18
- 19 - 26
- 27 - 35
- 35 - 49
- 50 – 64
- 65+
- Prefer not to say

GENDER IDENTITY

Please tick

- Woman
- Man
- Trans Woman
- Trans Man
- Non-Binary
- Prefer to self-describe
- Prefer not to say

If you prefer to self-describe, please express yourself here:

How did you hear about his vacancy?

DECLARATION

I declare that the information on this form is true and complete. I understand that any wilful misstatement or omission renders me liable to dismissal if engaged.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please note there is no need to have an original signature on the form if you are emailing it back to us. In emailing the form we accept that you are declaring that the information contained within the application is correct.