

ACCESS & LEARNING POLICY

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1. Executive Summary

At the Theatre Collection (TC), access and learning are at the heart of what we do and are summarised in our Mission Statement and in the Key Aims of our Forward Plan (2016-19). These complement the University of Bristol *Vision and Strategy* document (2016), which emphasises ‘academic collaboration in both teaching and research’, ‘strong links with other world-leading research-intensive universities’ and ‘a close and synergistic relationship’ with the City of Bristol; the TC additionally and actively implements access and learning opportunities for the broader educational environment, citizen scholars and the Cultural & Creative industries in and beyond Bristol.

The IDEASpace model, developed at the TC in 2015 (See Appendix 1) has allowed us to rethink the Collection as a source of knowledge to be discovered through various means (learning, research, curiosity, teaching etc.) and as catalyst for new work. This new way of working has proved particularly effective, opening up new partnerships, new ways of engaging with people and expanding the reach of our collections through co-curated exhibitions and loans to other museums.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the TC Forward Plan, TC Statement of Purpose, and the following TC policy documents: Exhibition Programming Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Customer Care Policy, Workforce Handbook, Comments and Complaints Policy, and Social Media Policy.

In addition, the TC Access and Learning Policy has been revised in light of the following documents:

- Arts Council England *Great Art and Culture for Everyone* (2010-2020)
- University of Bristol *Our Vision. Our Strategy.* (2016)
- University of Bristol *University Education Strategy 2017-2023*
- Museums Association *Code of Ethics* (2015)

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2. Mission Statement and Key Aims

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).

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3. Terms of Reference

3.1 Access

The TC defines access as an activity that is made possible when physical, intellectual, cultural, financial and technological barriers are removed. Removal of these barriers enables all visitors both on-site and remote to engage with and respond fully to the TC collections. Access is considered in terms of both on-site and remote engagement with the collections.

3.2 Learning

The TC defines learning in terms of engagement with the collections. This may be made by a range of users, from academics to the citizen scholar and the cultural and creative industries. Engagement can be enabled via the online catalogue and social media provision, onsite and remote enquiries, object-based learning and the support of teaching provision in the University (and other educational establishments on request), project facilitation and the creation of exhibitions and events.

3.3 Physical Access

Physical access to the Theatre Collection and related facilities (e.g. entrances, public areas, accessible toilet and lift access to the library, reading rooms and main TC office) is provided in accordance with the Equality Act (2010). Clear and visible signage and orientation (including in Braille) is provided for the benefit of all visitors and staff and this is currently (2018) being improved and updated by the University Estates Department throughout the Vandyck Building.

3.4 Intellectual Access

Intellectual access is the process by which users can access information about the collections. This can be made available in hard copy (e.g. paper catalogues and box lists) or electronically via the online CALM catalogue, or Excel spreadsheets and box lists which can be provided on request.

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2. Access to the Collections

2.1 Overview

The TC is open to everyone: members of the general public, individual enthusiasts, students and academics from within and beyond the University of Bristol, family historians, citizen scholars, and more specialised researchers, although access to some materials within the live art archives may be restricted to those over the age of 18. The TC aims to provide a safe, comfortable and welcoming environment for all.

The TC recognises that different users require different levels of engagement with its holdings, which we endeavour to accommodate through our enquiry and request procedures and the provision of events and exhibitions on-site as well as loans to other local, national and international exhibitions.

The TC aims to respond to its users' requirements and expectations through a continual process of open dialogue, consultation and evaluation. To do so, it provides and advertises a range of methods for communication, including the provision of feedback forms at point of researcher registration (with a Feedback Box in the reading room), a feedback option on the TC website, Social media (Facebook and Twitter), one to one communication, TC core staff email addresses and contact telephone numbers on our website and a visitor book or equivalent (e.g. comments cards) for exhibitions. The comments and needs of all users are taken into account when preparing and presenting our collection information and interpretation both on-site and online. Any actions implemented as a result of feedback are notified to users as appropriate.

See also the TC Customer Care and Exhibition Programming Policy, which are available to view at the TC on request or online at

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/theatre-collection/about/policies/>

The TC also abides by the University of Bristol Health & Safety Policy and IT Security Policy.

