



Press Release: THURSDAY 5 APRIL

SOCIETY OF LONDON THEATRE AND UK THEATRE ANNOUNCE NEW PLANS TO SUPPORT DIGNITY AT WORK

Today, the Society of London Theatre (SOLT) and UK Theatre announce their plans to support dignity at work. The new set of principles and zero-tolerance guidance is in direct response to the systemic issues revealed over past months in many workplaces including the entertainment industry.

They have been developed specifically with organisations and individuals within the performing arts industry including; Association of British Theatre Technicians, BECTU, Casting Directors Guild, Equity, Federation of Scottish Theatre, Independent Theatre Council, Musicians' Union, Standing Council University Drama Departments, Theatre NI, One Dance UK and Writers' Guild of Great Britain to prevent and tackle harassment and abuse of power, and ensure that theatres are an even safer, more supportive and inclusive working environment for all.

The results from industry-wide conversations have led to the formation of these plans:

- **A Set of Ten Principles** (see Notes to Editors for full info) which offer a shared vision to promote a safe and inclusive workplace environment that everyone – employers, employees, workers, freelancers, volunteers, directors and trustees – should adhere to. These include a shared responsibility for creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace that is positive and supportive and where bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment, is not tolerated. The emphasis is to embed these principles during the early stages of people's careers to ensure that a safer and more inclusive working culture becomes the norm.
- **A Support Line** from [Connect Assist](#) for people working in the performing arts industry resourced by the Theatre Development Trust, UK Theatre and SOLT. This free of charge, phone line will act as a resource to anyone needing support and advice re bullying and/or harassment, or has any other issue affecting them in their workplace (see Notes to Editors for additional info).
- **Resources and Guidance** UK Theatre and SOLT will provide *Dignity at Work* training delivered by [Challenge Consultancy](#) and will share good practice from across the UK and ensure that members can have easy access to clear up to date policies and procedures for preventing and dealing with harassment and bullying.

This work sits alongside the UK Theatre and SOLT's on-going commitment to support the performing arts workforce. More info here: <https://uktheatre.org/theatre-industry/guidance-reports-and-resources/theatre-workforce-review/>

The Olivier Awards with MasterCard 2018, which are produced by SOLT, are proud to be working in partnership with Time's Up Theatre UK ahead of, and during, the event on Sunday 8 April to support an end to sexual assault, harassment and inequality across all industries.

Julian Bird, Chief Executive of the **Society of London Theatre and UK Theatre**, said, "*The UK's theatre scene is one of the most respected and renowned arts industries in the world. We want to ensure that*

those working within it, receive the same due respect and ensure that all our colleagues are safe and supported in their workplace.”

Cassandra Chadderton, Head of UK Theatre, added, *“The support from within the UK theatre and performing arts industry to address and enable positive change has been overwhelming. Theatre is collaborative and we believe these plans can help bring about meaningful change together.”*

-ENDS-

NOTES TO EDITORS:

10 Principles to encourage safe and supportive working practices in theatre

1. Everyone is responsible for creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace that is positive and supportive. We do not tolerate bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment in theatre and the performing arts.
2. We value inclusivity, appreciate difference, and consider people equal without prejudice or favour. We build relationships based on mutual respect. We will all work to give and receive feedback in a constructive way, which we know will improve creativity and productivity.
3. We recognise that harassment may be unlawful.
4. We accept our responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other relevant legislation
5. We will aim to ensure that everyone working for a company or an organisation, or on a project or production, is fully aware of the expectations that relate to acceptable behaviour and recognise that the manner in which they perform their role is just as important as technical competence or creative ability.
6. We will ensure that processes are in place for the reporting and investigation of bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment.
7. Where bullying or harassment is found to have occurred, we will take appropriate action against bullies or harassers.
8. We understand that reporting bullying or harassment can be intimidating. If anyone comes forward to report behaviour which might amount to bullying or harassment we will endeavour to investigate objectively, respect confidentiality where possible, make the process of reporting clear and straightforward and take action when appropriate. Individuals who have made complaints of bullying and harassment or participate in good faith in any investigation should not suffer any form of reprisal or victimisation as a result.
9. We will respect each other’s dignity, regardless of the seniority of our role in an organisation.
10. We will ensure that these principles are embedded at the early stages of careers in theatre and the performing arts, to ensure that a safer, more inclusive working culture becomes the norm.

Note about the principles:

These principles have been developed following conversations with individuals, organisations and industry bodies.

The principles offer a shared vision to promote a safe and inclusive workplace environment that everyone – employers, employees, workers, freelancers, volunteers, directors and trustees – should adhere to.

A shared vision, and agreement of principles, is important in ensuring that lasting and meaningful change can take place.

It is essential to have a commitment from senior leaders to help create an inclusive culture. Visible endorsement of these principles should help to show a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. We encourage all employers and individuals to promote the principles.

The principles were developed by UK Theatre and Society of London Theatre from [those commissioned by the BFI](#), working in partnership with others in the film industry.

The following organisations support the principles:

[Association of British Theatre Technicians](#)

[BECTU](#)
[Casting Directors Guild](#)
[Equity](#)
[Federation of Scottish Theatre](#)
[Independent Theatre Council](#)
[Musicians' Union](#)
[Standing Council University Drama Departments](#)
[Theatre NI](#)
[One Dance UK](#)
[Writers' Guild of Great Britain](#)

Note about the Support Line:

The Support Line will be piloted for a year, managed by Connect Assist, and resourced by the Theatre Development Trust, UK Theatre and SOLT. During this pilot year, assessments will be to gauge how the line is used and to gain insight in to how to evolve support for the industry. More news, including a launch date, will follow soon.

PRESS CONTACT:

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Society of London Theatre (SOLT) a not-for-profit organisation representing the London theatre industry. SOLT also runs the Olivier Awards, West End LIVE, TKTS, Theatre Tokens, Kids Week and Official London Theatre. For further information: solt.co.uk

UK Theatre is the UK's leading theatre and performing arts membership organisation –promoting excellence, professional development, and campaigning to improve resilience and increase audiences across the sector. For further information: uktheatre.org