

Saxton Bampfylde



National Theatre

Appointment of Director and
Chief Executive

June 2023 | Reference: BTNC

Elliot Barnes-Worrell and Leonie Elliott in
Small Island. Photo by Johan Persson.

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre (NT) makes theatre that entertains and inspires using its creativity, expertise and unique reach. We share unforgettable stories with millions of audience members across the UK and around the world – on our own stages, on tour, in schools, on cinema screens and streaming at home.

World-leading artists make their best work at the NT with the widest possible audience and impact. We invest in talent and innovation on stage and off. We take seriously our role as the nation's theatre. Of the new productions we develop each year with a wide range of theatre companies, a third of that R&D resource is dedicated to shows staged at theatres outside London.

Through touring our work to local theatres and schools and nationwide education and community programmes, we are active in 71 of the 109 levelling up priority areas in the UK. A registered charity with deeply-embedded social purpose, the NT works with hundreds of schools and communities across the UK to fire imagination and inspire creativity, and to develop skills and pathways for careers in theatre.

Our key objectives as we look to the next five years are towards economic, environmental and social sustainability, upholding a culture that aims to take care of our people and the wider world.

A typical year at the NT...

- The theatres are 90% full at the NT's South Bank home;
- Three million audience members worldwide buy tickets to performances, with millions more engaging digitally;
- The NT is on the road, touring to dozens of UK towns and cities;
- Regular international productions with a strong presence in the US theatre landscape;
- Tens of thousands of young people engage with the NT's nationwide learning programmes
- Over 85% of state secondary schools access the free streaming service, the National Theatre Collection;
- NT Live broadcasts productions to 2,500 cinema screens in 60 countries, including over 700 screens across the UK from Penzance to the Shetland Islands;
- The NT employs thousands of people every year, from actors and front of house staff to scenic artists. The National Theatre is technically one of the largest factories in central London, with hundreds of skilled craftspeople, practitioners and artists working together;
- The New Work Department has a wealth of projects in development, with a third of its capacity now supporting companies outside of London;
- A vibrant South Bank building welcomes thousands of visitors daily, with three restaurants, multiple bars, a Bookshop and guided tours;
- A short walk away, the NT's Archive holds a treasure trove of material relating to theatre and performance;
- The NT's turnover is around £100m. Arts Council England funding makes up £16.15m of that each year, with the remainder being self-generated. The NT received a repayable loan of £19.7m from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund, which is the bedrock of its post-Covid recovery. As a consequence, fundraising is more important now than at any time in our history: along with financial self-help measures, the generosity of donors is more crucial than ever.

More information about the National Theatre can be found at its website:

www.nationaltheatre.org.uk

Giles Terera and the cast of Othello. Photo by Myah Jeffers



Samuel Blenkin and Marli Siu in The Ocean at the End of the Lane. Photo by Manuel Harlan.



Our Purpose

We believe great theatre sparks imagination and brings people together.

Our Vision

A world where theatre is thriving and vital.

Our Mission

To make theatre that entertains and inspires using our creativity, expertise and unique reach.

Background and context

The National Theatre is an extraordinary creative hub, where brilliant plays are nurtured and staged by exceptional theatre-makers and shared with the world. We champion creativity in education, in work and for life.

Stories are at the heart of what we do. Firing our imagination, creativity and empathy, stories inspire artists to discover innovative ways to share them with audiences. Stories are why people love theatre. The National Theatre can and should be an irresistible place to make theatre, and for audiences to experience the power of storytelling.

The magic of the National Theatre is that there is nowhere else like it. On London's South Bank: with three world-class auditoriums, the productions serviced by in-house producers, casting, music, technical and making teams in our theatrical craft workshops, a suite of studios and rehearsal rooms, a dedicated learning centre and digital studio, three restaurants, cafes, bars and the largest theatre bookshop in the UK.

While down the road, an entire studio dedicated to New Work with writers and development sitting side by side. This complex also plays host to our Immersive Storytelling Studio, where we bring together theatre-makers with cutting-edge technology, and the National Theatre's Archive, the largest open-access in-house theatre archive in the world.

This attracts an extraordinary range of expertise: from dramaturgs to carpenters, producers to archivists, technicians to caterers, show crews and nurses to booksellers and ticketing, voice coaches to lawyers, support services to security, graphic designers to prop-makers, facilities engineers to digital experts, education specialists to armourers, accountants to wig-makers, stage management to scenic painters. All work alongside the talented performers that audiences experience on stage each night. Through these roles and a host more, every element of making and sharing a production is enhanced by the dedicated and skilled individuals who work here, allowing seamless artistic creation from the genesis of an idea to its realisation.

