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Chief Executive Officer
Recruitment Pack

THE GRAND
THEATRE | BLACKPOOL

Welcome from the Chair



Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive of the Grand Theatre, Blackpool

This is an exciting time for the Grand Theatre. After an inspirational eight years leading the company, in early 2022 Ruth Eastwood is stepping down from her role to return to her freelance career. Her shrewd and insightful contribution has helped to develop the Grand into a vibrant, confident, flexible organisation, with National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status recognising the regional significance of her programme. It has been a pleasure to work with her over the years.

One of the most beautiful theatres in Europe, the Grand is central to its locality and its community through its programme of work both on stage and in the community with creative development projects.

Of course, Covid 19 has been devastating for the whole of the arts sector and the Grand Theatre has been no exception. However, we have been fortunate enough to have benefited from Arts Council England's (ACE) Emergency Funding and both rounds of the Cultural Recovery Fund receiving just over £1m in total.

Amongst other things, these funds are enabling the theatre to engage in a series of improvements that will increase the building's Covid security, ready for audiences, artists, and staff to return safely and comfortably when social distancing has been lifted and the theatre reopens in September 2021.

Throughout this period of building closure, the Creative Learning team has carried on delivering an exciting and engaging programme in alternative spaces and online. There are many partners who support us in this work, and these are outlined later in this pack.

Welcoming back audiences cannot come soon enough. The theatre has an excellent senior team capable and raring to go. We also have the support of a keen and loyal group of volunteers who are waiting in the wings for their chance to return.

We are seeking a Chief Executive who will lead this team to take the Grand to new heights, building on successes achieved pre-Covid and helping to take forward the theatre's Capital Development Masterplan, designed to deliver 21st century facilities for the audiences of tomorrow. With an enthusiastic and experienced Board of Trustees and a great team in post, we will make every effort to ensure that you have the support and resources to make the transition into this exciting and challenging role.

We have retained Jodi Myers as our recruitment consultant, and she would be happy to have an informal and confidential conversation with prospective candidates. Jodi is contactable on projects@jodimyrs.co.uk.

The closing date for applications is **10am Tuesday 31 August 2021**. We look forward to hearing from you.

Anthony P Stone
Chairman Grand Theatre (A & E) Ltd



Blackpool and the Surrounding Regions

Blackpool is one of the largest and most popular seaside resorts in the country. It is a town and unitary authority in the geographic and historic county of Lancashire, England, on the Irish Sea coast.

The total resident population of Blackpool is just under 140,000 (JSNA 2020). It is estimated that the resort currently attracts 17 million visitors a year.

Blackpool has a lively entertainment scene and the illuminations are the quintessential attraction. These are constantly being reinvented, currently through the Lightpool Contemporary Light Art Festival commissioning new works from national and international artists.

It is estimated that, during the summer months, there are up to 20,000 seats available in theatres, circuses, venues, hotels and pubs, focused on entertaining the visitor.

The town also has a growing arts and cultural offer available all year round for the resident, with the Grand Theatre and Grundy Art Gallery as National Portfolio Organisations, the Opera House a number one touring venue, LeftCoast as a Creative People and Places project and, due to open

in 2022, a brand new museum, ShowTown. Art B&B offers a unique artist-designed accommodation and grass roots organisations, such as Electric Sunshine, bring energy and creativity to the town.

Like many coastal towns in Britain, Blackpool suffered decline since its boom in the 60s and 70s, as foreign holidays became more accessible, along with guaranteed sunshine. However, over recent years the town has benefited from regeneration investment, including the Towns Fund, to improve both infrastructure and benefit the health, education and wellbeing of its residents

Blackpool sits on the edge of some of Britain's most beautiful countryside and vibrant cities. Small towns and villages fan out behind the town across Fylde and Wyre into rural Lancashire. The Trough of Bowland and the Lake District are under an hour's drive away, with Lancaster, Preston and Salford all within the theatre's catchment area.



The Grand

Blackpool Grand Theatre is a Grade II* listed Frank Matcham theatre which opened in 1894. It is a proscenium arched presenting house with a 1053 seating capacity and a 10m x 10m, 1:24 raked stage. Its seats are spread over 4 levels with the highest, the Gallery, having 300 bench seats (no backrest).

It has a flexible workshop/80 seat performance space known as the Studio, and a further 50 person capacity multi-use room called the Space.

