

THEATRE BY THE LAKE

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
RECRUITMENT PACK
AUTUMN 2026**



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Credit: Tom Kay



AN INTRODUCTION

We're looking for new Trustees who share our passion for theatre and the transformational power of the arts.

This is an exciting time to join Theatre by the Lake as we plan for the future with ambition and focus.

WHAT DO TRUSTEES DO?

Trustees are actively involved with the theatre's vibrant management team, particularly with our co-Chief Executives Liz Stevenson (our Artistic Director) and Simon Stephens (our Executive Director) in:

- **Developing our strategy and focus.**

Our direction has evolved significantly in recent years. As we develop a new business model with a clear artistic vision, we continue to adapt and refine our work to ensure it delivers the greatest impact.

- **Extending our reach.** Broadening our audiences, supporting creative talent locally and from further afield and taking the work that we produce beyond our own building into communities in Cumbria and more widely.

- **Ensuring our long-term sustainability.**

We want to create lasting value for the communities we serve. To do that, we must grow sustainably, extending our reach while building a financially resilient and environmentally responsible organisation fit for the future.

- **Executive support:** Each Trustee is also encouraged to make themselves available to the Executive as a sounding board on matters in which they claim a particular insight or have relevant experience. This might include governance, culture or strategy.

Trustees also perform the normal fiduciary duties that are common for Trustees and Directors. If you would like to see these, let us know.



Company 25. Credit: Chris Payne

WHAT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

We're particularly looking for applicants with the following skills and backgrounds:

- **Artistic Leadership:**

An established artistic leader with significant experience in theatre-making and programming. This Trustee will bring expert sector knowledge, strong industry connections and an understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing regional theatre. They will provide strategic artistic insight, advocacy and leadership.

- **Organisational Leadership:**

An experienced and strategic senior leader from a mid-scale or large-scale producing theatre. This Trustee will contribute expertise in organisational leadership, operations, finance and stakeholder engagement, helping to support sound governance and long-term sustainability. They will also bring valuable networks and a broad understanding of the wider theatre landscape.

- **Artistic Insight:**

An experienced freelance artist who can bring a contemporary creative perspective to Board discussions. This Trustee will offer valuable insight into the experiences of independent artists, contribute relevant sector knowledge and networks and help ensure a wide range of voices and perspectives are represented in strategic decision-making.

- **Fundraising:**

An experienced senior fundraising professional who will provide strategic advice to the Senior Management Team. They will bring expertise in trusts and foundations, individual giving and a broad understanding of fundraising for the arts, helping to strengthen the organisation's fundraising approach.



**“A production alive with movement
and community spirit”**

(Brassed Off, 2024)

THE GUARDIAN



Steel 2024. Credit: Chris Payne

THIS PACK

This pack contains:

- Background information about our organisation
- Information about the role of a Trustee
- The application process

This recruitment pack is also available in accessible formats including large print. If you would benefit from an accessible recruitment pack please contact: jobs@theatrebythelake.com

Theatre by the Lake strives to present a vibrant and diverse programme. We believe that we can do this most successfully if our Trustees and workforce encompass a broad range of perspectives and lived experience. We therefore warmly welcome interest from everyone, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious belief or disability.

Given their under-representation at Board level, we are particularly keen to encourage applications from those under the age of 30, from the Deaf and disabled community, or who identify as being of global majority heritage.

As an organisation rooted in place, we are also looking for people who live in or have an affiliation with Cumbria.



“A bumper crop of tenderness, toil and female strength”

(The Farmer's Wife 2026)

THE GUARDIAN



“Beautiful and breath-stopping”

(Steel, 2024)

THE STAGE



ABOUT US

OUR VISION (the big idea that we deliver on)
Theatre enriches the lives of everyone in Cumbria, and theatre made in Cumbria is celebrated on the national stage

OUR PROMISE (what audiences get from us)
Come together and experience the power of live theatre in an extraordinary place

OUR ESSENCE (felt through every brand expression and experience) Theatre made with passion in an extraordinary place

THEATRE BY THE LAKE IN NUMBERS: 2025-26, WE:

- Produced 5 'Made by TBTL' productions
- Partnered with theatres across the country, including London, Scarborough, Bolton, Ipswich, Derby and Hull
- Toured original work to 7 rural and community venues in Cumbria and nationally
- Won the UK Theatre Award for Excellence in Touring
- Won the Cumbria Life Award for Best Cultural Venue
- Delivered 492 performances across 175 productions, including 66 accessible performances
- Sold 74,799 tickets
- Welcomed 5,815 school pupils to experience the magic of live performance, with many children attending a theatre for the first time
- Delivered 2,250 hours of bespoke activity for young people
- Provided 228.5 total hours of in-kind support to local artists
- Supported productions by 11 local community groups
- Welcomed 200 people from families in hardship to The Wizard of Oz through our Give the Gift of Theatre at Christmas campaign
- Benefited from over 9,000 hours of volunteering

