



Technical Manager Recruitment Pack Autumn 2022



Thank you for your interest in joining Polka

We are...*"The place to be for children's theatre"* ayoungertheatre.com and *"one of the best-equipped kids' theatres in the world"* Time Out.

This recruitment pack is designed to tell you more about us, the job role you would be doing, the skills and knowledge 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 ed@polkatheatre.com.

We are receiving rolling applications for this role – there is no specific deadline, and we will respond to all candidates within 2 weeks of application to let you know whether we would like to invite you to an interview. If you would like to have a chat about this role in more detail, please contact Adam Crosthwaite, Head of Production on adam@polkatheatre.com.

Working, Wellbeing and Learning at Polka

Polka's commitment as an equal opportunities employer means we are keen to encourage applications from people from the Global Majority, 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 a community rooted venue, we are also well suited to people who live nearby and are looking to work locally, rather than travel into or through central London. Our environment is important to us, and we have radically improved our building's sustainability, and our Green Team help to implement practical operational changes.

We want to help people achieve their potential while working at Polka. We prioritise our mental health and the culture of working at Polka by having regular team days to share and learn from each other, providing the opportunity to work flexibly (subject to the type of role) and a range of social events. We invest in our people through training opportunities which help us learn and understand more about working together. Recently this includes trans-awareness, equality, diversity and inclusion and mental health awareness.

You can find out more about the benefits of working at Polka under the 'Contract Terms and Benefits' section below.





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. Around 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 Culture Europe funded Mapping programme.

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. Our redeveloped venue opened to the public in summer 2021. 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 website (www.polkatheatre.com) gives you more information about us. We are funded by Arts Council England, London, registered charity number 256979.

What sort of people work with us?

We are looking for people who share our mission, vision and values through their work. As part of our team, you will be conscientious, proactive and reliable in your approach to work and a willingness to learn and adapt to changes. We support and champion each other. You don't need to have a degree, specialist arts qualification or years of experience to work with us. We will support you to fulfil your full potential in your role.

Mission empower children to navigate their world through inspirational theatre and creative experiences.

Vision Improving children's lives, bringing communities together, creating ground-breaking theatre.

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.



What do we need for this role?

This is the role for you, if you:

- Would like to work for a pioneering national theatre for children.
- Love working in a venue or theatre but would prefer mainly daytime hours.
- Are technical and hands-on.

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. You will work closely with Head of Operations and their team who look after the building.

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.





Contract Terms and Benefits

This role is permanent and full-time but we will also consider options around part-time or annualised hours for the right candidate. We will consider applications for flexible working and job-sharing so please let us know your preference for this in your application. It is normally based at Polka Theatre 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1SB.

Job title for this role is Technical Manager. Your manager will be the Head of Production. You will be responsible for the Theatre Technician as well as casual and freelance technicians and contractors.

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 - £32,000 per year depending on experience.

Hours a full-time normal working week is 35 hours over 5 days Monday to Friday (excluding 1 hour for lunch). This role requires a flexible approach to working hours and days which will include evenings and weekends, especially during production weeks and at other times depending on the organisation schedule. 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.

Holiday 20 days per year 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.
- Flexi-time – you can start work anytime between 9am and 10am and work the corresponding 8 hours (with one hour for lunch) within the needs of the organisation.
- Complementary tickets for all Polka productions subject to availability.
- Discounts on main meals, tea and coffee in Polka's café.
- Regular social activities and team days.

Probationary period your appointment is subject to satisfactorily completing a 3-month probation period. Your notice period during probation is 1 month for both you and Polka.

Notice Period 2 months for both you and Polka.

Job Description

Here are more details about the responsibilities for this role:

Productions and projects

- Make sure that all creative teams, visiting companies, artists and Polka staff 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.
- 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

- Make sure of all public performances, creative learning projects, fundraising and development events run smoothly 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 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.
- Make sure 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)

- Make sure 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.
- Make sure 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.
- Make sure 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.
- Make sure 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

In your application, please make sure you show us how you would bring the following skills, knowledge and experience, that we are looking, for to this role. We value the different experiences that people bring to a job role and will always look to provide opportunities for you to learn more about your job role and help you gain more experience working at Polka. There are some areas we have suggested are beneficial but not essential to have.

1. 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.
2. Proven ability to write and speak eloquently in order to negotiate with people both internally and externally and manage difficult conversations.
3. 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.
4. Ability to work well in a team and independently, dealing with a diverse range of people at all levels using diplomacy, discretion and patience.
5. Proven knowledge of H&S legislation and procedures, including COSHH, LOLER, PAT and industry guidelines and safe working practices including ABTT and SOLT.
6. Full and clean driving license, and ability to drive a Luton van is beneficial but not essential.

7. Ability to:
 - a. work at height
 - b. work quickly and accurately
 - c. work flexible and sometimes unsociable hours
 - d. use a wide range of portable power tools and hand tools safely and confidently.
8. Proven 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
9. Proven experience of:
 - a. producing and interpreting scaled drawings
 - b. writing risk assessments
 - c. Qlab for sound and video, sound and projection set up experience, show networking
 - d. plotting on ETC Eos family of consoles
 - e. staging, rigging, lighting, sound, AV/video systems, budget management
 - f. equipment maintenance.
10. 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.

How to apply

Deadline

Rolling – we will contact you within 2 weeks of applying if we would like to invite you to an interview.

Ideal start date

Late 2022/early 2023.



Please complete and send the following to Adam Crosthwaite, Head of Production via email at adam@polkathatre.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.

- Current CV and 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/or work experience, as well as your knowledge, skills and experience.



Please also complete/send us

- Privacy notice form – download it, as a Word document, from our [website](#).
- Complete our Equality Monitoring survey at [Equality Monitoring survey](#)

The Equality monitoring survey is anonymous and is not sent to the person who receives your application. 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.

Once you have sent us the documents above, we will let you know we have received your application.

Interview Process

We will shortlist the applicants we would like to meet for an interview. Our shortlisters will be looking for you to have done the following:

Sent us a completed application. Clearly shown us how you share our values and the things we've mentioned in the 'What sort of people work for us?' section above. Given us examples of how you meet the points in the 'Person Specification' section above. Given us relevant information about your work history/experience and any training (remember to make sure to tell us about any gaps when you weren't working). We will offer interviews to the applicants who have shown us these things most strongly.

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.

Interviews will be held, in person at Polka Theatre, with Adam Crosthwaite, Head of Production and another senior manager. Interviews can be arranged via Zoom if needed.

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.