Pre-Covid, Blackpool Grand Theatre earned 91% of its income through sales. Arts Council funding represents 7% of its income. It is a service provider for Blackpool Council, and this represents 2% of its income. Additional funds are awarded through successful grant applications for specific activities. Currently two 3-year Creative Learning projects are being funded in this way through the Esmée Fairbairn and Goldsmiths' foundations. For capital development projects, applications are made to ACE and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Pre-Covid, the Grand had 35 FTE posts and, at closure, 57 employees working with 92 volunteers alongside. Currently, there are 14 FTE staff working, with 19 on furlough. The organisation is currently recruiting and re-building the establishment. Recruitment to new, improved, more flexible contracts has begun.

The Grand Theatre plans to re-open in September 2021. Volunteers will return in 2022.

To find out more about the history of the Grand, visit [Our Story](#).



'One of the most beautiful theatres in the country.'

Sir Ian McKellen

The Programme

The Grand Theatre aims to offer an artistic programme that is distinct within Blackpool's busy entertainment market. It is the main playhouse for the town, presenting professional drama and dance, music, children's theatre, opera and ballet. This is supplemented by a wide-ranging programme of music and comedy one-nighters. Its current NPO agreement focuses on the presentation of contemporary dance, physical theatre and work with very young children.

The Grand supports the amateur sector of the region, giving opportunities to rehearse and perform to a wide selection of drama, dance, musical and operatic societies/organisations, including its own Grand Young Company.

A variety of learning and participation experiences, including workshops, classes, projects and labs, spring from the programme on the stage. Over the last five years the Creative Learning team has developed a specialism, Story-led Resilience®, which takes a social justice framework and looks at the stories on our stage through a resilience lens. The aim is to help to equip children and young people with the tools they need to handle what life throws at them. This work has been developed in partnership with Boingboing, Brighton University's Centre for Social Justice and its potential as a new income stream for the business is currently being explored.

The Grand offers local schools and colleges opportunities to see, participate and learn through theatre. It is a member of the Local Cultural Education Partnership. It is an Arts Award Centre and, for the last nine years, has been part of the Royal Shakespeare Company's Associate Schools Programme, working with all 32 schools across the town

The theatre celebrates its heritage value through tours, talks and exhibitions and works in partnership with like-minded heritage, arts and cultural organisations as well as other third-sector partners.

During the pandemic, the Grand has taken its work into the virtual world, with programmes of engagement on its YouTube channel #athomewithyou, workshops and classes delivered digitally and its Christmas 2020 offering, Pantomonium!, filmed and sold as a pay-to-view download. It is anticipated that digital will continue to play an important role in the programme going forward.



Aims and Objectives

BLACKPOOL GRAND STRATEGY MAP

Blackpool Grand Theatre is a Grade II* Listed Matcham theatre which opened in 1894. It is governed by two separate charities: The Trust, which owns the building; and Arts and Entertainment (A&E), which runs it. It is supported by a third charity, the Friends of the Grand (FoG), an independent membership organisation which provides financial and voluntary support to the theatre. Together, these three bodies make up 'The Grand Family'.

Vision: Blackpool's Grand Theatre is a nationally recognised local resource committed to inspiring a life-long love of [the] theatre.

Mission: We offer opportunities to enjoy, participate and learn through theatre.

**Charitable Purposes & Aims:
ART | EDUCATION | HERITAGE**

AIM 1: for the three charities to work together to achieve greater strength, financial sustainability and increase our public benefit.

AIM 2: to offer a distinctive, rich and varied programme of quality arts and entertainment, using our artistic programme and heritage assets as tools to power participation, learning, resilience and positive experiences.

AIM 3: to grow and sustain audiences, participants and community users from Blackpool and beyond, by forging powerful partnerships, building long-lasting relationships and encouraging more and new people to benefit from the theatre's offer.

AIM 4: to invest in the maintenance, development and accessibility of our theatre building with a commitment to reducing our environmental impact.

AIM 5: to commit to continuous improvement of the skills, knowledge and diversity of our employees, volunteers and trustees.

