



Utopia Unlimited
Constitution

Constitution of Utopia Unlimited

Agreed by founding members on 04/01/2025

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Ratified at the first AGM (date and place – no more than 15 months after the constitution is agreed)

Section 1 – Name of the Association and membership.

Section 2 – Objects of the Association

Section 3- Aims of the Association

Section 4 – Steering Committee

Section 5 – Steering Committee General Duties

Section 6 – Steering Committee Individual Duties

Section 7 – Annual General Meeting and Emergency General Meetings

Section 8 – Raising Funds

Section 9 – Closing Down the Organisation

Appendix 1- Additional duties to be carried out by Association Members, volunteers and Employees as determined by the Steering Committee

1. The name of the Association will be Utopia Unlimited.

1a. Membership will be open to all, regardless of age, disability, race or gender, who are interested in the objectives of the Association.

2. The Objects of the Association are to:

2a. Create a safe, inclusive environment where children and young adults can take part in theatre, music and associated arts projects regardless of their background, experience and ability.

2b. Offer opportunities to children and young adults to develop technical theatre skills such as stage management, lighting, sound, set building and costume.

2c. Develop confidence and knowledge within all our members in their chosen fields within the organisation from performing to technical skills.

2d. Give children and young adults the opportunity to shape the projects undertaken by the organisation by giving them a voice to choose and develop projects with the support of the committee and volunteers.

3. The Association will:

3a. Work to produce high quality theatre and musical performances with children and young adults, aged between 8-21 years old, for the benefit of the participants and the local community.

3b. Ensure that membership is open to as many children and young adults as possible, regardless of background, ability, experience or financial status.

3c. Ensure the safety and wellbeing of all our members, volunteers and staff and by providing a clearly defined safeguarding policy and ensuring that all staff and volunteers have DBS checks.

3d. Raise funds for the organisation in order for the organisation to fulfil its intended objectives and to prevent any financial barriers to participation for members.

3e. Forge links within the local communities of the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales for the benefit of the organisation and other local community groups who have shared interests and values.

Section 4 – Steering Committee

- 4a. The Association will have a steering committee consisting of a chairperson, secretary and treasurer; all posts are open to job sharing. All posts will be subject to election or re-election at the AGM
- 4b. Any additional posts can be co-opted as needed subject to ratification at the next AGM.
- 4c. Utopia Unlimited may co-opt individuals or representatives of organisations, with relevant expertise or experience, onto the steering committee
- 4d. The Steering Committee will meet regularly either in person or online to discuss progress with current projects and to plan future ones. The subsequent meeting date to be agreed at the end of each meeting and recorded in the meeting minutes.
- 4e. 3 members of the Association will constitute a quorum.
- 4f. Additional sub-groups may be created to represent particular interests or projects.

Section 5 The Steering Committee has responsibility for:

- 5a. All administrative and financial tasks required for the smooth day to day running of the organisation, enabling it to meet the aims and objectives outlined above including the raising of funds.
- 5b. The safe recruitment and management of staff for the purpose of meeting the aims and objectives outlined above, ensuring that all recruitment meets current employment legislation including Right to Work checks, appropriate references and that background/DBS checks are undertaken.
- 5c. The approval of financial outlay on required staff, items, venues and services for the purposes of meeting the aims and objectives outlined above.
- 5d. Scheduling all events that the organisation will hold throughout the year and agreeing and booking venues.
- 5e. Having procedures in place in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all who take part, volunteer or are employed by the organisation.
- 5f. Ensuring all required insurances are in place and offer an adequate level of cover for those who take part, volunteer or are employed by the organisation and comply with all statutory requirements.
- 5g. Ensuring all required duties are completed in a timely manner for each show. Tasks may be delegated to an appropriate employee or volunteer if needed.
- 5h. Producing publicity plans for the recruitment of new members and reaching new audiences for the organisation's events.
- 5i. Arranging the organisation's social events for members and ensuring that all members' dietary needs are catered for in the selection of catered venues, should this be necessary.

Section 6 – Steering Committee; Main Duties of named roles

6a. Chairperson

6a.1. To chair all business meetings of the Association, where practical.

6a.2 To manage the organisation's social media accounts and to create relevant and engaging social media posts.

6a.3 To arrange the filming of all productions, organise the editing and preparation of the films for distribution. Ensuring, in association with the organisation secretary, that permission is first gained from participants, parents, or guardians as appropriate.

6a.4 The Chairperson will have a casting vote in all meetings of the Association.

6b Secretary

6b.1 To be responsible for the email inbox and ensure all enquiries are replied to in a timely manner or directed to the most appropriate committee member for their attention.

6b.2 To create membership forms and ensure all personal information is stored in compliance with current data protection legislation.

6b.3 To maintain the membership and staff databases and mailing list ensuring that the data stored is the minimum required to carry out the functions of the organisation in accordance with current data protection legislation.

