

**PRESS RELEASE 13 March 2020**

## **Theatres Trust commits to environmental sustainability**

**The national advisory public body for theatres launches its Environmental Principles and announces details of funding, in association with the Wolfson Foundation, for theatres to improve their environmental sustainability.**

### **Theatres Trust Environmental Principles**

Theatres, like all public buildings, have contributed to the climate and ecological emergency and the theatre sector must rapidly reduce the impact of its business on the environment.

For this reason the Theatres Trust is making five commitments to reshape its work and help to influence and improve the sector's sustainability.

Theatres Trust's Environmental Principles are:

1. Considering the environmental impact in all planning responses and advice provided
2. Supporting projects that are low impact and regenerative through its grants programmes
3. Working with partners to include environmental best practice in industry regulations
4. Disseminating case studies and knowledge to the industry from exemplar projects
5. Minimising the impact of Theatres Trust's own operations

Jon Morgan, Theatres Trust Director said: "As a socially engaged sector, the theatre industry has an obligation to do whatever it can to reduce the impact of its work on the environment. Theatres Trust has a vital role, ensuring that when we give guidance to any UK theatre or award grants, the environmental impact is a key consideration. We will challenge the need to develop where creative reuse or refurbishment are possible and encourage minimising of operational and embodied carbon."

More detail about the Theatres Trust Environmental Principles can be found on its website [theatrestrust.org.uk/environment](https://theatrestrust.org.uk/environment)

### **Funding for improving environmental sustainability, in association with the Wolfson Foundation**

Theatres Trust has already started to implement these principles and is delighted to announce details of the six theatres to receive funding through the **Theatre Improvement Scheme in association with the Wolfson Foundation**. More than £100,000 has been awarded to theatres to improve the sustainability of their buildings.

**Norwich Theatre Royal** will receive funding towards its Green Spaces project to install living walls and green roofing, a rainwater harvesting system and establish beehives. **Eden Court** in Inverness will improve its heating and ventilation (HVAC) system by installing modern, energy-efficient pumps.

**Eastern Angles**, the resident company at the Sir John Mills Theatre in Ipswich, and the **Unicorn** children's theatre in London will both install solar panels on their building roofs. Two arts centres, **Cast** in Doncaster and **Rich Mix** in London, will upgrade their lighting to low energy LED lights.

Paul Ramsbottom, Chief Executive of the Wolfson Foundation said: “We are delighted to be able to continue our work with Theatres Trust on this programme and to support the ambition of these six theatres from across the UK to improve the environmental sustainability of their buildings. This will have a direct economic impact and, in a wider sense, form part of civil society’s collective response to the climate crisis.”

As this round of funding attracted an unprecedented level of applications, demonstrating the clear demand from theatres, Theatres Trust and the Wolfson Foundation have agreed that improving environmental sustainability will be the theme for the next round of the Theatre Improvement Scheme.

Theatres can apply for grants of up to £20,000 towards their building or equipment as part of the scheme. It is hoped that these grants will support a range of projects that consider different ways theatre buildings can reduce their environmental impact and funding will be given to projects that demonstrate how a small intervention can have a big impact. Deadline for applications is noon on 14 September.

Further details can be found: [theatrust.org.uk/grants](https://theatrust.org.uk/grants)

**ENDS**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

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**Theatres Trust** is the national advisory public body for theatres. We believe that current and future generations should have access to good quality theatre buildings where they can be inspired by, and enjoy, live performance.

We champion the future of live performance by protecting and supporting excellent theatre buildings which meet the needs of their communities.

We do this by providing advice on the design, planning, development and sustainability of theatres, campaigning on behalf of theatres old and new and offering financial assistance through grants

[theatrust.org.uk](https://theatrust.org.uk)

**The Wolfson Foundation** is an independent charity that supports and promotes excellence in the fields of science and health, heritage, humanities and the arts. Education and research underpins all that we do. Founded in 1955, it has awarded over £900 million (£1.9 billion in real terms) to some 11,000 projects across the UK, all on the basis of expert peer review.