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2.2 Intellectual Access:

- The TC has a searchable online catalogue at www.bristol.ac.uk/theatrecollectio.../search.html which is freely available to all both onsite and remotely. The TC has recently migrated the catalogue into Calm Collections Management System software and is in the process of implementing Calm View. This will provide an enhanced search facility and increase accessibility to online information about the collections.
- Printed catalogues and box lists are also available to researchers on request.
- The TC online catalogue includes digitised content, current c.3000 images, with ongoing plans to increase this number through externally funded projects such as the HLF funded Bristol Old Vic Heritage Project which will add another 10,000 images, all licenced under Creative Commons non-commercial use. We continue to develop our digital holdings.
- The AV resources of the National Review of Live Art (NRLA) from 1986-2010 have been digitised and 99% of the files are available to view as DVDs in the TC reading room or viewing room on request. Approximately 50% of the digitised files have been made available online to authorised users, with the permissions of the artists, as a direct result of the AHRC funded *Into the Future* project.
- The TC submits its accession data each year to The National Archives for inclusion in their online search engine *Discovery*.
- The TC plans to provide and share information on its holdings for the Archives Hub online resource, from 2018-19.

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2.3 Physical Access

2.3.1 Buildings

The TC holdings are split physically across two sites: Theatre Collection: Park Row (part of the Vandyck Building in the centre of Bristol) and the Theatre Collection: Langford Store, which is in Somerset.

Theatre Collection: Park Row is the primary site for user access, teaching, exhibitions and events. Maps and directions to the Theatre Collection: Park Row site can be found on the TC website at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/theatre-collection/visit/>.

The Theatre Collection: Langford Store is unstaffed, with TC staff working on site on average once a month.

2.3.2 Opening times for the TC: Park Row site

- From January 2018 the TC is closed on Mondays to allow for collections management work and open Tuesday-Friday 9.30am-5.00pm.
- The TC is closed on University closure days and occasional other days. These closures are kept to a minimum, publicised as appropriate, and detailed information is also made available on the TC website and social media.
- The TC is open at other times, including occasional evenings and weekends by special arrangement for example, for Friends' events, exhibition previews or public events. Consideration will always be given to out of hours' openings and/or other events to maximise the reach of exhibitions and displays.
- The TC endeavours to be open on at least one Saturday or Sunday per year to maximise publicity and impact. This may include days which are already on the cultural calendar e.g. Doors Open Day.

2.3.3 Access to holdings and protocols at the TC: Park Row site

- We aim to treat all researchers equally in terms of access to the collections and the TC facilities.
- No charge is made for users who visit the TC for research or learning activities, including exhibitions and events.
- We reserve the right to charge a fee for commercially arranged visits or tours.

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- The reading room is staffed at all times. The creation of an Archives Assistant post in 2012 ensures that that all users are welcomed to the TC and have a point of contact during their visit.
- Two reading rooms are available for researchers to access the TC holdings. The main reading room is a quiet study area, while the second reading room can be used as an additional teaching room or for group visits, volunteer or project work. Facilities in the main reading room include PCs, scanners and a light box (on request). Both reading rooms are within a wireless hotspot for the University. All users of the reading room PCs are bound by the University's Acceptable Use Policy, which is available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/infosec/documents/ISP-09.pdf> Audio-visual, audio and microfiche material held in the TC can be viewed in a separate secure, dedicated viewing room which caters for individuals and small groups.
- The TC has a reference library which is open to all. Most books and current journal issues are kept on open access. Journal back copies and items from the Rare Book Collection (pre-1900) are held in the store-rooms and are made available on request.
- Researchers are not required to book an appointment to use the reading rooms but are encouraged to contact the TC in advance of a visit to ensure availability of space, particularly during the teaching term.
- Visitors wishing to research items in the collections are encouraged to contact the TC in advance (in person, by email, letter or telephone) to order items. These can then be retrieved prior to the researcher's visit.
- No restrictions are placed on the number of items requested by a researcher. TC staff may advise researchers on the extent of individual items.
- Retrievals are generally made prior to a research visit but retrievals on demand may be made depending on staff availability. Researchers are advised at point of request if there will be a delay in the retrieval.
- The TC enables both catalogued and uncatalogued (i.e. non-documentation enriched) material to be viewed by researchers. The TC actively encourages potential users to discuss their research requirements with staff prior to a visit so that TC staff are able to fully advise users of the existence of uncatalogued material and make it available whenever possible. Very occasionally, a restriction may be made to protect particularly fragile or vulnerable items prior to their conservation or in order to comply with GDPR or DPA legislation. Due to the nature of some of the materials in the live art archive, access may be age restricted. TC staff always explain to researchers if these restrictions apply on requested material.
- External researchers are required to complete a Researcher Registration Form on their first visit, which has been updated to align with GDPR (2018). Researchers are expected to abide by the reading room rules (a copy of which is handed out with the Registration Form). These are designed to protect the collections whilst still providing

