



# GREAT BRITISH **THEATRES** AWARDS

## **Theatres Trust launches inaugural Great British Theatres Awards to mark its 50th anniversary**

**Monday 2 November 2026**

**Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, London, SW1H 9NH**

To celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Theatres Trust has launched the inaugural Great British Theatres Awards - a nationwide spotlight on the buildings and spaces where extraordinary performance comes to life and communities gather to connect.

Theatres play a vital role in the UK's cultural life. They are places where stories are shared and creativity flourishes; they bring communities together, support regeneration and placemaking and contribute significantly to local and national economies. While many awards rightly celebrate the talented people who bring theatre and performance to life, the Great British Theatres Awards are about something different: the spaces themselves - the buildings where the magic happens.

The awards shine a light on theatres across the country, offering a unique and exciting celebration of the theatre industry.

Joshua McTaggart, CEO of Theatres Trust, comments, "In our 50<sup>th</sup> year, it feels vital to bring the sector together to champion the places and spaces where theatre happens. From grassroots community venues to landmark new builds, our theatres are more than just auditoriums, they are civic landmarks, cultural engines, and the beating heart of communities across the country. This is our moment to recognise them with pride."

The Great British Theatres Awards will recognise excellence across 10 open award categories, alongside two Judges' Awards. Public nominations are welcomed and theatre owners, theatre operators, local authorities, architects and theatre consultants are encouraged to make a nomination for a theatre they think deserves recognition in one, or more, of the categories.

The 10 Open Categories are:

- **Great New Build** - Awarded to a newly built theatre or a new extension to an existing theatre. Open to projects completed in the past 5 years.
- **Great Renovation** - Awarded to a theatre retrofit or refurbishment project, which has adapted an existing theatre to meet the needs of modern and future audiences and performances. Open to projects completed in the past 5 years.
- **Great Amateur Theatre** - Awarded to an amateur theatre that's making great use of its building. Open to amateur theatres that have carried out refurbishment projects in the past 5 years.
- **Great Found Space** - Awarded to a live performance venue created in a found or repurposed space, rather than a traditional or purpose-built theatre. Open to venues that have opened or been repurposed in the past 5 years.
- **Great Community Connection** - Awarded to a theatre that is going above and beyond to open its doors and offer a warm welcome to everyone, whether that's through adaptation to its building, programming or outreach work.
- **Great Use of Space** - Awarded to a theatre making innovative or unconventional use of a space or spaces in a theatre building. It could be temporary or permanent, on a grand scale or a just a small corner used imaginatively.
- **Great Placemaking Partner** - Awarded to a local authority that truly values culture and is investing in cultural infrastructure to meaningfully benefit its local community.
- **Great Green Theatre** - Awarded to a theatre that has put environmental sustainability at the heart of the building, whether through changes to the theatre itself, its operations or its performances.
- **Great Public Space** - Awarded to a theatre with a space beyond the auditorium that is well-loved and well used by the community or a specific user group.
- **Great British Theatres Shining Star** - Awarded to an individual or a group of individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to create, save or adapt a theatre building for the community.

In addition to the ten public categories, the panel of expert judges will crown one theatre as the Great British Theatre 2026. This will be awarded to one building that best exemplifies the spirit of the Great British Theatres Awards.

The judges will also present the Great British Theatres Lifetime Achievement Award, recognising exceptional long-term contribution to theatre buildings and cultural infrastructure.

Entries will open on Thursday 16 April via Theatres Trust's website. The online application process will consist of a 500-word statement accompanied by a PDF of supporting materials. The deadline for applications is 5pm on Thursday 11 June.

The shortlist of nominees will be announced in September, when tickets for the awards ceremony will go on sale. The inaugural Great British Theatres Awards will take place on 2 November at Central Hall Westminster.

The Great British Theatres Awards form a centrepiece of Theatres Trust's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, celebrating five decades of protecting and championing the UK's theatre buildings and looking ahead to the next generation of spaces.

## Notes to Editors

Title	Great British Theatres Awards
Date	Monday 2 November 2026
Location	Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, London, SW1H 9NH
Applications open	Thursday 16 April 2026
Applications close	Thursday 11 June 2026, 5pm
Website	
Twitter / X	@TheatresTrust
BlueSky	@TheatresTrust
Facebook	Theatres Trust
Instagram	@theatrestrust

## **Theatres Trust**

Theatres Trust is the national advice and advocacy body for the UK's theatres supporting all forms of theatres, whether old or new, commercial, subsidised or community-run.

We protect theatres and champion the future of live performance by advising and supporting our nation's theatres to develop best practice in design and management following the four principles of resilience, environmental sustainability, inclusivity and placemaking.

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