



## Duty Technician Recruitment Pack January 2023

Thank you for your interest in joining Polka.  
*“one of the best-equipped kids’ theatres in the world”* Time Out



(Photo: Hufton+Crow)

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 tells you about our perks and benefits, for all employees and 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 the deadline of **Tuesday 28 February at 9am.**

## About Polka

Polka is a pioneering national theatre for children based in Wimbledon, the first UK venue created exclusively for young audiences. Opened in 1979, we are one of just a handful of dedicated children's venues in the UK. Since then over 3.5 million children, parents, teachers and carers have been through our doors. Following our £9m redevelopment in 2020/21 we now have an opportunity to reimagine Polka for future generations.

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.

Our website ([www.polkatheatre.com](http://www.polkatheatre.com)) gives you more information about us. We are funded by Arts Council England, London, registered charity number 256979.



*Image: In the Winter Wood – coproduction with Apples & Snakes (photo: The Other Richard)*

## 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.



Image: The YC Chan Play Den at Polka (Photo: Hufton+Crow)



## Perks and Benefits

We continually strive to make Polka an even greater place to work. We listen to feedback and conversations with staff at our team days. By doing this, we recently reviewed our perks and benefits package and are delighted to make enhancements and add new ones, which are:

- Flexi-time – after your first day, 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.
- Extra holiday – after 1+ year of service an extra day per year, up to 5 extra days.
- Volunteering days – up to 2 days off per leave year (pro rata).
- Sabbatical unpaid leave – after 3+ years service.
- Cycle to work scheme.
- Season ticket loans.
- Emergency small loan scheme for salaried and regular casual staff.
- Pension – after 3 months you will be automatically enrolled into NOW Pensions scheme in accordance with statutory deadlines and contributions.
- Additional pension – an additional 1% of employer pension contribution above statutory minimum after 1 year of service.
- Complementary tickets – for all Polka productions subject to availability.
- Polka's Café and shop – generous discounts.
- Local discounts on shopping, dining and entertainment through Love Wimbledon card membership.
- Leisure centre and spa – corporate discounted rate with local gym, swimming pool and spa around the corner from Polka.
- Discounted parking if you need to drive to work, subject to availability.
- Regular social activities and team days.



Image: Polka Youth Theatre, 2018 (Photo: Ali Wright)

## 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 have 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** To 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.



Image: *I'll Take you to Mrs Cole* – coproduction with Complicité (photo: Ali Wright)

## Job Description

**This role is full-time and is permanent, but we are open to discussing part-time options. Normal working days are Wednesday through Sunday inclusive, however this open for discussion.** Further details can be found in the 'Main Terms and Benefits' section below.

This is a 'hands-on' role, working closely with Polka staff and the freelance creative teams for shows and events. You will be the primary Duty Technician supporting the day to day running of the technical side of our shows. You will support the Technical Manager and work alongside casual and freelance technicians and contractors. Together, you deliver the technical aspects of our own productions and facilitate visiting companies and events. This could include working on the fit-ups during production weeks and get-outs at the end of the production or event as well as operating and programming lights, sound, video and flying or set pieces. It could also include carpentry and driving if you have the necessary skills.

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, Derby Theatre, 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 to:

### **Productions and projects (including activities and events)**

- Act as Duty Technician, ensuring the technical side of all productions are running smoothly and being on call in case of problems. Powering up and down shows and troubleshooting as necessary.
- Fitting up and rigging technical equipment.
- Installing scenery safely and efficiently.
- Operating and programming lights, sound, video and flying or set pieces.
- Acting as a driver between Polka Theatre and our off-site workshop to support the team with set building (if you have driving and carpentry skills).
- Ensure that all creative teams, visiting companies and artists feel welcome, engaged and supported in the building and receive the highest level of technical support available.
- Carry out work, required by members of the creative team and Head of Production, to achieve the highest possible standards within agreed budgets.
- Attend production meeting and rehearsals as required at the theatre and off-site venues.

### **Technical operations and maintenance**

- Provide technical support for hirers as requested by the Operations team
- Where required, support the Technical Manager and Head of Production:
  - with external hires of technical/theatre equipment
  - to 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
  - to ensure all technical equipment, machinery, fixtures and fittings are well maintained including PAT testing.
- Keep up to date with industry best practice and current technology and systems.

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

- Ensure you are briefed by the Technical Manager and Head of Production and understand all H&S procedures and schedules
- Ensure you meet all H&S requirements 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.

### 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.



Image: Plastic Drastic Fantastic, 2022 – coproduction with Akademi. (Photo: Brian Hartley)

## 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.

### Skills:

1. Proven ability to work on tasks within a set timeframe or by a deadline
2. Proven ability to write and speak eloquently in order to work with people both internally and externally
3. Ability to use Microsoft Office: Outlook, Word, Excel, Vectorworks or similar CAD package and QLab on a regular basis
4. Ability to work well in a team and independently with patience
5. Knowledge of H&S legislation and procedures, including COSHH, LOLER, PAT and industry guidelines and safe working practices including ABTT and SOLT, is beneficial but we will make sure you receive appropriate guidance and training
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
  - e. carry out carpentry work, in order to help with set building, is beneficial but not essential

### Experience:

8. Experience working in the technical department of both a producing and receiving performing arts or similar venue
9. Proven experience of:
  - a. plotting on ETC Eos family of consoles
  - b. staging, rigging, scenic, lighting, sound and AV/video systems
10. The following qualifications/certifications are beneficial but if you haven't got them or they have lapsed Polka will arrange and pay for them: First Aid, Manual Handling, ladder use, mansafe, IPAF harness training plus relevant H&S courses to be agreed.

You will be required to have a valid [Disclosure and Barring \(DBS\) certificate](#) or be willing to undergo an enhanced DBS check (at Polka's expense) if a job offer is



made subject to this being obtained. We are happy for this to happen through the sensitive applications route for transgender applicants, as described [here](#).

## **Contract Terms and Benefits**

**Job title** Duty Technician

**Reporting to** Technical Manager

**Role** Full time, permanent (although we are open to discussing part-time options)

**Salary** £26,000 for full time role.

**Hours** Your standard working are 35 hours per week excluding a lunch break of 1 hour, worked over 5 days Wednesday to Sunday, but we will need to change them on occasion by agreement to support the demands of the theatre's work. 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** 28 days per year including bank/public holidays.

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

**Notice Period** 2 months for both you and Polka.

## How to Apply

**Deadline** Tuesday 28 Feb 2023, 9am  
**Interview** to be agreed

**Ideal start date** 8 March 2023

We will let you know within two weeks whether we will be inviting you for interview.



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

- Current CV and short cover letter telling us how you meet 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 by visiting [Survey Monkey website](#).

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, by the deadline, we will let you know we have received your application.

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)