



**BUILDING
COLLECTIVE
RESILIENCE**

Open Call for Researchers: Theatre & Performing Arts for Children & Young People (TYA)

Global, Advocacy-Focused Research
A Pilot

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Introduction

ASSITEJ International is a not-for-profit network of artists and organisations working in the field of Theatre & Performing Arts for Children & Young People (TYA) across over 75 countries who are dedicated to the belief that every child and young person deserves access to the arts, and especially to live performance, from the earliest possible age.

As part of the 'Building Collective Resilience' project (which is co-funded by the *European Union*), *ASSITEJ International* is seeking 4 lead researchers to help us collect and disseminate data, information, practices, ideas, and solutions around the themes of: Access to TYA, Dissemination of TYA, Diversity within TYA, and the Value of TYA.

ASSITEJ International considers Theatre & Performing Arts for Children & Young People (TYA) to be a broad and diverse field that includes, but is not limited to:

- applied theatre and performing arts for children and young people;
- theatre and performing arts education for children and young people;
- theatre and performing arts in education for children and young people;
- theatre and performing arts performed for, by, and with children and young people;
- youth theatre and performing arts programmes.

The research is to be advocacy-focused and useful to *ASSITEJ* members, National Centres, International Networks, TYA practitioners, and the wider TYA community, being published on an open access basis. It is intended to be of reference use for their day-to-day working lives to, for example, boost advocacy initiatives and funding applications, offer opportunities for learning, and to foster networking and collaboration.

This multi-pronged research project is a pilot and *ASSITEJ International* hopes that the learnings from this first-round will enable the association to secure future funding towards further research.

This pilot research package is to be completed between now and 31st December 2024.

Eligibility

This open call seeks to appoint 4 lead-researchers to each lead 1 of the main streams of the research package. We are seeking help from:

- Individual / independent researchers;
- Named individuals at research institutions (including universities, research bodies, and research agencies);
- Named individuals within the relevant practitioner field (including artists, management, and other creative professionals).

The research will be globally focused and researchers from anywhere in the world are eligible to apply. We particularly value applications from researchers who want to engage cross-nationally with *ASSITEJ* members across a diversity of the 75 countries where we are represented.

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Please note that secondary calls for research assistants/collaborators on a national level will likely follow the appointment of the 4 lead-researchers depending on the design of their research. We are not currently recruiting for this, however, if you wish to express an interest at this early stage in participating in the research on a national level, you can do so here: <https://assitej.typeform.com/to/blcaR2GU>

Research Streams

The research package is split into five streams - this open call is to appoint one research lead per stream (*with the exception of Stream 4 - see note*).

[1\) Quantitative Access Data](#) - An international comparative quantitative study that explores which, and how many, children and young people are currently accessing TYA by: (a) investigating, collating, and interpreting pre-existing data; and (b) defining, overseeing, and interpreting the collection of new data.

[2\) Dissemination / Engagement Case Studies](#) - An international comparative series of case studies exploring how children and young people access TYA on a structural level - including the habits, structures, and schemes through which children and young people engage with TYA.

[3\) Leadership Demographics](#) - A study examining the extent of diversity of TYA sector professionals, particularly those holding leadership roles.

[4\) Small Size*](#) - Research on how small children are perceived within the field of TYA.

**This research stream is being administered by the [Small Size Network](#) and this stream is NOT part of the current call but is included here for informational purposes.*

[5\) Value of TYA](#) - Collated evidence on the value of TYA that curates and synthesises the existing research from across the field.

More comprehensive information about each of the 5 streams may be found in the pages that follow.

Resources

As a pilot project, *ASSITEJ International* is able to grant seed funding to each lead researcher who is appointed. This funding comes from the 'Building Collective Resilience' project which is co-funded by the *European Union*. It is expected that most applicants will need to leverage institutional and/or third-party resources (whether in their staff time or in finance) in order to cover the 'full cost' of the research activities. If appointed researchers are able to identify suitable external funding opportunities, *ASSITEJ International* is willing and able to provide support with funding applications wherever possible.

Research colleagues/assistants are very welcome to join the research where they can be recruited. However, it is anticipated that the lead researcher would maintain overall

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direction and responsibility for the research output as coordination with *ASSITEJ International* and the research committee.

The seed funding granted by *ASSITEJ International* will provide each of the 4 lead researchers with modest remuneration for their professional activities - as well as funding to cover travel costs in order to engage in research and dissemination activities at the *ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering* in Novi Sad and Belgrade, Serbia (20th-24th Nov 2023) and the *ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival for Children & Young People* in Havana, Cuba (24th May – 1st Jun 2024). Both events may be attended either online or in-person.

