



Papatango Theatre Company Ltd: Fundraising Policy

As of April 2024

Papatango Theatre Company Ltd was founded in 2007 and incorporated in 2010, becoming a registered charity in 2013. Our mission is to uncover and nurture brilliant playwrights who would otherwise struggle to access professional theatre; we provide completely free opportunities in playwriting across a range of sectors, from high-profile, critically acclaimed productions that reach around the world to developing provision for new writing in regional venues to grassroots training in state schools and local community centres. We receive more annual script submissions than the National Theatre, and are unique in giving feedback to all. Over 4000 people engage in our free playwriting initiatives each year, and our discoveries have gone on to win BAFTAs, OffWestEnd, RNT Foundation and Alfred Fagon awards, work with the RSC, BBC and other leading organisations, and premiere in over 20 countries.

Per year, we receive approximately £80,000 in Arts Council funding, £100,000 from trusts and foundations, and around £50,000 from the box office. As we grow, we anticipate an increasing need to fundraise through charitable donations from individuals and sponsorships as well as trusts and foundations. To help guarantee our ongoing success in championing new writers and rendering theatre accessible and equitable, we aim to maintain and expand a broad base of funding sources.

This policy clarifies the ethical principles that underpin our fundraising, outlines the methods by which these should be delivered, and ensures openness to all our stakeholders, artists and beneficiaries. It applies to all donations and sponsorship whether from individuals, businesses or trusts and foundations.

Responsible Fundraising

Papatango Theatre Company Ltd are committed to ensuring that fundraising is carried out in an ethical and responsible manner. This policy sets the standards of conduct which we expect from our representatives, including the board of trustees, all employees and contractors, and volunteers. It is supplemented by our Data Protection Policy and related procedures.

Our key principles of responsible fundraising are:

- We have honest relationships with our donors and sponsors; all communications are truthful and transparent
- All monies raised are used exclusively for the purposes specified in the appeal and in accordance with our stated mission and purpose
- Donors or sponsors support our values of accessibility, equality, and generating art; no relationship can be to the detriment of these values
- All fundraising initiatives reflect our values and do not compromise the reputational standing of either ourselves or our donors or sponsors
- We have consistent processes for deciding from whom we accept money
- We adhere to all Institute of Fundraising codes of practice to ensure best practice, transparency and accountability, and are governed by part II of the Charities Act 1992
- We follow all relevant laws and maintain a policy to ensure best practice in data protection, including GDPR compliance
- We seek to be as cost effective as possible, pursuing sustainable fundraising
- We will never promote campaigns that place a physical, mental or emotional obligation on any individual, or that pressure any of our participants, audiences, or artists to contribute
- We will never be part of conduit funding or channel funding for other organisations

Criteria for Acceptance or Avoidance

Papatango Theatre Company Ltd seeks to raise funds by active and effective means, recognising our duty to demonstrate to the Charity Commission that all fundraising is in the best interests of the charity. Association with any donor or sponsor must not carry reputational risk, compromise our work, or put future funding at risk.

While our impact on the new writing industry is profound, we remain a relatively small-scale company working in a niche area of the arts. As such, our appeal to any sponsor or donor with a toxic public reputation is relatively small; a relationship with us is unlikely to rehabilitate controversial brands. This policy therefore balances our duty to uphold high ethical standards with recognition that the motivations of our donors or sponsors will primarily be philanthropic and not a PR exercise. Nonetheless, we will at all times balance the benefits of a potential donation or sponsorship against the risks, asking: “are there any good reasons why we should not accept funding from this source?”

Reasons to review or conduct due diligence on a donation or sponsorship are:

- Where the source is known to have direct associations with criminal activity
- Where the source is known for direct involvement in activities which harm the environment
- Where the source is known for activities which directly harm individuals, at either the production or consumption stage; that is, the source directly provides products or an environment with which any interaction causes deleterious health effects, e.g. cigarettes, armaments (if harm is caused through an individual's excessive consumption or irresponsibility, e.g. fast food or alcohol, we will not regard that as invalidating the sponsor)
- Where the source is known for unethical employment practices such as breaching working hours, failing to pay minimum wage, or otherwise infringing employee rights
- Where the source has business or personal objectives or activities which conflict with our own
- Where a relationship with the source might compromise our values or work, lead to a loss of reputational standing, or otherwise risk a decline in the support or resources available to our work
- Where the source demands headline credit; donations or sponsorship should be made with integrity, from belief in our work, not for promotional or reputational gain

For the avoidance of doubt, Papatango Theatre Company Ltd will not accept financial support from or partnerships with organisations that:

- make armaments
- make fossil fuels
- make tobacco

There may be other industries and companies where serious issues will need to be considered and for these we will adopt a risk management approach. We consider the advantages to our mission of accepting donations against any possible risk to our ability to continue to serve our mission in the longer term.