The National Theatre is a place that generates and attracts outstanding levels of creative energy, with the resources to put on shows in ways that no one else can. Our shows represent

and interpret the world around us, for local, national and international audiences. It is a place people are proud to support.

Yet as we turn 60 this year, we arguably find ourselves at one of the greatest moments of change in our history.

Even prior to 2020, audience expectations, funding models and a changing society added urgency to the need to innovate and adapt. The catalyst for change has arrived with the challenges of a post-pandemic world, the environmental crisis, the essential drive for representation and inclusion, and the post-Brexit operating context. Together these imperatives require organisations across the world to rethink why and how they work.

At this time we also face a shift in the process of making theatre within the performing arts. Important questions about the dynamics between theatres and their workforce are now at the forefront. The demand for sustainable and inclusive practice is justified and real.

In parallel, new ways have opened up for people to engage digitally as audiences and participants, as habits change and technology eases access for all.

A great strength of the National Theatre has always been our ability to adapt to the world around us. During the pandemic it was this that ensured our survival, finding new ways of making, distributing work and funding it. It is exactly that responsive mindset that will help us identify and meet the challenges of tomorrow and create work which speaks to the moment.

The values and behaviours that guide us

Our values represent the expectations we have for ourselves and each other; they guide our day-to-day decisions and the way we act.

- **Make a positive impact**, striving to make the world a better place through theatre.
- **Bring your passion**, applying energy and expertise to achieve the highest standards.
- **Collaborate to create**, bringing ideas to life through teamwork and forging connection.
- **Empower each other**, working to build and uphold an inclusive and equitable culture.
- **Act with confidence**, with the courage to make clear, intentional decisions that support our shared vision.

John Macmillan and Janet
McTeer in Phaedra. Photo by
Johan Persson



Olivia Colman and Olivia
Williams in Mosquitoes. Photo
by Brinkhoff Mogenburg



The role

The National Theatre is seeking a Director and Chief Executive to succeed Rufus Norris, who will be stepping down from the role in spring 2025.

In the past this has been one person. We are now in a different world: culturally, politically, socially, economically. It therefore follows that we should be, and are, open to different models of Directorship of the National Theatre.

To help candidates understand what we mean by this, we are open to any permutation of application. For example, an application from a single lead applicant; a single lead applicant proposing one or two deputies; a single applicant with a team of strong Associates lined up; a joint application; an application from another creative discipline other than Directing. Or an option that we haven't listed.

If you think you have an interesting and effective way to achieve the aims set out in this specification, we'd like to hear it. If you would like to test the idea for a new way of working with us before you apply, please let us know. We have appointed a recruitment firm, Saxton Bampfylde, to manage the process for us. All shortlisted applicants would also be invited to meet with Rufus Norris, the outgoing Director & CEO and Kate Varah, the Executive Director.

The Responsibility

The Director will report to the Board of the National Theatre ('the NT Board') and will have responsibility for the artistic, business management and organisational leadership of one of the world's most ambitious, successful and complex performing arts organisations. Key to success is a clear, compelling and cohesive vision for the National Theatre that responds to the world we live in today and supports future success and impact.

Appointment process

The appointment process will be run by the Succession Panel (comprised of Board members and independent, leading creative professionals). Details of the Panel members can be found on the final page of this document.

The Succession Panel will make recommendations to the NT Board which will then make an appointment.

The appointment process will be managed by a recruitment firm, Saxton Bampfylde.

All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence and at no time during or after the process will the names of applicants or potential candidates be made public. Interviews will be held outside of the NT building.



Connections: Flesh by Rob Drummond performed by Rare Studio Liverpool. Photo by The Other Richard.



River Stage: Frantic Assembly. Photo by Stephanie Claire.

Job Description

Purpose of the role: Artistic and organisational leadership to enable the National Theatre to deliver its mission and strategy.

Reporting to: The NT Board with a direct reporting line through the Chair.

Responsible for: Deputy Artistic Director, Head of Play Development, Head of Casting, Creative Director of Music, Head of Voice, NT Associates.

Responsibilities of the Executive: The Executive comprises the Director and Executive Director. Together this partnership is responsible to the Board for devising and delivering the artistic programme, policies and the management of the NT to the strategy agreed with the Board. They work to ensure that the artistic programme of the NT remains of the highest quality and that the organisation is managed efficiently effectively and in accordance with good business practice.

