

OV BACKSTAGE AT THE OLD VIC



**EVALUATION
2024-2025**

Education & Community at The Old Vic	02
OV Backstage	03
Programme	04
Participant information	13
Participant outcomes	18
Impact	22
Ideas for the future	27

THE OLD VIC EDUCATION & COMMUNITY TEAM

Head of Education & Community
Euan Borland
 Participation Coordinator
Suzie Carney
 Education & Community Coordinator
Sophia Chimonas
 Education & Community Director
Hannah Fosker
 Participation Manager
Charlotte Gaughan
 Education Manager (Primary)
Tom Latham
 Education Manager (Schools Club)
Becky Rathkey
 Community Manager
Jemima Senior
 Education Manager (Take the Lead)
Alice Watson

OV BACKSTAGE

OV Backstage Project Coordinator
Micaëla Corcoran

WITH THANKS TO

The Old Vic Technical Team:
 Stage Chargehand
Scott Carver
 Deputy Head of Stage
Edward Dennis
 Production Director
Dominic Fraser
 Technical Services Director
Christian Wallace
 Deputy Head of Wardrobe
Andy Keelan

Head of Wardrobe
Fiona Lehmann
 Head of Stage
Aran Morrison
 Head of Sound
James Percival
 Deputy Head of Lighting
Alex Riley
 Lighting Chargehand
Eimante Rukaite
 Head of Lighting
Andrew Stuttard

Girl from the North Country
 Creative Team:

Writer & Director
Conor McPherson
 Music & Lyrics
Bob Dylan
 Set & Costume
Rae Smith
 Orchestrator, Arranger & Musical
 Supervisor
Simon Hale
 Lighting
Mark Henderson
 Sound
Simon Baker
 Movement
Lucy Hind
 Musical Director
Alan Berry
 Casting
Jessica Ronane CDG
 Voice & Dialect
Salvatore Sorce
 Fights
Bret Yount

Associate Director
Corey McMahon
 Associate Costume
Poppy Hall
 Associate Sound
Jay Jones
 Associate Movement
James Berkery
 Musicians' Contractor
David Gallagher
 Baylis Assistant Director
Nikhil Vyas
 Wigs, Hair & Make-Up Supervisor
Campbell Young Associates
 Additional Arrangements
Conor McPherson & Simon Hale

Stage Management Team:
 Company Stage Manager
Tamsin Withers
 Deputy Stage Manager
Sophie Rubenstein
 Assistant Stage Manager
Emily Lawes

Freelance Artists:
 Sound No. 1
Karen Lowe
 Sound No. 2
Isabel Buchanan
 Production Sound
Sam Palmer
 Lighting Programmer
Sam Waddington
 Lighting Operator
Sonny Tricky

Artist Participants,
 Networking Sessions:
Lucy Adams
Fahmida Bakht
Nicola T. Chang
Gregory Clarke
Niall McKeever
India Mills
David Palmer
Magdalena Seyfried
Shakira Taylor Knight
Sarah Weltman
Joanne Wills

Masterclass Leaders and Visit Hosts:
Sorcha Corcoran
**The National Theatre Costume
 and Prop Hire**
John Sealey and Autograph Sound
Visual Scene
White Light

Additional participant support:
Sharon Calcutt Cheadle

OV BACKSTAGE

Generously supported by
Maria Björnson Memorial Fund, Kate Downey & Rob Knox,
MariaMarina Foundation and Sandra Charitable Trust.

EVALUATION

Editors
Suzie Carney
Charlotte Gaughan
 Design by
James Cunninghame Graham
 Photography by
Marshall Stay

With generous thanks to all
 Old Vic staff and Associates

Our renowned education and community projects inspire learning and connection. Each year we work with over 6,000 people of all ages, from five to 100+, in London and beyond, as well as a further 25,000 through our online learning platform, The Hub. We reach people at all stages of life to support skills development, employment prospects and wellbeing.

Our programmes build community cohesion, open up access to the arts and develop the emerging theatre professionals of tomorrow. We do this through a range of initiatives, including free theatre tickets, workshops delivered at The Old Vic, in schools, in the community and online, and through innovative employability and training programmes.

Our programmes are free to access and focus on engaging with communities who are underrepresented in the theatre industry, or who have limited access to it.



EDUCATION & COMMUNITY AT THE OLD VIC

OV Backstage offers paid placements on an Old Vic production to six 18–30 year-olds from underrepresented backgrounds in the arts.