Core (Financial) Enablers

Ticket Sales	Secondary Spend	Revenue Grants	Donations	Rent	Capital Grants
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Core (Resource) Enablers

Programming & Learning	Sales & Marketing	Technical Services	Finance, HR & Admin	FOH Services	Trustees & Volunteers	Building Services
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Control Functions

Governance: Boards & Committees

Lease	Policies & Procedures	Audit
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Values: Trustworthy | Respectful | Professional | Open & Honest | Welcoming & Helpful



Looking Ahead

Gaining NPO status in 2012 was a first step towards the Grand being recognised for its potential to play a wider role in the artistic life of Blackpool. Over subsequent funding rounds, it has persuaded ACE to increase its investment by a total of 37%. It is our ambition to do so again in the next bid, early 2022.

The Grand sees itself as a local resource: dedicated to using the stories on its stage to generate opportunities for people from all parts of our community to learn, share, participate and grow. In 2012 our Creative Learning Department consisted of one part-time role; today, we have 2.5 FTE and a wide pool of freelance artists, practitioners, and educationalists working with us. This work is moving from the outer edges of what we do and who we are to becoming a central pillar of our creative offer. Growth has been made possible by more than £500k investment from various local and national trusts and foundations over the last four years.

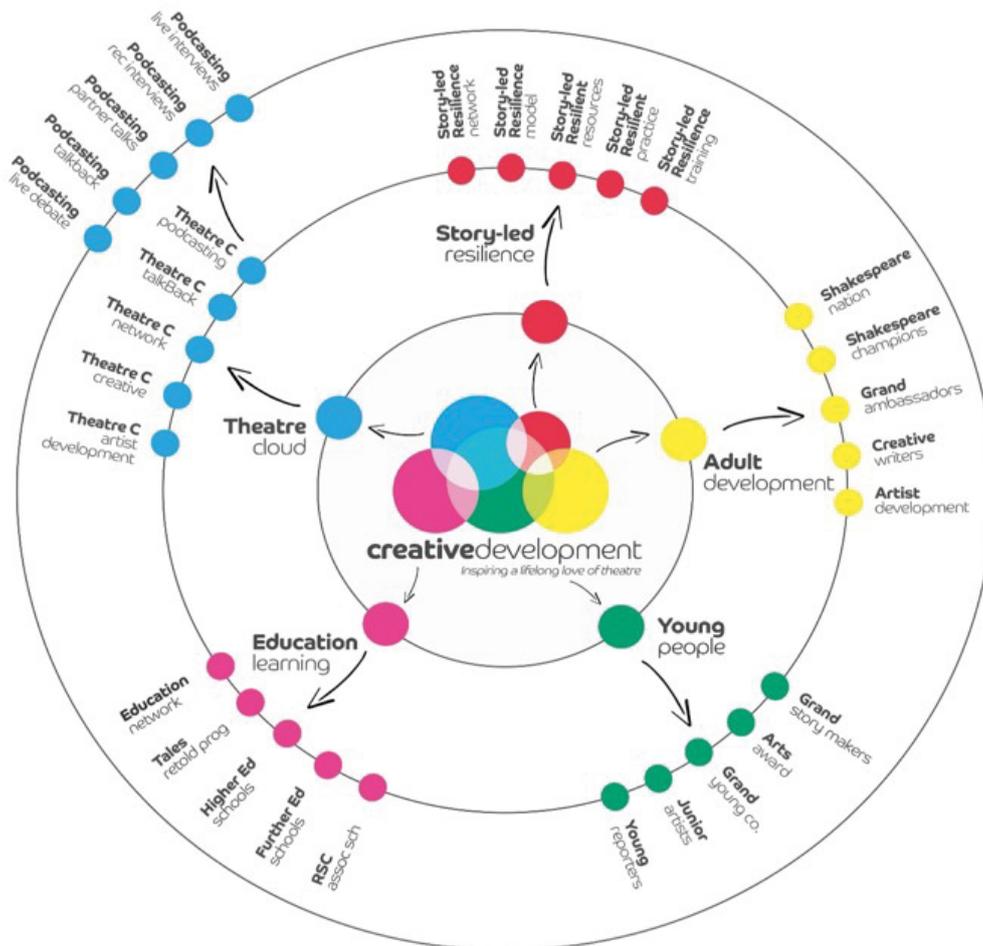
And our ambitions stretch far beyond Blackpool. In 2019, we were commissioned by the Children's Theatre Partnership to create the participation and learning materials for three tours: Holes, An Unexpected Twist and Animal Farm. Our job was to take our unique Story-led Resilience® and share the practise with four theatres (Canterbury Marlowe, Coventry Belgrade, Newcastle and Norwich Theatres Royal) in a three-year training programme, whilst creating a complete set of teaching and participation resources to be shared, free of charge, with all the theatres on each of the tours. Unavoidably, this was curtailed by Covid-19 but will restart when the tours recommence in

2022. Nevertheless, even during closure, we have been commissioned by both the Royal Opera House and Royal Shakespeare Company to share the practise in on-line workshop programmes for teachers and practitioners from across the UK. We are currently working with Edge Hill University's Department for Innovation to explore ways to expand and monetise this strand of our work.

