November 2026

Dear friend,

We are delighted that you are interested in joining us as a Trustee of Potential Difference Theatre.

We are looking for 2 new Trustees to join our board. We hope the attached information will give you a good sense of the company, what we are looking for and what the role of trustee involves.

If you have questions about the role, or if you would like any of this information in a different format, please get in touch by email at hello@potentialdifference.org.uk. We will be delighted to arrange an informal conversation.

The closing date for applications is **9am, Monday 14th December.**

We very much hope you will apply.

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# ABOUT US

Potential Difference is a theatre company making boundary-pushing work that tells stories at the intersection of science, philosophy and technology.

- Our projects spark from concepts and ideas that we believe have a big impact on our lives and are full of theatrical potential. We turn these into stories that seek to stimulate conversation and provoke debate.

- We seek extraordinary theatre-makers and bring them together with technologists, academics and subject matter specialists – to inform each other's practice, and to inspire new ways of representing ideas from current academic research with stories and live performance.

- We explore ways of using technology in live performance in to reach new audiences, find new ways for them to interact with and experience a story.

We have developed work with Battersea Arts Centre, the Lowry, the National Theatre Studio, Southwark Playhouse and The Yard. Our creative technology projects have been commissioned by and/or presented at MyWorld Bristol, the British Academy and Royal Holloway.

Our productions have taken many forms, from visceral new plays in theatres, to an outdoor socially-distanced treasure hunt guiding audience bubbles through a series of small but beautiful experiences, to an app-based promenade performance confronting audiences with the value of their own data, to a large-scale immersive takeover of primary schools. All of them aim to spark imagination, start conversations and stretch the boundaries of what theatre can be and do.

**Artistic Director - Russell Bender**

Russell is a theatre director, producer and dramaturg with a background in technology. His work as a director includes FAIR FIELD (Shoreditch Town Hall / Ledbury Poetry Festival), NO DOGS, NO INDIANS by Siddartha Bose (Brighton Festival, Southbank Centre, Live Theatre, Newcastle), DARKNET by Rose Lewenstein (Southwark Playhouse), KISS OF THE EARTH (Concert Theatre, 25 venue UK tour), THE SHROUD by Siddartha Bose (Rich Mix / Norfolk and Norwich Festival), GAME OF LIFE by Rose Lewenstein (The Yard). Russell was Creative Associate at multi award-winning arts producers Penned in the Margins where he was a director, dramaturg or consultant on more than 15 new performance works. He has assisted directors including Simon McBurney, Bijan Sheibani and Tom Morris. As a technologist, Russell has fifteen years' experience developing web and mobile applications. He was a senior developer at leading arts ticketing and marketing providers Spektrix from 2008-2011 and continues to work as a freelance consultant and creative technologist. He is a resident at the Pervasive Media Studio, Watershed, Bristol.

**Associate Producer – Kendall Masson**

Kendall is the Director of Development at Under the Radar Festival, New York. She is also a freelance theatre producer and arts fundraiser. She has been Associate Producer with Potential Difference since 2016. Kendall has worked with individual artists and organisations including Convergence (music + art

+ technology festival), Village Underground, Sophie Woolley, Di Mainstone and Tonic Theatre, Actors Touring Company and Told by an Idiot.

**Associate Artist – Jess Mabel Jones**
Jess is an Inclusive Performance Coordinator for HETV, specialising in pre-production and on-set direction, acting coaching and advocacy for Learning Disabled, Neurodivergent and Autistic actors, and Inclusive Workplace consultation. She is also a neurodivergent, multidisciplinary artist, with 15 years of award-winning experience in the Theatre sector.

**Current board of trustees:**

**Tina Strack (chair)** has 20 years' experience in health and non-profit administration working in diverse fields such as community services, rehabilitation, cancer care, patient safety, quality improvement and patient involvement.

**James Baggaley** is Chief Executive Officer at Made Media - a digital agency working with arts and cultural clients around the world. He has a background in arts management and digital technology, having worked for organisations like The Place in London and Spektrix, which provides cloud-based box office software to arts and entertainment venues around the UK and North America.

**Iltaph Khaliq** is a former Global Chief Operating Officer in divisions of 3 of the world's largest banks. He set up his own international consulting, coaching and training enterprise 10 years ago. After operating in Switzerland and the Middle East, Iltaph returned to the UK and is "Diamond" and "Platinum" mentor on Acadium.

**Ligia Osepciu** is a barrister at Monckton Chambers. She specialises in European law, with a particular focus on competition law, public procurement, telecommunications law and utilities regulation.

