

20 October 2023

Chichester Festival Theatre launches pilot Artists Development Programme

Chichester Festival Theatre is launching a pilot Artists Development Programme for emerging local artists. Open to theatre makers from multiple disciplines, including actors, producers, directors, writers, composers, video artists and designers, four early career artists or companies will be offered a tailored, part-time and flexible 7–10-month programme that develops their skills, makes vital connections to other industry professionals, and delivers a small creative project that will add to their emerging portfolio of work.

The participants will receive a grant of £2,000 – £5,000 (pro-rata depending on the number of individuals involved) to enable them to devote adequate time to the programme, plus travel and accommodation costs. Led by CFT's Artistic Director Justin Audibert and Creative Associate Sophie Hobson, the programme will be targeted at artists from East Sussex, West Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire.

Each artist will create a professional development plan; be assigned a mentor from CFT or the freelance community; and receive a series of workshops led by Justin Audibert and other leading industry professionals.

The artists will also receive access to observe rehearsals, tickets for performances at CFT, and a focused period of research and development to work on their chosen project with up to four collaborators whose costs will also be paid by CFT.

We define 'emerging' as:

- artists new to their discipline or companies who are newly formed
- those with no more than two professional credits on a production
- those who have been practising their discipline for no more than two years

(Previous experience in a different area does not affect whether an artist is 'emerging'; for example, an established actor could be an emerging director.)

Justin Audibert and Sophie Hobson said: 'We recognise the vital importance for our industry of nurturing the leading artists of tomorrow but also the barriers preventing artists from our region and under-represented backgrounds to launch a creative career and access their first professional roles. We hope this programme will improve employability and career progression for all the participants.'

Applications open on 26 October at cft.org.uk and close on 12 November. There will also be a drop-in session for informal chats with Sophie Hobson at CFT on Tuesday 7 November.

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