Responsibilities and line management are assigned between the Director and Executive Director to ensure the efficient running of the organisation and may change from time to time to acknowledge this. Initial joint and key individual responsibilities are set out below.

Key areas of responsibility

The following are key responsibilities of the Director

Artistic

- **Artistic Vision:** Work inclusively to guide and lead the company to develop, communicate and deliver a bold, long-term artistic vision and social mission. Bringing together all aspects of the NT's work to offer a programme of bold, form-shaping, world-class theatre that is experienced both live and digitally.
- **Programme:** Lead and shape delivery of this artistic vision, producing consistently high-quality and popular productions and supporting the development of flagship education & learning projects. Ensure that this work reaches large, diverse audiences, furthering the artistic reputation, social impact, and financial sustainability of the NT and supporting the freelancers who work with us. This includes programming the three theatres on the South Bank: Olivier, Lyttelton, Dorfman, and working closely with the

commercial and digital teams to ensure the work is shared nationally and globally.

- **Talent Development:** Seek out, support and develop a wide range of the very best creative artists, practitioners and craftspeople to work with and for the NT. Reach beyond the traditional talent pools both domestically and internationally.
- **New Work Generation:** Alongside the New Work Department, create a strategy to commission and develop imaginative new theatre. Support world-class theatre artists, digital innovators and new creative voices to deliver their best work. Ensure professional support for the creative professionals working at the main NT building and the NT Studio.
- **Global Reach:** Programme work in service of an NT strategy that is rooted at the South Bank but with a deep commitment to serving audiences and beneficiaries nationwide and internationally. There must always be a coherent and economically-viable artistic plan to augment and grow a vivid, dynamic and prominent presence for the NT in London, New York and beyond.
- **Guidance:** Drawing on substantial experience in the industry, provide oversight and guidance to creative teams working at the NT on productions, and nurture new talent both in production teams and performers.
- **Fundraising & Advocacy:** As part of the significant fundraising responsibilities shared with the Executive Director, Chief Development Officer and fundraising team, give quality time to cultivating and stewarding major donors in the UK, US and internationally, alongside writing and giving speeches and opinion pieces on a regular basis to internal and external audiences.
- **Sector Leadership:** To work with and for the wider theatre community, advocating as a clear and confident spokesperson for the sector; ensuring the NT is a home for the sector and sharing its resources and skills as widely as possible.

The following responsibilities are shared jointly with the Executive Director:

Strategy

- Evolve and deliver the corporate strategy for the NT. Take responsibility for identifying and developing new medium and long-range opportunities in accordance with the existing Five Year Reset Plan to innovate the mission and business model to achieve long term artistic and financial sustainability.
- Facilitate maximum income generation from artistic and other commercial opportunities, and through the use and development of the NT's unique brand and global footprint.

- Set and lead the NT's strategy for increasing representation from under-represented groups in the artistic, technical and administrative roles on and off stage.
- Be an active part of conversation with the Executive Committee of senior managers setting a strategy for commercial development of the content generated by the NT.

Organisational Leadership

- Provide excellent team leadership at a time of continual change. Engage with and inspire colleagues to ensure they are motivated, valued and nurtured with appropriate training and skills development opportunities.
- Promote a dynamic, caring, open and collaborative working style with an active approach to achieving increased diversity in all areas of organisation.
- Ensure that National Theatre has in place policies and procedures to enable the organisation to be managed in an effective and compliant way, safeguarding its reputation and building on the NT's values.

Finance & Governance

- Maintain financial stability and the efficient use of resources, using the NT's capacity to have the maximum, measurable positive impact across the whole country and globally.
- Be accountable to, work transparently and collaboratively with the Chair and the Board.
- Offer insight and perspectives to the Board to enable Trustees to fulfil their duties.
- Aim to maximise revenues for both the NT and freelance theatre-makers, while ensuring alignment with the NT's values and financial risk profile.

Fundraising & ACE

- Lead and support the creation of a fundraising culture within the company. Play an active role in the continuous development of the NT's fundraising capabilities, identifying opportunities and nurturing and developing relationships with trusts, foundations, individuals and companies.
- Cultivate relationships with key donors and sponsors and play an active role in generating new funding partnerships in collaboration with the Chief Development Officer and US fundraising team.
- Maintain the company's positive relationship with major funders including Arts Council England, developing and nurturing senior level contacts with a particular focus on maintaining the NT's position as a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England.

