

**Tender information pack**

**national<sup>®</sup>  
youth  
theatre**

# **Evaluation and Impact Report for Assemble; National Youth Theatre**

**2026 - 2028**





## 1. Brief:

Evaluation and Impact Report:  
The Assemble Programme

## 2. Length of contract:

January / February 2026 – October 2028

## 3. Fee:

£15,000 in Year 1  
£15,500 in Year 2  
£16,000 in Year 3

*Above costs are all inclusive of travel,  
expenses, and VAT where applicable*

Total: £46,500



## 4. What we are looking for:

We are seeking an evaluator to review the National Youth Theatre's National Lottery Community Funded programme, Assemble, within the cultural, education, employment and wider social landscape.

The evaluation will shape the programme's future direction and support ongoing learning with NYT and our national partners. NYT is committed to a creative workforce where d/Deaf, Disabled, Learning Disabled and Neurodiverse young people are represented and supported. Assemble is delivered with major arts venues nationwide, ensuring young people can access high-quality training, supported work experience and meaningful employment pathways:

Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff; [Chapter](#) | [Caerdydd](#) | [Cardiff](#)

Exeter Northcott Theatre; [Exeter Northcott Theatre – Exeter's Flagship Theatre](#)

Lowry, Salford; [Lowry](#)

Mayflower, Southampton; [Mayflower](#) | [Southampton](#)

and Sheffield Theatres; [Crucible](#), [Lyceum](#), [Playhouse](#) and [Montgomery](#) | [Sheffield Theatres](#)

We'd like this to be a live, discursive, iterative process offering timely insight throughout delivery so that we can maximise the impact of Assemble for the intended beneficiaries.



## 5. Contract Delivery and Preparation:

This evaluation and impact reporting is intended to be live, reflective, and iterative.

The shape and proposed delivery of the evaluation and impact report will be finalised in a co-designed process with all partners to ensure it benefits the wider systemic change the programme is aiming for and achieves the desired outcomes for National Youth Theatre and all delivery partners.

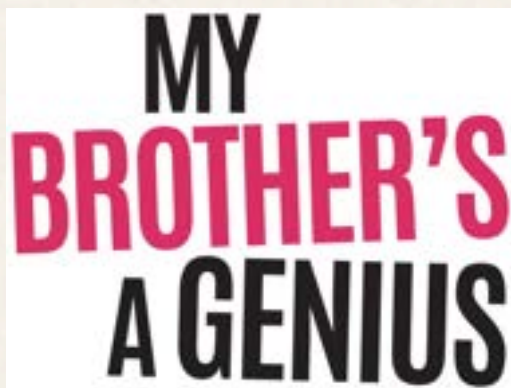
The contract will require some travel in visiting partner venues to experience the flavour of the programme, though this is anticipated to be relatively minimal – we anticipate that the majority of contact will be online with the delivery partners individually and as a whole to maximise efficiency. There will be an annual, in-person, all-partners meeting that evaluators will be invited to.

The evaluation and impact report is intended to serve the overall programme focusing on the headline objectives and progress. The creative evaluation of workshops and the in-person delivery, plus the capture of visuals and participant feedback, will be led by each partner/venue working to a shared brief coordinated by the appointed team.

The Assemble programme and principles of delivery are based on a Theory of Change. The appointed team will be provided with all the background materials behind Assemble including the external evaluation report from London Metropolitan University from the first iteration of the Programme, internal evaluation reporting, Theory of Change, and the relevant application materials submitted to the funder National Lottery Community Fund.







## 6. About National Youth Theatre

The National Youth Theatre has long championed inclusive practice and pathways into the creative industries. Our approach is co-designed with disabled young people and specialists, and rooted in sustained partnerships with non-mainstream schools across London. Programmes with these schools, Highshore, Samuel Rhodes, Richard Cloudesley, Woodfield and The Village, have consistently improved wellbeing, confidence, teamwork, and creative expression.

We have delivered inclusive digital and in-person projects with partners such as Heroes of the Imagination, in partnership with Touretteshero, and supported national progression through the Inclusive Practice Collective (2020–22) Greater Manchester, Leeds & West Yorkshire and London, training 35 young people in inclusive facilitation in partnership with Islington Council's Youth Employment Service and Mencap.

NYT also commissions and presents disabled-led work, including BLINK Dance Theatre, Frozen Light, Athena Stevens, and Debris Stevenson. Debris' My Brother's A Genius, commissioned for StoryFest2024 (a festival of new writing), is now touring nationally. Debris also led the Neurodiversity Mentoring Collective, part of a programme funded by the GLA providing mentoring for 500 young people across creative and inclusive practice.