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maximum access to them. Handling procedures are also explained to them by the Archives Assistant/member of staff on duty in the reading room.

- Visitors to TC exhibitions and events are not required to complete registration forms.
- From June 2017, researchers are also given a form requesting feedback on their experience of visiting the TC. This form has been introduced to provide a greater level of formal feedback on the TC facilities, access and relationship of TC holdings to research outcomes. Following GDPR (2018) this information is provided anonymously, but the evidence can be used by the TC to inform e.g. funding applications.
- In order to comply with legislation and best practice for duty of care, the TC has a strict protocol on accessing any online challenging material, which has been developed following consultation with the UoB Secretary's Office, the University Ethics Committee, UoB Head of IT Services, UoB Head of IT Security and the UoB Director of Communications and Marketing. The protocol includes a 'Take Down Policy'. Further details of the policy and procedures are available on request.
- Where archive material is considered to be particularly challenging in its content and/or potentially hazardous (e.g. material from the Franko B Archive), consideration is always given to the most suitable form of access. In these cases, members of the TC staff will liaise closely with the individual researcher to balance accessibility of the archives with a duty of care.
- The TC has made considerable effort to create digital surrogates of some of the most vulnerable material in the collections, such as the NRLA Video Archive and lantern slides.
- The TC aims to provide a high standard of customer care in every aspect to all its users and stakeholders. We encourage feedback from visitors and we take great care to ensure that we provide all our services efficiently, courteously and to a high standard. Complaints are dealt with according to procedures detailed in the TC Customer Care Policy.

2.3.4 Remote enquiries

- If researchers are unable to visit the TC in person, TC staff can undertake research enquiries on their behalf. This service is provided free of charge for up to half an hour. Additional time spent on a remote enquiry will be charged at £12.50 per half hour. The researcher will be informed if the enquiry will necessitate a search longer than half an hour, and permission will be sought before charges are incurred.
- Payment for research services are made via the University of Bristol Theatre Collection online shop at <https://shop.bris.ac.uk/product-catalogue/faculty-of-arts/faculty-of-arts-other/university-of-bristol-theatre-collection-research-and-scanning-charges>

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- Freedom of Information enquiries are dealt with according to the University of Bristol FOI Policy. Procedures are outlined at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/foi/request/>

2.3.5 Reprographic services

2.3.5.1 Reprographic services: non-commercial

- Non-commercial is defined as for personal reference only.
- Researchers visiting the TC may take photographs (non-flash) of materials for personal reference only. University of Bristol staff and students are not charged. External researchers will be charged £3 per day for camera use and will be asked to complete a copyright declaration form.
- Researchers visiting the TC may use the scanner available in the reading room to create images for personal reference only. University of Bristol staff and students are not charged. External researchers will be charged £3 per day for use of the scanner and will be asked to complete a copyright declaration form.
- On-site and remote researchers may request for images to be scanned by TC staff, for personal reference only. The researcher will be asked to complete a copyright declaration form and a charge will be made of £3 for the first scan and 50 pence for each additional scan. If a large number of scans are required, that will entail the member of TC staff spending longer than half an hour scanning, then additional costs of £12.50 per half hour will be made. The researcher will be advised of any additional costs before the work is undertaken.

