



## Recruitment Pack for Technical Manager March 2022

Thank you for your interest in joining Polka.  
*"The place to be for children's theatre"* [ayoungertheatre.com](http://ayoungertheatre.com)



This recruitment pack is designed to tell you more about us, the job role you would be doing, the skills and experience you would bring to the role and the qualities and values we're looking for. It also explains how you can apply and the interview process.

If you have any feedback or questions about this recruitment pack or require it in a different format, please let us know. We can be contacted on 020 8543 4888 or email [ed@polkatheatre.com](mailto:ed@polkatheatre.com).

We look forward to receiving your application by **9am Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022.**

## Equal Opportunities

Polka's commitment as an equal opportunities employer means we are keen to encourage applications from people of colour, people across the gender spectrum and people who self-identify as disabled, who are underrepresented in our sector.

Our newly redeveloped venue is accessible for wheelchairs and prams/buggies; most spaces can be accessed step-free.

As a children's theatre we are generally open during the daytimes and weekends, rather than evenings, making us well suited to people who have families and/or other caring responsibilities outside of work.

As an important part of our local community in Wimbledon and the London borough of Merton, we are also well suited to people who live nearby and are looking to work locally, rather than travel into or through central London.





## About Polka

Polka is a pioneering national theatre for children based in Wimbledon, South West London. The first UK venue to be created exclusively for young audiences, we celebrated our 40th anniversary in 2019. We are one of just a handful of dedicated children's venues in the UK. Presenting a year-round programme of new work made at Polka, visiting shows, and Creative Learning activities for 0-12 year olds, we continue to pioneer developments in children's theatre, nurture artistic talent in the sector, and maintain an international reputation while serving local communities.

Polka is a charity and Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. Our mission is to empower children to navigate their world through inspirational theatre and creative experiences. Over 100,000 people visit us each year and a further 18,000+ take part in creative learning and community activities. We involve children at every stage of the creative process and lead the way in Early Years theatre for under 6s together with our academic collaborators and the EU-funded small size network.

Inclusivity is and always has been an integral part of the company's offer. In 2007, Polka pioneered relaxed performances for children on the autistic spectrum, a model which continues to be replicated across the cultural sector. We run a free ticketing scheme, enabling children from deprived areas to experience live theatre for the first time, and a range of initiatives that provide opportunities for children with particular access needs or who live in challenging circumstances to participate in our activities. We offer opportunities for all children and families regardless of age, ability, culture or background, to engage in theatre.

This is an exciting time to be joining Polka. Since opening our Wimbledon home in 1979, over 3.5 million children, parents, teachers and carers have been through our doors and we now have an opportunity to redevelop and reimagine Polka for future generations. Our redeveloped venue opened to the public in summer 2021.

For more information about Polka Theatre and our work, please visit [www.polkatheatre.com](http://www.polkatheatre.com)

Polka is funded by Arts Council England, London, registered charity number 256979.



## Vision and Values

Polka's mission is to 'empower children to navigate their world through inspirational theatre and creative experiences.' We are looking for people who are conscientious, proactive and reliable in their approach to work with a willingness to learn and ability to adapt to changes and share Polka's vision:

**Improving children's lives, bringing communities together, creating groundbreaking theatre.**

As well as our values:

**Child-centred** placing children at the heart of everything Polka does

**Community** engaging our diverse communities of children, families, educationalists and artists

**Excellent** pioneering, adventurous, offering the highest quality

**Memorable** creating magical, meaningful experiences

**Inclusive** welcoming, accessible, nurturing, supportive, representative.





## Job Description

This role is a full time, permanent role. As part of the interview process we're open to discussing flexible working patterns. Further details can be found in the 'Main Terms and Benefits' section below.

As a key member of the production department, you will manage all technical aspects of Polka's productions and events and provide the highest standards of technical support to all activities. This is a 'hands-on' role, working closely with Polka staff and the freelance creative teams who make all shows and events. With strong technical management skills, you will support the Head of Production to deliver our own productions, facilitate visiting companies, private hires and events, and drive commercial revenue through external hires of technical equipment. You will manage Polka's Theatre Technician as well as casual and freelance technicians and contractors.

Polka produces between 5 and 8 new in-house productions each year across its two theatre spaces. Around half of these are co-productions and partners have previously included Complicité, Little Angel Theatre, Royal and Derngate and The Royal Opera House. We undertake some touring and also receive companies to our Wimbledon home, although the majority of the year is presenting our home produced work. Having our own workshop means we build all our own sets as well as sets for other theatre companies. The production team also facilitate various projects (including education activities and community and fundraising events) which take place in other areas of the building or at other venues.