NYT hosts Access Acquired, a Made by Members group founded and run by and for disabled and neurodiverse members, and they hosted a 3-day festival in our building last year. In the 2025 NYT took part in Ramps on the Moon's change programme, a programme of support for embedded change with performing arts organisations committed to disability equality and anti-ableism, alongside partners Exeter Northcott Theatre, Mayflower Southampton, founding partner Sheffield Theatres, and 15 other organisations.



# 7. About Assemble

Assemble (2023–25) established new progression and participation opportunities for disabled and neurodivergent young people across three regions, supporting 120 participants through creative buddying, skills development, and increased confidence.

Assemble (2025–28) expands this nationally to create systemic change for d/Deaf, Disabled, Learning-Disabled and Neurodiverse young people by offering supported work experience, training pathways, and a new workforce of Creative Support Workers. The programme helps participants build creative skills, confidence, peer networks, and routes into employment, through in-person activity, creative projects, and industry experiences. We are also exploring how Assemble can respond to changes in young people's needs, education pathways, and workforce trends.

Read more here: [Assemble to create systemic change in recruitment of disabled young creatives - National Youth Theatre](#)

## Scaling up: Assemble 1.0 → Assemble 2.0

- Relationship-building extends from peers/volunteers to include employers and wider employment support networks.
- Engagement shifts from cultural participation to recognising creative employment as a viable option for young people.
- Work experience and employment progression prepare young people to pursue aspirational careers.
- School activity scales to college partnerships, creating sustainable career routes.
- Influence grows from community-level access to sector-wide policy and employment practices.

## System Change:

- Young people's aspirations will be recognised and supported to explore higher-level creative careers.
- Colleges will gain knowledge, confidence, and contacts to guide disabled young people into the cultural sector.
- Families will understand the sector's opportunities and how to access them.
- Young people will know creative employment is possible and understand routes into it.
- Cultural employers will have the confidence, skills, and strategies to support disabled staff.
- Employers will better understand access needs and benefits systems, helping bridge gaps in support.



## 8. Submission format outline:

Applicants are invited to respond to the brief with the following:

We welcome expressions of interest in response to this tender outlining how you will help National Youth Theatre and our partners deliver the intended aims for Assemble and the evaluation.

- Please supply a brief outline detailing the approach you would take to the work and why it is of interest to you
- A short outline of how your prior experience demonstrates your suitability to meet the brief
- In your response, please include short bios for all those that will be contributing to the delivery of the brief (if responding as part of a team)
- Provide a breakdown of your proposed budget (including day rates for each team member).
- Please feel free to tell us anything about yourselves and alignment to the vision for Assemble.
- Please also provide details for two referees who can speak to your relevance for this work.

As a team we find word counts can be both restrictive and add pressure to your response, so we invite you to **respond in your own style and preferred format**. Please do feel free to be in touch with any questions or if you would welcome a pre-submission conversation.



**Submission deadline: 11am Thursday 15 January 2026**



## 9. Timeline

### Briefing call:

We invite all potential applicants to request a briefing call with the NYT Assemble team and any available partners prior to submission.  
**Please let us know the dates and times that work for your team.**

### Opening date:

Monday 15 December 2025

### Submission date:

11am Thursday 15 January 2026

### Online Interviews:

Week commencing 19 January 2026

### Start Date:

February 2026

### Mid-Way Report: Summer 2027

A mid-point evaluation will be completed in Summer 2027 to guide future funding and the strategic development of Assemble.

It will:

- summarise the programme's aims, delivery model, and activity to date
- present early evidence of impact
- highlight emerging successes and challenges.

The report will outline indicators of progress, unexpected findings, strengths and areas needing attention. This point in delivery offers a key moment to explore long-term options and begin conversations with local and national stakeholders about continuation, expansion, or refinement to secure future viability. The report will be shared with prospective partners and funders and will include a public-facing executive summary suitable for a wide audience.

### Final Report: August 2028

A final evaluation will be delivered in August 2028 to enable a review period and to inform the end-of-grant reporting to the National Lottery Community Fund and to serve as a landmark sector resource, whilst continuing to advocate for enhanced investment to benefit disability representation in creative pathways.

This report will consolidate the full programme narrative, evidence of impact, lessons learned, and recommendations, and will be designed for use as a case study and practical toolkit for the wider industry.

### End-of-contract:

October 2028



## 10. Collaborative submissions:

We welcome proposals from organisations or teams whose members bring lived experience of disability or neurodiversity, as well as from those partnering with Disabled-Led organisations or forming wider collaborative arrangements.

We are seeking partners that demonstrate an iterative, reflective methodology, highlight public value, and actively support the programme's ongoing delivery. Though not an essential requirement, added value will be considered during assessment and appointment, which may include:

- the involvement of d/Deaf, Disabled, Learning Disabled and Neurodiverse people
- alignment with related research
- access to public platforms for dissemination, including professional networks.

