

**Date Approved:** 11 June 2018  
by Theatre Collection Management Committee (TCMC)

**Review Date:** Annually by TC Director

**Renewal Date:** 10 June 2023

# Contents

1. Executive Summary.....	3
2. Statement of Purpose .....	4
2.1 Mission Statement.....	4
2.2 Key Aims .....	4
3. Background .....	5
4. Forward Plan .....	6
5. Principles .....	7
5.1 Intellectual Access:.....	7
5.2 Researchers.....	7
5.3 The Research Environment.....	8
Appendix 1 IDEASpace Model.....	9
Appendix 2 Toe Dippers to Deep Sea Divers Model .....	10

**ARCHIVE**

**MUSEUM**

**RESEARCH**

# 1. Executive Summary

The Theatre Collection (TC) is an accredited museum and accredited archive service, based in an academic faculty in a research-intensive university. As such, enabling and encouraging research and scholarship remains our *raison d'être*. The collection is 'a resource for supporting academic activity: enabling and inspiring new research within and beyond the University of Bristol, enriching the student experience through collection-based teaching and learning, and facilitating impact and public engagement activities'. (Key Aim 3).

As a theatre collection our holdings directly and actively relate to the Cultural & Creative industries. We are uniquely placed to be used as a research resource for investigation and inspiration, which may have scholarly, creative and/or social outcomes (as encapsulated in the IDEASpace model (Key Aim 6). See also Appendix 1. This research activity will often have potential for impact and public engagement within and well beyond the University.

We encourage research of all types and at all levels, and aim to provide helpful, open and non-discriminatory support for all researchers, regardless of their level of research experience and research interests.

We are open to all, welcome all users and make no restriction on who may come in and carry out research based on our collections (with the exception of some age-related exceptions for some material held within the Live Art Archives)

We regard research with the Collection as part of a natural and deepening progression of learning and discovery, from initial encounters with exhibitions to in-depth academic research (See Appendix 2: 'Toe-dippers to Deep Sea Divers' Model).

## **Relationship with other policies and plans**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the TC Forward Plan (2016-19), TC Access and Learning Policy, TC Customer Care Policy and TC Exhibitions Programming Policy.

We also abide by the following University of Bristol Policies:

- Ethics of Research Policy and Procedure at [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/red/documents/research-governance/research\\_ethics\\_policy\\_v6\\_220515%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/red/documents/research-governance/research_ethics_policy_v6_220515%20FINAL.pdf)
- Research Governance and Integrity Policy at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/red/documents/research-governance/rqi.pdf>

And we comply with ethical codes of conduct in the sector including:

- Museum Association Code of Ethics  
<https://www.museumsassociation.org/download?id=1155827>
- Archives and Records Association Code of Ethics  
[http://www.archives.org.uk/images/ARA\\_Documents/ARA\\_Code\\_Of\\_Ethics.pdf](http://www.archives.org.uk/images/ARA_Documents/ARA_Code_Of_Ethics.pdf)

**ARCHIVE**

**MUSEUM**

**RESEARCH**

## 2. Statement of Purpose

### 2.1 Mission Statement

Our mission is to curate a world-class collection relating to the history of British theatre. We will enable the Collection to be used for education, research, innovation, enjoyment and inspiration by all those who wish to do so, locally, nationally and internationally. Working with academic and student users, the Cultural & Creative sector and the public, we will facilitate the generation of new scholarly, creative and social outcomes.

