

SOCIETY OF
LONDON
THEATRE
EST 1908

UK
THEATRE
EST 1894

Job Pack



Head of External Affairs

Welcome From Our Co-CEOs

Thank you for your interest in working with us at the Society of London Theatre & UK Theatre. Our organisations are the membership bodies for the theatre sector, representing theatre producers, managers, owners, and operators both in London's West End and across the UK.

This is an exciting opportunity to work for our organisations, working on behalf of a vibrant and diverse sector, at a critical time for our industry. After we joined the organisations, we started a strategic review process which defined who we represent and our new vision and mission.

Our vision is a dynamic, sustainable and world-class theatre sector.

Our mission is to champion theatre and support our members to thrive.

To deliver our vision and mission, we are in the final year of an exciting three-year strategy delivering against ambitious three-year goals and we are in the process of developing our next three-year strategy which will build on the successes of the last three years.

We cannot achieve our vision and mission alone – and nowhere is that truer than in how effectively we engage with government, policymakers, industry and the media on behalf of our members. As we look to the future, the Head of External Affairs is one of the most business-critical appointments we will make: this is the person who will define how government, industry and the public understand the value of theatre, and who will turn our advocacy priorities into real influence at the highest levels.

The successful candidate will have a direct and lasting impact on our members and the wider sector. Reporting to our Director of Membership & External Affairs the role works collaboratively with other Heads of Department and the Executive Team to ensure the organisations are meeting their goals. They will advise our Co-CEOs, Presidents and Boards on the political and reputational issues that matter most, build the relationships that protect and grow the conditions theatres need to thrive, and lead a talented team to deliver measurable results for our members. With an ambitious and experienced leader in this role, we will significantly strengthen our ability to deliver our strategy and support the sector through a pivotal period.

Theatre and the performing arts industries enrich our lives and strengthen our sense of belonging in communities up and down the country, supporting community cohesion and economic growth. Alongside the social and cultural benefit our members provide, theatre is also a key component of our fast-growing creative industries. Domestically, theatre generates £2.39bn GVA, supporting 205,000 workers. For every £1 spent on a theatre ticket, an additional spend of £1.40 is generated in local economies, adding up to £1.94bn per annum of extra value added to local economies by theatre audiences.

We work hard, and aim to have fun while we're doing it. We have a fantastic team of around 60 people working across our main office in Rose Street and the Official London Theatre Ticket Booth in Leicester Square. Our social committee ensures that we have plenty of opportunities to get to know each other, our sustainability committee is working hard to ensure we play our part in protecting the planet and there are plenty of opportunities to experience the world-class theatre produced and presented by our SOLT & UK Theatre member. While a background in theatre or the arts is not essential, you will need an appreciation for performing arts and the importance of cultural activities as an integral part of our lives.

We hope you find this role of interest and look forward to receiving your application.

All best wishes,

Claire Walker & Hannah Essex

Co-Chief Executives

Who we are & what we do

Based in the heart of Covent Garden, Society of London Theatre (SOLT) & UK Theatre are the membership bodies for the theatre sector, representing theatre producers, managers, owners and operators.

We have a shared staff team working together to deliver our joint vision and mission for our two organisations.

Our vision – the world we want to see – is a **dynamic, sustainable and world-class theatre sector**.

Our mission – what we do as an organisation – is to **champion theatre and support our members to thrive**.

In order to deliver on our vision and mission we have three joint priority areas for both organisations. These bring together our membership services, advocacy campaigns, audience initiatives and major events and awards.

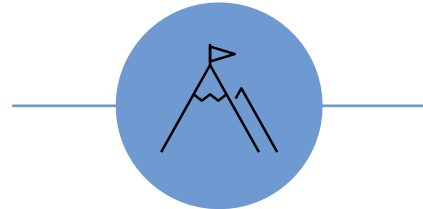
Our three joint priority areas are:

- **Membership:** Developing a growing, engaged and united membership
- **Audiences:** Increasing engagement with theatre
- **Advocacy:** Create the conditions for theatres to thrive

Introduction to Our Values

Our **Values** have been co-created by us, the team at SOLT & UK Theatre. They are authentic to us and we are all responsible in upholding them to create the working environment and culture we need to succeed.

