

#BePartofSomething

**NATIONAL
STUDENT
DRAMA
FESTIVAL**

INFORMATION FOR SCHOOL GROUPS

CONTENTS.

“There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that the learning the students engage in on an almost 24-hour basis genuinely helps them to improve the quality of their work, evidenced by them regularly exceeding expectations in both AS and A Level.” Andrew Rogers | Therfield School

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WHAT IS NSDF?

NSDF 20 will take place from 4-10 April 2020 in Leicester //

Founded in 1956, NSDF is a unique and precious thing, a charity that has helped generations of talented young people from all backgrounds find their home within the arts.

The Mission of NSDF is simple but vital:

- to empower and inspire young talent and ambition
- to teach skills
- to help launch careers
- to build the audience of tomorrow

Every year hundreds of 16-25 year olds come together for one week, in one chosen city, to watch the best and boldest shows by other students from across the UK and participate in workshops, discussions and many other events.

Whether for the quality of shows or the inspirational training by industry professionals, teachers nationwide return to NSDF every year and we invite you to share in the experience.

For NSDF 19 we delivered **11 shows** and a **work-in-progress**. We organised **105 workshops** by leading industry figures such as Dame Harriet Walter, Simon Stephens, Timberlake Wertenbaker and April Deangelis as well as major organisations like the RSC, Headlong, Soho Theatre, Donmar Warehouse, Middle Child, Rash Dash and Young Vic to name but a few.

Every day of the Festival we organise a **discussion** that explores issues of deep contemporary relevance. We have a **festival magazine** that we publish every day and that anyone at the festival can write for.

We also have 3 student-led **Festival Teams** including a **Technical Team**, a **Management Team** and a **Noises Off Critics Team** who help us to run the festival week.

And your students can get involved in all of this.

“NSDF continues to inspire and encourage me and my students to take creative risks and make work that is interesting and thought provoking. It instills in our students the confidence to strive for excellence and push boundaries in their performance work. It gives them new ways of thinking and an abundance of skills and contacts that they otherwise wouldn’t have had access to.

If you make one decision this year, please make the decision to take your students to this important festival. You won’t regret it.”

Hannah Dolan | Ralph Thoresby School

COSTS

Student Ticket (includes access to all workshops, shows, discussions, events)

Full Week Pass - £100.00

Half Week Pass - £50.00

One Day Pass - £25.00

All teachers and accompanying adults go free!

GET INVOLVED.



Enter a Show //

Submit your show to be considered for the annual festival. One of our Selection Team made up of professional directors, actors and producers, will spend up to an hour with your students after the show, offering constructive feedback, assessment and broader advice about entering the creative industries.

If the show is selected you'll be performing to hundreds of people, peers and professionals alike.

Even if your show isn't selected, your students may get invited to be part of the NSDF Company which is designed to reward and assist those people we have seen in shows who we think are special talents. Read more about the Festival Company [here](#).

We always welcome show entries from schools/colleges and we value work by 16 year olds beginning their A-Levels in exactly the same way as emerging graduate companies. In recent years we've had shows by schools such as Leyton College Sixth Form, Bridgend FE College and Artsed, all led by 16-18 year olds.

We select the productions we think are the best we have seen but with an eye on the process a company has undertaken, the subject matter, the diversity of casting and ambition. We consider work that is 'in development' if it is well acted and well produced. The mix of work is always varied - new plays, musicals, devised work, extant plays - staged in 'traditional' theatres, found spaces, immersive and site specific or site responsive. We champion risk and work that reflects the political and social conversation.

[All submissions are done online](#). You will be asked to login or create an account and enter the details of your show. Please give us at least 3 weeks notice before the date of your show in order to organise someone to come and see it. Please let us know if your show is sooner than 3 weeks and we will try and make something work.

February 2019	submissions open
December 2019	interim results day
1st February 2020	last day to see submissions
2nd February 2020	selection day
4th-10th April 2020	NSDF 20 in Leicester

COSTS

£98 this includes up to an hour of feedback and discussion with one of selection team. NSDF subsidises every selection in order to keep costs as low as possible.

