



Draft Business Plan 2025-29

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Help shape the next stage of LTТА

This draft business plan sets out our vision for the Local Theatre Touring Alliance, but it's not final. We're actively seeking input from our supporters to ensure it reflects the widest range of needs, experiences and ideas across the sector. Whether you've been closely involved or are just getting to know LTТА, this is your chance to shape where we go next. The more voices we hear, the stronger and more inclusive our work will be.

Please share your thoughts via our short [online survey](#) by **Friday 31 October 2025**.

Executive Summary

The Local Theatre Touring Alliance (LTTA) is a new sector-led initiative working to secure the future of professional touring theatre in towns and smaller cities across the UK. We bring together venue managers, producers, policymakers, and funders to tackle the urgent and systemic challenges facing this part of the theatre ecosystem.

Professionally managed mid-scale venues (typically seating 300–800) play a vital role in their communities, yet many are under pressure from disinvestment, rising costs, skills shortages, and an inconsistent supply of high-quality touring product. In response, LTTA has emerged as a collective effort to protect and strengthen the conditions for creative touring across the country.

In less than a year, LTTA has established a broad and growing supporter base, launched a high-impact survey of venue managers, and convened national conversations on critical issues including pricing, programming, and collaboration. This early momentum confirms a clear demand for coordinated support, shared learning, and practical reform.

LTTA now seeks to build on this foundation by becoming a formally constituted organisation with a long-term ambition to be recognised by Arts Council England as an Investment Principles Support Organisation (IPSO). In the short term, we are seeking core support through a combination of targeted grant funding and a new Contributing Supporter scheme for industry stakeholders.

Our mission is clear: to champion local theatres and build a more resilient, better-connected touring ecosystem. Through systems change, shared infrastructure, and a culture of collaboration, LTTA will help ensure that high-quality professional productions continue to reach audiences in every part of the UK.

Vision, Mission & Values

Our Vision

A resilient, inclusive and thriving theatre touring ecology that ensures people in towns and smaller cities across the UK can experience high-quality live performance, close to home.

We believe mid-scale professionally managed venues are vital civic and cultural assets. Touring to these venues should be viable, sustainable and ambitious: contributing to vibrant local economies, creative opportunity, and national cultural life.

Our Mission

The Local Theatre Touring Alliance (LTTA) exists to strengthen and sustain professional touring to venues outside major city centres, typically seating between 300 and 800 people.

We do this by:

- Convening the sector to coordinate better planning, share insight, and develop skills
 - Championing the needs and value of local theatre touring to funders, policymakers and the public
 - Creating new models, pilots, and partnerships that address practical barriers to sustainability
 - Connecting producers and venues to foster collaboration and innovation
 - Providing a national voice for a part of the theatre ecology that has long been undervalued but remains essential
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Our Values

Trust: We commit to open and honest dialogue.

Transparency: We share information and decisions openly.

Collaboration: We work together to create long-term solutions.

Respect: We value everyone's contribution.

The Need for LTТА

Across the UK, hundreds of professionally managed mid-scale theatres, typically in towns and smaller cities, are facing an increasingly unsustainable environment for touring. These venues are vital cultural and civic assets: they provide access to live performance for millions, support local economies, and act as key commissioning and presenting partners for companies working at scale.

Yet despite their value, they face a set of interconnected and growing challenges:

- Rising costs in production, touring and operation
- Disinvestment from local authorities and limited access to core funding
- Reduced availability of high-quality touring product, particularly in drama and lyric work
- Pressure on staffing and skills, particularly in technical and producing roles
- Uncoordinated planning, leading to inefficient routing and booking conflicts
- Shrinking audience development capacity, as many venues struggle to maintain education and community programmes

Despite their critical role, no national body currently exists to strategically support this part of the sector. Touring remains fragmented, under-strategised and often improvised, with vital decisions taken in isolation and collaboration happening only sporadically.

Without intervention, the touring ecology will continue to contract, audience access will narrow, and local cultural life will suffer.