Social distancing rules reduce our capacity from over 1,000 to less than 350, making it uneconomical for most producers to bring work to the Grand. This has meant that, apart from *The Woman in Black*, it has not been possible to programme 'normally' with week-long runs of quality product. Instead, we have focused on one-nighters. So, in order to offer audiences a quality theatre experience that we can be proud of, in October we shall produce our own show. *Around the World in 80 Days* was originally commissioned as a one-off to celebrate the Theatre's 125th anniversary. Now, with Cultural Recovery Funding, we will re-mount it, with or without social distancing, to ensure the theatre is open for business and welcoming customers back in a safe and comfortable environment. Then, perhaps, we might consider taking it on tour.

Creative Learning

The pictogram, below, describes how all our creative learning initiatives fit within the artistic and audience development aims of the business:



Some examples of current two and three-year funded projects that we are delivering:

Tales Retold

In partnership with Blackpool English Hub working with 12 schools. It aims to achieve positive outcomes for children in oracy, resilience and creativity. Its main funder is the Goldsmiths' Charitable Trust with additional support from Blackpool Council's Opportunity Area and School Improvement Board. The project started in June 2021 and culminates in June 2024 with the first Blackpool Schools Story-Telling Festival.

Resilient Story-Maker

In partnership with the voluntary youth sector, including young carers, we work with up to 100 young people in their informal community settings and over zoom. They are building creative skills as well as defining and applying particular choices/moves to build their personal resilience.

Its main funder is the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

The project started in 2020 and converted to digital delivery. It ends in 2023 with a young person-led series of events where they will share work, be co-commissioners and provide peer-led creative resilient resources.

Illuminate Holiday Programme

In partnership with Blackpool Social Services' Looked After Children's Team, we are working with children and young people in care during the holidays on a Light and Sound project that aims to give them a voice and shine a light on their experiences. This project will be working with LightWorks (Blackpool's Illuminations team). The project started in 2019 and was paused in 2020, and it will recommence in October 2021.

Consumer Snapshot

- The Grand presents approximately 350-400 performances a year
- 130 – 160,000 tickets are sold to 28,000 bookers annually (pre-pandemic)
- 48% are Web sales (51% use mobile), 39% Counter, 13% Phone
- Dormitory Dependable 21.8%, (17% within 40min drive time)
- Trips and Treats 20.4% (20% within 40min drive time)
- 55.8% of ticket income comes from local FY postcode bookers
- 35.6% Male, 64.4% Female bookers
- 45-54yrs 19.3%, 55-64yrs 32.1%, 65+ 36.4%
- 51.9% are first time bookers
- NET Promoter Score 79
- Average Price Paid £20.04
- Ticket Types 66.9% Adults, 43.1% Concessions

Finance and Funding Summary

The Grand's 2019/20 audited accounts can be reached here:

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/1022754>

The 2020/21 audited accounts will be made available to candidates invited to interview.

2020/21 has, obviously, been an unusual year. Whilst it has been impossible to open the theatre to the public, we have generated a total of £38,175 in income from online sales. The theatre also received £85,261 of business interruption insurance and Government grants, through Arts Council England and Blackpool Council, totalling £736,844. At the financial year-end we held unrestricted reserves of £390,459 and, with additional funds from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and other trusts and foundations, restricted grants of £254,769. We are also carrying a programming reserve of £70,000, Advertising Fund of £10,000 and CRF reserve of £157,000 as designated funds. (Correct as at 31 March 2021).

Partners

The Grand has developed partnerships with a range of organisations including:

Future U, UCLan, Headstart Blackpool, Aspired Futures, Blackpool Carers Centre, Boingboing, University of Brighton, Edge Hill University, Blackpool and the Fylde College, Blackpool Sixth Form, The RSC (Royal Shakespeare Company) and Blackpool English Hub.