**Jane Martin** is a freelance service design and user research consultant with specialisms in participation and evaluation. She has 20+ years experience working in the arts, international development, government and the third sector. Jane has a particular interest in mental health and is training to be a therapist.

# KEY PROJECTS

## CLASSBOT 450




### Created by **Potential Difference** and **KIT Theatre**

**Classbot 450** is a unique week-long interactive adventure in schools, designed to inspire primary aged pupils to learn coding using exciting live immersive drama and an accessible coding interface. Classbot revolves around LeX - the "world's first robot teacher" who is unveiled during a special school assembly as part of a "special government teaching initiative". Unfortunately, the robot (played by an actor) 'breaks down' spectacularly in her first lesson, leaving it up to the children to find ways to save the day. Over the week, every child takes part in an adventure that unfolds across assemblies, video calls, across creative and coding workshops and spills into the corridors and playground.

In addition to supporting pupils' coding education, the project builds confidence and literacy through a series of creative tasks and invites pupils to explore philosophical questions posed by advancements in Artificial Intelligence. Created in co-production with KIT Theatre and with support from John Lyon's Charity, Classbot has toured to 15 primary schools in North West London between 2022 and 2026, reaching over 6,500 children.

*"I've been a Head 18 years, it's the first time that there's been something that has genuinely engaged all of the children from nursery to year six...There was a buzz with the children talking about it... It's a really good project. I cannot praise it enough".* **Headteacher at St Robert Southwell**

*"They still talk about it. I think it's something that will sit with them on the rest of their educational journey until they are adults."* - **Year 4 Teacher, St Mary Abbot**

*"One of my personal highlights was the lively debate that emerged regarding AI and [the antagonist's] visit. It sparked genuine curiosity and critical thinking, and it was amazing to see pupils so animated and thoughtful in their responses."* **- Y5 Teacher, St Robert Southwell**

*"All I can say was that it was the best thing ever. It was so fun, that week was so fun. And every time I woke up in the morning, I thought oh my gosh I can see LeX now."* - **Year 4 pupil, Blessed Dominic**

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## FRAGMENTS

Written by **Laura Swift**
and **Russell Bender**
The Playground Theatre , London
The Old Fire Station, Oxford

*"A multi-disciplinary piece of theatre which celebrates the creative spirit and the art of storytelling itself"*
- Salterton Arts Review




*Fragments* is inspired by the vast collections of ancient papyrus stored in museums around the world. The play is about the search for one of Euripides' award-winning lost plays (*Cresphontes*) and puts its surviving lines back on stage for the first time in 18 centuries. With original songs and music by composer Jon McLeod and lyricist Victoria Saxton, and shadow puppetry designed by puppeteers Jess Mabel Jones and Lori Hopkins, *Fragments* is co-written by leading Hellenic scholar Laura Swift and director Russell Bender, who also collaborated with theatre devisors and experts from the world of papyrus study and conservation. *Fragments* reveals the niche world of papyrological research while joyously celebrating humans' fundamental and age-old need to tell stories and to keep creating and recreating live performance.

## SIGNAL FIRES
**Devised by the Company**

*"Exciting, inspiring, moving, strange, reassuring"*



In November 2020, we presented an outdoor, socially distanced, promenade performance in the grounds of The Actors' Church, Covent Garden as part of nationwide Signal Fires festival. The performance reflected on the shared and isolated experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the role of performance in our lives, and on what is lost when live theatre cannot take place.

## DARKNET

**Written by Rose Lewenstein**
**Directed by Russell Bender**
**Southwark Playhouse**



DARKNET navigates through the world of data transparency and the deep web, uncovering the things we choose to share online and the places where we can hide. The play was developed through an extensive period of R&D with support from Battersea Arts Centre and Cambridge Junction. The script was shortlisted for the George Devine Award in 2016.

## GAME OF LIFE

**Written by Rose Lewenstein**
**Directed by Russell Bender**
**The Yard**

GAME OF LIFE is inspired by the mathematical phenomenon of 'emergence' - the collective intelligence of ungoverned swarms. From the individual cells in our brains, to the cities we live in, to the communities we form online, emergence is a driving force in our lives. GAME OF LIFE was developed with the support of East 15 Acting School and the National Theatre Studio and supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

You can read more about our past work at www.potentialdifference.org.uk

# IN DEVELOPMENT

**Classbot V2** (Working title)

We have recently received funding from The Portal Trust to continue our partnership with KIT Theatre to develop a successor to Classbot 450 which will be piloting in Summer 2027. This will be an all-new immersive adventure for primary school children made with a blend of theatrical magic, inventive technology and a spirit of playful disruption that aims to explore the opportunities and risks of AI in learning while encouraging critical thinking and addressing misconceptions.