The Local Theatre Touring Alliance has emerged to fill this gap: a collaborative, values-led national initiative, focused on practical change, peer support and shared ambition for professionally managed venues and the companies that work with them.

What the Local Theatre Touring Alliance Could Do

As a national sector support organisation focused on mid-scale professional touring, LTTA's role could include:

1. **Coordinate systems and shared infrastructure**
Develop tools such as anti-clash calendars, programming grids and shared planning resources.
 2. **Broker relationships and enable collaboration**
Connect venues, producers, funders and stakeholders to spark joint projects and strengthen touring networks.
 3. **Host marketplaces and pitching forums**
Create opportunities for producers and venues to present work in development, explore partnerships, and build future tours.
 4. **Increase skills through peer learning and shared training**
Support the professional development of touring producers and venue teams through peer-to-peer learning, mentoring and specialist training offers.
 5. **Share good practice across the sector**
Identify and promote effective models in programming, producing, audience development, inclusion and sustainability.
 6. **Undertake research and gather evidence**
Produce and commission insight to inform strategic decision-making and advocate for the value of local theatre touring.
 7. **Influence public policy and raise sector voice**
Champion the role and value of professionally managed local theatres and mid-scale touring through advocacy and public engagement.
 8. **Pilot new ways of working**
Test innovative approaches to governance, funding, producing and presenting in response to the sector's evolving needs.
 9. **Increase resources for the sector**
Unlock new investment, support fundraising collaboration, and broker funding partnerships across the public, private and philanthropic sectors.
 10. **Develop and deliver national programmes**
Initiate scalable schemes such as shared pricing initiatives, touring subsidies, or inclusive ticketing models — building visibility and consistency across the UK.
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Impact to Date

Since its inception in early 2025, the Local Theatre Touring Alliance (LTTA) has grown rapidly into a national movement advocating for a stronger, more sustainable mid-scale touring ecology. In just a few months, working entirely on volunteer capacity, LTTA has:

Built a Broad and Committed Community

- Attracted over 150 registered supporters, including venue managers, touring companies, producers, funders, and trade bodies across the UK.
- Secured active participation from stakeholders representing every nation and English region.
- Established a values-led community committed to collaboration, trust, transparency, and respect.

Identified Shared Priorities Through Research

- Launched a nationwide survey of venue managers, with high response rates, capturing detailed insight into programming challenges, skills shortages, and financial pressures.
- Synthesised survey findings into a public report that shaped initial action planning and informed sector-wide discussion.

Convened Sector-Led Dialogue and Action

- Held a series of well-attended online forums bringing together producers, venue managers and national partners to explore key issues such as pricing, risk-taking, and collaboration.
- Facilitated the development of practical new ideas, including regional venue hubs, shared planning horizons, and affordable ticketing schemes.
- Established working groups focused on pilot projects, knowledge sharing, and national advocacy.

Positioned LTTA in the National Conversation

- Contributed to the independent ACE review led by Margaret Hodge MP, ensuring mid-scale touring voices were heard at a critical policy moment.
- Built relationships with national agencies including Arts Council England, UK Theatre, ITC, ABTT, and NODA.
- Acted as a convenor and connector, supporting joined-up conversations across a fragmented landscape.

Where we are and where we're going

Where We Are Now

- LTTA is an un-constituted alliance, operating informally but with a clear shared purpose.
- Run entirely by volunteers, with no paid staff or formal governance structure.
- Over 150 registered supporters, including venue managers, producers, touring companies, and other sector stakeholders.
- Strong early momentum, including a national venue managers' survey, two general meetings, and a successful first forum event.
- Clear values (trust, transparency, collaboration and respect) underpin all activity.
- Scoping document in place, outlining key sector challenges and collective priorities.
- Emerging strands of work, including technical skills, pricing, planning, and pilot models.
- No dedicated funding or infrastructure, but growing demand for coordination, support and leadership.

