



 **Costume Designer** **Wig Maker** **Producer**




**Lighting Technician**  **Engineer** 

**Archivist**  **Director** **Graphic Designer**

**Graphic Designer**  **Prop Maker** 

**Stage Manager** **Producer** **Costume Designer**

**Prop Maker** **Stage Manager**  **Director**

**nt**  **Wig Maker**  **Accountant** 

**Engineer**  **Lighting Technician** **Archivist**

For decades, the National Theatre has been focused on turbo-charging creative skills and professional development.

Now we want to do more. More opportunities to train our future workforce and address the growing skills shortage are urgently needed. We know there are still those who are less represented in our sector. We know there is talent we are not reaching.

To address this, we are launching a new National Theatre Skills Centre in September 2024 – offering more resources, training and professional development opportunities to boost specialist skills across all areas of theatre, with opportunities available nationwide from entry-level to mid-career.

# Skills at the National Theatre

The National Theatre is the largest employer in the not-for-profit theatre sector, and a skills incubator for the entire creative industries.



New Views 2023 script reading,  
photograph by Emma Hare

**Each year we train over 1,000 under-21-year-olds in theatre-making disciplines, such as technical theatre, performing, writing and producing.**

National Theatre's Young Technicians programme 2023,  
photograph by Belinda Lawley



Internationally recognised as a centre of excellence, we already work in partnership with over 100 UK theatres and cultural organisations.

No matter what your skill set or aspiration, there is a role at the National Theatre to explore – in person or digitally – across performance, creating productions, business, engineering, technical, digital, hospitality and many more.

In developing the National Theatre Skills Centre, we are proud to be opening up our building and working with national partners to expand placements and introduce new qualifications for all.

Of the entry-level apprentices we have trained over the last decade, nine in ten have gone directly into paid, professional work in the area in which they trained.

**If you want to join in, find out more at**  
**[nationaltheatre.org.uk/skillscentre](https://nationaltheatre.org.uk/skillscentre)**



# National Theatre Skills Centre

National Theatre's Young Technicians programme 2022, photograph by Belinda Lawley



The National Theatre Skills Centre is unique.

Under the guidance of world-leading experts, our varied programmes develop skills and open up career pathways and access to training in theatre for everyone, from pupils in secondary schools to those seeking specialist professional development.

At the National Theatre, young people, freelancers and others in our industry can:

- **Explore and discover the breadth of their careers in theatre and the creative industries.**
- **Build their skills through short courses.**
- **Launch their career with an apprenticeship.**
- **Take part in courses and workshops, in person at the National Theatre, with our partner theatres across the UK and online.**
- **Learn transferable skills that can be applied in other disciplines or sectors.**
- **Build their career through our professional development programmes.**

The National Theatre Skills Centre offers the widest range of workplace-delivered placement, training and apprenticeship opportunities of any organisation in the creative arts.

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## Billy

Billy, 16, took part in a nationwide Young Technicians programme with the National Theatre and Nottingham Playhouse, and is currently studying at a technical and event production college. He also works part time with the Nottingham Playhouse in backstage crew roles.

**‘When you go to a theatre, you don’t see all the work that happens behind the scenes. Working with Nottingham Playhouse was great; I did lots over the training weekend and the fact that you could speak to professionals who do it day-to-day at the National Theatre is a one-off experience that you cannot get elsewhere.’**



**‘The primary passion of my working life has been the delivery of new plays to the stage and supporting the writers, directors and designers that make them. There is no better place in the country to learn your craft and develop your skills than the National Theatre. I strongly believe no matter what your skill set or aspiration, there is a role at the National Theatre to match your interests and ambition.’**

**Paul Handley,**  
Director of Production and Technical

# What’s so special?

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## Learn from world-leading experts

The National Theatre Skills Centre provides the opportunity to work with industry-leading experts. From the teams who make our props and build our sets, to our experts working in digital or finance, we will open up access to experienced National Theatre staff as well as professionals across the country in disciplines such as lighting, sound, scenic art, hospitality, marketing, business administration and digital media.