## Key Responsibilities

Your job description includes responsibility for:

### Productions and projects

- Ensure that all creative teams, visiting companies, artists and Polka staff teams feel welcome, engaged and supported in the building and receive the highest level of technical support available.
- Support creative teams and producers with technical needs during production development to achieve the highest possible standards within agreed budgets.
- In liaison with the Head of Production prepare plans and schedules for fitting up and rigging technical equipment, including rotas for freelancers, to ensure the smooth running of fit up, production weeks and get outs.
- Attend and contribute to production meetings as required.
- Attend and support rehearsals as required at the theatre and off-site venues.
- Contribute to preparing department and production budgets.

## **Technical operations and maintenance**

- Ensure the smooth operation of all public performances, creative learning projects, fundraising and development events as required within the building and off-site.
- Liaise with visiting companies to assess their technical needs and if/how they will work in Polka's spaces, and liaise internally to facilitate this .
- Provide technical support and information for hirers as requested by the Operations team.
- Draw and amend rig plans for Polka's in house and touring productions and for external users of the theatre as required.
- Recruit, supervise and train technical teams as required, including freelance, casual and visiting production staff.
- Manage Polka's part time Theatre Technician
- Manage all external hires of technical/theatre equipment.
- Maintain an inventory of technical equipment and manage the general upkeep and tidiness of stage areas including backstage, tech boxes, stage, lighting galleries and stores.
- Ensure all technical equipment, machinery, fixtures and fittings are well maintained, including management of PAT testing all Polka equipment, and overseeing the inspection of rigging and lifting equipment in accordance with LOLER regulations as required.
- Maintain and develop good relations with local and national suppliers, seeking economic and environmentally friendly deals for hires and equipment.
- Keep up to date with industry best practice and current technology and systems.

## **Health and Safety (H&S)**

- Ensure all H&S requirements are met at all times while working.
- Attend training as required and maintain awareness of H&S regulations specific to the spaces and equipment used, and all industry advice pertaining to safe working within Covid-19 guidelines.
- Ensure all potential hazards are made safe as soon as is practicably possible and all specialist electrical equipment is correctly shut down at the end of each working day.
- Support the Head of Production who is the Lead for the H&S Team, attending regular meetings and contributing to the H&S Team.
- Ensure the technical teams as required, including freelance, casual and visiting company production staff or volunteers, are fully briefed all on H&S procedures and schedules.
- Ensure external hires are fully briefed on the safe use of spaces.
- Produce risk assessments and method statements when required.

## General

- Contribute to the planning process of the theatre, raising well in advance pressure points and the need for additional resource.
- Attend and contribute to regular Company meetings and season review meetings.

## All team members are expected to

- Champion and honour Polka's vision and values (you can find these on the previous pages).
- Maintain confidentiality and abide by Polka's policies and procedures.
- Follow Health and Safety rules at work.
- Follow Safeguarding rules and legislation.
- Actively ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is part of Polka's culture.
- Contribute to Polka's Environmental Action plan by thinking and working sustainably.
- Contribute towards Polka's fundraising goals, this may include research, writing applications, advocacy and managing relationships.
- Take part in operational teams to help share learning, find joint solutions and drive change.
- Participate in all training, development and wellbeing initiatives as required.
- Undertake any other duties as may be reasonably required.



## Person Specification

The following skills, knowledge and experience are required to carry out this role. There are some which we have suggested are beneficial but not essential to have.