Where We Want to Be

- A formally constituted organisation, with a governance structure fit for purpose.
- A recognised Sector Support Organisation, with core funding from Arts Councils across the UK.
- A small, paid core team, supporting delivery, communications and coordination.
- A trusted source of support, tools and convening for professionally managed venues and producers.
- National programmes running, including anti-clash tools, pitching events, pricing initiatives and training.
- Evidence-based and insight-driven, regularly producing research and data to inform the sector.
- A leading voice in advocacy, championing the value of local theatre touring to policymakers and funders.
- Sustainable and resilient, with diversified income from grants, partnerships and sector contributions.
- A connected, collaborative community, working together to strengthen and grow mid-scale professional touring across the UK.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

The LTTA is committed to creating a more equitable and inclusive touring ecology that reflects the full diversity of the UK.

We believe that touring theatre has a unique role to play in connecting communities, sharing stories across regions, and expanding access to live performance. But too often, the voices seen on our stages and the audiences in our theatres don't reflect the breadth of modern Britain. We want to change that.

Our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is grounded in practical action and shared responsibility. We will:

1. Support the development and touring of more diverse work

- Identify barriers preventing underrepresented artists and companies from accessing touring opportunities, and explore practical solutions through research, pilot programmes, and producer/venue dialogues.
- Advocate for commissioning, co-producing, and programming models that better support work led by Black, Asian and ethnically diverse artists, disabled artists, LGBTQ+ artists, and artists from working-class backgrounds.
- Promote inclusive casting, creative leadership, and storytelling as central to the artistic and commercial success of future touring models.

2. Champion audience development strategies that reflect the communities we serve

- Work with venues and producers to identify where current touring audiences don't reflect local populations and test new ways of engaging underrepresented groups.
- Share audience insight, case studies and successful strategies to support colleagues in building more representative audiences, including long-term relationship-building, partnerships with local groups, and pricing models that increase access.

3. Facilitate inclusive conversations across the sector

- Ensure our forums, webinars and working groups reflect a diversity of voices, including those who have been historically marginalised or underfunded in the touring system.
- Invite challenge and learning from others, and publish who we are hearing from and working with.

4. Embed EDI in our governance, recruitment, and culture

- Build a board that reflects the diversity of the UK: across geography, lived experience, artform practice, and organisation type (including both venue and touring companies).
- Design open and inclusive recruitment processes for staff, board members and consultants, with clear efforts to reach people from underrepresented groups.
- Ensure our internal policies, funding relationships and communications reflect anti-discriminatory practice and inclusive values.

We know that words alone do not create change. LTTA will publish a short EDI action plan by the end of our first operational year, informed by listening to those already doing vital work in this space. Our commitment is to make touring theatre part of a more inclusive cultural future, where every community has access to high-quality live performance, and every story has the chance to be heard.

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental responsibility is integral to the future of touring theatre — not just because of the climate crisis, but because more sustainable practices often align with greater efficiency, resilience, and community relevance.

Touring theatre has long struggled with sustainability due to travel emissions, duplicate logistics, and wasteful production practices. These challenges are magnified at the mid-scale, where budgets are tight and environmental investments often feel out of reach. But we believe the mid-scale touring ecology can be reimagined in a way that places environmental sustainability at its core.

LTTA will champion practical solutions that work for our scale and sector:

1. Positioning local theatres as a green choice

- Promote the environmental benefits of attending local performances rather than travelling to major cities – reducing car use, cutting emissions, and strengthening local economies.
- Advocate for transport and planning policies that recognise the role of local cultural infrastructure in reducing carbon emissions.

2. Encouraging smarter touring models

- Support efforts to reduce unnecessary duplication and mileage through better route planning, regional clusters, and block-booking.
- Explore potential for **Regional Touring Hubs** and “touring residencies” that reduce the carbon footprint of each show by increasing the depth of engagement in each location.

3. Working together to reduce waste

- Share good practice on **sustainable set, costume and tech design** suitable for mid-scale touring.
- Explore regionalised approaches to storage, reuse, and recycling – including potential regional ‘green stores’, inspired by the National Theatre model, but scaled to our context.

4. Supporting venues and companies to go further

- Create space for venues and producers to share resources and learning around sustainability — from LED retrofits and energy audits to green rider clauses and sustainable travel plans.
- Explore pooled funding bids to help smaller organisations trial new sustainable practices or join sector-wide carbon measurement initiatives.