Nationwide and international impact and reach

- Lead the NT's nationwide strategic plans and initiatives, targeting resource and funding to achieve the optimum impact.
- Work with key partners in towns and cities around the country establishing an effective network by which to share the NT's resource and programmes with local stakeholders.

- Support the development of the international strategy and continuing evolution and importance of the NT's digital offer, delivering on the ambition to increase audiences and revenue.

Advocacy

- Develop and promote proposals to support the long-term health of the sector with government and other key stakeholders.
- Be an ambassador for the NT brand and a leading artistic voice, within and for the sector, in wider social and policy-making circles and to the public. Promote the organisation and British theatre with a range of stakeholders, including audiences, donors, funders and public authorities.

Sustainability

- Work to reduce the NT's environmental impact to support progress towards net zero carbon by 2030, ensuring the delivery of actions for change through all aspects of the production process and the company's activities. Proactively assist the company and sector's environmental advocacy.
- Champion the implementation of the Theatre Green Book at the NT and within the wider sector. Take a leading role on strategic initiatives to reduce the environmental impact of work emanating from NT and the industry.

Culture

- Provide confident, informed leadership on all aspects of culture, equity, diversity and inclusion, ensuring the NT is an inclusive and actively anti-discriminatory organisation.
- Ensure that the conditions exist culturally and operationally to inspire all to create their best work when engaging with the NT. This responsibility ranges from devising practical solutions to improving NT and wider industry working practice to setting the tone for kind, collaborative engagement.
- Work with the senior leadership team to ensure that the NT is effective in reaching and engaging a wide and diverse audience.
- With senior colleagues, ensure that all the NT's creative, production and staff teams, associates and casts reflect the broad diversity of the UK population.
- Ensure that the NT's work is made with and for diverse audiences of many backgrounds and identities.
- Using the unique combination of the NT's regional, national and global standing, work in a collaborative way with the sector to support the development of diverse new creative talent. Lead a sector-wide step change in audience renewal, digital reach, and arts rich education.
- Work at all times to meet commitments to inclusion in strategy and policies, reviewing and renewing these plans frequently.



Rosie Sheehy and Callum Scott Howells in Romeo and Julie. Photo by Marc Brenner.



Young Technicians course. Photo by Emma Hare.

Person specification

The ideal candidate(s) for the Director position will be an experienced, inspirational and collaborative leader with the ability to create a compelling and cohesive vision and commit wholeheartedly to ensuring a confident future for the NT.

They will bring innovation and creativity to the work we produce and share, creating and implementing an artistic vision to ensure the NT remains one of the most exciting and responsive creative institutions, relevant to audiences of today and tomorrow.

Essential Experience and Knowledge

- A theatre practitioner/creative/artist with significant experience of directing, writing or creating plays, with a track record of highly acclaimed work and in-depth experience of the creative development and production process.
- A willingness to engage deeply the wider theatrical canon, and with new writers and other creators across different media.
- Extensive experience of working with artists of all levels of experience and profile.

Essential Skills and Attributes

The following essential skills and attributes could be found within one person or, if the application is a collective one, they could be evidenced within the range of people offered in the alternative proposition.

- The ability to develop and articulate a vibrant and exciting artistic vision to inspire and secure the NT's future as a world-leading theatre.
- A generosity of spirit that attracts the very best domestic and international artistic talent to the NT and supports collaborative creative working.
- Proven literary, dramaturgical and commissioning skills.
- An understanding and commitment to making the NT's work relevant in live and digital spaces, with the widest possible reach and resonance for contemporary audiences.
- An understanding of the NT's global brand, and the ability to be an ambassador(s) for the charity's international reach.
- A collegiate, inclusive and generous leadership style(s) with excellent interpersonal skills, and the ability to gain trust, commitment and inspire staff (employed and freelance) and to provide visionary, empathetic and confidence-building leadership(s) to an organisation facing significant change.
- The willingness and ability to develop a thorough understanding of the NT's finances and governance/compliance responsibilities and to facilitate fundraising and commercial income generation.
- The ability to advocate for an understanding of people's lived experience of discrimination, marginalisation, or other social and cultural barriers relating to aspects of their identity.
- The ability to provide moral and ethical leadership(s), against a backdrop of rapidly changing expectations and norms across society.
- A commitment to the importance of an arts-rich education and diverse talent development. Experience of working in or an aptitude and interest in developing knowledge and experience of other media, e.g. digital, immersive, film/TV
- A demonstrable commitment to continuing professional development as an artist and leader and to learning from successes and failures.
- Administrative competence.

