

# Terms of Reference: Review into English language theatre in Wales.

## Background

Arts Council of Wales (ACW) is the official body for developing, supporting, and connecting the arts. We do this by distributing the public funds that are made available to us by the Welsh Government and the money that we receive for good causes from the National Lottery. Through our work, we want to see the arts flourish and reach as far and wide as possible. We believe that the arts are for part of the daily lives of the people of Wales, connecting us to each other, integral to our wellbeing, and inspiring us for generations to come.

One of the published outcomes of our recent Investment Review 2023 Report and Decisions (the process through which we decided on the organisations to whom we would be offering multi-year funding), was a review of our support for English language theatre. This document sets out the Terms of Reference for this review.

## Scope and Purpose of the Review

This review will inform Arts Council of Wales's future development and funding approaches and help determine where resources need to be directed to best support English language theatre for the greater public benefit to audiences.

To do this, the review will consider:

- What are the gaps in English language theatre provision; what are audiences missing and why? What do audiences want?
- How can we deliver ambitious work at scale that harnesses the nations creative skills and talents?
- What might be the possible models for doing this?
- What are the current avenues for supporting playwrights, theatre makers and associated professions and freelancers?
- What successes and examples of best practice that we can build on (asset-based approach)? What work is finding and connecting with an audience as the sector builds back post pandemic?
- How do we develop and scale and elevate productions to 'national level'? What does this require? What to theatre makers need and when?
- What level of Investment might be needed to support the ambition of the report.
- What is the importance of an English National Theatre of Wales as an institution to the nation?
- Mid-scale touring – how do we support work and models to take work to venues across Wales? What structures are required for theatre makers and venues?
- Talent and skills development – how do we build on existing good practice?

- What matters to the theatre sector and the associated professions in terms of talent development & retention and opportunities for new creative partnerships?
- The role of international partnerships and opportunities.
- What role can the Arts Council of Wales play in the above? Mindful of current investment in theatres and venues and the application of Lottery funds and maximising public value. Are there better ways to award funding from the Arts Council of Wales to support touring, theatre development and ambition?

We expect this work to produce the following:

- A SWOT analysis of English Language theatre in Wales. This will be informed through:
  - communication with audiences, stakeholders, makers, and communities – including those that are under-represented, do not have access or choose not to partake in existing theatre; and
  - supported by in-house ACW data analysis
- Provide an outline action plan for the sector, including short, medium and long term aims with action commencing in quarter one of 2025/26. This should
  - Provide a series of actionable recommendations for ACW-on what needs to be done to support the sector in line with the resources available and its own priorities.
  - Include recommendations relating to broader partnership and stakeholders and could include models from outside of Wales where appropriate.
  - The final agreed version be written and formatted in Welsh and English language versions in a clear and accessible manner.

**Process of how we move forward in the review.**

This work will be supported by a separate detailed project plan. The key milestones of the project are:

**Draft Timeline**

June	Project Director call published
July	Project Director role appointed. ACW Governance model agreed Final TOR Agreed

	“current picture” data shared Work commences
Nov	Draft review shared with council
Jan	Go public
April	Implementation of review findings for financial year 25/26

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