



**THE BRISTOL  
IMPROV THEATRE**

# **TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT PACK**

The Bristol Improv Theatre  
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# ABOUT THE BRISTOL IMPROV THEATRE



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The Bristol Improv Theatre is an organisation dedicated to furthering the art of improvisation in the UK. We believe that the lessons that underpin improvisation have the power not only to entertain but also educate and empower people to live happier, fuller lives.

From our venue in Clifton, we produce and perform improvised theatre alongside a varied programme of cultural events including film screenings, live music, stand up comedy, dance, drag, burlesque, poetry and much more. Far from being improv purists, we believe that spontaneous, creative, collaborative entertainment comes in many forms, so we make and programme work which celebrates shared experience, laughter and liveness.

Our theatre school provides creative training for adults that is flexible and affordable; some students join our classes as actors looking for new approaches to their work, but just as many have never performed before, simply looking to build their confidence and meet new people. As well as classes, we offer heaps of opportunities for adults to get on stage, to play and perform in a safe and supportive environment.

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# OUR STORY SO FAR

We originally formed in 2012 as the Bristol Improv Network, with the aim of bringing together Bristol's existing improv groups to raise the profile of improvised theatre and comedy in the city. In 2013 we ran the first Bristol Improv Festival: each night a local group double-billed with a visiting company, culminating in a theatre sports-style throwdown featuring acts from all over the UK.

In 2014 we started running regular shows and classes at the Polish Ex Servicemen's Club in Clifton; three years later, with support from an army of volunteers, crowdfunding and private investment, we bought and refurbished the venue and opened the Bristol Improv Theatre. Complete with a 115 seat black box theatre, licensed bar with cabaret stage, two rehearsal rooms and two private flats, we are the first space in the UK dedicated to improvised theatre.

Since then, we have carved out our own unique corner in Bristol's cultural scene as a place where adults can come and not only enjoy theatre, but also play and perform themselves in a relaxed and supportive environment. We exist to entertain and serve the amazing community that has formed around this strange little project, and to bring improvised theatre and training to as many Bristolians as we can.

Since March 2020 we have fought and grown to meet the demands of running an arts venue during a pandemic. Thanks to the incredible support of our community and funding from the Arts Council's Cultural Recovery Fund, we were able to move our teaching online and stream shows for audiences at home. We designed interactive games for people to play in their bubbles and ran outdoor classes and jams to keep bringing people together in person wherever possible. We have been running a regular programme of socially distanced shows and classes since we were able to reopen our venue in May 2021.

# WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

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As we recover and rebuild from the pandemic, we want to safeguard our aims and ethos by registering as a charity and making our directors accountable to an independent voluntary board of trustees.

With the Board of Trustees' help we intend to create a sustainable future for the Bristol Improv Theatre. Our primary goals are to:

- Reach a wider audience base with a new marketing strategy
- Enact our DEI action plan to create a space which welcomes all, celebrates difference and actively seeks out new work and collaborators to diversify our programme
- Build a cash reserve to shore up our organisation against future crises
- Develop a new fundraising strategy

# WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

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We are looking for people who:

- Believe in the power of theatre and the arts to bring people together
- Believe that art and culture should be accessible to all
- Are connected to the creative or cultural sector (whether personally or professionally)
- Are able to give time and energy to support the Bristol Improv Theatre
- Have experience that would be relevant to delivering our goals (ie. Marketing/PR, fundraising, legal) whether in the arts sector or elsewhere

# ONGOING TRUSTEE EXPECTATIONS



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As well as the legal responsibilities for trustees, we expect board members to:

- Attend 3 board meetings a year & AGM - at present all of these are being conducted over zoom but in future we hope to hold at least one in-person meeting per year
- Come to performances at the Bristol Improv Theatre
- Be prepared to communicate with leadership (usually over phone or email) throughout the year about specific issues
- Offer support on occasions where their expertise would be valuable to organisation - e.g. offering advice on a specific area or looking over a funding application and giving feedback

If you are interested in becoming a trustee for the Bristol Improv Theatre, a great place to start is by saying hello. Email [caitlin@improvtheatre.co.uk](mailto:caitlin@improvtheatre.co.uk) to register your interest and arrange an informal chat.

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