The resulting report will be a key tool in strengthening public understanding of this area of practice, supporting partner recruitment, and advocating for sector-wide change.

We recognise that there are a range of skills, experiences and professional practice that will intersect to deliver the required outcomes and impacts for Assemble which may include prior experience with disabled led organisations or programmes.

## Key Contacts

### National Youth Theatre

Karen Turner – Executive Director and COO

Anna Niland – Associate Director

Esther Miller-Myers – National Inclusion Producer

Elliot Howe – Participation and Inclusion Producer

### Partner organisations

Appropriate team members at Partner venues and the wider Assemble team as required.





# 11. Aims and Objectives

This evaluation is designed to be a live, inquiry-led process that supports continuous reflection throughout Assemble. It should enable the programme and its partners to respond in real time to emerging findings, challenges, and opportunities, helping raise the programme's profile and strengthen its impact on young people across the UK.

The work should explore the systemic change Assemble can generate, as well as the structural barriers it cannot address alone, offering insight into the wider cultural, political, and practical factors shaping disabled and neurodivergent young people's access to creative employment.

We are seeking a rigorous analysis of which elements of Assemble genuinely influence employment pathways, alongside a clear examination of the role of cultural venues and the wider sector - highlighting where change is achievable within current practice and where broader commitment is needed from education, policy, and funding systems. The evaluation should support credible advocacy, inform future strategy, and produce a route map that other organisations can use, ensuring the learning extends beyond the funded period.

This research should consider the external context, operational realities, political environment, and practical barriers that affect employability. Specific KPIs will be agreed with partners and evaluators, with key questions outlined here:





# Key Questions

- What prevents disabled and neurodivergent people from entering and sustaining paid cultural employment, and what enables them to succeed?
- What changes - structural, cultural, political, financial - are shaping the future of cultural employment?
- What experiences, pathways, and conditions most commonly lead disabled and neurodivergent people into paid cultural work?
- What barriers do cultural employers face in hiring disabled and neurodivergent people, and which approaches have proved most effective in addressing them?
- Who needs to care about this work (employers, policymakers, funders, local authorities), and what will motivate their investment and action?
- How does delivering work nationally through partnerships affect the impact of addressing barriers and creating opportunity?

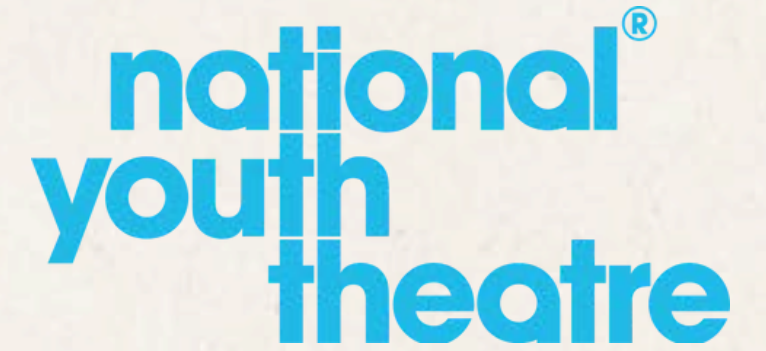


**We look forward to reading your application.**

If you need any access adjustments, or have any questions, please contact [esther.myers@nyt.org.uk](mailto:esther.myers@nyt.org.uk)



# About National Youth Theatre



National Youth Theatre empowers young people to tell stories and find their voices on leading stages, screens and behind the scenes. For 70 years we have equipped young people with toolkits to realise their creative potentials, from Helen Mirren and Daniel Craig to Regé-Jean Page, Ed Sheeran and Florence Pugh. Partnering with Netflix, Sky, EON Productions, Microsoft and other leaders we pioneer an industry-oriented approach where young people learn from top professionals in front of live and online audiences, including our 10m online audience. We work nationally and inclusively with 15,000 young people annually aged 11-25, and up to 30 if disabled/neurodivergent, providing progression routes to careers across the creative industries. NYT training is accessible, inclusive and relevant to all young people. We break down barriers to opportunity, engage diverse young people, build confidence and skills and create the next generation of award-winners and creative leaders.