### 2.2 Key Aims

1. To curate a world class collection relating to the history of British theatre that provides a unique insight into theatre, the process of creating theatre and theatre's broader cultural contexts.
2. To collect, care for, conserve and catalogue the holdings, raise awareness of them and make them available to a wide range of users both within and beyond the University.
3. To use the Collection as a resource for supporting academic activity; enabling and inspiring new research within and beyond the University of Bristol, enriching student experience through collections-based teaching and learning and facilitating impact and public engagement activities.
4. To enable and encourage the public to engage with the Collection through a variety of methods which offer routes to deepening knowledge. This may be on-site (exhibitions, reading and viewing rooms, volunteering and other activities), off-site (co-curated exhibitions, loans and events) and online (website, social media and other digital platforms).
5. To work with the Cultural & Creative industries and act as a catalyst to develop, nurture and support partnerships, projects and outcomes based upon the Collection.
6. To enable the Collection to be used as a source for investigation and inspiration, which may have scholarly, creative, cultural and/or social outcomes (as encapsulated in the IDEASpace model).

**ARCHIVE**

**MUSEUM**

**RESEARCH**

### 3. Background

The Theatre Collection is based in an academic faculty in a Russell Group university, therefore facilitating research has always been at the heart of what we do. The Theatre Collection was established in 1951 as a teaching and research resource to ‘serve scholars and practitioners alike’ for the UK’s first ever Department of Drama (established 1947). It has been at the forefront of theatre research, including Practice as Research, ever since. The TC is now recognised as one of the most comprehensive research collections for the history of professional British theatre in the world. In 2013, following an Academic Review led by the Faculty of Arts, we became an independent unit within the Faculty of Arts, recognising that whilst the subject matter of the collection itself is professional British theatre (the definition of which covers a continuum from historic and ‘traditional’ theatre to contemporary performance and Live Art) the research potential is recognised as being ‘More than just theatre’. Since 2010 we have continuously received HEFCE Museums, Galleries and Collections Funding (with an uplift awarded in 2016) in recognition of the important contribution we make to research activity and the UK HE research infrastructure.

In order to respond to the changing research environment, we take a proactive approach to collecting. Our Collections Development Policy (CDP, 2016-2021), allows for the Collection to grow and respond to changing research agendas and support academic researchers needs. For example, in 2005/6 we acquired the Live Art Archives (transferred from Nottingham Trent University), which supported evolving academic priorities in the Drama Department and brought with it our first substantive AHRC Research Project. In 2008 Franko B donated his archive to us, which is now the subject of a Wellcome Trust Research Resources grant. In 2011 the Raymond Mander & Joe Mitchenson Collection, another collection of national significance, was transferred to the TC, prompting a significant rise in research and teaching activity within and beyond the University. Consideration of the increased opportunities for interdisciplinary research were key factors in the acquisition of the personal archive of Oliver Messel (2015) and the Women’s Playhouse Trust Archive (2015).

**ARCHIVE**

**MUSEUM**

**RESEARCH**

## 4. Forward Plan

Details of the Forward Plan are included here to reflect the integrated nature of research across all our activities.

Our Forward Plan (2016/17-2018/19) sets out our Statement of Purpose: Mission Statement and Key Aims and describes how we deliver these aims (see Forward Plan (2016/17-2018/19- section 7-9). All our objectives are linked to the overarching desire to increase accessibility and use of the collections for education, research, innovation, enjoyment and inspiration. Our ethos is grounded in the belief that there is a direct correlation between curating a world class collection, increasing its visibility and accessibility and releasing its research potential. This opens up opportunities for new research by individuals, project teams and partnerships.

Aim 2 of our Forward Plan (see 2.2. above) includes particular reference at Objective 2.5 to our intention to 'increase accessibility and visibility of our collections to researchers and the public onsite and, particularly online'.

Aim 3 of our Forward Plan focuses on research (see 2.2 above) with specific objectives relating to enhancing research:

- 3.1.1 Collection based scholarship and research at UoB
- 3.1.2. advance scholarly knowledge across the academic sector
- 3.1.3 We will build on and expand our international reach
- 3.1.4 We will reach out beyond the university sector and will lead and develop innovative practice for external benefit across the Cultural & Creative sectors.

The detail of how we are achieving these objectives and their associated action points can be found in the Forward Plan.