5. Making sustainability visible to audiences and funders

- Encourage clear, honest communication about the environmental impact of touring, including when we're trying new approaches or learning from failure.
- Advocate for sustainability to be recognised as a key criterion in public funding for touring — and for funders to support realistic transitions at all scales.

We will actively connect our work to existing sector-wide initiatives that are already driving change. This includes aligning with the Theatre Green Book framework and promoting its adoption across both venues and touring companies, at a scale appropriate to mid-scale productions. We will also seek to work in partnership with Julie's Bicycle to support measurement, reporting and learning across the network. Where possible, we will amplify the work of others (including the Sustainability in Theatre Consortium and national efforts led by Arts Council England and the other UK arts councils) to ensure mid-scale touring is part of a coordinated, well-supported transition towards a more environmentally sustainable theatre sector.

Touring theatre can and must be part of a lower-carbon cultural future. LTTA will work to ensure that the mid-scale is not left behind in the green transition, but becomes a testbed for creative, collaborative solutions that put people, planet and place at the heart of the touring ecology.

Financial Model and Fundraising

Overview

LTТА is developing a mixed funding model designed to support our transition from a voluntary initiative to a sustainable, national organisation. Our approach centres on public grant funding and sector-led contributions, reflecting our collaborative ethos and commitment to public value.

Start-up and Short-Term Funding Needs (2025–2026)

To establish a basic operating structure and deliver early activity, we are seeking grant funding from UK arts councils and trusts to:

- Incorporate and establish governance
 - Fund a part-time core team and essential administrative support
 - Deliver convening, research and pilot activity aligned with our strategic aims
 - Build visibility and credibility across the UK theatre landscape
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Contributing Supporters

In parallel, we are inviting sector colleagues to become LTТА Contributing Supporters. These are organisations — typically venues, producers or suppliers — who are well-positioned to contribute financially to our shared goals.

- Minimum contribution: £3,000 per year
- No preferential treatment or influence is given
- Supporters will be acknowledged on LTТА materials and at events

This light-touch support model is a critical part of our financial base, enabling us to remain lean, focused and sector-led.

Medium-Term Model (2026–2029)

Our ambition is to become an Investment Principles Support Organisation (IPSO) in the next Arts Council England funding round.

As an IPSO, LTТА would:

- Align directly with Arts Council England's four Investment Principles
- Provide practical, peer-led support to organisations delivering against those principles

- Offer a national perspective while remaining rooted in local needs
- Champion innovation, evidence-led approaches, and sector collaboration

To support this transition, we will:

- Build a credible delivery record through funded pilots, convening and research
- Maintain a broad base of sector supporters
- Demonstrate how our work supports strategic outcomes across Inclusivity & Relevance, Ambition & Quality, Dynamism, and Environmental Responsibility

Financial Management

Following incorporation as a Company Limited by Guarantee, LTTA will:

- Establish transparent financial procedures
- Provide quarterly financial reporting to the Board
- Publish externally audited accounts annually
- Commit to keeping administration light and spending focused on frontline support

Governance and Structure

Legal Structure

The Local Theatre Touring Alliance (LTTA) is in the process of registering as a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG). This legal form allows us to operate as a not-for-profit organisation with clear accountability, while remaining agile and responsive to the needs of the sector.

Our medium-term goal is to secure recognition as an Independent Provider of Sector Support (IPSO) (or equivalent) within Arts Council England's investment framework, ensuring long-term sustainability and national reach.

Board and Governance

A volunteer Interim Steering Group currently guides LTTA's direction.

Upon incorporation, we will establish a formal Board of Directors. The board will be responsible for:

- Strategic oversight and risk management
- Approving the business plan and annual budget
- Ensuring LTTA adheres to its values and (charitable) aims
- Supporting and holding to account the executive leadership

We are committed to building a board that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve, with a mix of professional backgrounds, geographic representation, and lived experience. We will include voices from both venue-based and touring organisations, across the charity and commercial sectors, to ensure a broad range of perspectives and insight.