The programme offers participants the opportunity to work across the lifecycle of an Old Vic production, from rehearsals through to press night, gaining hands-on experience, knowledge and an understanding of what a career in the industry looks like. The programme offers a route into the industry for those who have not undergone formal training and may face barriers to accessing traditional routes, such as university. The programme supports the next generation of backstage theatre workers, diversifying the future workforce and responding to the skills shortage currently faced by the theatre industry.

This year's participants worked on *Girl from the North Country*, written by award-winning playwright Conor McPherson with music from Bob Dylan. The programme began with an induction week where participants were introduced to each other, the team and the building as well as learning about the timeline of a professional production and the roles associated with them. Participants were also equipped with the OV Backstage Resource Pack to supplement their learning.

Following this they shadowed The Old Vic Technical team, *Girl from the North Country* creatives and wider freelance production staff in one of five backstage disciplines: **costume and wardrobe, lighting, set and staging, sound and stage management**. As well as taking on practical tasks within the production, participants' learning was also enhanced through off-site visits and workshops. Each participant had 15 paid days of work across the programme.

The project culminated with a networking session to help participants take the next steps in their careers and meet further industry professionals to broaden their knowledge and networks.

The project is organised by the Education & Community team and a dedicated OV Backstage Coordinator, who work with the Technical team, Production team, creatives and wider freelance team to coordinate each placement. This year the coordinator role was taken on by freelance Stage Manager, Michaela Corcoran. OV Backstage is brought about through collaboration from a huge number of people across The Old Vic and beyond, working together to provide the most insightful and beneficial experience for all participants.

OV BACKSTAGE

RECRUITMENT AND CRITERIA

OV Backstage was set up to work with young people who are currently underrepresented in backstage roles, including people from the Global Majority, women, those from working class backgrounds, care experienced people, neurodiverse people and disabled people.

In addition, to be eligible to apply for the programme, participants had to:

- Be aged between 18–30
- Be interested in developing a career in their chosen discipline
- Have had some prior experience in their chosen discipline, for example at school, or a short course
- Not have undertaken any formal training or a university degree in their chosen discipline.



Application Process

Applicants were asked to complete an application form to collect personal details, eligibility, availability for the project and any access requirements. They were also asked the following questions which could be answered in a written format or by a video/audio recording:

- Why are you interested in your discipline?
- What past experience or transferable skills do you have in your chosen discipline?
- What would you like to get out of the OV Backstage programme?

Applications for OV Backstage opened on Thu 20 Mar and closed on Mon 07 Apr. Programme information was made available on The Old Vic's website and advertised through the theatre's social media channels, as well as in an email campaign to our dedicated 'Take Part' mailing list. This year, in collaboration with the Old Vic Technical team, we expanded the scope of each discipline and included more detailed information on the types of activity that would be involved in each placement.

To reach as many people as possible, specifically those from groups that experience barriers accessing arts opportunities, we contacted charities, youth groups, virtual schools, young carer organisations, job centres and employability organisations.

In addition, the Education & Community team conducted targeted outreach to organisations which offer entry level courses in technical theatre, such as the National Theatre, National Youth Theatre and Stratford East. The programme was featured on the newsletter and opportunity boards of a range of organisations that support young people to find creative opportunities. These included Get Into Theatre, Arts Jobs, The Dots, Creative Portal, Backstage Niche and Disability Arts Online. The programme was also shared with organisations that work with young people with transferable skills who may not be aware of opportunities within the arts, such as Single Homeless Project, The Prince's Trust, Drive Forward Foundation, and Lambeth and Southwark Councils.

Online Information Session

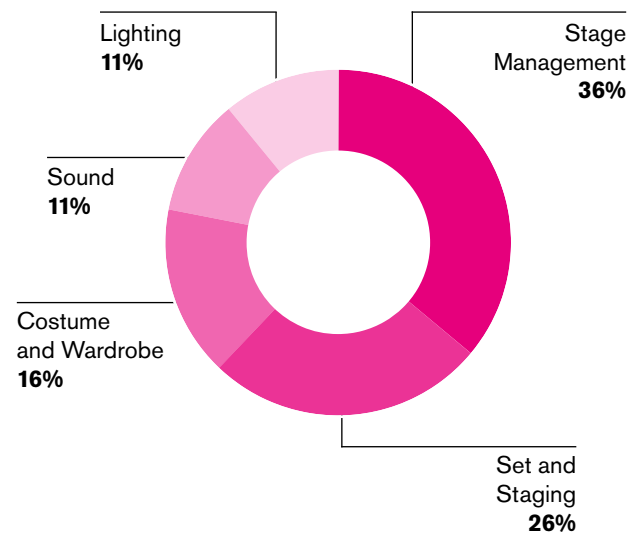
At the start of the application window, we ran an online information session, where participants could find out more about the programme, the placements on offer, as well as receive advice and guidance about the application process and ask any questions they had. This was hosted by Participation Manager, Charlotte Gaughan, Participation Coordinator, Suzie Carney and freelance Stage Manager and OV Backstage contributor EJ Saunders. This was attended by 48 people with a further 59 people accessing the transcript and slides after the session.

