

synergy theatre project

Vision

Synergy believes that theatre can be transformative, change perceptions, and open up new possibilities towards a more positive future. We live in a world where some of the most disadvantaged are over-represented in the criminal justice system and are more likely to suffer social exclusion. Our vision is to work through theatre towards a fairer world where those within or at risk of entering the criminal justice system can discover alternate pathways and become an integral and meaningful part of society.

Mission

Synergy seeks to create a ground-breaking, interrelated programme of artistic work which harnesses the energy, instincts, and life experiences of those we work with – prisoners, ex-prisoners, young offenders, and young people at risk of offending – gives them a voice and, in doing so, their dignity back. We want to inspire change by capturing the imagination and affecting the feelings, behaviours and attitudes of participants and public, whilst doing our part to influence the arts and criminal justice sectors towards systemic change.

Our work

Our work provides practical opportunities which develop beneficiaries' skills, capabilities and resilience, builds a bridge from prison to social reintegration, provides vital support to rehabilitation, and seeks to prevent young people from entering the criminal justice system. We do this through:

- Producing high quality theatre and film for prisons, mainstream theatres and schools, that uniquely bring together professional artists with prisoners and ex-prisoners to create and perform urgent and authentic work, representing unheard voices on the stage;
- Offering theatre-based training for prisoners and ex-prisoners with a focus on creative development, progression routes, and pathways into education, training and employment;
- Challenging mindsets, unlocking creative potential and offering alternative pathways for young people at risk of offending through our Young People's Programme of creative projects and productions led by professional and ex-prisoner artists and facilitators;
- Engaging the public through performances, debates, access to prisons, and a chance to hear directly the stories of those involved in the criminal justice system;
- Providing ex-prisoner led role-play training which contributes to professional development for criminal justice sector staff and offers ex-prisoners paid employment, a platform to share their experiences and the opportunity to influence systemic change;
- Working to promote the impact of the arts within the rehabilitation and desistance agendas, seeking to influence approaches, to share expertise, and to effect institutional change, and working with mainstream cultural institutions and artists to connect them to new experiences and lives.

Synergy has an excellent reputation and works with many long-term partners including the Royal Court, Young Vic and Soho Theatres, Sara Putt Associates and numerous prisons and schools, youth offending teams and pupil referral units across London. The company's last five mainstream productions have played to capacity audiences and received 4- and 5-star reviews across the national press with two productions for young people receiving the Brian Way and Writers' Guild Awards. The winners of 'The Stage 100' 2021 Award included Synergy under 'Serving the community', acknowledging and celebrating our commitment to ensuring provision and sustained engagement for beneficiaries during the pandemic. We received a commendation at the Howard League for Penal Reform's Community Awards 2021 under the 'Policing and children' category for our online one-to-one intervention work with young people. We were also shortlisted for the CJA Awards 2021 for our Lockdown Dramas national prison scriptwriting competition, as was our New Writing Manager for the Kenneth Tynan Award.

We have recently relocated to an office at the new theatre space, Brixton House. This marks a very positive move for the organisation and will enable us to offer staff a flexible approach to working.

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Our programme of theatre-based training for prisoners and ex-prisoners develops creative and transferrable skills and is designed to build self-esteem and equip individuals for employment. Its purpose is to create access to education, training, work placements and paid employment to reduce reoffending and improve chances in life.

The programme comprises acting, playwriting and bespoke creative courses for prisoners and free introductory and intermediate courses in acting, stage management, playwriting, film production and workshop facilitation for ex-prisoners. Led by industry experts affiliated with our expanding list of project partners, these courses provide opportunities for the development of specific and transferrable skills and lead to work placements and employment opportunities within Synergy, with partners, affiliated organisations and beyond.

Synergy is seeking a dynamic individual to build on the success of the programme to date, including overseeing delivery in both the prison estate and the community, broker new partnerships for training and employment opportunities, support beneficiaries and help realise our future ambitions.