The seed funding on offer is different for each of the 4 streams in this call (calculated according to the requirements of the final research output) and is listed below alongside the detailed explanation of each stream.

Each of the lead researchers will become members of the Research Committee along with the Chair of *ITYARN (International Theatre for Young Audiences Research Network)*, Tom Maguire, and Managing Director (Knowledge & Network) of *ASSITEJ International*, Chris Blois-Brooke. The purpose of the Research Committee is to provide a space to explore and discuss the research activities in a supportive environment and to identify commonalities between the research streams.

In summary, *ASSITEJ International* can offer:

- Seed funding to cover modest remuneration for professional activities - as well as a grant to cover travel costs in order to engage in research dissemination activities;
- Support with third-party funding applications wherever possible;
- Secretariat staff and the research committee to administer and support;
- Research access / contact arranged by our international Secretariat to our network of members in over 75 countries and, in particular, our National Centres in 64 countries who may assist in research activities;
- Access to *ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering 2023* in Serbia (Nov 2023) and *ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival for Children & Young People 2024* in Cuba (May 2024) to complete research activities, network with sector professionals, and share research findings;
- Translation (where indicated in the descriptions below), graphic design, and online publication of research outputs;
- Web publishing of research outputs (on an open-access basis) as well as online presentation seminars to disseminate the research findings to sector professionals.

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Application Requirements

This open call seeks to appoint 4 lead-researchers to each lead 1 of the main streams of the research package. The application deadline is **20:00 GMT on 20th February 2023** (click [here](#) to see this in your time zone). Please submit your CV along with a maximum 2 page (A4) covering letter explaining: which stream you are applying for; your motivations for conducting this research stream; your relevant experience and expertise; a brief outline of how you might intend to approach the research stream; an estimated timeline for the production of the research; and (optionally) any details about expected institutional and/or third party resources that you may be able to leverage to support the seed funding from *ASSITEJ International*.

Please submit this as an editable Word Document and PDF via email to: chris@assitej-international.org

Timelines

Open Call Published:	30 th January 2023
Deadline for Applications:	20:00 GMT 20 th February 2023 (click here to see this in your time zone)
Interviews for Shortlisted Candidates:	1 st & 2 nd March 2023
Appointment of Successful Candidates:	3 rd March 2023 (with an immediate start date)

Selection

Selection will be according to the following criteria:

- Track record of relevant research experience (as an academic and/or research-engaged practitioner);
- Relevant methodological and thematic experience;
- Track record of engaging with international and multicultural partners;
- Research proposal and outlook.

Across the pool of candidates we will be seeking a diversity of sociocultural identities and a balance of geographical representation.

The selection committee will consist of:

- The Chair of *ITYARN (International Theatre for Young Audiences Research Institute)*, Tom Maguire;
- Member of the Executive Committee of *ASSITEJ International*, Selloane (Lalu) Mokuku;
- *ITYARN* Board Member and Counsellor to the Executive Committee of *ASSITEJ International* Executive Committee, Paulo Merisio;
- Managing Director (Knowledge & Network) of *ASSITEJ International*, Chris Blois-Brooke.

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Funded PhD Opportunity (PhD Studentship)

Running alongside, but administratively separate from the research streams that form the basis of this call, is a funded PhD opportunity, entitled “Evidencing Value in Theatre for Young Audiences”, at *Ulster University*. Led by one of the leading researchers in the field, Professor Tom Maguire, this 3-year PhD project will engage with existing external partnerships (both local and international) to (a) generate evidence to develop, test and refine frameworks for understanding the value of TYA and (b) close the gaps in the evidence for this value. It will be aligned with a current set of work being conducted by *ASSITEJ International*. Applicants are invited to define the specific focus and scope in their proposal responding to this call. It is envisaged that within an overall mixed methods design, a case study approach (however developed) would provide for analytical depth while allowing for generalisable findings, though this may be revised in dialogue between the supervisor and the successful applicant.

Applicants for this studentship are welcome from around the world.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.ulster.ac.uk/doctoralcollege/find-a-phd/1457323>

Deadline for Submissions

(directly to *Ulster University*):

16:00 GMT 27th February 2023

(click [here](#) to see this in your time zone)

Interviews for Shortlisted Candidates:

Week Commencing 27th March 2023

Preferred Student Start Date:

18th September 2023

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Stream 1: Quantitative Access Data

Phase 1: Existing Quantitative Access Data of Theatre & the Performing Arts for Young Audiences in Europe

Collecting and systemising existing quantitative data from a minimum of 5 European countries that have data on numbers of audiences under the age of 18 who attend theatre and the performing arts each year. This may be completed in consultation with our relevant National Centres. Final research output to include document/report providing a discussion/visualisation of the data, workable data for ongoing analysis by those accessing it, and information on data sources. The outputs are to be written in English.