Governance

Theatre Ownership

The Grand Theatre is owned by Blackpool Grand Theatre Trust Limited ('the Trust') a company limited by guarantee and having charitable status. The main charitable objects of the Trust are to conserve, maintain, develop, and enhance the building and the Theatre's historic and archival collections. The Trust leases the Theatre to Blackpool Grand Theatre (Arts & Entertainments) Limited ('A&E').

Theatre Operator

The Theatre is operated by Blackpool Grand Theatre (Arts & Entertainments) Limited ('A&E'), a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. The main charitable objects of A&E are to present an eclectic programme of the performing arts. In addition, the Theatre contributes to the development of creativity and learning in the local and wider community.

The Catering Company, Grand Productions and Showseats Limited are subsidiaries of A&E and profits on their operations are donated to the parent company.

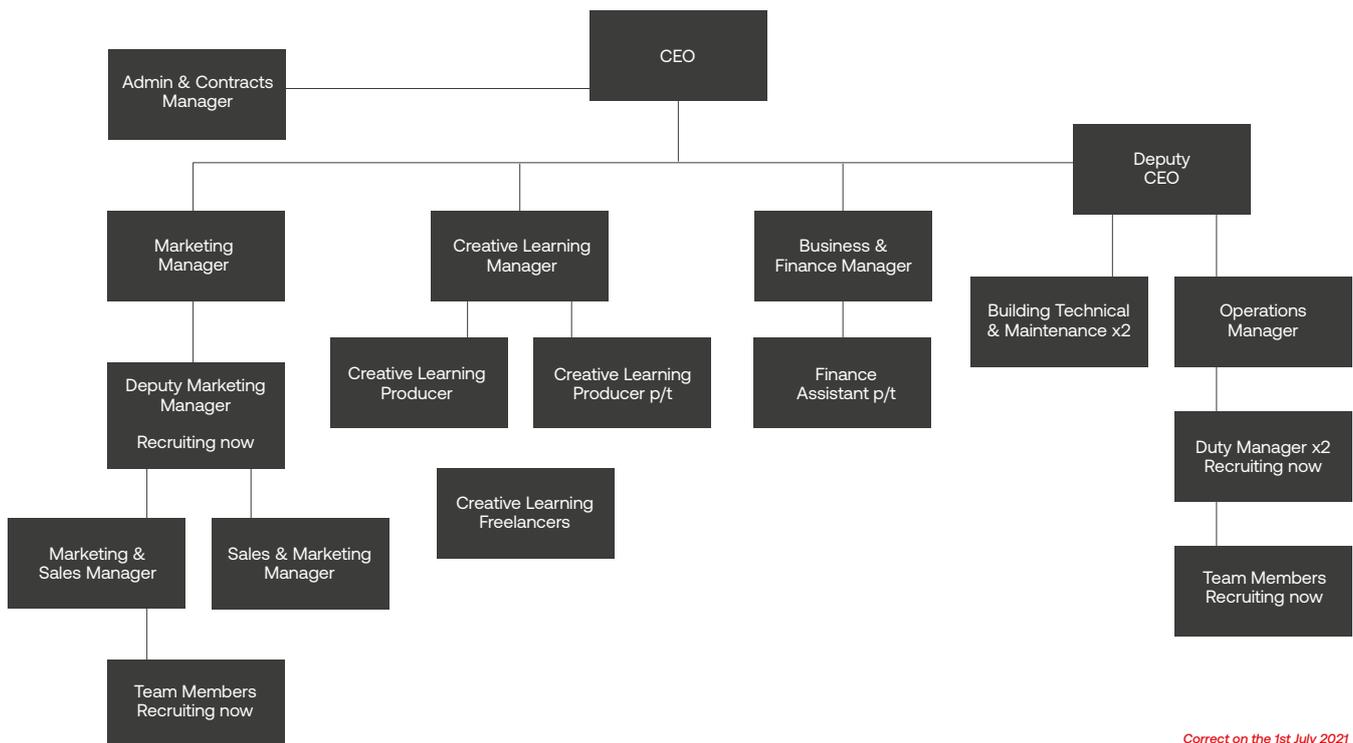
The Theatre is supported by The Friends of the Grand – a voluntary group that raises funds for the theatre and provides operational support.

