



Theatres Trust awards £124,000 to help seven more theatres improve their sustainability

Through its partnership with the Wolfson Foundation, Theatres Trust is awarding grants totalling c.£124,000 to seven theatres across the UK for vital environmental sustainability projects, as theatres around the country respond to the climate crisis and seek to make sustainable improvements to their buildings. There was an unprecedented level of demand for the Theatre Improvement Scheme, with Theatres Trust, the national advisory body for theatres, receiving more applications for this round than for any other funding programme it has run.

Among the successful projects is Grade II* listed **Leeds Grand Theatre**, where calculations have shown that changing the taps, toilet flushes and shower valves will result in significant water savings of up to 50%. **New Diorama Theatre** in London will receive funding for a small but significant project that reflects its ethos as a collaborative space supporting artists and companies at the start of their careers. LED stage lighting will offer designers the opportunity to develop their skills with state-of-the-art equipment, while newly created storage and workshop spaces, built with up to 90% re-homed wood and fittings, will enable materials to be shared and re-used more effectively while introducing best practice of reusing materials to the next theatre-making generation.

Solar panels and energy-efficient lighting continue to be popular projects, with theatres recognising the impact these measures have on improving their sustainability. **The Garage**, a performing arts hub for young people in Norwich, is receiving funding towards a project to install solar panels and LEDs, which will reduce the venue's lighting energy use by up to 80% and save money over time. Lighting will also be updated to energy-efficient LEDs at the **Old Fire Station** in Oxford and at the **Tyne Theatre & Opera House** in Newcastle upon Tyne, where the improvements are expected to save

41,000 tonnes of carbon a year. **An Lantair** in Stornoway is one of the largest arts developments in the Highlands and Islands and will install solar panels on the roof and storage batteries in the basement, with the aim of being able to make shows from 100% renewables in the next two to three years. **Cast** in Doncaster is being funded for the first phase of its solar energy and battery storage project, which will allow the theatre to reduce its grid usage by 6.5%.

Jon Morgan, Director at Theatres Trust says, “We are delighted to support seven more theatres in their bids to be more sustainable, with the projects funded demonstrating the range of ways that theatres can make a difference. This grants scheme, along with our ongoing work on the Theatre Green Book, is part of our overall mission to make theatres more sustainable. The fact that we received a record number of applications shows the urgent need for funding for sustainability improvements, and we are grateful to the Wolfson Foundation for its ongoing support.”

Paul Ramsbottom, Chief Executive of the Wolfson Foundation says, “At this time of high energy costs, we know that improving the environmental and financial sustainability of buildings has renewed urgency for the sector. These seven projects are excellent examples of the practical changes organisations can make. We are very pleased to be working in partnership again with Theatres Trust on this programme to support the response to the challenges of the climate crisis.”

These awards are made in partnership with the Wolfson Foundation, which renewed its funding for the Theatre Improvement Scheme in 2021 for a further three years. The next round of the Theatre Improvement Scheme is now open for applications, with £115,000 to be awarded in grants of up to £20,000 for projects to improve theatres’ sustainability. The deadline for applications is 5th September 2023. Further details on the scheme can be found at: theatrust.org.uk/how-we-help/grants-funding/theatre-improvement-scheme.

Notes to Editors

Title	Theatres Trust
Website	theatrust.org.uk
Twitter	@TheatresTrust
Photo	Leeds Grand Theatre

Theatre Improvement Scheme grant recipients

An Lanntair, Stornoway - £20,000

Opening in 2005, An Lanntair is a multi-arts venue and hub for creativity located in the Outer Hebrides. It is one of the largest ever arts developments in the Highlands and Islands. The grant will fund solar panels on the roof and 15 kw lithium storage batteries in the basement. Together this will cover general energy usage during the daytime and most of the consumption during the peak evening period too. As the venue switches over to LED theatre lighting, its aspiration is to be running shows from 100% renewables within two to three years.

Cast, Doncaster - £20,000

Cast in Doncaster is a purpose-built arts centre that opened in 2013. A green audit of the building identified a number of energy-saving projects, including the installation of solar panels and battery storage. This grant will fund the first phase of this project, installing an initial array of solar panels, with the array being expanded and batteries installed in the future as funding allows. This investment will reduce Cast's energy from the grid by around 6.5% with some selling back of energy created.

The Garage, Norwich - £20,000

Based in a modern conversion of a 1930s coachworks, The Garage is a theatre and performing arts hub focused on combatting social exclusion and raising aspirations amongst young people. Taking advantage of its large flat roof, a solar array will be installed, producing 23,500kWh of energy, while inside 70 LED fixtures will be installed, reducing lighting energy consumption by 80%. Overall, this will save the equivalent in CO2 of removing 3.5 cars from the road or planting 94 trees. The Theatre Improvement Scheme grant will part-fund the project, with match funding for the remainder already secured.

Leeds Grand Theatre & Opera House - £19,922

Grade II* listed Leeds Grand is a number 1 touring venue as well as home to Opera North and Northern Ballet. This grant will part-fund a project to reduce the theatre's water usage. Detailed research has indicated that replacing sink taps, toilet flushing mechanisms, and shower valves will reduce the theatre's water consumption by an estimated 50%.

New Diorama Theatre, London - £7,175

Since opening in 2010, New Diorama has become recognised as a world-leading home for independent ensemble and devised theatre-making practice, a critical part of the UK's artist development ecology, and a beloved local venue. With match-funding from Arts Council England, this grant will deliver a two-part project to reduce the theatre's

environmental impact. Electricity usage will be reduced as lighting stock is replaced with new energy-efficient LEDs. This will be coupled with a scheme to convert unused space into new storage and shared workshop spaces for early-career designers and production teams, embedding best practice in material sharing and reuse across a new generation of theatre makers. These facilities will be built using 90% re-homed wood and fittings, including from New Diorama's temporary space at NDT Broadgate.

Old Fire Station, Oxford – £17,030

The Old Fire Station is a centre for creativity in Oxford, housing two organisations, Arts at the Old Fire Station (AOFS) and the homelessness charity Crisis. This grant will allow the theatre to upgrade to energy-efficient LED lighting, including updating the lighting rig and the equipment used for external events. AOFS will promote environmental sustainability to the artists and companies that use the building, sharing knowledge on how to use LEDs effectively.

Tyne Theatre & Opera House, Newcastle upon Tyne - £19,891

Newcastle upon Tyne's Tyne Theatre & Opera House is one of only nine Grade I listed theatres in England. This grant will fund the first phase of the project to replace the stage and front-of-house lighting with energy-efficient LEDs. The expected impact of the grant has been measured as saving 41,306kg (41 tonnes) of carbon per year.

Theatres Trust

Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. They believe that current and future generations should have access to good quality theatre buildings where they can be inspired by, and enjoy, live performance. They champion the future of live performance by protecting and supporting excellent theatre buildings which meet the needs of their communities. They 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.

Theatres Trust is a founding partner, along with Buro Happold and ABTT, of the Theatre Green Book project, a sector-wide initiative led by Renew Culture, to create clear, practical guidance and a shared standard for environmentally responsible theatre.

The Wolfson Foundation

The Wolfson Foundation is an independent charity with a focus on research and education. Its aim is to support civil society by investing in excellent projects in science, health, heritage, humanities and arts. Since it was established in 1955, some £1bn (£2bn in real terms) has been awarded to more than 12,000 projects throughout the UK, all on the basis of expert review. Funding for the Theatre Improvement Scheme is part

of a wider investment in the cultural sector, supporting museums and galleries, historic sites, educational institutions as well as performing arts organisations.

wolfson.org.uk @wolfsonfdn

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