Due Date: 31st January 2024

February 2024:

Online presentation and discussion of Phase 1 research findings to *ASSITEJ* members (National Centres, International Networks, Regional Networks, Affiliates, Artists, Producers, Festival Organisers, and other sector professionals).

Phase 2: "Access & Dissemination of Theatre & the Performing Arts for Young Audiences in Europe and Beyond" Report

Working alongside the Stream 2 researcher, collating, unpacking, and concluding on the data sets, survey results, and best practice examples of Stream 1 and Stream 2 into a summary report on access and dissemination. The outputs may be written in English, French, or Spanish and will be translated into each of the other two by translators appointed by *ASSITEJ International*.

Due Date: 31st May 2024

Phase 3: New Quantitative Access Data

Collecting and systemising quantitative data from producers of theatre and the performing arts for young audiences in a minimum of 5 culturally diverse and geographically dispersed European countries where no existing access data exists. This may be completed in consultation with our relevant National Centres. Same format of outputs as Phase 1. The outputs are to be written in English.

Due Date: 30th September 2024

October 2024:

Online presentation and discussion of Phase 3 research findings to *ASSITEJ* members (National Centres, International Networks, Regional Networks, Affiliates, Artists, Producers, Festival Organisers, and other sector professionals).

Seed Funding Available From *ASSITEJ International*:

6000 EUR remuneration for professional activities fees
+ 1585 EUR for expenses relating to dissemination activities

= 7585 EUR

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Stream 2: Dissemination / Engagement Case Studies

Phase 1: Case Studies on Dissemination of Theatre & the Performing Arts for Young Audiences in Europe and Beyond

Collecting information and describing national examples of how children and young people access TYA on a structural level - including the habits, structures, and schemes through which children and young people engage with TYA. It will explore, for example, how children and young people access theatre and performing arts through touring, through local venues, through classroom engagements, or through local communities. It may explore how dissemination of TYA is stimulated by public funding, for example, whether there is governmental or foundational support for touring - and how contact between theatre companies and performance organisers is established. This should compare and contrast a minimum of 5 culturally diverse and geographically dispersed European countries in addition to a minimum of two non-European countries. This may be completed in consultation with our relevant National Centres. The outputs may be written in English, French, or Spanish and will be translated into each of the other two by translators appointed by *ASSITEJ International*.

Due Date: 29th February 2024

March 2024:

Online presentation and discussion of research findings to *ASSITEJ* members (National Centres, International Networks, Regional Networks, Affiliates, Artists, Producers, Festival Organisers, and other sector professionals).

Phase 2: "Access & Dissemination of Theatre & the Performing Arts for Young Audiences in Europe and Beyond" Report

Working alongside the Stream 1 researcher, collating, unpacking and concluding on the data sets, survey results and best practice examples of Stream 1 and Stream 2 into a summary report on access and dissemination. The outputs may be written in English, French, or Spanish and will be translated into each of the other two by translators appointed by *ASSITEJ International*.

Due Date: 31st May 2024

Seed Funding Available From *ASSITEJ International*:

4000	EUR	remuneration for professional activities fees
+ 1585	EUR	for expenses relating to dissemination activities

= 5585	EUR	

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Stream 3: Leadership Demographics

Leadership Demographics

Surveying the leadership demographics of producers, venues, and festivals in the field of theatre and the performing arts for young audiences from a minimum of 6 countries.

This may be completed in consultation with our relevant National Centres. The questions will aim to identify how the artistic and administrative leaders identify in terms of gender, ethnic background, skin colour, minority/majority, abilities/disabilities as well as age, educational background and annual income. A minimum of 60 responses should be collected. The outputs may be written in English, French, or Spanish and will be translated into each of the other two by translators appointed by

ASSITEJ International.

Due Date: 31st March 2024

April 2024:

Online presentation and discussion of research findings to *ASSITEJ* members (National Centres, International Networks, Regional Networks, Affiliates, Artists, Producers, Festival Organisers, and other sector professionals).

Seed Funding Available From *ASSITEJ International*:

3400	EUR	remuneration for professional activities fees
+ 1585	EUR	for expenses relating to dissemination activities

= 4985	EUR	

Stream 4: Small Size

Research on How Small Children are Perceived

Researching how (small) children are perceived in different countries, cultures, communities, and institutional settings and how that reflects, shapes, and challenges artistic processes and performances. The outputs are to be written in English.