Applications

206 people applied to take part in OV Backstage for 2024–25. Changes to the application form also meant high levels of eligibility in the applicant pool.

The most common ways that people heard about the programme included 29% via The Old Vic website, 19% via word of mouth and 17% from other organisations. This year we shared the opportunity with other backstage programmes where OV Backstage could act as a suitable next step for their participants. One of our cohort was referred by the Southbank Technical Academy which offers an entry level introduction to a broad range of backstage roles. This participant had the opportunity to try a variety of backstage specialisms at the Southbank Centre, and OV Backstage was the perfect opportunity for them to move forward with their main interest, lighting.

Applications were split across the following disciplines:



21 candidates were shortlisted for interview and six candidates were selected to take part in the programme. This year interviews were conducted by the Participation Coordinator and the relevant head of department for each discipline. Feedback from last year's programme indicated that the Technical team would like to have known more about the participants prior to them joining the team, so this was a great way to embed them in the process from the start, and meant all interviewees had a chance to meet industry professionals and ask questions.

‘I’m so grateful for this opportunity for all of the hard work and time that the team have put in. I have felt so welcomed and supported throughout and I’ve gained so much confidence. I really can’t express enough how appreciative I am to have been part of this year’s programme’

OV Backstage Participant



DELIVERY

Induction

The programme began with an induction week, allowing participants to get to know one another and project staff, as well as introducing them to The Old Vic and its programming. In previous years we have had a two-day induction, but this year with the scheduling, we were able to widen the scope, which gave us greater momentum at the start of the programme.

This included:

- Getting to know you activities
- Learning useful theatre terminology
- Introduction to theatre roles and departments and how they work together
- Health and safety induction
- Certified manual handling training with RB Health and Safety Solutions
- Backstage tour with Technical Services Director, Christian Wallace
- Introduction to the model box and production plans with Production Director, Dominic Fraser
- Introduction to sustainability and the Theatre Green Book with Deputy Production Manager, Madeleine Young
- Introduction to the rehearsal room and *Girl from the North Country* with Associate Director, Corey McMahon
- Watching *The Brightening Air*, giving participants an opportunity to see how the theatre is transformed from one production to the next.



Placement Shifts

Following the induction, participants were embedded in their relevant departments to shadow and take part in the production through the get out of *The Brightening Air*, get in of *Girl from the North Country*, fit up, rehearsals, technical rehearsals and previews. Please see below for a summary of activity from each discipline.

Costume and Wardrobe:

- Shadowing Head of Wardrobe, Fiona Lehman, Deputy Head of Wardrobe, Andy Keelan and multiple dressers and wardrobe assistants
- Costume fittings
- Wig and costume meetings
- Cataloguing, restoring and storage of *The Brightening Air* costumes
- Get in of *Girl from the North Country* costumes
- Laundry calls and ironing
- Lying out dressing rooms and preparing dresser tracks
- Costume track plotting
- Shopping trip to restock the costume stores
- Supporting quick changes.

Sound:

- Shadowing Head of Sound, James Percival, Production Sound, Sam Palmer, Sound No.1, Karen Lowe and Sound No. 2, Isabelle Buchanan
- *Girl from the North Country* get in
- Preparing the sound rack
- Speaker rigging and shadowing delay speakers being assigned
- Band seating and supporting band mic allocation
- Rig checks
- Covering part of the Sound No. 2 track during the show.

Set and Staging:

- Shadowing Head of Stage, Aran Morrison, the Stage team and Set Designer, Rae Smith
- Visit to the set build workshop
- *The Brightening Air* get out, including de-rigging flats and packing down furniture
- *Girl from the North Country* get in
- Helping to fit the stage floor and build stage masking
- Constructing stage flats
- Shadowing and operating the fly system
- Technical drawings masterclass.