Wolfson Foundation has long been providing capital funding to the cultural sector, supporting museums and galleries, historic sites, educational institutions and performing arts organisations. The Foundation’s existing funding programme for the performing arts aims to support and promote excellence in the sector. Since the beginning of the 2017 Theatres Trust has been working with the Foundation to develop a scheme focusing on smaller, regional theatres,

complementing its existing funding programme and building on the knowledge and expertise of Theatres Trust. Our partnership continues with the **Theatres Improvement Scheme**.

[wolfson.org.uk/funding/funding-for-places/funding-for-performing-arts-organisations/](http://wolfson.org.uk/funding/funding-for-places/funding-for-performing-arts-organisations/)

## **More about the Theatre Improvement Scheme grant recipients**

### **Eastern Angles, Ipswich | £20,000**

Eastern Angles is resident at Ipswich's Sir John Mills Theatre, which sits within a listed former school dating from 1882. The regional touring company has used the theatre since 1988 for rehearsals and the presentation of its own shows, and to present a programme of touring productions. The company is expanding its operation further into the building. The Theatre Improvement Scheme, in association with the Wolfson Foundation, will contribute £20,000 towards Eastern Angles' project to install Solar PV panels on the roof of the building. The solar panels will power the theatre auditorium, rehearsal room and new spaces created from the expansion. This will reduce energy consumption and lower energy bills for the theatre company.

### **Rich Mix, London | £20,000**

Rich Mix is an independent arts centre, welcoming the communities of East London to create, share and enjoy culture. Rich Mix opened in 2006, converted from an old leather factory. The Theatre Improvement Scheme, in association with the Wolfson Foundation, will award £20,000 to Rich Mix to upgrade its Studio Theatre lighting rig. Low energy LED lights will replace halogen light fittings on the rig, significantly reducing Rich Mix's carbon footprint, and improving its lighting offer on shows in the Studio Theatre.

### **Norwich Theatre Royal, Norfolk | £19,750**

Norwich Theatre Royal was built in 1934 on the site of a 1768 theatre destroyed by fire. It works with world-class artists and companies to present a year-round programme of work characterised by high quality, variety and diversity. The Theatre Improvement Scheme, in association with the Wolfson Foundation, has awarded £19,750 towards Norwich Theatre Royal's Green Spaces project to install living walls and green roofing, a rainwater harvesting system and establish beehives. The project will create a greener built environment for its theatre-goers and improve the theatre's carbon footprint.

### **Unicorn, London | £19,089**

The Unicorn opened in 2005 in London as the UK's first theatre built for, and designed by, children. The Theatre Improvement Scheme, in association with the Wolfson Foundation, will award £19,089 to Unicorn to install Solar PV panels on its roof. The Unicorn has a five out of five star environmental rating with Julie's Bicycle, and the solar panels will help power the theatre spaces, reducing its energy consumption and lowering energy bills.

### **Eden Court, Inverness | £16,200**

Built in 1976, Eden Court in Inverness is considered one of the most significant post-war theatres in the UK. In 1997 the theatre was refurbished and extended and became the largest multi-arts centre in Scotland. The Theatre Improvement Scheme, in association with the Wolfson Foundation, has awarded Eden Court £16,200 to improve its heating and ventilation (HVAC) system by installing modern, energy-efficient pumps. The new pumps will reduce the theatre's energy consumption and lower energy bills.

**Cast, Doncaster | £11,544**

Cast in Doncaster is a purpose-built arts centre that opened in 2013. The Theatre Improvement Scheme, in association with the Wolfson Foundation, will award £11,544 to Cast to replace its existing fluorescent and incandescent general and theatre lighting with low energy LED lights. The upgrade will lower the theatre's energy bills and reduce its carbon footprint.