

The Wyllie Longmore Award 2026

After a hugely successful two years, the Wyllie Longmore Award returns for a third year, continuing its mission to support early-career theatre artists based in Greater Manchester. This award offers a bespoke, fully funded learning experience for individuals who face barriers in accessing top-tier theatre training, networks, and opportunities in the region.

Over the course of 12 months, the selected theatre artist will embark on a transformative journey to realise their highest potential. This is more than just a programme, it's a chance to collaborate with leading artists and cultural organisations across Greater Manchester, building a strong foundation for a long and successful career in theatre.

What Does the Award Include?

The recipient will receive a 12-day programme spread across a year, designed to meet their personal development goals, alongside £1,500 to support their participation. The programme is co-created between the successful artist and our Wyllie Longmore Award (WLA) partners, ensuring it meets their unique needs and aspirations.

Activities may include:

- **1:1 mentoring** with cultural and art-form leaders
- **Opportunities to shadow** the rehearsal process of professional productions
- **Access to creative space** for personal development or rehearsals
- **Training and workshops** to sharpen skills
- **Free tickets** to theatre events
- **Insight into board-level decision making** at cultural institutions
- **Hot-desking at cultural hubs** to build networks and learn from the teams
- **Feedback from seasoned practitioners** on their work
- **Behind-the-scenes access** to the creation of new theatre pieces
- **Participation in research and development** with partner organisations and artists

A Legacy of Nurturing Talent

The Wyllie Longmore Award is proudly delivered by some of Manchester's most influential cultural organisations, each deeply inspired by Wyllie Longmore's dedication to nurturing talent. Our partners include:

- **Contact Theatre**
- **Factory International**
- **HOME Manchester**
- **Odd Arts**
- **Royal Exchange Theatre**

This award honours Wyllie Longmore's extraordinary legacy of supporting emerging talent, sharing high-quality learning experiences, and fostering an inclusive and caring theatre environment. His influence continues to shape the future of the arts in Manchester and beyond.

Who Can Apply?

This opportunity is open to anyone who identifies as a theatre artist, including actors, directors, dramaturgs, stage managers, and more. We are looking for individuals who are:

- Currently living and working in **Greater Manchester**
- Have between **3-5 years of professional practice** (we understand careers can be non-linear!)
- **Underrepresented in the theatre sector** or unable to access similar opportunities

How to Apply

There are two ways to apply for the Wyllie Longmore Award:

1. Nominate Someone

If you're part of an organisation, charity, cultural group, or community network and know someone who would benefit from this opportunity, you can nominate them.


Please include the following information (in no more than 500 words or a 3-minute video):

2. Nominate Yourself

If you're an early-career theatre artist who meets the criteria, you can nominate yourself. Please include (in no more than 500 words or a 3-minute video):

This fully funded 12-month programme offers:

- 💰 £1,500 towards your development
- 🗋️ Mentoring, creative space and professional opportunities
- 🤝 Collaboration with Manchester's leading arts organisations
- 🌟 A chance to shape your future in theatre

 **Deadline:** Midnight, Sunday 16 Nov 2026

👉 Apply or nominate someone: <https://forms.gle/35jybucanDg6J6VY6>

✉️ Questions email: jobs@oddarts.co.uk

Further Information

We are looking for artists with undeniable talent, passion, and care for their craft, who are at a crucial point in their careers. Ideal nominees have not yet had their work performed or commissioned on major stages, but they have shown potential in smaller projects (under £2,500).

We encourage nominations for those facing barriers in the industry, including those related to social, gender, financial, ethnic, cultural, or geographical disadvantage, or disability.

The Judging Process

Nominees will be invited for an informal interview with our diverse panel of cultural leaders, including a

member of Wyllie Longmore's family. We want to hear about their artistic journey, aspirations, and how this 12-month opportunity could make a real impact on their career. We are happy to accommodate any access needs for this process.

How to Donate

If you'd like to support the Wyllie Longmore Award, you can make a donation [HERE](#) Your donations will help provide additional resources for awardees (such as set/room hire or transport costs) and offer funding for more than one nominee. We will keep you updated on how donations are used to support emerging artists.

This award is about more than just theatre, it's about breaking down barriers and nurturing the next generation of talent in Greater Manchester. We can't wait to see the next Wyllie Longmore Award recipient thrive!

Honouring Wyllie Longmore- Empowering voices, shaping futures

About Wyllie Longmore:

Wyllie Longmore (1940–2023) was a Jamaican-born British actor, director, and educator who made Manchester his creative home. Best known for his roles on stage and screen (*Love Actually*, *Coronation Street*, *Cold Feet*), he was also a founding figure at The Arden School of Theatre and an influential mentor to generations of artists.

Throughout his career, Wyllie championed access, integrity, and care within the arts, breaking down barriers for underrepresented artists and inspiring others through his warmth, wisdom, and belief in the transformative power of theatre.