**The Invisible Friend –** The Invisible Friend will be an interactive performance for 6–11-year-olds and their families in which children are invited to help Alex, an adult, reconnect with her childhood invisible friend. Wearing head tracking spatial audio headphones, and guided by a performer, children co-create a magical adventure with an invisible creature.

Blending theatre and gameplay, The Invisible Friend will empower young audiences through inclusive child-led storytelling encouraging imaginative play, while speaking to their parents/carers in the room with rich intergenerational resonances.

# BEING A TRUSTEE FOR POTENTIAL DIFFERENCE

Our board of trustees is made up of people who are passionate about supporting Potential Difference to grow and achieve its potential. As a tiny organisation with big plans on the horizon, a lot of the focus of board meetings is in supporting core team to develop the strategy and structures they need to realise their ambitious vision for the company.

**Commitment**

There are usually four board meetings a year, held as a mixture of online and in-person in central London. These are relaxed and friendly. Enquiries from the Artistic Director are emailed out to individuals, or the whole Board, on a semi-regular basis.

We occasionally schedule ad hoc meetings and calls focusing on particular topics in between board meetings. These usually are open to whichever trustees are interested in taking part.

**Term of Service**

We normally seek a minimum commitment from trustees of three years with the opportunity to extend.

**Remuneration**

As a charity, our board of trustees are not remunerated for their work. We reimburse reasonable out of pocket expenses.

**Eligibility**

A person cannot be a Trustee if under 18 years of age or disqualified under section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 because of bankruptcy, conviction for an offence of dishonesty or deception or anyone who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1996.

# ABOUT THE ROLE

Potential Difference is a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity in England and Wales, with a non- executive board. Our trustees have a legal responsibility for overseeing the management, finances and governance of Potential Difference and for ensuring that our activities are planned and carry out to meet our charitable objectives. They also act as a sounding board and offer support and advice on a range of issues.

**We aim to have a board of trustees who possess:**

- An enthusiasm for the vision of Potential Difference and a willingness to act as an advocate for our work with potential partners, donors, sponsors and supporters.
- The knowledge to ensure that Potential Difference complies with its governing documents, charity law, company law and other relevant legislation and regulations.
- The ability to engage with good governance, including budgeting and financial planning
- The ability to act as a 'critical friend', offering both support and constructive challenge, and to contribute to the long-term strategic direction and growth of the company.

For further information on the responsibilities of a Trustee, see https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the- essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3

**We are seeking two new trustees to join our board:**

We are looking for one trustee with significant experience in finance and/or accounting to take over the role of treasurer, after a period of handover.

We are also seeking a trustee with experience or skills in any of the following areas:

- Experience of the theatre sector, especially related to developing new work our UK touring.
- Experience of marketing and communications that could help a small organisation building brand and audiences.
- Experience of grant funding, fundraising from individuals and other forms of income generation
- Experience of working with software, emerging technologies, creative technology

Previous Trustee experience is not required, and we welcome applications from people with a range of backgrounds, expertise and skills. If you are a first-time trustee, you will be warmly supported by the existing board in getting up to speed with your responsibilities. If you are in any doubt about whether to apply, please feel free to get in touch with us for an informal discussion.

We believe in the importance of creating a more diverse and representative arts sector and of representing that diversity on our board. We warmly encourage applications from people whose backgrounds and lived experience are underrepresented in the theatre sector. We are particularly keen to receive applications from people from the Global Majority and Deaf and disabled people.

We will work to provide any access support or reasonable adjustments that would be required for you to undertake the role effectively. If you have any accessibility needs as part of the application, please get in touch.

# HOW TO APPLY

If you have any questions about the role or would like to arrange a short informal chat, contact us at hello@potentialdifference.org.uk

To apply, please send a CV and a short cover letter by email to hello@potentialdifference.org.uk. We would love to hear about what interests you about our work and being a trustee for Potential Difference and what you believe you could bring to the role.

Please also fill in an equal opportunities monitoring form online at https://go.potentialdifference.org.uk/equalopps

You are also welcome to send us a short video or audio recording instead of a letter. We are happy to receive links to audio or video recordings or from file transfer services such as WeTransfer. Let us know if you would like support with sending us this material.

We will be in touch with all applicants.

The closing date for applications is **9am, Monday 7th December**

# DATA PROTECTION

Any information you give us in relation to your application will be securely held with access restricted to those involved in dealing with your application. Unless you are invited to become a trustee, your data will be kept for twelve months and then destroyed. By applying you are giving your consent to your data being stored and processed for the purpose.