



## **Introduction**

The National Youth Theatre (NYT) is celebrating its 70th anniversary and is seeking to commission the design and development of a permanent digital platform that will host and showcase its archive.

The platform will act as both an archive and a community storytelling space, where users can explore materials from the NYT archive, contribute their own items and stories, creating a living archive that grows over time.

The project aims to strengthen alumni engagement, celebrate the organisation's cultural impact, and preserve important theatre heritage for future generations.

## **Project Overview**

NYT intends to develop a digital platform that allows:

- Display and exploration of digitised archive materials
- User submissions of archive items
- Community engagement through comments and reactions and sharing
- Curated thematic galleries
- Integration with NYT's existing website and digital asset management system

The archive will include materials such as:

- Photographs
- Videos
- Documents
- Audio recordings
- Artwork and ephemera

The platform should present this material clearly and encourage both exploration and contribution.

## **Project Objectives**

The key objectives of this project are to:

### **Encourage Community Contribution**

Enable past and present NYT members and participants to upload and share archive materials from their experiences at NYT.

### **Create an Engaging Archive Experience**

Design a visually compelling and easy-to-use gallery for exploring archive content.

### **Enable Community Interaction**

Allow visitors to comment on, respond and share archive items, fostering storytelling and dialogue.

### **Ensure Quality and Safety**

Provide moderation tools and safeguards to ensure content quality and respectful engagement.

### **Support NYT's Legacy and Cultural Preservation**

Create a permanent digital record of NYT's work and its community.

These objectives aim to support NYT's wider goal of amplifying alumni voices and celebrating its history. NYT also aims to use the platform to reconnect with alumni so they can support the organisation and its work.

## **About NYT**

National Youth Theatre empowers young people to tell stories and find their voices on leading stages, screens and behind the scenes. Partnering with industry 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.

## Target Users

The digital archive will serve three primary user groups:

### Contributors

Past or current NYT members who wish to upload archive material. This is likely to be the smallest user group.

Needs:

- Simple upload process
- Clear submission guidelines
- Feedback after submitting content

### Explorers

Users who want to browse and discover archive materials. They are interested in individuals or moments from NYT's history, but also in the arts and theatre in general. They are more interested in content rather than information.

Needs:

- Engaging visual galleries
- Editorial storytelling
- Thematic collections

### Factfinders

This user group will be seeking specific information about the organisation; its work or its history. They may be researchers, journalists, educators, and theatre professionals looking for specific information.

Needs:

- Structured metadata
- Search and filtering tools
- Downloadable resources and documentation

## Key Features

The proposed platform should include the following functionality.

### 1: User Upload System

A simple and accessible system (Typeform integration) allowing users to contribute archive materials. Key capabilities should include:

- Upload form with metadata fields (title, description, date, tags)
- Support for images, PDFs, audio and video
- Terms and conditions agreement
- Confirmation messages for submissions
- Integration with moderation workflow

## **2: Archive Display**

A dynamic gallery displaying archive items. Features should include:

- Searchable gallery with filters such as: Date/Tag/Contributor/Location
- Visual grid or list layout
- Thematic curated collections

Each item should have its own page including:

- Full item display
- Metadata
- Description and contextual information
- Tags and related content
- Reactions
- Social media sharing functionality

## **3: Community Interaction**

The platform should support community engagement features such as:

- Commenting on archive items
- Reaction features (e.g., emojis)

## **4: Moderation and Administration**

An administrative interface should allow NYT staff to:

- Review and approve user uploads
- Moderate comments
- Reject inappropriate submissions
- Manage metadata and tags

Automated moderation tools should support manual moderation workflows.

## **5: Curated Editorial Spaces**

The platform should include:

- A landing page highlighting key archive items
- Curated thematic galleries
- Campaign or seasonal content areas

This will allow NYT staff to highlight stories within the archive.

## **Design Requirements**

The platform should be:

- Mobile-first responsive
- Accessible and compliant with recognised accessibility standards
- Simple and intuitive for a broad user base
- Visually aligned with NYT branding

Current website usage indicates:

- 65% mobile users
- 33% desktop users
- 2% tablet users

## **Technical Requirements**

The solution should ideally:

- Integrate with NYT's Digital Asset Management (DAM) system
- Integrate with existing NYT website CMS(Silverstripe)
- Allow archive items to link to relevant pages across the NYT website
- Be scalable to accommodate future archive growth
- The system should also minimise the manual workload for NYT staff through effective tagging, automation, and moderation tools.
- Standalone systems will be considered if they can be integrated with existing website infrastructure

## **Sustainability Requirements**

The solution should be financially sustainable for the charity long-term, and as such, please include in your response and budget:

- If any, costs for upkeep of the platform
- Cost of integrations with existing web CMS(if necessary)
- If platform can be added to NYT's existing hosting, or needs standalone hosting
- Human resources required to service and manage the platform
- Time needed to train staff/collaborators to use platform

## Timeline

Subject to appointment, the proposed timeline is:

Phase	Timeline
Design	June 2026
Development	July – September 2026
Testing and Launch	September 2026

## Budget

Total project budget: £20,000 – £25,000 **exclusive of VAT**

Proposals should clearly outline:

- Estimated costs
- Breakdown of phases
- Ongoing maintenance (if applicable)

## Success Metrics

Project success will be measured using:

- Archive visitors
- Community engagement metrics (comments, shares, reactions)
- User feedback on usability and accessibility

## Proposal Requirements

Agencies responding to this tender should include a proposal document outlining the agency's approach, timeline, and cost estimate as well as:

- Overview of the agency and relevant experience
- Examples of similar projects

## Submission Details

Please submit proposals to [digitalproducer@nyt.org.uk](mailto:digitalproducer@nyt.org.uk) by **May 21st 2026**.



Storytellers Start Here is a project bringing our archive of 70 years to life for a new generation and celebrating the impact of National Youth Theatre on the thousands of young lives it has supported.

We're grateful to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for their support of Storytellers Start Here.