“Artistically sharp and stunningly situated”

THE NEW STATESMAN



Wizard of OZ 2025. Credit: Pamela Raith

OUR STORY

At our home in Keswick and out across Cumbria, we produce and present nationally acclaimed theatre, made with passion, which is seen by audiences from across the globe. Our work is rooted in our place, looking out over the idyllic Derwentwater, and aims to be both relevant and accessible to the communities around it. We are a champion of Cumbrian creativity.

We believe theatre has the power to transform lives and so create vital opportunities for Cumbrian artists, young people and communities to come together, be inspired and explore their creativity. At our venue and out across the region, we strive to make and share great theatre which tells stories, builds communities and celebrates its place. We are Cumbria's leading producing theatre and its largest Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation.

From origins as 'The Blue Box', the Theatre was willed into existence by the local community and opened by Dame Judi Dench in 1999. Since then, TBTL has established itself as an integral part of the UK regional theatre network, becoming a major attraction for both Cumbrian residents and visitors to the Lake District.

The Theatre has a flexible Main House with 400 seats. It also operates a 100-seat Studio, allowing for events of all shapes and sizes. Together, these host almost 400 performances each year. We also generate income from an adjacent and beautifully situated café, enhancing the experience for visitors, helping to support our long-term resilience and supporting our important role as one of the major tourist attractions in the Lake District.

Last year, we welcomed nearly 75,000 audience members to the theatre, including 99 schools. We also took *Steel*, a new Cumbrian play by Lee Mattinson, on the road for a national tour of community venues and studio theatres. We were privileged to win the **UK Theatre Award for Excellence in Touring**, a testament to our strategic approach to engaging local communities, as well as the **Cumbria Life Award for Best Arts and Culture Venue**.



Liz and Simon. Credit: Amy Bateman

OUR ORGANISATION

Theatre by the Lake is the trading name of Cumbria Theatre Trust Ltd. (CTT), a company limited by guarantee and registered charity. We also have a trading subsidiary TBTL Services Ltd., which oversees the catering and other commercial services.

The governing body of CTT is the Board of Trustees who are simultaneously directors of the company and Trustees of the charity.

Our joint chief executives, Executive Director Simon Stephens and Artistic Director Liz Stevenson, are delegated the management and artistic operation of the company by the Board of Trustees, which is chaired by Sam Alberti.

TERMS

This role is unremunerated. Reasonable, pre-agreed domestic travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Board meetings take place quarterly, with an annual Away Day. Most meetings take place at Theatre by the Lake, and are scheduled for Saturday mornings. Committees meet every 2 - 3 months, usually on weekday evenings.

The Board is open to virtual attendance and most meetings are hybrid but Trustees attend at least two of these per year in person, as well as the Away Day. Trustees need to have direct experience of the work we produce and are warmly encouraged to attend performances and other key events during the year.

The appointment is for an initial term of 3 - 4 years which can be renewed once at the discretion of the Board.

HOW TO APPLY

PRE-DISCUSSIONS

If you would like a confidential and informal discussion about the role of Trustee, please contact Simon Stephens at **simon.stephens@theatrebythelake.com** or **0176 820 6063**

If appropriate, Simon will arrange for you to speak to our Chair, Sam Alberti.

APPLICATIONS

To apply for the role, please submit:

- A short CV together with a covering letter or email that explains why you are interested in becoming a Trustee and what you might bring to the role. If you are more comfortable, you might instead want to make a short video that gives us your details.
- Please also complete our online Equal Opportunities and Monitoring Form which you can find on the listing page.

Please send your application to **jobs@theatrebythelake.com** or post to Simon Stephens, C/O Theatre by the Lake, Lakeside, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 5DJ.

CLOSING DATE

Monday 30 November 10am

INTERVIEWS

Successful applicants will be asked to attend an interview with Trustees and an informal chat with the co-CEOs.

SALARY

Trustee/Director posts are unremunerated.



FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information is available on the TBTL website.

Our history:

<https://www.theatrebythelake.com/about-us/history/>

Our team:

<https://www.theatrebythelake.com/about-us/team-contact-new/>

Our Board:

<https://www.theatrebythelake.com/about-us/Board/>

Our report and accounts: <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/01874868/filing-history>

**“The most beautifully located
and friendly theatre in Britain”**

The Independent



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f t i y l n d TBTLAKE

Lark Rise to Candleford. Credit: Pamela Raith