Blackpool Grand Theatre (Arts & Entertainments) Limited Trustees

Peter Akroyd (Chair, Finance Sub Cttee), former City of London banker; **Samantha Bonser**, Director of HR for the Federation of Small Businesses; **Lindsay Campbell**, partner director of Campbell & Rowley Catering & Events Ltd; **Stephen Crocker**, Chief Executive Norwich Theatre Royal; **Tony Depledge OBE (Vice Chair)**, director and manager in the passenger transport industry in both the public and private sectors; **Glenn Mascord**, retired teacher and educationalist; **Anthony Stone (Chair)**, consultant, former chairman of the travel trade association for the independent travel management industry; **Sue Walker**, arts education practitioner; **Philip Welsh**, Head of Visitor Economy for Blackpool Council.

Organisational Chart

We have a strong and experienced staff team in place, with the opportunity to develop further over the coming period.



Person Specification

The board of the Grand Theatre is seeking an inspirational leader with extensive experience of working in the cultural sector. The individual will want to build on the success of the current operation and ensure it emerges from the pandemic with renewed commitment to leading the theatre to even greater achievements. They will be comfortable with multiple priorities and have a positive attitude to risk.

While we are looking for someone who can demonstrate they have the vast majority of these skills and experience, some are marked essential (E) and others desirable (D), and we recognise that some candidates if appointed may need support in one or two areas.

Skills and experience

- Experience of managing a broad range of activities within a complex, nationally regarded creative organisation (E)
- Experience of working in a presenting venue (D)
- Understanding of funding for the arts (E) and heritage (D)
- Proven success in generating income from a variety of sources including brokering long-term partnerships (E)
- Proven strategic skills, including leading on business planning and implementation (E)
- Proven ability in financial management, strategy and accountability (E)
- Proven highly developed interpersonal skills, with the ability to lead, inspire and motivate a team (E)
- Experience of recruiting staff and facilitating their professional development (E)
- Excellent networks in the performing arts (E)
- Experience of negotiating complex contracts in the performing arts (E)
- Proven ability to advocate and influence (E)
- Experience of working with a board of directors/trustees (E)
- Experience of capital projects (D)
- Understanding of marketing, including use of social media (D)
- Computer literacy (E)

Personal qualities and attitudes

- High level of self-motivation and a positive attitude (E)
- Ability to work on your own and as part of a team (E)
- Ability to lead and manage multiple projects with enthusiasm (E)
- Creative approach to prioritisation and problem solving (E)
- Calmness under pressure (E)
- Flexibility to work evenings, weekends and travel as required (E)
- Commitment to equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of work and to environmental sustainability (E)
- Commitment to audience development and engagement (E)
- Commitment to arts practice in education and community engagement (E)
- Knowledge of Blackpool, the surrounding region and its specific context (D)

Job Description

Chief Executive Officer

REPORTING TO - Chairman of Blackpool Grand Theatre (Arts & Entertainments) Limited

LOCATION - Grand Theatre/Home working/ UK & Abroad

Role/Purpose

Working with the trustees (i.e., the directors) of the companies involved in the Grand Theatre operation to:

- Deliver the vision and mission for the Grand Theatre
- Secure a sustainable future for the Grand
- Represent the Grand with partners, stakeholders, and other relevant external organisations
- Contribute to the welfare and well-being of the communities of Blackpool and the Fylde Coast

Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership

- Collaborate with the trustees to define and articulate the theatre's vision and develop strategies for achieving that vision
- Create operating plans that support the strategic direction set by the trustees in line with annual operating budgets; submit annual plans to the trustees for approval
- Guide the senior management team in the business planning process
- Promote a culture that reflects the theatre's values and driving principles, encourages good performance and encourages productivity
- Provide leadership on the commercial exploitation of all areas of operation and develop further income streams
- Negotiate and deliver the service level agreement with Blackpool Council
- Champion diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity

Programme and audience development

- Programme the theatre with presentations in accordance with the theatre's objectives and agreed artistic policy
- Seek to maximise the financial return to the theatre by negotiation with producers
- Stay abreast of current trends and reactions to the theatre's products and services and anticipate future trends
- Collect, analyse and evaluate information that measures the success of the theatre's offering and refine or develop programmes accordingly
- Oversee maintenance of existing audiences and development of new audiences
- Ensure that work for and with children and young people, and outreach work remains integral to the theatre's offer