For further information about the company's work visit: [**www.synergytheatreproject.co.uk**](http://www.synergytheatreproject.co.uk)

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Learning and Engagement Manager (Adults)
REPORTS TO:	Artistic Director
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	Learning and Engagement Assistant, freelance theatre practitioners and ex-prisoner facilitators

JOB PURPOSE SUMMARY

The Learning and Engagement Manager will lead our theatre-based training programme for prisoners and ex-prisoners, deliver a range of activity, manage work placements and exit strategies for beneficiaries and develop ongoing provision for the future.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES/MAIN DUTIES

- Deliver key activities that fulfill Synergy's strategic objectives around learning and engagement for prisoners and ex-prisoners
- Provide opportunities for beneficiaries to participate in a programme of high quality theatre-based training
- Maintain existing partnerships with theatres, cultural institutions, arts organisations and Further Education colleges as well as develop new relationships to extend delivery of the programme and support community engagement, placements and job brokerage
- Work in consultation with the prison estate and Probation Service and other referring agencies to support recruitment
- Liaise with all key stakeholders to ensure the smooth running of the programme
- Recruit and manage freelance artists and creative practitioners
- Oversee induction, support, mentoring and exit strategy of ex-prisoners
- Research and develop external training and work experience opportunities and progression routes for ex-prisoners beyond Synergy
- Monitor activity and collate data and information to produce evaluation reports
- Liaise with and report to project funders and partners
- Ensure that the company's vulnerable adult policy is implemented and updated as necessary, and manage Enhanced DBS checks of contracted teams
- Oversee marketing and press for projects
- Line manage the Learning and Engagement Assistant
- Manage project budgets set by the company and comply with Synergy's financial procedures
- Work with the Development Manager to research and secure funds for the development of the ongoing programme
- Represent Synergy within local, regional and national arts and education and sectors
- Undertake any other duties as may reasonably be required

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Establish and promote good internal relationships within your department and the main office, ensuring that colleagues, participants and contractors are treated with care and consideration
- Meet financial targets including profit and expenditure
- You are responsible for the performance of your team (both employees and contractors or freelancers) and as such you will;
 - Ensure that you are aware of, and adhere to the company's rules and procedures
 - Undertake the continuous process of training and developing team members. This includes in your role the completion of performance appraisals, succession planning and communication meetings
 - Issue your team members with personal objectives to include challenging yet achievable targets in line with Synergy's wider objectives

- Take responsibility for the recruitment of your team including devising job descriptions, interviewing and communicating with trustees
- Oversee short-term workers on creative projects
- Carry out the administration required to pay your team accurately and on time. You should ensure you are fully trained in the necessary procedures to enable you to complete these tasks and adhere to the timelines and rules governing this area.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

SKILLS and ATTRIBUTES

Essential

- Proven track record of devising and managing a range of successful creative learning and engagement activity (ideally 5+ years)
- Strong interest in and understanding of the role of theatre in learning and the community and/or arts in the criminal justice system
- Experience of brokering relationships with employers to help people into work
- Good knowledge of the formal and informal further education sectors
- Highly organised and self-motivated with excellent project management skills
- Excellent communication skills, both written and oral, and ability to build relationships with a range of partners
- Ability to manage client groups with tact and skill

Desirable

- Understanding of current legislation regarding protection of vulnerable adults involved in arts activities
- Experience of working in FE using a multi-agency approach
- Experience of using the Dynamic Purchasing System, the MoJ's procurement system
- A good knowledge of apprenticeship models

Terms of employment

- Contract: Permanent. Subject to a six-month probationary period with three-month review
- Location: London office with blended working option
- Salary: £34,000
- Annual leave: 25 days plus Bank Holidays
- Hours: Full-time (37.5 hours per week)
- The post will be offered subject to a satisfactory references and an Enhanced DBS check

Application procedure

Please **download the application form from Synergy's website** along with the equality and diversity form which will be separated from your application and kept anonymised.

Please email your application form and CV to: **info@synergytheatreproject.co.uk** with 'Learning and Engagement Manager (Adults) application' in the subject line.

Closing date for applications: Midday on Friday 12 August 2022

First interviews will be held: Week commencing 22 August 2022

Thank you very much for your interest. We look forward to receiving your application.

Synergy Theatre Project is an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from all groups, especially those underrepresented in the arts, and actively encourage those from diverse backgrounds to apply.