We are particularly mindful of the following issues that may be linked to companies or individuals:

- Negative publicity that will significantly impact on our reputation
- Negative publicity that will significantly impact on our work
- A poor reputation for equal opportunities and diversity
- The promotion of gambling or risky behaviour around money

Due Diligence

The principles above should maintain an ethical fundraising practice. To further ensure that significant donors or sponsors do not carry any reputational damage or risks to Papatango Theatre Company Ltd, or otherwise contravene any of the criteria stated above, we will conduct a screening process for:

- any source proposing to make a contribution of over £10,000
- any source where any member of the board of trustees or an employee has raised a concern
- unsolicited funding offered at short notice or via an unknown third party
- funding offered in the form of a loan
- any source who asks for all or part of a donation to be returned at a later date
- funding offered for a specific project where the source insists that a particular third party is used as a partner or supplier on the project
- funding that has unusual or disproportionate conditions attached

Screening processes will be led by our board of trustees, who will:

- conduct a standardised search of publicly available material designed to highlight potential areas of controversy or concern through adverse news searches on Google (or a similar web search engine) and a registry check (both with Companies House data and reasonably available international registries)
- seek the advice and opinion of individuals who have knowledge of the specific funders and/or context in which they operate
- review the funder's stated activities in their publicity and materials
- review the funder's most recent published accounts and report

As a small organisation, the extent to which we can conduct in-depth investigation into any potential donor or sponsor is perforce limited; any sources of funding will be subject to ongoing evaluation in case new information relevant to our fundraising principles becomes available. At all times Papatango Theatre Company Ltd will distinguish between mere allegation or rumour or speculation on the one hand and confirmed fact or legal finding on the other, treating the former with caution although not disregarding the same if we consider that public perception carries a reputational risk irrespective of underlying truth.

Documenting Decisions

Any funding that is assessed through the above screening process must be documented, following this decision-making checklist:

1. Does the proposed course of action support our vision, mission and values?
2. Is it consistent with our policies?
3. Have we weighed the risks against the benefits?
4. Has the course of action been discussed to an appropriate extent across the organisation?
5. Have we done enough research?
6. Has our governing body been sufficiently involved in the decision-making process, so that it is fully informed and in a position to endorse a decision?
7. If we decide to proceed, do we have a clear articulation of why we are pursuing the course of action and have we logged the decision-making process?

Papatango Theatre Company Ltd will keep records of all decisions, research and screening processes for at least seven years after the funding relationship expires.

General Principles

Participation in a specific arrangement with a sponsor or donor does not in any way imply Papatango Theatre Company Ltd's approval or endorsement of any corporate policies, nor does it imply that we will advocate on behalf of any corporate entity. Papatango Theatre Company Ltd retains equal editorial control over any information produced as part of a sponsorship arrangement or where our logo displayed. In such cases, all materials in print, broadcast, or electronic media prepared must be approved by Papatango Theatre Company Ltd.

Reporting

Suspicious of criminal activity regarding any donation, grant, transfer of funds or contact with third parties should be reported to the board of trustees immediately.

Crisis Management

Crisis management procedures will take effect when an existing funder's situation may impact on Papatango Theatre Company Ltd's level of risk and increases it. In the event of a funder experiencing a crisis we will immediately complete another screening process and decision-making checklist, and make any additional updates. This will inform the appropriate decision of next steps, which may include termination of the relationship, as decided by the board of trustees. All action will be documented and kept on file for seven years.

Depending on the course of action, the board of trustees may want to consult:

- Stakeholders

- Partners
- Colleagues and/ or other organisations in the cultural sector
- Professional bodies (e.g. ITC, UK Theatre, Equity, ABO, Creative Industries Federation)
- Experts in other sectors (e.g. experts in business, finance, political advisors)
- Community groups (e.g. those that could be affected by, or who are referenced in a work)
- Audience
- Local Authority
- Police
- Lawyers
- Media and press (trusted representatives)

Sharing decision-making can help build a reputation for transparency, increasing understanding of our work and values. In turn, this can increase the likelihood of a diverse set of people lending support if and when needed, especially at any time of crisis management.

Complaints

In the case that we receive a complaint surrounding our fundraising practices the board of trustees will consider it directly. All complaints are taken seriously and, where possible, will be addressed on an individual basis directly with the complainant.

Transparency

Papatango Theatre Company Ltd will undertake to communicate this policy where appropriate to all its stakeholders including but not limited to the Arts Council, the staff and volunteers, the board of trustees, sponsors and donors, and the audiences, artists, and participants.

Conclusion

This fundraising policy is designed to ensure due diligence and an appropriately documented, fast and efficient process which can be undertaken in a manner conducive to fundraising which is effective, sustainable, and ethical.

Any staff, volunteers or stakeholders wishing for clarification on any point should contact Papatango Theatre Company Ltd's producer or the chair of the board of trustees:

Chris Foxon, producer, chris@papatango.co.uk

Stephanie Bain, trustee, stephaniebain631@gmail.com