Lighting:

- Shadowing Head of Sound, Andrew Stuttard, the Lighting team, Lighting Designer, Mark Henderson and Lighting Programmer, Sam Waddington
- *The Brightening Air* get out including de-rigging lights
- Prep work for *Girl from the North Country* including visit to LX prep at White Light, prepping and labelling cables
- *Girl from the North Country* get in including rigging lights
- Rig checks
- Constructing LX practicals
- Shadowing LX Operator, Sonny Tricky, and then operating the show.

Stage Management:

- Shadowing Company Stage Manager, Tamsin Withers, Deputy Stage Manager, Sophie Rubenstein, and Assistant Stage Manager, Emily Lawes
- Attending rehearsals and production meetings
- Rehearsal room get out, packaging and packing down props, loading and unloading the van
- *Girl from the North Country* get in
- Joining technical rehearsals
- Props management
- Covering part of the Assistant Stage Manager track
- Attending notes sessions
- Resetting on two show days.

OV Backstage Resource Pack

Participants were provided with the OV Backstage Resource Pack to compliment and scaffold their learning throughout the project. Created by previous OV Backstage Coordinator and freelance Stage Manager, EJ Saunders, it includes information on production processes and timelines, guides to roles in each of the OV Backstage disciplines, links to useful information, career guidance and resources, self-led learning and tasks for different stages of the production, and a glossary of theatre terminology. Following its introduction last year, we embedded it more in the programme and provided timely guidance on how to use it at different points of the production process.

Pastoral and Access Support

The OV Backstage team, consisting of Participation Manager, Charlotte Gaughan, Participation Coordinator, Suzie Carney and Project Coordinator, Micaëla Corcoran, provided tailored pastoral care and access support for participants. This included regular individual and group check ins, as well as opportunities to reflect on learning and confidence levels, to ensure participants didn't feel overwhelmed working in a large theatre building. At certain points in the programme, where multiple participants were on site, additional freelance stage managers were employed to ensure everyone had support and that health and safety procedures were being followed.

Support with travel costs were on offer to all participants who required it, to ensure that costs were not a barrier to participation. Four participants were provided with this support.

Masterclasses and Industry Visits

We arranged specific, skills-based masterclasses and trips to relevant industry sites for all participants to widen the scope of their learning. This also allowed them to meet a wider range of professionals with varying entry routes and career journeys.

These included:

- Autograph Sound visit
- Model-making masterclass with theatre designer SORCHA CORCORAN
- National Theatre Costume and Prop Hire visit
- Association of British Theatre Technicians Theatre Show.

Next Steps Workshop

The programme culminated in a Next Steps workshop to support participants to create goals and organise plans for their career journey after the programme. This included:

- A 'How to be a Freelancer' masterclass led by Old Vic Education Associate, Freyja Winterson, detailing the practical considerations of freelance work. This included how to generate and sustain work, wellbeing as a freelancer and how to navigate finances and tax returns
- The Opportunity for each participant to meet with two industry professionals relevant to their career progression. Guests were curated to fit with who would be most inspirational and beneficial for each person to meet
- A Goal reflection session where participants reflected on goals set at the start of the programme and setting of new goals for the future. They were encouraged to break goals down into manageable chunks, for one week, one month and one year post programme. To support accountability, goals set for one month were sent via post to individuals
- A CV session. During and after the session participants were encouraged to share their CVs with staff for feedback and suggestions.





PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

GENDER



IDENTITY

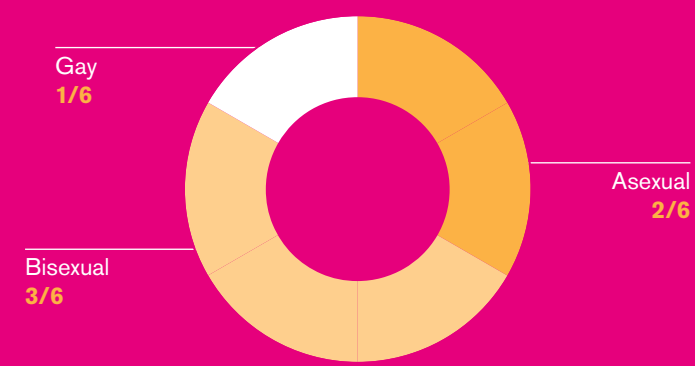
Do you identify as trans?