They help guide the way we work together - as a team, with our members, customers and everyone who we interact with to enable us to deliver our **Vision and Mission**.



Purpose
We work with and for
our members



Contribution
We own our impact



Ambition
We believe in the art
of the possible



Collaboration
We are all in it together



Inclusion
We champion and
celebrate diversity

Purpose

We work with and for our members

We work **with** our members and the wider sector in true collaboration with a shared purpose to deliver our vision and mission. We work **for** our members with many other groups, including audiences, customers, partners and stakeholders.

We respect and champion the unique impact our members make to welcome, entertain, challenge, inspire and tell stories which change lives. We gather relevant knowledge from inside and outside our sector to continuously support, challenge and inspire our members.



Contribution

We own our impact

We are empowered to take ownership of our work to make meaningful contributions and take pride in the impact we deliver. We work from a basis of trust and a culture which balances freedom to deliver our roles with professional accountability.

We use our initiative to understand our roles and the part we play in delivering our objectives. We are generous in sharing our unique skills, knowledge and talents with colleagues to help each other grow and develop.



Ambition

We believe in the art of the possible

We are ambitious for ourselves, our team and our members. We welcome new ideas, optimism, innovation, creativity and feel empowered to challenge the status quo.

We try to avoid getting bogged down in the day to day and remember to consider the bigger picture. We problem solve as we go. We understand that part of delivering, is taking time to plan, reflect and grow for next time.



Collaboration

We are all in it together

We respect and appreciate our colleagues and work collaboratively towards shared success and overcoming challenges. We celebrate the wins, big or small, and take pride in the journey we're creating.

We create opportunities to celebrate and embrace the joy of working in theatre. We communicate openly, with fairness and honesty.



Inclusion

We champion and celebrate diversity

Inclusivity is the common thread which runs through all our Values. We welcome diverse perspectives and understand everyone brings different skills and experiences from which we can all benefit.

- I encourage a culture where everyone can belong and I treat everyone with empathy and respect.
- I seek to understand diversity in its broadest sense.
- I acknowledge any privilege and challenge my unconscious bias.



Role description

The Head of External Affairs will lead Society of London Theatre and UK Theatre's external affairs function, will help set the strategic direction for advocacy, policy, public affairs and communications strategies. Reporting directly to the Director of Membership & External Affairs the postholder will play a pivotal role in advancing the interests of theatre across the UK and ensuring the sector's voice is effectively represented at the highest levels of government, industry and public life.

The role has two core strands. The first is public affairs and policy: developing and delivering integrated influencing strategies that build relationships with ministers, parliamentarians, civil servants and industry partners, and ensure SOLT & UK Theatre's advocacy priorities shape the political and regulatory environment in which theatres operate. Alongside this sits a distinct media relations and communications remit: building the profile and reputation of SOLT & UK Theatre with journalists and the public, supporting our Co-CEOs and other spokespeople in media opportunities, and protecting the organisations' reputation through issues and crisis communications. While your experience may be more in one area than the other, the postholder will need to develop an integrated External Affairs strategy and flex between the two strands as political and reputational priorities demand, working closely with members, policymakers, industry partners and the media so that SOLT & UK Theatre is recognised as an authoritative and trusted voice for the theatre sector.

As a senior leader, the postholder will provide strategic advice to the Executive leadership including the Co-CEOs, Presidents and Boards on political, policy and reputational matters, identifying opportunities and risks within the external environment and translating these into effective advocacy and communications activity. They will lead and develop a high-performing team and ensure that all external affairs activity delivers measurable impact for members and supports the organisations' strategic objectives.