Bring a School Group to the Festival //

School groups make up a substantial proportion of the audience at NSDF every year.

Teachers bring groups back every year to immerse their students in some of the best work being produced by young people across the UK and workshops led by theatre industry-leading professionals.

Nowhere else can you get this concentration of performances, training, discussion and entertainment.

The average day at NSDF:

Most of the activities take place in and around Curve Theatre, Leicester

Time	Activity
10:00-13:00	One to two workshops led by industry professionals (from a choice of 100+)
14:30-15:30	Daily discussion where the whole festival come together to talk about the shows they've seen during the week and issues of deep contemporary relevance
16:00-18:00	Watch show 1
19:30-21:30	Watch show 2
22:00-00:00	Late night events from our famous NSDF Quiz to our Open Mic Night where anyone can sign up for a slot and perform

On average, every festival participant will see *at least* two shows a day.

Last year's shows included new writing, gig-theatre, devised work, verbatim, published texts by writers including Gary Owen and Jon Brittain as well as a site-specific immersive murder-mystery in a nightclub.

NSDF 19 had the broadest and highest profile workshop campaign in the history of the Festival. Every day we presented workshops led by some of the most exciting and brilliant artists and organisations. And we catered to almost every available area of interest, for example:

Are your students interested in Dance and how Movement can be utilised in theatre?

Choose to attend workshops with Mark Baldwin OBE, former artistic director of Rambert, Lucy Hind, West End Choreographer and Movement Director or Rash Dash.

Are your students interested in Writing?

Choose from workshops given by April De Angelis, Timberlake Wertenbaker, Simon Stephens, James Phillips, Jon Brittain, Chris Thorpe or Ishy Din.

Are your students interested in technical theatre or working backstage?

Explore Sound Design with multi Tony and Olivier Award winner Gareth Fry, learn about cutting edge video technology with Guildhall, or join Equity's Stage Management Workshop.

[See full NSDF 19 Workshop Programme here](#)

KEY DATES

October 2019	tickets go onsale
February 2020	shows announced
March 2020	workshop programme announced and online booking available

COSTS

Full Week Pass - £100.00

Half Week Pass - £50.00

One Day Pass - £25.00

All teachers and accompanying adults go free!

Apply to be on our Festival Teams //

NSDF is made for young people and is largely run by young people.

At NSDF we have three different Festival Teams that students can apply to be on.

It is a full on learning experience like no other.

The Technical Team //

Our Student Technical Team follow a bespoke course of learning through doing. The Technical Director, backed up by a professional tech team lead and mentor the student technical team. During the Festival Week each young person can follow a specialised technical path in Sound, Lighting, Stage Management, Video or Logistics. They build the venues for the festival, providing all technical support for the productions and attend specially programmed technical workshops using state of the art equipment supplied by sponsor companies such as SLX and Blackout.

The Management Team //

The Director, Administrator and Coordinator lead a student Management team of up to 50. These brilliant young people are the public face of the festival, ensure its smooth running and operate front of house, artist liaison and logistics. Being on the Management Team offers a fantastic opportunity for aspiring producers, arts administrators and events organisers to gain hands on experience in running an event. They are also encouraged to

attend the workshops and are provided with especially programmed workshops in producing and other areas of interest.

KEY DATES

November 2019	applications open online
January 2020	applications close



“Working with professionals and working on NSDF has helped me learn a great deal about the systems and functioning of theatre in UK. It has helped me integrate my past experiences and moulded me into a better theatre producer.”

Srishti Ray | Winner of the 2019 Management Team Award

The Noises Off Critics Team //

Published each day of the festival, Noises Off is a magazine of reviews, opinions, and other articles covering all aspects of the Festival and the greater arts world. Over the week, Noises Off interrogates, celebrates and shines a light on what's happening: in shows, backstage, during discussions, workshops and in wider conversations.