<b>Skills and knowledge required</b>	
<b>1</b>	Proven ability to organise projects and people (creating and implementing rotas). giving the attention required, within a set timeframe or by a deadline and within budget.
<b>2</b>	Proven ability to write and speak eloquently in order to negotiate with people both internally and externally and manage difficult conversations.
<b>3</b>	Ability to use: Microsoft Office (Outlook, Word, Excel), Qlab, Vectorworks or similar CAD package on a regular basis. Competence in show networking, including OSC and Midi.
<b>4</b>	Ability to work well in a team and independently, dealing with a diverse range of people at all levels using diplomacy, discretion and patience.
<b>5</b>	Proven knowledge of H&S legislation and procedures, including COSHH, LOLER, PAT and industry guidelines and safe working practices including ABTT and SOLT.
<b>6</b>	Full and clean driving license, and ability to drive a Luton van desirable.
<b>7</b>	Ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. work at height</li> <li>b. work quickly and accurately</li> <li>c. work flexible and sometimes unsociable hours</li> <li>d. use a wide range of portable power tools and hand tools safely and confidently.</li> </ul>
<b>Experience required</b>	
<b>8</b>	Significant experience working at a senior level in the technical department of a producing and receiving performing arts venue and overseeing technical needs of touring theatre
<b>9</b>	Proven experience of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. producing and interpreting scaled drawings</li> <li>b. writing risk assessments</li> <li>c. Qlab for sound and video, sound and projection set up experience, show networking</li> <li>d. plotting on ETC Eos family of consoles</li> <li>e. staging, rigging, lighting, sound, AV/video systems, budget management</li> <li>f. equipment maintenance.</li> </ul>
<b>10</b>	The following qualifications/certifications are beneficial but if you've not got them or they've lapsed Polka will arrange and pay for them: First aid, manual handling, ladder use, mansafe, plus relevant H&S courses to be agreed.





## Main Terms and Benefits

**Job title** Technical Manager

**Reporting to** Head of Production

**Responsible for** Theatre Technician, casual and freelance technicians, contractors

**Works closely with** Head of Operations, Building & Operations Manager, Workshop Manager

**Role** permanent, full time. We will consider applications for flexible working and job-sharing so please let us know your preference for this in your application.

**Salary** £30,000 per year.

**Hours** A full-time normal working week is 35 hours over 5 days Tuesday to Saturday (excluding 1 hour for lunch). This role requires a flexible approach to working hours and days which will include evenings and weekends (Polka is open to public Tuesday to Sunday). We operate a Time of In Lieu (TOIL) system for additional hours worked. As a children's theatre we are generally open during the daytimes and weekends, rather than evenings.

**Location** Polka Theatre at 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1SB.

**Holiday** 20 days per annum pro rata plus bank/public holidays.

### Pension and benefits

- After 3 months you will be automatically enrolled into NOW Pensions scheme in accordance with statutory deadlines and contributions.
- RISE health and wellbeing service (including face to face counselling).
- Complementary tickets for all Polka productions subject to availability.
- Discounts on main meals, tea and coffee in Polka's café.

**Probationary period** Appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of 3 months. Notice period during probation: 1 month for both you and Polka.

**Notice Period** 3 months for both you and Polka.

## Application Process

### Key Dates

**Deadline** 9.00am Monday 4 April 2022.

**Interview** week commencing 4 or 11 April 2022

**Ideal start date** as soon as possible.



### How to apply

Please complete and send the following to Adam Crosthwaite, Head of Production via email at [adam@polkatheatre.com](mailto:adam@polkatheatre.com) or post it to them at Polka Theatre, 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon SW19 1SB. Remember to include *Technical Manager* as your email subject line or on the envelope.

Document	Link to click on
Current CV	
Short cover letter addressing the Person Specification.	
If you would prefer, you are welcome to send us a short video or audio file (no longer than 5 mins), telling us about yourself, your current and previous job roles and any relevant qualifications and/or knowledge, skills and experience.	
Privacy Notice	Please download our <a href="#">privacy notice form</a>
Equality monitoring questionnaire	Please complete our <a href="#">Equality Monitoring survey</a>

The Equality monitoring questionnaire is not sent to the person named above. It helps us understand whether we are succeeding in promoting equality of opportunity and encouraging representation. It is completely separate from your application and we do not connect the two.

On completion of all the above documents by the deadline, we will acknowledge receipt of your application. We regret that late applications will not be considered.

You can find out more about us [on our website](#).

If you would like to discuss this role in more detail please call Adam Crosthwaite, Head of Production on 07785 931110 or email [adam@polkatheatre.com](mailto:adam@polkatheatre.com)

## Interview Process

Because of the nature of this role, we would like the interviews to take place in-person at Polka Theatre as this will give you an important chance to see the building you'll be working in. Zoom first-interviews are also a possibility if you prefer.

Interviews will be held with Adam Crosthwaite, Head of Production and another senior manager, during week commencing 4 or 11 April 2022.

If the interview is via Zoom, we will email you a meeting invite, which includes a link to the interview, in advance. We will let you know if there is anything in particular that we need you to prepare in advance.

All applicants will receive a response from us to confirm whether or not they have been selected for an interview. We aim to give at least half a weeks' notice ahead of the interview date.

All applicants who attend an interview will be offered feedback. It is not possible for us to give individual feedback if you have not been selected for an interview.

Thank you very much for your interest. We look forward to hearing from you.