2.3.5.2 Reprographic services: commercial

- Commercial use is defined as any usage within the public sphere, including print and online publication and public dissemination, film and television, performance and installations, exhibitions and displays, websites, online blogs and all forms of social media.
- Commercial image requests are directed to the picture research agency ArenaPAL (enquiries@arenapal.com)
- Researchers taking, scanning or requesting images for personal use are always advised of the procedure involved should they wish to later use images for commercial purposes.

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2.3.6 Access to holdings and protocols at the TC: Langford site

- Researchers may request material from the Langford Store, which can then be retrieved by staff and made accessible in the reading room at the Theatre Collection: Park Row site. Provision may be made for additional off-site retrievals if a researcher's visit falls outside of the standard dates for staff visits to the Langford Store. In all cases, researchers are advised to request items well in advance of a visit, as resources and travel may influence retrieval times.
- For both the TC: Park Row and TC: Langford sites, if requested items are impractical to retrieve or unsuitable for production, an explanation will be given to the researcher and alternative access methods will be offered where possible, such as the provision of digital surrogates or, where practical, arranging for a researcher to visit the Langford Store. In such instances the researcher will be accompanied by TC staff. Such provision will be made on a case by case basis and discussed with the individual researcher.
- Image requests made for items stored at Langford are treated as remote enquiries and dealt with as 2.2.5.1 and 2.2.5.2.

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3. Learning

3.1 Public engagement

- The TC recognises the importance of learning opportunities for all, and constantly seeks to enable and encourage the public to engage with the TC through a variety of ways that offer routes to deepening knowledge.
- The TC stages regular on-site exhibitions, co-curated off-site exhibitions and the loan of items to other national and international museums and galleries. (See also the TC Exhibition Programming Policy.)
- The TC welcomes requests for visits and tours of the TC by groups of up to 12 people. Non-commercial visits and tours are provided free of charge and tailored to the interests of the group.
- The TC views partnerships and projects as opportunities to engage with external community and specialist interest groups and to target potential new users, especially among those currently under-represented. Such projects include the HLF-funded Bristol Old Vic Project: *Protecting and Sharing the Heritage of Britain's Oldest Theatre*, and the HLF-funded *Sharing the Messel Magic* project.
- The TC participates in national events such as Bristol Doors Open Day and Heritage Open Day, to encourage members of the public of all ages to visit the TC, find out more about its activities and see current and specially-curated displays and exhibitions.
- The TC has an active volunteer group. Members are of all ages and contribute to a range of short term and longer projects. Wherever possible, TC staff aim to respond to the particular interests of volunteers in allocating project work.
- The TC has an active Friends' Association with which it collaborates to host public events such as lectures and 'Collections Chats'.

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3.2 Student and Academic Staff Engagement

3.2.1 University of Bristol

- The TC aims to work with students and academics from all departments and faculties across the University of Bristol, although it currently works predominantly with departments in the Faculty of Arts.
- The TC seeks to support archive-based research activities, from Foundation Year to post-graduate students and academics at all stages of their careers. The TC is also actively involved in promoting its facilities to prospective students and their parents during open days and post-offer open days, whenever possible.
- TC staff work closely with academics in the Faculty of Arts to co-lead archive research and object-based learning sessions for taught undergraduate and postgraduate units. TC staff are also actively engaged in the planning of these sessions to ensure that the TC holdings can be used in the most effective way.
- First year Theatre Department single and joint honours students, and those embarking on specific archive-based units, are offered an introduction and tour of the TC as well as guidance on archive research skills and handling skills prior to beginning their course/unit. However, any student seeking to use the TC for unit-related or independent study is welcome to approach the TC for guidance on using the collections for their research.
- The University of Bristol Theatre Department has appointed an Academic Champion for the TC, who actively promotes the Collection as a teaching and research resource, across the University. From Autumn 2017 this role falls within the remit of the newly appointed Reader in the Theatre Department who will spend 20% of their time in advocacy and academic development work for the TC.

3.2.2 External HE and FE students

- The TC actively supports and encourages engagement by external HE and FE students with the Collection holdings and responds positively to requests for visits and workshops. TC staff work closely with external academics and teachers to facilitate and co-lead bespoke workshop sessions for regional sixth form colleges and other FE and HE institutions such as University of the West of England and the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.
- The TC is also actively engaged with University of Bristol initiatives such as IntoBristol, Access to Bristol, and the Sutton Trust Summer School and visiting Fulbright scholars, and works with the University's Widening Participation and International Office to provide bespoke workshops and tours of the TC.