Is your gender identity the same as the sex you were assigned at birth?

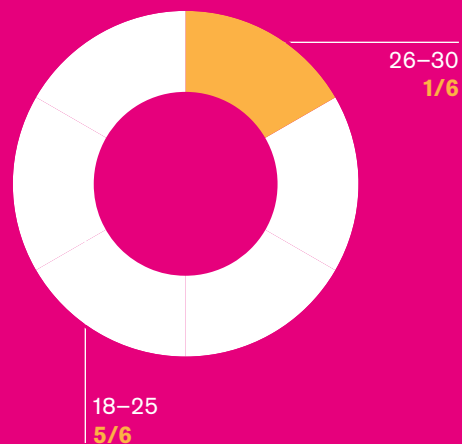


SEXUAL ORIENTATION

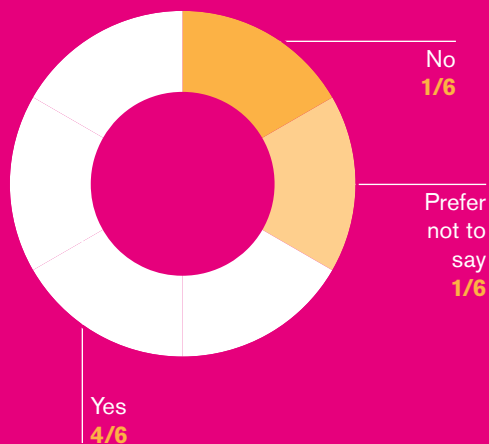


PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

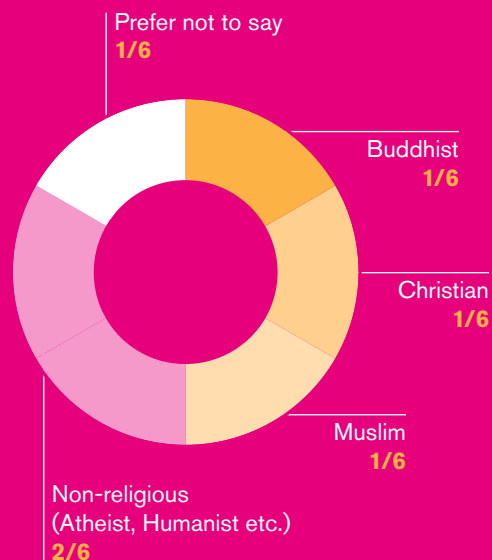
AGE



DISABILITY



RELIGION AND BELIEF



Of the participants who selected yes:
(able to select more than one response)

1/4 Learning, concentrating or remembering (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia)

1/4 Mental health (e.g. anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder)

3/4 Social or behavioural issues (e.g. neurodiverse conditions such as autism, attention deficit disorder or asperger's syndrome)

CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

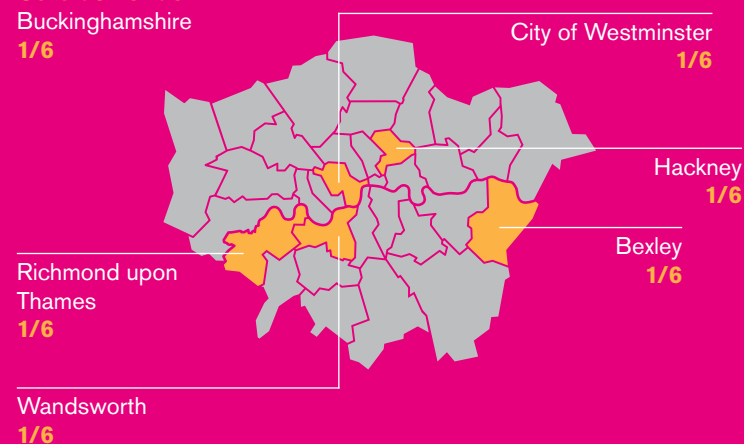
Do you have caring responsibilities?