NSDF is a proud supporter of Arts Award.

Join a Festival Team, submit a show, or attend the workshops - there are loads of things you can do at the Festival that will contribute towards an arts award! [Read about Arts Award here.](#)



PLANNING YOUR TRIP

Buying Tickets //

Tickets will be available to buy in October 2019. If you are bringing a school group, please get in contact with Lizzie, lizzie@nsdf.org.uk who will organise your booking for you.

We are able to issue Full Week Passes, Half Week Passes and One Day Passes.

Booking Accommodation //

Most of the festival activities will take place in and around [Curve Theatre](#), so we recommend booking accommodation nearby.

We have a full list of recommendations on our website [here](#) but our top hotel picks are Ramada Encore, Ibis Leicester City Hotel (for location) or Travelodge Leicester Central (for cost).

Getting There //

The festival starts on Saturday 4th April 2020 and Registration (where you can pick up your tickets) will run from 2pm-4pm; so we recommend you aim to arrive in Leicester for that time.

Registration will take place at Curve Theatre which is less than a 10 minute walk from the train station and has plenty of parking. For more information about travel and transportation please see our website [here](#).

The Festival finishes on Friday 10th April 2020 after the Awards Ceremony which runs on into the evening, so we recommend you aim to leave on Saturday morning, but you are free to really leave whenever you need to.

Planning your activities //

When you arrive in Leicester, you'll be assigned a route, and given a coloured wristband accordingly. These colours (red, blue, green and yellow) represent routes. Each route will see each show at a different time throughout the week.

The only part of the festival you will need to book onto in advance are the workshops which will go live on our website about a week before the festival (we will send reminders to everyone before this). Everything else, you can just rock up to when you're there!

Young Persons Protection //

We take the safety of your students extremely seriously and we will do everything we can to make sure they have a wonderful time at the festival and feel fully part of it.

However, we cannot operate in loco parentis for groups or individuals between the age of 16 and 18. This means that this age group must be accompanied by a teach or an adult (which is one of the reasons why we offer free tickets to any teacher/adult who is at the Festival).

NSDF has a Young Persons Protection Policy in place. This can be found, in full, on our [website](#).

NSDF FAQs.

When will the next festival be?

NSDF 20 will take place from Saturday 4th - Friday 10th April 2020.

When does the festival finish?

We finish on the evening of Friday 10th with an Awards Ceremony and then celebrations continue that night but the festival officially finishes after the Ceremony. Participants often leave on Saturday morning.

Where will the next festival be?

In venues across Leicester City but mostly at Curve Theatre.

I want to enter a show, what is the criteria?

We will see any performance whatever the genre or the venue requirements!

If for some really surprising reason we can't consider your show – you will be reimbursed straight away. But we are always on the end of the telephone to talk it through.

What is the deadline for entering a show?

The last day we can see a show for the NSDF 20 is Saturday 1st February. Anything after that will be considered for NSDF 21.

What is Interim Results Day?

A date in December where we let all shows know whether they have been longlisted or not.

What are the costs?

The cost of entering a show is £98 which is around a third of our costs and helps towards selector fee, travel and accommodation.

The festival ticket prices for school groups are £100 pp for the full week. We also offer Half-Week Passes (£50 pp) and One Day Passes (£25 pp). Teachers and accompanying adults go free.

Is there any financial support?

Last year we launched the biggest bursary campaign in the history of NSDF and we have every intention of providing the same support this year.

More information will be announced but please email bursaries@nsdf.org.uk if you have any queries in the meantime.

I'm not a student, can I come to the festival?

Yes, anyone aged 16-25 can come to the Festival.

If you have any questions about the Festival or would like to talk to someone please don't hesitate to contact our NSDF Administrator Lizzie at lizzie@nsdf.org.uk who will be more than happy to help.

Follow us on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter @NSDFest or visit our website www.nsdf.org.uk

