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**Stagetext’s Vision is of a society where arts, culture and entertainment venues present no barriers to the full participation of d/Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people.**

**Our Aims**

* We advocate for and promote accessible captions and subtitles to arts and culture providers and to other key stakeholders
* We deliver theatre captioning, live subtitling and digital subtitling services to arts and culture providers
* We advise arts and culture providers on how they can make their events and content accessible
* We identify and promote new technology to better meet the needs of arts and culture providers and d/Deaf audiences
* We help to grow d/Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing audiences for arts and cultural events.

**Our services:**

* Delivery of captioning at events, like theatre performances, where the script can be pre-prepared and cued live
* Supplying a speech-to-text reporter or Palantypist for events, like talks, where the script cannot be pre-prepared
* Subtitling pre-recorded digital content or delivering training for in-house subtitling
* Training for professional and non-professional theatre captioners.

**Our Beneficiaries**

Our purpose is to improve access to culture for **d/Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people** - there are estimated to be about 12 million d/Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people in the UK, that’s 1 in 5 of the population. The proportion of the population with a hearing loss is rising as the number of people over 60 increases and is estimated to reach 15.6 million by 2035. (RNID prevalence estimates using Office for National Statistics population data (2018)).

In addition to this audience, there are many others who benefit from captioning and subtitling, including:

* **People with English as an additional language** – seeing the words at the same time as hearing them is very helpful for people who do not have English as their first language.
* **Neurodivergent people** - who may find that seeing the text aids concentration, for example.
* **Students** – people who are studying the text of a play can find it useful to see the words as they are spoken.
* **General public** – Stagetext receives a lot of positive feedback from the general public about the usefulness of captioning particularly for performances in acoustically variable venues, particularly where the actors speak quietly, with strong accents or for plays which are particularly wordy.

**Our Ambitions**

Stagetext is looking to the future and considering how to best meet its charitable aims in the light of accelerating changes in technology, the economics of the cultural sector and a genuine aspiration to widen participation and access. As a result, in Autumn 2020 we commissioned an Options Analysis, which reviewed the service delivery and operating model for captioning theatre and explored how Stagetext might deliver its advocacy work with greater impact. This process is ongoing, and our roadmap is yet to be finalised, but we are excited and encouraged with our findings and at the possibilities that are emerging. Stagetext has big aims and ambitions over the next five years and we need a strong refreshed Board to realise our role within the Cultural sector.

We are very excited by the possibilities of a revised vision and we are actively seeking new Trustees to join us in developing and shaping the Charity so that it widens participation and access for both clients and users.

**The Company**

Stagetext is a company limited by guarantee (no.3995686) and a registered charity (no**.**1084300)

We are a hard-working company with a core team of 8, led by our CEO, Melanie Sharpe. You’ll find lots of information about our team and our organisation us on our website [here](http://www.stagetext.org/about-stagetext/stagetext-staff)

Our annual turnover for 2019/20 was £751k of which 36% was core funding from Arts Council England. Our current funding agreement as a National Portfolio Agreement runs until the end of March 2023; we will begin making our application for the next funding period in January 2022.

In 2019/20 we were successful in fundraising £47k from other public and private sources.

Our earned income comes from our three services, Theatre Captioning, Live Subtitling i.e. subtitling of unscripted events such as talks and conferences, and Digital Subtitling for pre-recorded videos. This income stream has changed dramatically over the past 12 months due to the Covid pandemic, when theatre captioning was nonexistent due to theatre closures. The art sector’s move to offering cultural events and videos online saw an increase in making online content accessible, and therefore both live and digital subtitles experienced a dramatic increase in demand.



**Financial position**

Stagetext prides itself on having been financially secure since its inception in 2000. As of April 2020, Stagetext had unrestricted reserves of £184k. However, Stagetext also recognises that we are in difficult financially restrained times and must ensure future viability by ensuing our business model is robust and fit for purpose through rigorous financial management / systems and ongoing review of our services.

[**Charity Commission: Stagetext**](https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/3974044)

**The Role:**

As Stagetext is a limited company by guarantee and a registered charity, members of the Board of Directors are also Trustees of the charity.

Our office is in London, and board meetings have previously taken place in Central London. However, we are very open to continuing to meet both online as well as in person; a speech-to-text reporter is present at all meetings. You can be based anywhere in the UK. This is a voluntary, unpaid role.

**Time commitment**

Board members are elected for an initial 3-year period**.**

There are four meetings of the Board each year, as well an annual strategy away day.

As Board members are recruited for specific skills, they are asked to contribute their expertise to advise and support members of staff on an ongoing basis either working individually, on a subcommittee or specific project, working closely with the Chief Executive. From time to time there will be key events to attend, such as launches, fundraising or training events, and an annual strategy away day.

We anticipate a time commitment equivalent to around a 1 day a month; we’re happy to discuss the details of this with you so that you have a clear understanding of our expectations.

**Our Board**

Our Board currently comprises of ten members, six of whom are users of captioning services. For further details, visit our [website](http://www.stagetext.org/about-stagetext/stagetext-board-of-trustees).

Board members are appointed on the basis of their skills, experiences and networks which they are able to bring to the organisation which will enable us to deliver our aims.

We are keen to diversify our Board culturally as we are aware that in the past Stagetext services have generally been used by both large / medium venues and those able to afford commercial ticket prices. Stagetext is committed to diversifying its reach to those traditionally excluded and whose skills and life experiences haven’t been utilised and engaged to enrich the Board’s understanding and reflect a more inclusive approach to our governance.

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**Duties & responsibilities**:

You will work closely with the CEO to take a strategic overview of the organisation’s planning and programme. The Board ensures that Stagetext meets its charitable objectives and operates to the highest professional standards.

We will work with you to make sure that there is a full induction process. We will also discuss what support you might like in your first months, such as a buddy system, to make sure that you have everything you need to play a fully effective role on the Board.

If you don’t have trustee experience, you might find it useful to have a look at the Charity Commission’s guidance here on how to be a good trustee.

[The Essential trustee guide PDF](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/866947/CC3_feb20.pdf)

**Next steps:**

**Information / Briefing Session**

We will be holding one-to-one briefing sessions on the **23rdth March between 4.30pm and 6pm** where you’ll have a chance to chat to some of our current Board members and our CEO Melanie Sharpe.

We’ll hold this session on Zoom and it will be live subtitled. We can arrange a BSL interpreter or other access requirements, please email melanie@stagetext.org to let us know if you would like to attend and if you have any access requirements as soon as possible.

**Application Process:**

To start the conversation, we are asking you to send us an expression of interest. You can send a letter of **no more than two pages.**

**Please make sure you tell us:**

* Why you would like to join the board.
* What you think you would bring to the organisation and how your skills could support the Board and team in achieving its vision.
* A bit about yourself; the work you do and your previous experience.

**You need to send your expression of interest to melanie@stagetext.org by the deadline of 5pm on Friday 9th April 2021, along with a completed** [**Equal Opportunities Form**](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/6QZ2XMB)

We are planning to have interviews on the mornings of Tuesday 20th and Wednesday 21st April; when you contact us, please let us know if you are not free on these dates.

**If you need any access support in order to apply, please email** **melanie@stagetext.org**

**For an informal chat please also drop us an email to** **melanie@stagetext.org**