Instagram / TikTok / Facebook / Twitch: @NationalYouthTheatre,

X (Formerly Twitter) @NYTofGB

Website: [www.nyt.org.uk](http://www.nyt.org.uk)

[Meet the young people](#) [National Youth Theatre support](#)



# About The National Lottery Community Fund



We are the largest non-statutory community funder in the UK – community is at the heart of our purpose, vision and name. We support activities that create resilient communities that are more inclusive and environmentally sustainable and that will strengthen society and improve lives across the UK. We're proud to award money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and to work closely with Government to distribute vital grants and funding from key Government programmes and initiatives. As well as responding to what communities tell us is important to them, our funding is focused on four key missions, supporting communities to:

1. Come together
2. Be environmentally sustainable
3. Help children and young people thrive
4. Enable people to live healthier lives

Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, we distribute around £500 million a year through 10,000+ grants and plan to invest over £4bn of funding into communities by 2030. We're privileged to be able to work with the smallest of local groups right up to UK-wide charities, enabling people and communities to bring their ambitions to life. National Lottery players raise over £30 million each week for good causes throughout the UK. Since The National Lottery began in 1994, £49 billion has been raised and more than 670,000 individual grants have been made across the UK - the equivalent of around 240 National Lottery grants in every UK postcode district. [Website](#) | [Bluesky](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)



# About our partners: Chapter Arts Centre

**CHAPTER**

Chapter is an international centre for contemporary arts and culture, rooted in the heart of Cardiff, Wales.

They commission and present thought-provoking exhibitions, films, performances and multi-disciplinary events by established and emerging contemporary artists who expand our worldview and challenge the status quo.

The artists they work with actively engage with the critical questions and issues that shape our present and they foster dialogue between audiences and artists through a public programme that provides opportunities to connect through our histories, the way we live now and how we might imagine new futures.

Their approach is collaborative, foregrounding projects that have shared purpose and prioritise social and cultural equity, and they advocate for communities and artists as world builders.

[www.chapter.org](http://www.chapter.org)



# Exeter Northcott Theatre

Exeter Northcott Theatre is a city-wide organisation welcoming more than 100,000 people each year to live theatre and events at the Northcott Theatre on the University campus, and the Barnfield Theatre in the city centre of Exeter.

A registered charity, the Northcott also offers a wide range of creative opportunities for and with the people of Exeter and Devon. These include year-round opportunities for young people through the Northcott Young Company; Elevate, a talent development programme for local artists; and bespoke projects developed with community groups, schools and other charities.

[www.exeternorthcott.co.uk](http://www.exeternorthcott.co.uk)

# Lowry, Salford

Proudly rooted in Salford, Lowry is here to spread the joy of art and creativity, and give space to different views, voices and opinions. As a registered charity, every penny we earn goes directly back into our community, nurturing local talent and fostering the creative professionals of tomorrow. Welcoming more than 800,000 visitors a year, our diverse programme—featuring theatre, dance, musicals, music, comedy, visual arts, and more—reflects the vibrant spirit of our city. Whatever you're here for, we're here for it!

Visit us at [www.thelowry.com](http://www.thelowry.com)

**EXETER  
NORTHCOTT  
THEATRE**

**LOWRY**



# Mayflower, Southampton

The Mayflower logo, featuring the word "Mayflower" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, set against a white rectangular background.

Mayflower is committed to providing exceptional theatre and arts experiences for everyone, both in Southampton and beyond. Our main hubs of performing excellence are our two venues, Mayflower Theatre and Mayflower Studios. Mayflower Theatre is a Grade II listed building and Mayflower Studios is a creative producing theatre and is open to all even if it's just for coffee or to meet in the city centre location. Both venues have a shared vision for their place in Southampton and work together under the Mayflower brand to support each other to reach their goals of providing inspiring experiences for all.

[www.mayflower.org.uk](http://www.mayflower.org.uk)

Mayflower offers a diverse and inclusive programme of shows and events and sees more than 520,000 people visit each year which resulted in contributing over £67 million to the local economy in 2023/2024. After operating costs, all surplus is invested in maintaining their Grade II listed building and their education and participation programme to make arts and culture accessible across the city and communities they serve. Mayflower is driven by the mission to create profit for purpose which has seen more than 200,000 young people engaged over the last 12 years to help them discover a love of the arts with a particular focus on underrepresented and disadvantaged individuals within the community.



# Sheffield Theatres



Sheffield Theatres is home to four theatres: the Crucible, the Sheffield landmark with a world-famous reputation; the Tanya Moiseiwitsch Playhouse, an intimate, versatile space for getting closer to the action; the gleaming Lyceum, the beautiful proscenium that hosts the best of the UK's touring shows, and the Montgomery, a theatre and arts centre with a longstanding history of championing children's creativity. Sheffield Theatres is the ticket to big names and local heroes, timeless treasures and new voices, and each year welcomes over 400k audience members. With a longstanding reputation for bold new work, many multi-award-winning shows have been made in Sheffield including Life of Pi and Everybody's Talking About Jamie which have both enjoyed West End and international transfers before returning to the theatres as part of UK tours.

[sheffieldtheatres.co.uk](http://sheffieldtheatres.co.uk)