Operations and Finance

- Develop and monitor strategies for implementing all approved plans to ensure the long term financial viability of the Theatre
- Oversee development and approval of budgets and financial forecasts that support the theatre's overall objectives, strategies and plans
- Manage resources within budget guidelines according to best practice
- Provision of thorough and accurate information to keep the trustees appropriately informed of the theatre's financial position
- Promote a culture of value for money in all transactions including the implementation of effective procurement systems
- Develop fund raising strategies with the trustees
- Oversee staff in the development, implementation and monitoring of fund raising plans and applications
- Provide all necessary support to the trustees to enable them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities to best effect
- Ensure compliance with rules and regulations governing the administration of charitable funds and company administration
- Ensure compliance with all current legislation
- Champion the theatre's environmental strategies, ensuring sustainability goals are reflected in all aspects of the theatre's work

Advocacy and Communications

- Be a spokesperson and representative for the theatre
- Work with the Friends of the Grand, to develop the scheme, to make best use of the volunteers in the theatre, and to support as necessary their fundraising efforts
- Ensure that the theatre, its vision, programmes, activities and services are consistently and positively presented and maximise opportunities for income generation
- Stay abreast of developments in theatre and the arts to ensure that this knowledge is disseminated throughout the organisation in the practices and programming of the theatre

People

- Develop and deliver leadership within the theatre, creating a working environment that allows staff to perform at their highest potential and identify training needs to support their professional development
- Manage staff effectively, providing direction, guidance and review taking action as necessary
- Lead on the recruitment and evaluation of performance of key staff
- Oversee policy development and documentation
- Oversee performance management and improvement systems

Partnership

- Maintain and build relationships with key stakeholders including Arts Council England, Blackpool Council, other neighbouring local authorities and the Friends of the Grand, trusts and foundations.
- Further deepen the Grand's placemaking and cultural leadership role in Blackpool and the Fylde Coast

General

- Comply with theatre's policies and procedures, security, fire regulations and health and safety policies and legislation including Data Protection legislation.
- You will be required to travel with this position and overnight events are likely



Terms & Conditions

This is a summary of the principal terms and conditions:

- Salary negotiable, dependent on experience, circa **£65,000**
- The appointed person will be engaged as an employee
- The company operates a contributory pension scheme
- The post is subject to a six-month probation period. Notice period is one month by either party during the probationary period and six months thereafter for both parties
- The post-holder will be expected to fulfil the hours required to do the job, including some evening and weekend work, but is not expected to work more than an average of 48 hours per week across the year in line with the Working Time Regulations
- Holiday allowance is 28 days per annum (Plus public holidays)

Application Process

To arrange a confidential, informal discussion before applying, please contact Jodi Myers, who is acting as The Grand's recruitment consultant, on projects@jodimyers.co.uk and she will be pleased to set up a time to talk to you.

Applications should be made by submitting a letter explaining in no more than three sides of A4 what attracts you to this position and evidence of your ability to fulfil the role and meet the Person Specification.

Please also supply a CV and a separate page headed with your name giving:

- Names and contact details for two employment/professional referees, however, the Grand will not take up reference unless candidates are invited to a second interview
- Details of notice period in current employment if applicable
- A statement that you have the right to work in the UK or that you require a work permit to do so
- Details of any criminal offence you have been convicted of where you have not yet completed the rehabilitation period for the offence

In addition, to help us monitor our equal opportunities plan, we would be grateful if you could complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring form. When your application is received, this form is removed and is not used during the short-listing process. Please follow the link below:

<https://www.blackpoolgrand.co.uk/app/uploads/2021/06/BGT-Equal-Opportunities-Monitoring-Form.docx>

Applications should be addressed to Anthony Stone, Chair Grand Theatre Blackpool, and sent via email to projects@jodimyers.co.uk with 'Grand Theatre Blackpool' in the subject line by **10am on Tuesday 31 August 2021**.

Subject to Government guidelines, first round interviews will be conducted on Wednesday 29th September 2021 at the Grand Theatre in Blackpool. People invited for interview will be notified by 15th September. Second round interviews to be held the first week in November, also at the Grand Theatre. This schedule allows time for candidates invited to second round interviews to spend time with senior staff between in the intervening period.

The Grand Theatre is committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and applications from individuals are encouraged regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.

If you require this pack in a different format, please contact admin@blackpoolgrand.co.uk