We welcome applications from all and are open to discussing access requirements. If you would like to discuss any access needs during your application or, if you are selected for interview, at the interview stage, please email us at jobs@soltukt.co.uk and the HR team will get in touch with you.

We cannot support Visa applications; all applicants must have the right to work in the UK.

Contract type	Permanent 35 hours per week over 5 days
Salary	£60,000- £80,000 per annum.
Key responsibilities & accountabilities	Public affairs & policy Set the strategic direction for SOLT & UK Theatre's advocacy, policy and public affairs work, translating organisational strategy and member priorities into a focused programme of influence with clear outcomes, accountabilities, and measures of success. • Act as the senior external affairs adviser to the Director of Membership & External Affairs and provide authoritative advice to the Co-Chief Executive Officers, Executive Team, Presidents and Boards on policy, political and stakeholder matters, including recommendations requiring senior organisational decisions. • Own the framework for SOLT & UK Theatre's policy positions and advocacy priorities, ensuring positions on key issues affecting theatre and the creative industries, and wider cultural sector responses are evidence-led and member informed. • Own the political and stakeholder engagement strategy, leading the organisations' engagement with ministers, senior parliamentarians and civil servants, local and regional leaders, and other key decision-makers on the most sensitive and strategically important issues, while setting the direction for and overseeing the wider stakeholder relationship programme delivered by the team. • Work collaboratively with colleagues and external partners to champion the effective use of data, research and member insight across External Affairs, ensuring evidence is used strategically to inform policy positions, strengthen advocacy

	and influencing activity, and demonstrate the impact and value of the theatre sector. • Set the strategic approach to alliances and partnerships with industry bodies, cultural organisations, strategic partners, identifying where collective action will materially increase SOLT & UK Theatre's influence and secure senior- level alignment where required. • Ensure member views and priorities are reflected in advocacy activity through effective consultation, engagement and intelligence gathering and resolving competing interests. • Provide senior-level political and policy foresight, identifying material risks, opportunities, emerging issues, and recommending how SOLT & UK Theatre respond, escalate or reposition. • Lead the preparation of policy submissions, consultation responses, briefing papers, speeches and reports. • Develop and deliver campaigns and influencing activity that support the organisations' strategic objectives and create the conditions for theatres to thrive. • Represent SOLT & UK Theatre at senior and influential external meetings, conferences, events, parliamentary receptions and industry forums, and act as an organisational spokesperson where appropriate Media relations & communications • Set and own the media and external communications strategy, working with colleagues to raise the profile of SOLT & UK Theatre, and position the organisations as authoritative voices for the theatre sector. • Advise and prepare the Co-CEOs, Presidents and other senior spokespersons for significant media opportunities and public speaking engagements- determining the strategic messaging and positioning required.
--	--

	• Lead the organisations' approach to reputation management, issues management and crisis communications, providing strategic advice during sensitive situations. • Attend press nights where appropriate and take advantage of trade tickets when offered. Stakeholder engagement & team leadership • Build and maintain strong relationships with members and ensure effective mechanisms are in place to gather sector intelligence and feedback. • Manage external affairs projects, budgets and resources effectively, ensuring delivery against agreed objectives and KPIs. • Lead, motivate and develop the External Affairs team, setting direction, delegating operational delivery appropriately and creating a positive, inclusive and high-performing culture. • Prepare reports, updates and impact evaluations for the Co-CEOs, Executive Team, Presidents and Boards. • Undertake any other duties as reasonably required.
Directorate	This role sits within the Membership & External Affairs Directorate whose focus is to strengthen the voice, influence and impact of SOLT & UK Theatre on behalf of members. The directorate leads the organisations' advocacy, policy development, public affairs, communications member and stakeholder engagement activity, working to create the conditions for theatres to thrive across London and the UK. The team plays a central role in shaping sector policy, influencing decision makers, enhancing the reputation of the organisations and ensuring members' views are represented effectively at local, regional and national levels. The directorate works closely with colleagues across the organisation to ensure advocacy, membership engagement,

