



Job vacancy, November 2024
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER: PRESS & PR

Soho Theatre is London's most vibrant producer for new theatre, comedy and cabaret. A charity and social enterprise, we are driven by a passion for the work we produce, the artists we work with and the audiences we attract. We own our own home, Soho Theatre in the heart of London's West End. A former Synagogue, we raised funds, purchased and redeveloped it, opening it in March 2000. Today it is one of the capital's busiest theatre and comedy venues, with a year-round festival programme and a buzzing bar. Our roots date back to the early 1970s at the Soho Poly Theatre. Small but influential, Soho Poly was radical and relevant, capturing the excitement and innovation of its time. Today our work is wide-ranging, drawing from this fringe heritage, and adding a queer, punk, counter-culture flavour. We champion voices that challenge from outside of the mainstream, and sometimes from within it too. We value entertainment and a great night out.

We produce and co-produce new plays, work with associate artists and present the best new emerging theatre companies and comedians. We present the early work of countless UK artists (many who become industry giants), and we present many international artists' London debuts. We have a thriving variety of artist and talent development programmes, artists under commission and in development, and two new writing awards including the national Verity Bargate Award for new playwrights.

Work extends far beyond our Dean Street home, with a UK and international touring programme and connections. We present shows and scout talent at Edinburgh Festival Fringe and have close links with the Melbourne International Comedy Festival. We are the UK's leading presenter of Indian comedians and regularly present work there. We film shows and create our own digital work seen across our social platforms, on TV and in flight and streamed from our website.

We are working towards the opening of an exciting new second venue in London, Soho Theatre Walthamstow. A culmination of many years of Soho's work, in collaboration with a grassroots local campaign, to save a glorious, 1930s art deco venue with an incredible heritage reinvented as a 1,000-capacity venue for world-class comedy, panto, performance and participation – a 'local theatre with a national profile'.

Led by a collaborative and diverse senior team and board, Soho Theatre is an exciting place to work with a strong team ethic, fast paced, and with opportunities and intent for staff development and progression.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

THEATRE: continue to increase the resource, profile and quality of Soho's theatre and new writing programme; to ensure that this work sits well within Soho's lively cross-genre festival programme with diverse audiences, but also carves out the space to breathe and flourish within it.

COMEDY: work to ensure that we maintain an industry leading place through thoughtful curation, innovation and always being able to spot the next new talent; ensuring that artists continue to see Soho as a home for comedy and one of the places they want to perform; maintain programming integrity as we grow our audiences through Walthamstow, touring and digital.

CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT: grow our pathways for creative participation from early years to adulthood, supporting the next generation of artistic talent; support the growth of creative, connected communities around a new local theatre in Walthamstow

WALTHAMSTOW: successfully open and establish as a 'local theatre with a national profile', working with our key stakeholders of Council and community. Effectively manage the resultant change, organisational growth and risk.

AUDIENCES AND DIGITAL: build our distinctive London brand towards wider and inclusive audiences, with a particular focus on LGBTQ+, South Asian and Waltham Forest; international focus on India as well as

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Australia and the USA. Continue to build digital audiences and sustainable business models, also moving into specific digital content creation (as distinct from digital capture of live).

Job Description

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| Job Title: | Communications Officer: Press & PR |
| Purpose of Job: | To support and maximise Soho Theatre's press & PR campaigns and activities, and manage its word-of-mouth and influencer pr work, in line with the organisation's strategic plan and objectives, and its audience and sales targets |
| Reports to: | Communications Manager: Press & PR |
| Location: | Due to the nature of this role, the successful candidate will be required to work full time from Soho Theatre (primary: Dean Street venue, secondary: Walthamstow venue). |

Overview

The Communications department works at the heart of Soho Theatre's programme, selling tickets, creating content and telling the story of who we are and what we do. Working as part of an in-house Communications team, this role provides press & PR support for the profile and activities of Soho Theatre group. This includes Soho Theatre's year-round festival style programme on stage, on tour in UK/internationally and online, creative engagement and the management of its word-of-mouth and influencer public relations. All whilst working collaboratively with the wider company to achieve and maximise audience and sales targets and box office and bar income.

Soho Theatre group includes Soho Theatre (Dean Street), Soho Theatre Walthamstow, Soho Theatre Digital, Soho Theatre Bars, as well as touring (UK and international – particularly India, New York, Australia)

Job Outline

PRESS

- Lead on and manage small to mid-scale Soho Theatre inhouse comedy and cabaret press & pr campaigns and small theatre press & pr campaigns, and to deadlines. This includes strategy planning, asset collation, writing and distribution of compelling press releases, interview pitching (follow up and management), campaign coverage and evaluation
- Lead on and manage touring press & pr campaigns, including Soho Theatre India, and support Soho Theatre's Edinburgh Festival Fringe campaign
- Manage small to mid-scale Visiting Company press & pr support
- Manage and support Creative Engagement press & pr work
- Support key Soho Theatre group internal / inhouse press & pr campaigns
- With support from Communications Assistant: Press & PR, coordinate the organisation, hosting and management of press & guest nights (invites, RSVPs), press photo calls, interview logistics and other company press events. This includes working with artists, directors, actors, writers, programming, production and operations staff