Operational Capacity

LTTA is currently volunteer-led. In the short term, we aim to recruit a small core team (initially one part-time post) to:

- Manage day-to-day operations
- Deliver key activities such as convenings and pilot projects
- Support fundraising and stakeholder engagement
- Develop communications and sector-facing resources

We will also seek to second expertise from across our supporter base and commission project delivery where appropriate.

Advisory and Working Groups

LTTA will continue to convene **thematic working groups** (e.g. pricing, skills, product development), enabling members to collaborate on specific challenges and opportunities.

A wider **Supporter Network** will be maintained via our mailing list and events programme. Supporters are kept informed of developments and invited to contribute insight, ideas, and feedback to shape our priorities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We are committed to tracking the impact of our work through regular data collection, stakeholder feedback, and reflective learning. We will establish simple, meaningful KPIs aligned with our strategic objectives, report annually on progress, and adapt our activity in response to what we learn. Where appropriate, we will commission external evaluation to ensure transparency and accountability.

Risk Management

The LTTA has, to date, been delivered entirely through the goodwill, time and expertise of a core group of volunteer practitioners. While this has enabled significant early momentum, it also brings with it a serious risk of burnout and inconsistency. Without paid capacity or a formal structure, the initiative risks becoming unsustainable just as sector interest and engagement is growing.

This business plan directly addresses these risks by setting out a path to establish LTTA as a formally constituted organisation with dedicated leadership, proper governance, and a clear financial model. Appointing a part-time National Convenor will relieve pressure on volunteers and provide strategic coordination, while Contributing Supporters and early-stage fundraising will build the financial resilience needed to maintain and grow the work.

Other key risks include:

- **Financial Risk** – mitigated through a diversified funding strategy (combining core funders, sector contributions, and project grants) and conservative budgeting.
- **Mission Creep** – mitigated by reaffirming our focus on professional touring to mid-scale venues in towns and smaller cities, while welcoming broad support.
- **Stakeholder Disengagement** – mitigated through transparent communication, meaningful consultation, and offering clear routes for involvement.
- **Reputational Risk** – mitigated by adopting strong governance structures, developing key policies (e.g. safeguarding, EDI, financial management), and ensuring accountability through regular reporting.

A risk register will be maintained and reviewed quarterly by the Board, with actions assigned to manage live and emerging risks. This pragmatic approach will ensure LTTA remains nimble, grounded and able to respond to the real challenges facing the sector — without placing unsustainable demands on those trying to lead it.

LTТА Timeline

Phase 1: Foundation and Mobilisation (2024–Mid 2025)

- Early research, sector listening and convening of initial forums.
 - Development of the Scoping Document and public launch of LTТА.
 - Rapid growth in support from venues, producers, funders and sector bodies.
 - First thematic webinars and working groups identifying core challenges and opportunities.
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Phase 2: Establishment and Start-up (Late 2025–Mid 2026)

- Formal constitution as a Company Limited by Guarantee.
 - Successful fundraising to appoint part-time National Convenor and begin operational setup.
 - Creation of governance structures and adoption of core policies.
 - Deeper engagement with sector stakeholders and funders.
 - Launch of early pilot projects, coordination tools and learning networks.
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Phase 3: Strategic Development and Delivery (Mid 2026–2027)

- Consolidation of core operations and long-term partnerships.
 - Progress towards IPSO (Investment Principles Support Organisation) status.
 - Coordination of national initiatives (e.g. planning horizon tools, programming marketplaces).
 - Delivery of pilot touring and audience development projects.
 - Sector-wide engagement in professional development, research and advocacy.
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Phase 4: Growth and Sustainability (2028 onwards)

- Secure long-term revenue funding through Arts Council England and other UK arts councils.
- Expand capacity to support regional collaboration, data stewardship, and innovation.

- Demonstrate impact through evaluation, case studies, and national visibility.
- Strengthen LTTA's role as a trusted, agile and values-led support organisation for touring theatre in towns and smaller cities.

Version 1.11

8 October 2025

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