	communications, campaigns and strategic priorities are aligned and delivered cohesively for maximum impact. Reporting to your line manager: Director of Membership & External Affairs Direct reports: Press & Public Affairs Manager, Policy & Research Manager
Technical knowledge & skills required	Public affairs & policy • Significant experience in external affairs, public affairs, policy or advocacy at a senior level. • A strong track record of influencing public policy, political decision-making and stakeholder agendas. • Strong understanding of UK Government, Parliament, local government and policy-making processes. • Experience of owning integrated advocacy, public affairs or influencing strategies, prioritising resources and adapting approach in response to changing political and organisational circumstances. • Experience of using data, research and insight to develop compelling narratives, inform policy positions and strengthen advocacy and influencing activity. • Experience of owning strategic stakeholder programmes and building trusted relationships at the most senior levels. Media relations & communications • Senior-level experience of media relations, communications planning and reputation management. • Exceptional written communication skills, editorial oversight including the ability to prepare and oversee the production of high-quality policy papers, consultation responses, briefings, speeches and reports.

	• Excellent verbal communication and presentation skills, with the confidence to represent the organisations externally. Leadership & general • Strong strategic thinking skills with the ability to analyse and interpret complex information and identify opportunities and risks. • Proven experience of managing and developing staff and fostering a high-performing team culture. • Strong project management and organisational skills, with the ability to manage multiple competing priorities. • Experience of budget management and effective resource planning. • An understanding and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. • An interest in, and appreciation of, the theatre sector and wider creative industries.
Competencies	<u>Impact</u> • As a senior leader within the organisation, you are responsible for leading and delivering the External Affairs function to the highest possible standard, ensuring activities and projects achieve agreed objectives and organisational KPIs. • You will contribute to the development and delivery of organisational strategy, ensuring advocacy, policy and stakeholder engagement activities support business goals and member priorities. • You will evaluate the effectiveness and impact of external affairs activity and make recommendations to improve influence, profile and outcomes. • You will identify opportunities and risks within the external environment and convert these into practical action for the benefit of members and the wider sector.

	<u>Communication</u> • An exceptional communicator, you build trusted relationships with members, policymakers, government officials, partners, media and other stakeholders. • You are an effective advocate for the organisations and can communicate complex issues clearly, confidently and persuasively to different audiences. • You will represent SOLT & UK Theatre externally and support colleagues to communicate consistently and effectively. • You actively promote cross-organisational collaboration, ensuring teams work together to maximise impact and influence. <u>Innovation</u> • You will set direction and champion innovation within external affairs activity, identifying new opportunities to increase influence, engagement and impact. • You seek best practice from within and beyond the cultural sector to improve ways of working and strengthen outcomes. • You will contribute to organisational decision-making by providing insight, foresight and creative solutions to complex challenges. • You encourage continuous improvement and a culture of learning within your team. <u>Knowledge</u> • You will have significant expertise and experience in policy, public affairs, advocacy, communications or stakeholder engagement. • You maintain an up-to-date understanding of political, policy and sector developments relevant to the organisations and their members.
--	--

	• You invest in your own professional development and use your expertise to support colleagues and organisational priorities. • You use evidence, research and member intelligence to inform recommendations and strategic decisions. <u>Culture</u> • You will support a culture of transparency, equality, diversity and inclusion, fairness and continuous improvement. • You will lead by example and demonstrate behaviours that reflect organisational values and expectations. • You will ensure individuals within your team are supported to develop, grow and achieve their potential. • You are a collaborative leader, willing to support colleagues, contribute across organisational priorities and help create a positive and inclusive working environment. • You will champion member-focused thinking and ensure the organisations remain responsive to the needs of the theatre sector.
--	--

Working with us

Society of London Theatre and UK Theatre support the welfare of their employees and offer a range of short-term and long-term benefits. We regularly review our employee benefits in consultation with staff to ensure our offer is competitive and fit for purpose in today's society.