Due Date: 31st December 2023

June 2024:

Online presentation and discussion of research findings to *ASSITEJ* members (National Centres, International Networks, Regional Networks, Affiliates, Artists, Producers, Festival Organisers, and other sector professionals).

*Please note that this research stream is being administered by the [Small Size Network](#) and this stream is NOT part of the current call but is included here for informational purposes.

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Stream 5: Value of TYA

Collated Evidence on the Value of TYA

Collating a range of evidence through which claims to the value of the performing arts for children might be supported. The collation will be done through a survey of ASSITEJ members/ stakeholders and other artists in the field, a systematic survey of existing data sources, additional quantitative data collection and analysis and/or a systematic literature review. This may be completed in consultation with our relevant National Centres. The outputs may be written in English, French, or Spanish and will be translated into each of the other two by translators appointed by *ASSITEJ International*.

Due Date: 31st May 2024

September 2024:

Online presentation and discussion of research findings to *ASSITEJ* members (National Centres, International Networks, Regional Networks, Affiliates, Artists, Producers, Festival Organisers, and other sector professionals).

Seed Funding Available From *ASSITEJ International*:

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Appendix

More Information About *ASSITEJ International*

ASSITEJ International unites theatres, organisations, and individuals throughout the world who make theatre and performing arts for children and young people. *ASSITEJ* is dedicated to the artistic, cultural, and educational rights of children and young people across the globe and advocates on behalf of all children regardless of nationality, cultural identity, ability, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion. *ASSITEJ* brings people together so that they can share knowledge and practice within the field of theatre and performing arts for children and young people in order to deepen understanding, develop practice, create new opportunities, and strengthen the global sector. The members of *ASSITEJ International* are national centres, professional networks, and individuals from more than 75 countries across the world.

You can learn more about *ASSITEJ International* on our website:
<http://www.assitej-international.org>

More Information About the 'Theatre & Performing Arts for Young Audiences: Building Collective Resilience' Project as a Whole

The project is designed to build collective resilience across the network of cultural and creative organisations working in the Theatre & Performing Arts for Young Audiences (TYA) sector. The sector is highly active, not only in providing children and young people with creative and imaginative theatrical experiences for the sake of art and culture itself, but also in delivering positive social impact to the next generation. After the deeply felt effects of COVID-19, this project is determined to 'build back stronger', creating a Network with sufficient resources and relationships that secures the future of the industry and the young people it serves.

The project aims to fill the gap that currently exists in *Creative Europe*-funded Networks by recognising a significant demographic of art makers working specifically within TYA. It focuses on the impact that the TYA sector has on the cross-cutting priorities of sustainability, diversity, access and inclusion, and representation. It seeks to galvanise the possibilities of broadening cultural contributions and of the dissemination of art for all.

The project centres *ASSITEJ International* as the network catalyst for connection and involvement, for the collation of research and best practice, and for the increase of artistic voices. It focuses on permeable borders and it spotlights children and young people as cultural actors and contributors to the health and resilience of the arts community.

Through live gatherings and a broad online reach, the 'Building Collective Resilience' project will engage the dedication and expertise of a vibrant and highly engaged arts sector and its audience, one that is often forgotten in data and research, and yet one that is most vital to the times ahead. It will empower and connect younger generations

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through theatre and the performing arts as we move towards a future full of possibility, humanity, and extraordinary art.

More Information About the Aims of the Research Package

Aims of Research Activities

- To provide the sector and other stakeholders with collated and annotated quantitative data about access to theatre and the performing arts for children and young people.
- To provide the sector and other stakeholders with collated and annotated data/surveys/research about the cultural and social backgrounds of audiences in theatre and the performing arts for children and young people.
- To provide the sector and other stakeholders with collated and annotated examples of dissemination structures in theatre and the performing arts for children and young people, with a focus on diverse audiences.
- To provide the sector with research on the perception of very young children in different national contexts and how that reflects, shapes, and challenges artistic processes and products.
- To provide the sector and other stakeholders with a range of evidence that supports the value of the performing arts for young audiences.
- To provide the sector and other stakeholders with collated and annotated leadership demographics in the sector of theatre and the performing arts for children and young people.

Aims of Dissemination Activities

- To provide knowledge and create collective reflection about the leadership demographics of the sector.
- To enable sector professionals to understand and use the research on access, dissemination, and the value of theatre and the performing arts in the lives of children.
- To share artistic knowledge and inspirations about creating performing arts for the very young.

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