PUBLIC RELATIONS

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- Manage Soho Theatre Group word-of-mouth and influencer public relations work, in close alignment with Digital / Socials team and Communications colleagues
- Contribute to Soho Theatre's digital and socials work with colleagues to generate interesting and innovative storytelling ideas and content to engage audiences and influencers
- Act as an ambassador for Soho Theatre when representing Soho Theatre group to media, arts industry, associate organisations, visiting companies, creatives and sponsors, internally and when at other events and venues
- Proactively discover, develop, nurture, and manage positive relationships with existing and new media and influencer contacts, as well as freelancers and agencies
- Research the correct placement of news pieces and features and respond to all media enquiries in a timely manner (over the phone, on email and in person)
- Build relationships with stakeholders and your equivalent colleagues in the industry, looking at ways of collaborating to gain coverage in a competitive environment
- Support the communications (press & pr) strategy, in creative collaboration with Communications department colleagues, to raise Soho Theatre's reputation and profile, and generate positive coverage that builds and maximises audiences and sales

ADMINISTRATION

- Support the daily administration of Soho Theatre's press & pr activity, ensure all activity fits into the Soho Theatre brand and tone of voice and evaluate on an ongoing basis
- Ensure all campaign documents are up to date, utilising the Microsoft Office 365 suite (including OneDrive, Planner)
- Support Communications Manager: Press & PR in their management of Communications Assistant: Press & PR

GENERAL

- Ensure Soho Theatre's website is up to date in its storytelling, this includes monitoring and regularly contribute content for and to the newsfeed and all non-ticket related webpage content
- Work collaboratively with Soho Theatre group to achieve and maximise audience and sales targets alongside box office and bar income
- Work collaboratively with colleagues, sharing information with your line manager, team and colleagues as appropriate, whilst respecting confidentiality, so colleagues have all the information they need to perform their duties effectively, efficiently and successfully
- Attend meetings with and on behalf of the Communications department, this includes meetings with artists/creative teams and internal colleagues to report on campaign activity and strategy
- Deputise for the Communications Manager: Press & PR when required; provide cover for the Communications Assistant: Press & PR when required
- Be up to date with arts/entertainment/culture, always looking for new opportunities
- Support the aims and objectives of Soho Theatre both internally and externally
- Attend Company meetings and other internal meetings as required
- Uphold Soho Theatre groups internal policies, including Equal Opportunities and Health & Safety policies
- Any other duties the Co-Communications Directors or Communications Managers may reasonably require

This is a guide to the nature of the work required of the Communications Officer: Press & PR. It is not wholly comprehensive or restrictive and may be reviewed with the post holder and the line manager from time to time.

Person Specification

QUALITIES

- The ability to work successfully in an energetic and dynamic festival-like environment
- A genuine interest in and enthusiasm for theatre, comedy and cabaret, including new writing
- A creative, curious, confident, ambitious communicator who has a proactive, positive, flexible and helpful approach and attitude to work
- The understanding of what makes a good story and enthusiasm for finding creative and engaging ways to communicate to different stakeholders (including influencers)
- Knowledge and interest in all media with an appreciation of the range of the arts sector and arts media and relevant non-arts media (including podcasts)
- Attention to detail, organised and self-motivated: can take direction, manage self and act on initiative, individually and as part of a large team
- A genuine interest in achieving and surpassing campaign and audience targets
- The ability to engage with a wide range of personalities and backgrounds and an ability to develop and maintain good relationships
- Excellent time management skills and punctuality
- Flexible attitude and approach to work and working hours - as an evening entertainment venue the role will include regular evening and occasional weekend work for press nights, industry events and networking

EXPERIENCE (essential)

- A good track record of creative publicity & pr experience, as an Assistant or Officer (preferably in an arts/entertainment environment) with good industry contacts
- A good record of working on word-of-mouth and influencer campaigns
- Experience of working on and across multiple campaigns simultaneously and to deadlines

SKILLS

- Clear, accurate and creative written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to communicate and negotiate confidentially and respectfully face to face, over the phone, on email and online
- Press & PR campaign skills: writing creative strategies and compelling copy, including press releases and pitches
- Ability to prioritise and work to deadlines with a willingness to contribute to collaborative working as well as work confidently alone using initiative
- Excellent research, administrative, organisational and networking skills
- Good level of computer literacy

Terms And Conditions

Equal Opportunities

Running through the core of Soho Theatre are the values of equality of opportunity, diversity of background and inclusion and accessibility for all. Our artists, audience and staff reflect a diverse London and we work hard to increase representation across cultures and experience.

Terms of Employment

This is a permanent full-time role, with a six-month probation period, working from Soho Theatre's venues year-round. Following a successful probation period, the notice period for this role is two months.

Salary

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£27,000 – £30,000 per annum depending on experience

Holiday entitlement

20 days per annum plus Bank Holidays, rising to 25 days plus Bank Holidays after one full year of continuous employment.

Hours

The full-time working week is 35 hours working from Soho Theatre (primarily) and Soho Theatre Walthamstow (occasionally), with an hour unpaid for lunch. General office hours are 10am-6pm Monday to Friday, regular evening and occasional weekend work will be required. There are no overtime payments; TOIL is negotiable on occasion and in advance with your line manager.

Pension

The Company operates an auto-enrolment pension scheme, which you are eligible to join after three months of employment. This is at the rate of 3% from the employer and 5% from the employee on qualifying (banded) earnings. The Government will pay in 1% of qualifying earnings, which is tax relief. If you have made other arrangements, there is the option to opt out altogether.

Staff Benefits

- Complimentary tickets for Soho Theatre shows
- Employee Assistance Programme including health insurance
- Staff discount on food and drinks at Soho Theatre Bar and other local businesses
- Season ticket and Cycle to Work loans
- Seasonal flu jabs
- Training and development opportunities

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