**ARCHIVE**

**MUSEUM**

**RESEARCH**

## 5. Principles

In addition to our Aims and Objectives, there are a series of overarching principles that we adhere to across our activities.

### 5.1 Intellectual Access:

- No charge is made for users who visit the TC for research. We make catalogued and uncatalogued material freely available on site to all researchers.
- We make users aware of our uncatalogued material through our web site and catalogue by identifying and describing all collections at collection level (minimum), regardless of whether they are yet fully catalogued.
- We share our data as widely as possible, via our website, through The National Archives online search engine *Discovery* and we plan to provide and share information on our holdings for the Archives Hub online resource, from 2018-19.

### 5.2 Researchers

- We aim to treat all researchers equally in terms of access to the collections and the TC facilities.
- We are open to all and make no restriction on who may carry out research based on our collections (with the exception of some age-related exceptions for some material held within the Live Art Archives which are limited for legal reasons).
- Information for visiting researchers is provided at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/theatre-collection/visit/>
- We encourage research of all types and at all levels, and aim to provide helpful, open and non-discriminatory support for all researchers, regardless of their level of research experience and research interests.
- TC staff knowledge and experience is shared openly with researchers in an advisory capacity (but we do not judge or seek to influence research outcomes)

**ARCHIVE**

**MUSEUM**

**RESEARCH**

- For researchers who are unable to visit in person we offer a remote enquiry service, with no charge being made for the first 30 minutes research. See <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/theatre-collection/services/enquiries-and-research/>

### 5.3 The Research Environment

- We work closely with our Academic Champion to promote use of the TC for research, teaching and learning within the University.
- We use the ‘Toe-dippers to Deep Sea Divers’ model (Appendix 2) to enable all users to have a deepening participation and engagement with our collections, and to support a research rich curriculum by encouraging collections and research outcomes to be used in teaching and learning activities.
- We support academic endeavour within the University and work with individual academics, Specialist Research Institutes (SRI), University Research Institutes (URI) and Centres to enable and facilitate individual and collaborative research, and other projects.
- We also support academic endeavour beyond the University which seeks to use the TC holdings for research, teaching and public engagement activities. These activities may be by individuals, groups, institutions or other collaborations.
- TC staff take an active role contributing to the archive and museum sector through conference papers, publications, talks and other events.
- TC staff take an active role supporting the academic sector and individual academic staff, through contributing to conferences, talks, tours and other events.
- TC staff support others from within, and beyond UoB, to develop research grants and other applications that relate to our holdings.
- TC staff work with partners (including researchers) to help deliver academic and other outcomes based on our holdings.
- TC staff proactively develop grant applications and projects (cataloguing, conservation, digitisation etc.) that enhance access to and use of our collections, including for research use.
- TC staff abide by the UoB Ethics of Research Policy and Procedure, Research Governance and Integrity Policy and comply with the Museum Association Code of Ethics and Archives and the Records Association Code of Ethics