6/6

No

BOROUGH/LOCAL AUTHORITY

Outside London
Buckinghamshire
1/6



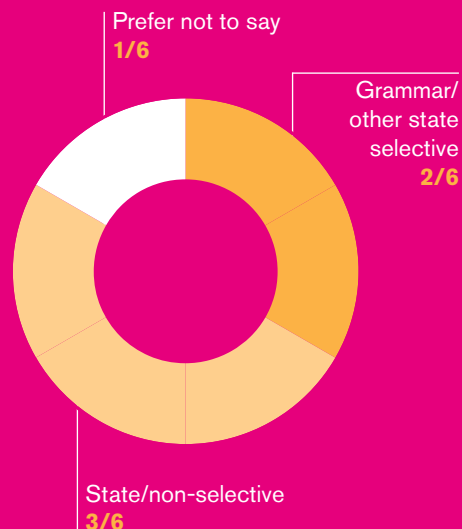
ETHNICITY

1/6	Arab
1/6	Asian or Asian British: Other
1/6	Asian or Asian British: Pakistani
1/6	Black or Black British: African
2/6	White: British, English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish

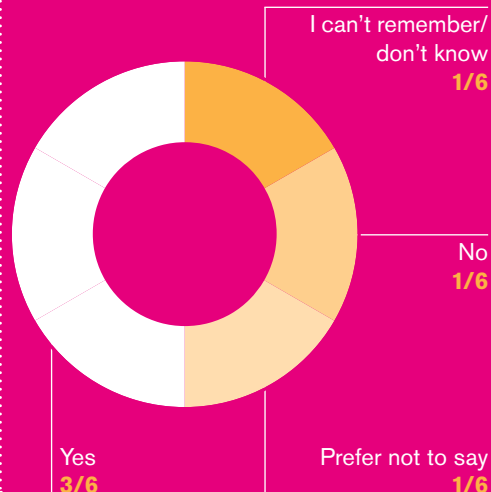
'Thank you so much for this opportunity I felt really held and seen by Charlotte, Ella and Suzie throughout the whole process. As someone who is neurodivergent and sometimes finds it hard to settle in new environments, I really appreciated that'

OV Backstage Participant

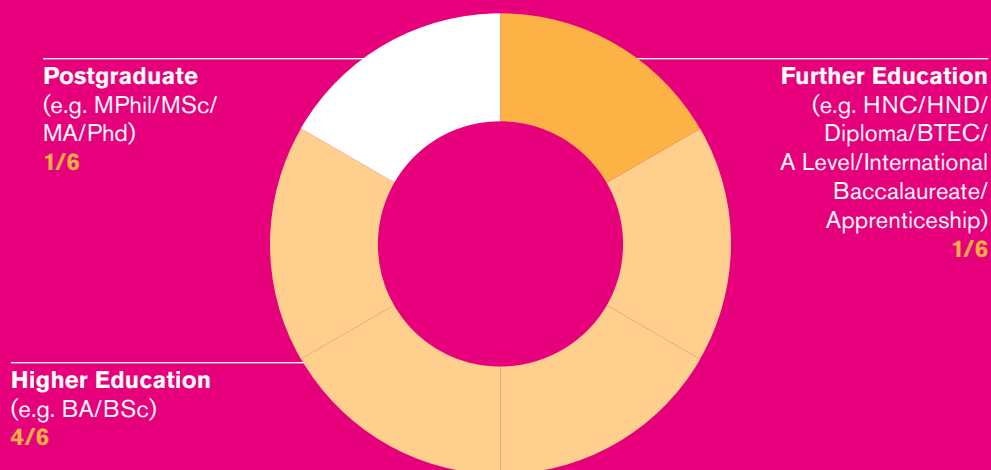
EDUCATION



FREE SCHOOL MEALS

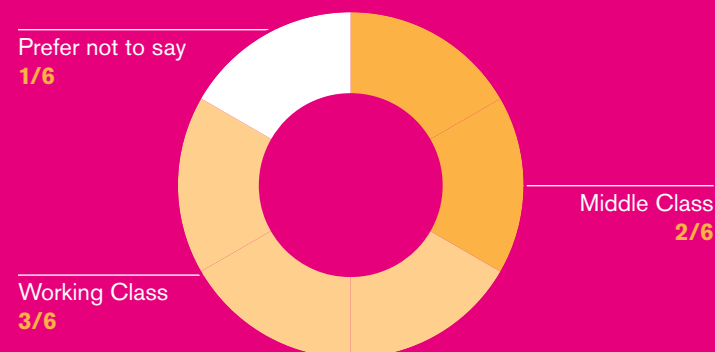


QUALIFICATIONS



SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

What do you feel best describes your socio-economic background?



What was the occupation of your main household earner when you were aged 14?

