

National Theatre – evidence to Treasury Select Committee – Coronavirus

The National Theatre employs over 1000 people in contracted, freelance and casual roles. Beyond our staff the NT family of course includes performers, stage managers and technical crew.

Our annual income last year was £107m, with nearly 60% of that coming from ticket sales, so the closure period leaves a huge dent in our finances.

Impact

- Our international tours and transfers have been affected, with *The Lehman Trilogy* suspended on Broadway and *War Horse* not completing its tour of Australia – with subsequent Asia dates threatened. These suspended productions also have a significant financial impact for us.
- The Coronavirus disruption is also impacting major projects nationwide with schools, teachers, partner theatres and community organisations right across the UK.

As a values-led organisations we are taking measures to ensure our whole NT family are given the most equitable opportunity to plan and navigate through the coming months.

We are considering how the NT can positively contribute to the wider challenges that society will face over the coming months as well as proactively advocating for financial support for our sector from Government in the strongest terms.

Our ask from Government

To support our organisation and other theatres across the UK we are asking the following to be considered by DCMS and Treasury:

1. A government-led hardship fund for theatres covering the cost of losses during any closure period or extended period of low attendance. Such a fund to extend across all income streams, not just ticket sales, and to account for production costs.
2. Relaxation of the rules around Gift Aid to encourage audience members returning tickets or suffering cancellations to donate the cost of their ticket as a charity donation.
3. Support us by opening up conversations with overseas governments to negotiate access to funds they are putting in place to mitigate the financial losses their theatres are experiencing.
4. Longer term, an increase in theatre tax credit, particularly for touring, to stimulate new investment once the virus has passed.