**ARCHIVE**

**MUSEUM**

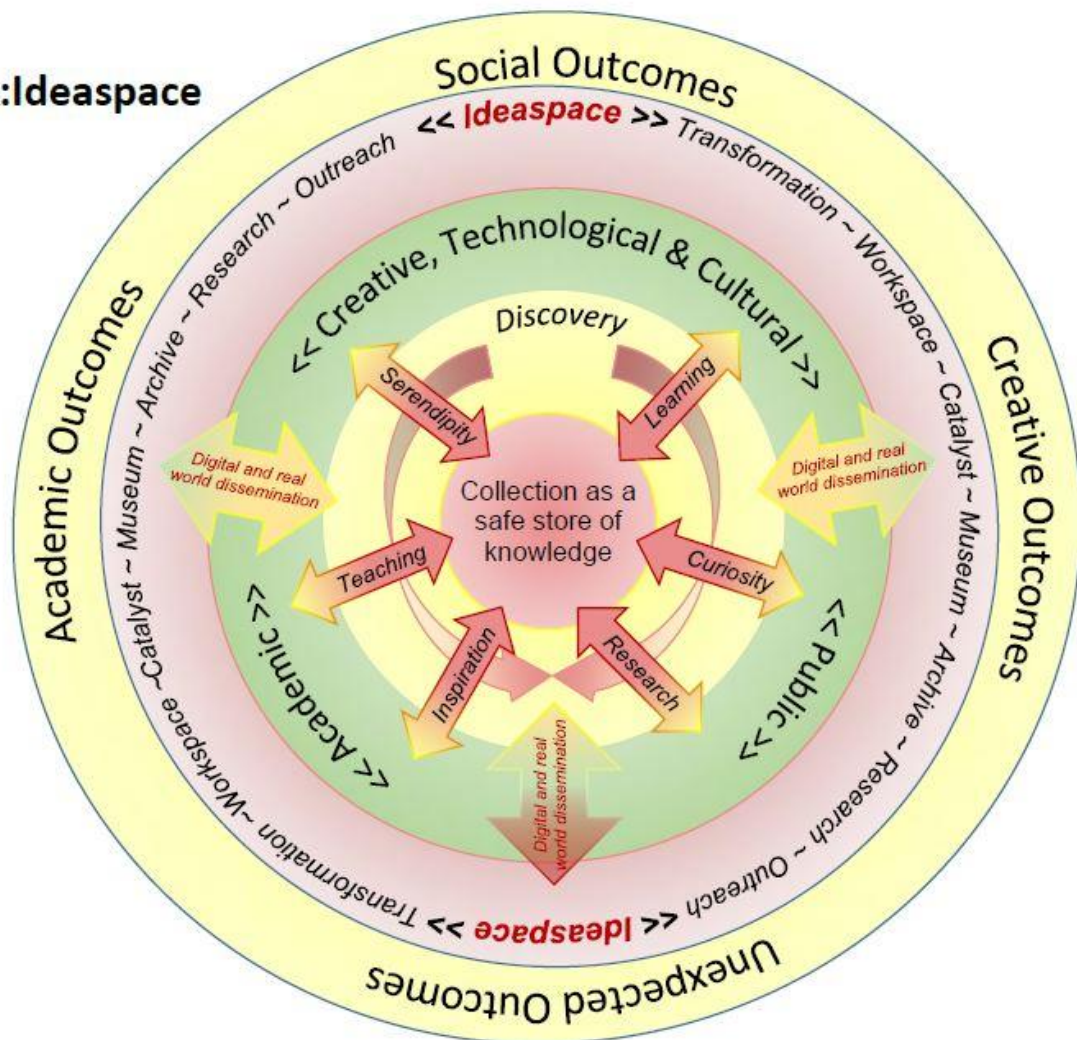
**RESEARCH**



# Appendix 1 IDEASpace Model

Theatre: IDEASpace is our unique model for an Inspiring, Dynamic and Engaging Arts Space. Our vision situates the Collection at the heart of academic activity (teaching, research) within and beyond the University. It allows the Collection – and the knowledge it contains – to be discovered through self-led learning, teaching, research and curiosity. It brings together the three user communities of Academic, Cultural & Creative (C&C) industries (including creative technologists) and Public, enabling each to engage with the Collection and with each other. It embeds us in the cultural life of the city and country, through partnerships with C&C organisations including, but not limited to, those whose collections we hold. It provides innovative, new routes to dissemination and public engagement on and through local and national partners. IDEASpace transforms the Collection: it becomes a catalyst for new scholarly, creative, cultural and social outcomes and facilitates/brokers new partnerships and other innovations

## Theatre:Ideaspace



**ARCHIVE**

**MUSEUM**

**RESEARCH**

# Appendix 2 Toe Dippers to Deep Sea Divers Model

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION V1.3

Cultural Collections: enabling a research-rich, innovative and inclusive educational experience

Deepening learning journey



ARCHIVE

MUSEUM

RESEARCH