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## Take part in person or online

Courses run in person at our South Bank home and at our partner venues across the country, as well as online through our digital Skills Centre. From autumn 2024, this new platform will provide resources to explore careers in theatre and signpost opportunities to take part online or in person.

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## When your course ends, we’re still here for you

Your relationship with the National Theatre will continue long beyond your course or programme. Our alumni network will support your progression into our industry by providing job opportunities, courses, advice, networking, ticket discounts and more. We want to ensure that your pathway into our sector is clear – as well as offering a lifelong connection with the National Theatre and our partners across the UK.



Maria Hucker, Scenic Metal Fabricator  
Apprentice at the National Theatre,  
photograph by Cameron Slater





# Opportunities for you

Find out more about current and future opportunities offered through the National Theatre Skills Centre at [nationaltheatre.org.uk/skillscentre](https://nationaltheatre.org.uk/skillscentre)

## 11 years+

### Discover Creative Careers

Live and digital events and resources which showcase careers in theatre.

- **Short films, insight and guidance showcasing careers in theatre on our digital Skills Centre.**  
*Free*
- **New Careers in Action guided tours.**  
*At the National Theatre*
- **In Focus workshops for 13–25-year-olds to take an in-depth look at a National Theatre production and specific aspects of theatre-making.**  
*Free, by application*
- **Events for school groups and young people showcasing how landmark National Theatre productions are made and spotlighting careers.**  
*At the National Theatre and partner venues*
- **Meet National Theatre staff at careers fairs like The Big Bang and Skills London.**
- ***All About Theatre*, the National Theatre's award-winning guide to theatre-making.**

## 14 years+

### Develop Your Skills

Hands-on courses led by National Theatre specialists, targeted at under-represented groups:

- **Young Technicians – Technical training, run nationwide, for 14–18-year-olds in areas such as lighting, sound, video and automation.**  
*Free, by application. At the National Theatre, partner venues and online*
- **Young Producers – Annual course for 18–25-year-olds, introducing the basics of producing including budgeting, marketing, project and artist management.**  
*Free, by application. At the National Theatre*
- **Introduction to Stage Management – In-depth introduction to the art and skills of stage management, led by our in-house teams.**  
*Free, by application. At the National Theatre and online*
- **More courses to be announced including prop and costume-making, scenic art, wigs, hair and make-up.**

## 16 years+

### Learn in the Workplace

Short placements of one week to three months developing skills and employability, focused on groups currently under-represented in our workforce.

- **Placements at the National Theatre or through community partnerships.**  
*At the National Theatre, partner venues and online*
- **Archive placements for autistic adults through our on-going partnership with Care Trade.**  
*At the National Theatre*

Other recent examples include:

- **Shadowing the Director and Music and Sound/Stage Management on *The Effect*.**  
*At the National Theatre*
- **Short, paid placements in Costume, Development, Graphic Design and Retail.**  
*At the National Theatre*

### Supporting Your Qualification

Placements for current or recent students across a broad range of theatre disciplines.

- **Placements for ages 18+ offered across the year in a range of departments.**  
*At the National Theatre*
- **T-level placements offered through Lilian Baylis Technology School (Lambeth) and Mulberry UTC (Tower Hamlets).**  
*At the National Theatre and partner venues*
- **Placements for BTEC production arts are offered via schools and colleges in Lambeth. From 2025 we will offer BTEC production arts immersion days, including a chance to watch a technical rehearsal guided by a member of National Theatre staff.**  
*At the National Theatre*



National Theatre's Young Technicians programme 2022, photograph by Belinda Lawley

National Theatre 2024, photograph by Kate Peters



National Theatre Student Conference 2024, photograph by Emma Hare



National Theatre 2024, photograph by Kate Peters





## Ongoing professional development

### Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Apprenticeships are a vital way for people to join the theatre workforce, blending paid work at the National Theatre with college learning to complete a nationally recognised qualification.