- 1/6 Senior, middle, junior managers or administrators** (e.g. finance manager, chief executive, large business owner, office manager, retail manager, bank manager, restaurant manager, warehouse manager)
- 1/6 Small business owners who employed fewer than 20 people** (e.g. corner shop owners, small plumbing companies, retail shop owner, single restaurant or cafe owner, taxi owner, garage owner)
- 1/6 Technical and craft occupations** (e.g. motor mechanic, plumber, printer, electrician, gardener, train driver)
- 2/6 Long-term unemployed** (claimed Jobseeker's Allowance or earlier unemployment benefit for more than a year)
- 1/6 Prefer not to say**

'Thank you for such an inclusive, warm and exciting journey!'

OV Backstage Participant

PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

ACCESS AND INCLUSION

Before the programme:

5/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they felt comfortable and welcome at The Old Vic

4/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they felt connected to The Old Vic.

After the programme:

6/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they felt comfortable and welcome at The Old Vic

6/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they felt connected to The Old Vic.

WELLBEING

Before the programme:

2/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they were generally confident in their own skills and abilities

3/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they cope well with rejection in a professional context.

After the programme:

6/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they were generally confident in their own skills and abilities

6/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they cope well with rejection in a professional context.

LIFE SKILLS

Before the programme:

5/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they had good problem-solving skills

5/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they were a good team player

2/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they felt confident about applying for work

3/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they were good at networking

4/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they had good communication skills.

After the programme:

6/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they had good problem-solving skills

6/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they were a good team player

6/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they felt confident about applying for work

6/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they were good at networking

6/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they had good communication skills.

PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

QUALITY AND IMPACT

6/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that:

As a result of this project, they felt more connected to a community

As a result of this project, they felt better connected to networks and know how to access opportunities that can help them pursue a career in the creative and cultural industries

As a result of this project, their confidence in themselves has improved

As a result of this project their theatre knowledge and skills are developing

As a result of this project, their employability skills are developing

As a result of engaging in this project, their mental health and wellbeing has improved

During this project they did something they didn't know they were capable of

The workshop leaders were excellent at creating a welcoming and inclusive environment

The workshop leaders adapted to their needs

Overall this project was excellent.

'OV Backstage has inspired me to keep going and not to limit myself. Set goals to gain my independence and happiness'

OV Backstage Participant

INDUSTRY SKILLS

Before the programme:

3/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they felt confident working in a theatre environment.

After the programme:

6/6

of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they felt confident working in a theatre environment.

ACTIVITY

Before the programme:



2/6

of participants went to the theatre at least once a month

After the programme:



3/6

of participants went to the theatre at least once a month



3/6

of participants went to museums, galleries, or another cultural/heritage venue at least once a month.



4/6

of participants went to museums, galleries, or another cultural/heritage venue at least once a month.

INDUSTRY AND DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC SKILLS

A key theme in the feedback related to development of both industry-wide and discipline-specific skills. Confidence in their own skills and abilities went from two out of six prior to the programme to six out of six after. 100% of participants agreed at the end of the programme that they feel confident working in a theatre environment, that they had good problem-solving skills, were good team players, good at networking and had good communication skills.

Participants mentioned generally feeling, *'more comfortable with the demands of a working theatre'* and being, *'at ease because I know I deserve to be there'*. All described developing skills specific to their specialism. One reflected, *'I've learned very practical skills like how to cover a track for sound. I've also learned how much working in theatre is about being reliable and friendly'* and another said, *'getting hands on and involved to upskill me in areas that increase my employability e.g. working with tools, manual handling, flies and networking with industry professionals'*. Another listed, *'networking, show call experience (quick changing, dressing, cue lights), best practice for laundry and maintenance, knowledge of sourcing and haberdasheries, experience of tech and dress rehearsals'* as concrete skills they will take away from the experience.

Participants also mentioned the scope and variety of the placement and the impact this had on skills development with one saying, *'the tailored approach and commitment to giving us a well-rounded experience. I really appreciate all of the opportunities to get involved with different stages of the production process as much as possible. I also appreciate the opportunity to focus on next steps and networking'*.

'The coordination that was given to making it as a well-rounded of an experience as possible. To have been involved from rehearsals to press night provided a really good understanding of the bigger picture, making me feel more confident in pursuing stage management as a career'

OV Backstage Participant

NEXT STEPS AND CAREER PATHWAYS

The evaluation highlighted that participants felt more confident on a range of aspects relating to their next steps and career pathway after the programme. Confidence in applying for work went from two out of six before the programme to six out of six afterwards. 100% of participants agreed that as a result of OV Backstage, they feel better connected to networks, know how to access opportunities that can help them pursue a career in the creative and cultural industries, and that their employability skills are developing.