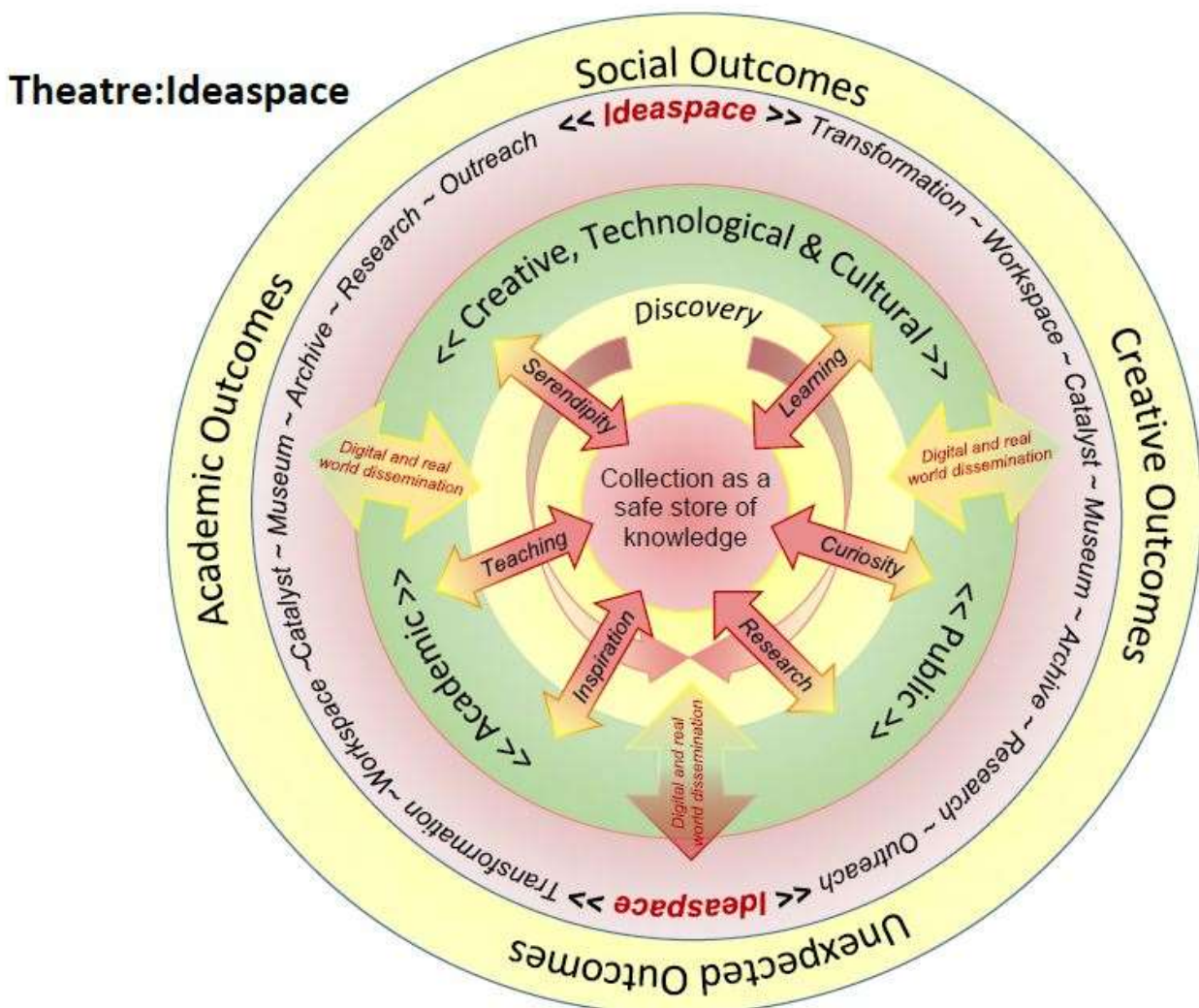
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Appendix 1 – Theatre: IDEASpace model

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



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