Detailed below are those benefits currently available – unless stated otherwise, these are non-contractual and subject to change.

Agile and Flexible Working	Our main office is based in Covent Garden, London and the Ticket Booth is based in Leicester Square.
-----------------------------------	--

	Depending on the role, we have an agile working policy which means that we expect minimum of 60% of your working hours to be spent in the office or with members each week. You are, of course, welcome to come in more than that if you prefer. Please note, you will be expected to work outside of core hours from time to time to meet the needs of the organisation. All roles are open to flexible working – e.g. job share, reduced hours or other flexible working approaches.
Your Health and Wellbeing	The health and wellbeing of our staff is our upmost priority. We offer a range of benefits to support your physical and mental health. WeCARE - Digital Wellbeing. Delivers a complete solution across Physical & Mental Health, Finance and Legal support and wellbeing advice from qualified professionals tailored to the individual. MyStrength - One to one support with a qualified Wellbeing guide, a person there to help and support on your wellbeing journey. Support is built around the individual. Toothfairy - Access to smart dental App – Your personal dentist. The following are optional benefits: • Paid annual eyesight test. • Paid annual flu vaccination.
Your Finances and Protection	We offer a competitive pension scheme and further protections. Pension Scheme • Contributory pension scheme - The current contributions are as follows: ○ Employer Contribution: 5% of gross pay. ○ Employee Contribution: Minimum of 3% of gross pay. Personal circumstances

	• Death-in-Service Insurance Cover – 3 x annual salary.
Annual Leave	• 25 days annual leave plus bank holidays (contractual), rising to 27 days annual leave after 5 years continuous service. This will be pro rata for part-time roles. • Non contractual time off: your Birthday off or a day off within two weeks of your birthday. Company Closure Day, normally on a day next to a Christmas bank holiday.
Personal Development	• We invest and believe in continuous professional development and training opportunities for all. • Where appropriate, we suggest and arrange professional mentors to offer additional external guidance.
Travel to work	Our offices are based in the heart of Covent Garden. Many of our staff walk, use public transport or cycle to work or a combination of the above. The following apply after probationary period: • Interest free Travel Season Ticket loan.
Theatre-going	Our staff champion theatre and the work of our members. That includes attending regular theatre productions and visiting members (where appropriate) across the UK. • Staff are offered complimentary tickets to see shows on set dates and sometimes to attend opening nights of productions. • All staff can buy Theatre Tokens with a 10% discount.
Events and experiences	• We offer many opportunities to get involved with events such as West End LIVE, the Olivier Awards, Kids Week workshops and TheatreCraft (jobs fair for craft roles in theatre sector).
Socialising with colleagues	Our staff regularly socialise together as a team and this is led by a dedicated social committee.

Sustainability	We have a dedicated Green Committee to champion sustainability and a green agenda throughout our building and the way we work.
Local discounts	We are fortunate to work in the beautiful surroundings of Covent Garden and have negotiated a range of local benefits for our staff to enjoy. • Local retail discounts through Heart of London Club and Love Covent Garden. • 20% off at Trevor Sorbie hair salon.

How to apply

To apply for this role, please email your **CV** and a **cover letter** (no more than 2 pages) with responses to the three questions below:

1. In no more than 150 words, describe why you're interested in this Head of External Affairs role and what draws you to working in the theatre or live events sector.
2. Please describe your experience of influencing decision-makers on behalf of an organisation, sector or membership body. How did you build relationships, manage competing interests and achieve the desired outcome?
3. This role involves advising senior leaders, developing policy positions, managing stakeholder relationships and responding to fast-moving external pressures. Please describe your experience with these kinds of responsibilities and how you ensure high-quality, accurate work under pressure.

Closing Date for Applications: Friday 28th August 2026