One person reflected that they, *'feel clearer on what skills I have and feel more confident in explaining my experience and how it has strengthened those skills. I also feel clearer on the career path I would like to take'*. Another mentioned the increase in their knowledge of available roles saying, *'OV Backstage has inspired me to get involved in more aspects of backstage theatre and apply for a larger range of jobs e.g. stage management and tech swing roles'*.

Different aspects of the programme were credited with increasing confidence about and knowledge of next steps. Some mentioned the networking opportunities with one saying, *'my employability skills are redeveloping because I've had the opportunity to network with lots of people. I have also been able to practise and gain new experience which I could be paid for in future, like LX operating'*. While another said, *'getting advice from industry professionals has given me a clear idea of what my next steps could be'*.

Others mentioned the next steps workshop as being instrumental in their ongoing career journey, *'I have not only developed skills from actively working on stage and in the workshop but learning how to consolidate these for interviews and CVs in the next steps session was very helpful into how to present this to employers'*. Knowing that they could stay connected to the building after the programme formally through the OV Connect Network, our emerging theatre professionals alumni network providing additional opportunities, networking and workshops, and informally with project staff, was also important to participants with one saying, *'it has provided me with lots of experience and skills, tips and advice and resources. I feel supported if I ever need help for future vocations'*.

CONFIDENCE AND WELLBEING

Increases to wellbeing and confidence were another key impact of the programme. All participants said, as a result of OV Backstage, their mental health and wellbeing has increased and their confidence in themselves has improved.

For many of the group, increased confidence came from realising goals they had set for themselves at the start of the programme and from working outside of their comfort zones and succeeding. 100% of participants said they had achieved something they didn't know they were capable of. One person commented, *'I was able to work comfortably in a much larger team to what I was used to at my old place, which I was nervous about as I thought I would get overwhelmed and end up standing and watching, but I was able to get hands on and felt like I belonged in the building'*. Another commented on the legitimacy the experience gave them saying, *'this experience reinforced that this is something I am capable of doing'*.

Other likely reasons for this increase in confidence is participants' connection to a group of likeminded emerging theatre professionals with 100% saying that as a result of OV Backstage, they felt connected to a community. One person reflected, *'it has inspired me to properly reach out and connect with other emerging creatives and build community'*.

Finally, all participants agreed that the workshop leaders were excellent at creating a welcoming and inclusive environment and adapting to their needs with one noting that The Old Vic team provided, *'such an inclusive, warm and exciting journey'*.

'OV Backstage has inspired me to continue putting in effort towards achieving my goals. At times it can feel discouraging or like "grasping at straws" to enter the industry in that capacity with no experience. OV Backstage renewed my confidence'

OV Backstage Participant





BACKSTAGE

We are really excited for the opening of Backstage in Autumn 2025. This brand new, six-story building has been purpose built to become the new home of education and community work at The Old Vic with a variety of exciting new ways to support the next generation of emerging theatre professionals. This will include a new studio space, writers' room and script library. Having a dedicated space on site will allow us to bring all OV Backstage induction, next steps and group catch up sessions into the building and the new studio space will allow more opportunity for participants to practise and apply their skills.

INTRODUCTIONS AND INTEGRATION

All participants agreed that they felt comfortable, welcome and connected to The Old Vic but mentioned wanting, '*more time to meet the people in the theatre we were shadowing*' during the induction process and another would have liked an induction to the workshop before starting their shifts. This is something we will incorporate into the induction period next year. We will also ask participants to complete a 'Get to know me' document with information on how they best like to learn and any goals for the placement which can be shared with Old Vic staff.

LADDER TRAINING

Set and stage participants reflected that they would have liked to receive ladder training ahead of their placement to allow them to complete a wider variety of tasks and to aid future employment. Next year, funding allowing, we will endeavour to add this training opportunity to the induction.

'I have been consistently supported to grow skill sets across departments in theatre, keenly developing my adaptability, employability and professional horizons'

OV Backstage Participant

IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE

The Old Vic
The Cut, London SE1 8NB
0344 871 7628
oldvictheatre.com

The Old Vic Theatre Trust 2000 Charity No. 1072590
The Old Vic Endowment Trust Charity No. 1147946