- **Currently we offer qualifications in Scenic Metalwork, Scenic Carpentry, Workforce Development, IT and a three-year Assistant Archivist apprenticeship.**

[At the National Theatre](#)

- **Other trainee roles lasting 12–18 months are offered in a number of National Theatre departments including Costume and Voice.**

[At the National Theatre, by application](#)

### Professional Creative Development

For freelance artists, practitioners and teachers. Opportunities include courses, bursaries and residencies for directors, designers, teachers and artists working in education and community settings such as:

- **The Linbury Prize for Stage Design: open every two years, offering 12 prize recipients the chance to work with some of the UK’s leading theatre, opera and dance companies.**

[Free, by application. At the National Theatre and partner venues](#)

- **The Max Rayne Design Bursary: an annual opportunity for an early-career designer to gain in-depth experience.**

[At the National Theatre, by application](#)

- **Training for directors, writers and artists working in community settings through our nationwide Connections, New Views and Public Acts programmes.**

[At the National Theatre and partner venues](#)

- **The New Work Department supports talent development through writer attachments, the Staff Directors’ programme for assistant directors and the annual Directors’ course.**

[At the National Theatre, by invitation](#)

- **Regular professional development for drama, English and primary school teachers as well as our annual Drama Teacher Conference.**

[At the National Theatre and online](#)

- **We welcome a number of PhD researchers each year in the National Theatre Archive.**

[At the National Theatre](#)





# Case studies

National Theatre 2024,  
photograph by Kate Peters



## Ameena

Ameena took part in National Theatre Young Producers 2019. Ameena has worked across London's fringe and off-West End scene and is the youngest producer to work in the West End. She now runs Ameena Hamid Productions, which will stage *Why Am I So Single?* by Toby Marlow and Lucy Moss at the Garrick Theatre, and HD General Management which helps producers realise their shows from fringe to the West End.

**'It gave me the confidence to go out and produce and taught me that often the best thing to do as a producer is just do it! Everything you learn across a producing career helps you and the more diverse that knowledge can be the better... I think the best thing is learning how diverse people's backgrounds are and that anyone can get into theatre at any point and in so many different ways.'**



National Theatre 2024,  
photograph by Kate Peters

## Kelsey

**'I found the apprenticeship great as I was able to challenge myself every day and learn whilst doing something rather than reading it from a book. I am dyslexic and I really struggled in school because I didn't learn the same way as everyone else and doing my apprenticeship, I learned that there was more than one way to learn. I was able to get an insight on the industry and was able to work and network with many people, including freelancers.'**

Kelsey completed an Apprenticeship in Technical Theatre from 2018 to 2020 and is now employed at the National Theatre as a Lighting Technician.



National Theatre Student Conference  
2024, photograph by Emma Hare

## Anna

Anna took part in the nationwide Young Technicians programme, in partnership with HOME Manchester in 2023.

**'I feel incredibly grateful for the opportunity to have completed the course and for the resources provided to us. I found the in-person sessions super helpful in consolidating my knowledge and putting it into practice, such as rigging lights. This opportunity has helped me get involved with HOME Manchester as following on from the two sessions there, we were given the opportunity to shadow a National Theatre Connections production, which was great experience. I feel I have gained some really valuable knowledge which I don't doubt I will use in my future! I am looking at applying for a technical theatre and stage management undergraduate course.'**

# Routes into your dream job

We will help you to discover which careers you are interested in, develop your skills, learn in the workplace and enrol in apprenticeships or further training, whether at the National Theatre or another provider. Our programmes will support you to stay connected and move through the industry.

How this could work for you.