Desirable Skills

- Experience of running another organisation
- A track record of directing and/ or producing plays domestically and/ or internationally
- Experience of working in film and/or television
- Experience of dealing directly with both philanthropic foundations and individuals
- A relationship with the Department for Culture, Media & Sport, Arts Council England and other funders
- Knowledge of international theatre practices, and contacts outside the UK

Terms of appointment

Remuneration will be competitive and commensurate with experience.

The expectation is that the role will formally commence in Spring 2025, with the Director designate(s) being in post from 2024 on a part time basis to programme their first Season, schedule permitting.

The role will be based at the National Theatre's home on the South Bank in London. Some travel, domestic and international, will be required.

Other benefits include:

- 30 days annual leave (excluding bank holidays)
- Complimentary tickets for shows and NT Talks & Events
- Complimentary tickets for any show outside of the NT as relevant for the delivery of the role
- Travel expenses as appropriate for the role
- Discounts in the NT's bars, café, restaurants and bookshop and at local businesses
- Interest-free season ticket and cycle-scheme loans
- Pension schemes with Legal & General and NEST
- Access to Employee Assistance Programme
- Staff networks including:
 - Amplified: the Global Majority network
 - LGBTQ+ network
 - Women's network
 - Disability network
 - the NT is also a member of Parents and Carers in the Performing Arts (PiPA)

How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the National Theatre on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **BTNC**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter, and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Monday 24th July 2023**.

The NT wants its workforce to be representative of all sections of society and welcomes applications from everyone. As users of the disability confident scheme, we guarantee to interview all disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for our vacancies.

If you require any adjustments for the interview process please let us know.

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

Succession Panel

The Succession Panel is made up of the people below and will lead the interview process for the role of Director. The Panel will make recommendations to the NT Board, who will formally make the appointment.

Sir Damon Buffini (Co-Chair of the Panel)

Damon Buffini is Chair of the National Theatre. He was a founding partner of Permira and was Chairman and Managing Partner from 1997 – 2010. Damon is currently Deputy Chair of the BBC and Chair of the BBC's Commercial Board. He was Chair of the £2bn Culture Recovery Fund from 2020 – 2022.

Simon Warshaw (Co-Chair of the Panel)

Simon Warshaw is a member of the National Theatre Board and Chair of the Nominations Committee. He was Chair of the National Theatre's Corporate Development Board between 2017 and 2023. Simon is a founding partner of Robey Warshaw LLP, a boutique investment bank based in London.

Sheila Atim MBE

Sheila Atim is an Olivier award-winning actress, singer, composer and writer with a wealth of experience across theatre, film and television. Sheila is currently a member of the Board of Trustees of The Old Vic.

Dominic Cooke CBE

Dominic Cooke is an award-winning director and currently an Associate Director at the National Theatre. Dominic was Artistic Director and Chief Executive of the Royal Court Theatre from 2006 – 2013 and has directed numerous productions for the National Theatre, including *The Corn is Green* and *Follies*.

Dame Vikki Heywood DBE

Vikki Heywood is a member of the National Theatre Board and Chair of National Theatre Productions Ltd (the subsidiary Board with oversight for tours and transfers). Vikki has a wealth of sector experience including Chair of the Mountview School of Music and Drama, Chair of the Royal Society of Arts, 14-18 NOW and UNBOXED, Executive Director of the RSC, Joint Chief Executive of the Royal Court Theatre and executive producer in the West End and on Broadway.

Vicki Mortimer

Vicki Mortimer is a member of the National Theatre Board. An acclaimed freelance designer who works in opera, theatre and ballet, Vicki has designed more than 25 productions for the National Theatre is an Honorary Fellow at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and is on the Steering Committee for the Birkbeck MFA Theatre Directing.

Farrah Storr

Farrah Storr is a member of the National Theatre Board and the National Theatre's Nominations Committee. An award-winning journalist and editor, Farrah is Head of European Writer Partnerships for the publishing platform, Substack as well as having been the former editor-in-chief of ELLE UK and Cosmopolitan.

Neil Darlison, Director of Theatre, Arts Council England is an observer to the process.



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Maimuna Memon in
Standing at the Sky's
Edge. Photo by Johan
Persson.