



**OLDHAM
COLISEUM
THEATRE**



**CREATIVE
DIRECTOR**

Welcome Letter from Martina Murphy, CEO



Martina Murphy

Chief Executive Officer
Oldham Coliseum Theatre

Dear Future Creative Director,

If you are reading this, you are already circling something important.

Oldham Coliseum Theatre is not simply reopening a building. We are re-imagining what a civic theatre can be in the 21st century — rooted in Oldham, shaped by its people and resonant far beyond our borough.

We have been through closure, uncertainty and transition. During that time we have kept the organisation alive across the borough — supporting artists, building partnerships, developing young people and continuing to create work while planning the theatre's future.

As we move towards reopening our historic building, we are shaping something bigger than a season brochure. We are building a Cultural Campus — a living ecosystem where artists, communities and young people can create, experiment and grow.

This role is not about maintaining the status quo. It is about helping shape what comes next.

We believe in:

- Circle, not pyramid leadership: An organisation defined and led by a shared purpose, not by hierarchy
- Oldham Born. World Bound.
- Artist development as infrastructure
- Theatre as a civic act
- Collaboration over ego
- Risk with rigour

You will join a team that has worked tirelessly to keep this organisation relevant and resilient. You will inherit deep relationships with communities, partners, artists and funders. You will also help shape the artistic identity of a theatre that has always punched above its weight.

If you are ready to build something meaningful in a town that deserves ambition, I look forward to hearing from you.

Martina Murphy
CEO

OUR ARTISTIC MANIFESTO



Oldham Born. World Bound.

We make work that starts here and speaks everywhere.

Circle not Pyramid

Leadership is collaborative.

Artist Development as Infrastructure

We invest in artists long-term through residencies, R&D and meaningful pathways.

Theatre as a Civic Act

Our work lives beyond the building — in schools, community spaces and across the borough.

Risk with Rigour

We take bold artistic risks supported by thoughtful planning.

Access is Fundamental

Our programme reflects the people of Oldham in all their diversity.

ROLE OVERVIEW



Oldham Coliseum Theatre is seeking an innovative, values-driven Creative Director to lead our artistic vision through reopening and into a bold new era.

Reporting to the CEO and leading the Creative Engagement and Programming strands, the Creative Director will shape and steward the full artistic programme — from early concept through to public presentation.

This is a senior leadership role within the organisation, working closely with the CEO, executive colleagues and Board to ensure artistic ambition sits confidently alongside organisational sustainability and civic purpose.

ROLE DETAILS



Contract

Permanent, 4 Days p/w

Salary

£60k FTE

Responsible to

CEO

Responsible for

Head of Creative Engagement, Head of Production & Producing, Technical Production Manager, Welcome Manager

Working closely with

Programming & Productions Team, Guest Curator & Reopening Ambassador

Location

Oldham Coliseum Theatre offices and performance venues across the Borough of Oldham

Holiday

30 days pro rata (including bank holidays)

Pension

3% Employer Contribution (following 3-month postponement period)

Probation

3 months

Notice Period

3 months

Recruitment Period

March-June 2026

Decision Confirmed

July 2026

The probation period will include a supported induction aligned to key organisational milestones, including the theatre's reopening and the development of the Cultural Campus model.

The first fully originated season is expected 2028/29.



THE OPPORTUNITY



This is a rare opportunity to help shape the future of a historic theatre at a pivotal moment in its story.

Oldham Coliseum Theatre has long been recognised as one of the North West's most important producing theatres, with a legacy of developing artists and creating work that resonates far beyond its borough.

Following a period of closure and transition, the organisation is entering a new chapter. As plans progress towards reopening the theatre's historic building, the Coliseum is also developing a broader Cultural Campus vision — one that connects artists, communities and creative pathways across the borough.

This moment presents both challenge and possibility.

The next Creative Director will help shape the artistic identity of the organisation during this period of reinvention — contributing to a theatre that is rooted in Oldham while speaking confidently to national audiences.

Working closely with the CEO and a committed team, the Creative Director will play a central role in building a theatre that is collaborative, artist-led and deeply connected to the community it serves.

This is not simply a programming role. It is an opportunity to help shape a civic cultural institution for the future.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES



Artistic leadership

Develop and articulate a clear artistic vision aligned with the ethos and ambitions of Oldham Coliseum Theatre.

Programme Development

Shape and deliver the artistic programme through commissioning, partnerships and collaboration.

Governance & Reporting

Work with the CEO and colleagues across the organisation to embed artistic thinking within wider organisational planning.

Community Engagement

Develop meaningful relationships with communities across Oldham ensuring local voices shape the programme.

Artist Development

Create pathways for emerging and established artists.

Production Oversight

Champion artistic quality across productions while encouraging innovation.



LEADERSHIP, RESPONSIBILITY & SPECIFICATION



People Leadership & Organisational Responsibility

The Creative Director will play an important role in leading and supporting colleagues across the organisation.

This includes:

- Supporting team development and performance
- Leading through organisational change
- Upholding governance and organisational policies
- Creating a supportive and accountable working culture

Person Specification

Essential

- Strong artistic leadership experience
- Senior leadership experience within a producing organisation or equivalent
- Experience commissioning and delivering work
- Experience managing artistic budgets
- Ability to lead and support teams
- Commitment to inclusive programming
- Experience working in producing or publicly funded organisations
- Experience developing artist development programmes
- Knowledge of the North West creative sector

Desirable

- Experience working with communities in post-industrial towns
- Experience contributing to long-term organisational planning



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & SAFEGUARDING



Oldham Coliseum Theatre is committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming workplace.

We encourage applications from individuals currently under-represented in the arts sector and recognise that leadership journeys can take many different forms.

Reasonable adjustments will be made throughout the recruitment process and beyond.



APPLICATION PROCESS



Applicants should submit

- A CV
- A covering letter (maximum two pages)

Closing date for applications

13 April 2026

Please submit to: recruitment@coliseum.org.uk
Shortlisted candidates will be invited to participate in a two-stage interview process.

Stage One

Artistic Leadership & Collaboration

Conversation with members of the Senior Leadership Team and Board.

Stage Two

Organisational Leadership & Civic Partnerships

Including:

- Meeting staff representatives
- Strategic discussion with Board members
- Conversation with key external stakeholders.