National Theatre 2024,  
photograph by Kate Peters



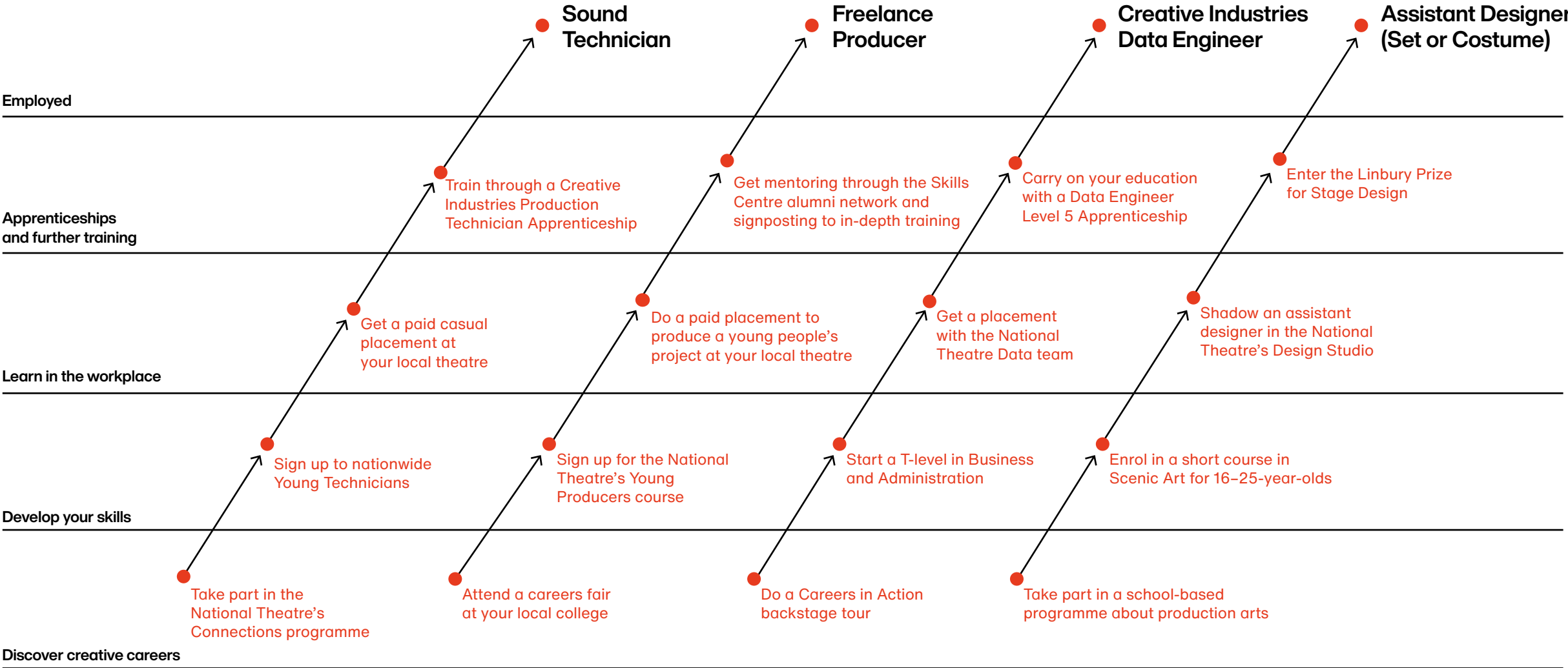
National Theatre 2024, photograph by Kate Peters



National Theatre 2024, photograph by Kate Peters



National Theatre Student Conference  
2024, photograph by Emma Hare







Jemima Hutton, Props Apprentice  
(upholstery) at the National Theatre,  
photograph by Cameron Slater

# Find out more about the opportunities offered through the National Theatre Skills Centre at [nationaltheatre.org.uk/skillscentre](https://nationaltheatre.org.uk/skillscentre)

Nationwide learning programmes for young people are supported by The Mohn Westlake Foundation, Buffini Chao Foundation and Clore Duffield Foundation.

Creative Careers are enabled by TikTok.

Apprenticeships at the National Theatre are supported by Bank of America.

The Linbury Prize for Stage Design is funded by The Linbury Trust.

## National Theatre

The Royal National Theatre is a registered charity no.224223.

Registered as a company limited by guarantee in England no.749504.

Registered Office:  
Upper Ground, London SE1 9PX

### Credits:

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Supported using public funding by  
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