6b.4 To prepare agendas for committee meetings, take minutes and distribute them to all committee members in a timely manner.

6c Treasurer

6c.1 The treasurer will open an account in the name of the Association and present a report on the account at the steering committee meetings and at the AGM.

6c.2 To research and apply for relevant grants for the organisation, and to inform all parties about the terms of any grant funding received.

6c.3 To create, with the steering committee, and approve, budgets for productions and other projects.

6c.5 To collect, monitor and record all payments to the Association. Where the treasurer cannot be present at an event collection of payments may be delegated to a suitably appointed volunteer, committee member or member of staff.

6c.6. To review and approve bursary applications for members who apply for them.

6c.7. To ensure the accounts are audited by an external person or body on an annual regular basis.

6c.8 To renew the organisation's NODA membership annually.

6c.9 To provide adequate cash floats for events and performances.

6c.10 To ensure all cash from events and performances is paid into the organisation's bank account.

Section 7 – Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meetings

7a. The AGM will take place between **January - March**. For the purpose of electing a Steering Committee, and any additional committee members, examining the organisation's accounts and dealing with other organisational matters notified in the agenda.

7b. The date, time and location of the Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting will be announced publicly at least 28 days prior to the meeting and the meeting's agenda must be circulated to members at least seven days in advance of the meeting. Agenda items be notified to the Steering Committee no later than 14 days before the AGM

7c. The minutes of the AGM will be taken by the outgoing Company Secretary and distributed by the incoming Company Secretary.

7d. The quorum for the Annual General Meeting will be a minimum of seven people.

7e. The process for electing the Steering Committee:

7e.1. The process for electing the Steering Committee, will be, wherever possible, overseen by an impartial volunteer who is not proposed for a position on the incoming Steering Committee and who is not a member of the outgoing Steering Committee.

7e.2. Any interested member must first declare their intention to stand for a position, when asked in the meeting. Nominees for the Steering Committee must be aged 18 or over.

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7e.4. Nominees will be required to leave the meeting while the remaining members vote for which candidate they want in that position. The person with the greatest number of votes will be elected to the position. This process will be repeated for all Steering Committee positions until the full board is elected.

7e. 5. Outgoing Steering Committee members will be required to conduct a full handover with the respective incoming member to ensure continuity of information.

7f. Constitutional amendments should be made at either an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting. Constitutional amendments will be passed with a two thirds majority.

7g. Steering Committee members have the right to resign their position at any time. 2 months' notice should be given in writing. In the event of a member resigning, an Extraordinary General Meeting will be called, within 2 months, to elect a new member into the role.

7h. Extraordinary General Meetings can be called should the Governing Board deem it necessary to change the constitution or in the event of a Governing Board member resigning their position. The process for calling an Extraordinary General Meeting is the same as for an Annual General Meeting, as described in 7b above, and the Extraordinary Meeting carries the same powers as the Annual General Meeting.

Section 8 – Raising Funds

8 Fund raising for the Association will be wide ranging, including but not limited to:

8a. Participation fees

8b. Voluntary donations

8c. Raffles

8d. Exit door collections

8e. Ticket Sales

8f. Interest free loans from Association members

Section 9 – Closing Down the Organisation

9.a The Association may be wound up at any time if agreed by at least two-thirds of members present and voting at an AGM or SGM called for the purpose. Notice must be given at least 14 days before the meeting.

9.b The quorum for the Meeting will be a minimum of seven members where practicable, unless membership has fallen such that this is not possible.

9.c All debts, where possible, must be cleared by the organisation's funds and sale of assets. If, once all debts are cleared, there are residual funds and properties, these will be donated to a similar organisation that shares the values of the organisation.

9.d On closure it will be the responsibility of the Secretary to ensure that all personal data of members, staff and volunteers is disposed of in accordance with current data protection legislation.

Appendix 1- Additional duties to be carried out by Association Members, volunteers and Employees as determined by the Steering Committee

1. To ensure that rehearsal and performance venues are booked for the shows and events.
2. To communicate with the staff and volunteers involved in the shows and ensure that each person is aware of their duties and responsibilities in adequate time.
3. To ensure that publicity is produced in a timely manner, and widely shared for any organisational activities.
4. To monitor registrations of the shows and ensure recruitment of participants is effective and far reaching.
5. To ensure that all required properties and costumes for shows and events are purchased or otherwise sourced, and that if rented or borrowed, these are returned in a timely manner and in the condition in which they arrived with the company.
6. To design the set and ensure that it is created and built in a timely manner.
7. To arrange appropriate storage for the organisation's set items, costumes and properties and other items of related equipment, and to arrange appropriate transport for the required items to rehearsal and performance venues.
8. To keep the organisation's website updated with details of current performances, membership details, organisational policies and other required information.
9. To arrange, order and distribute all branded merchandise for the organisation including, but not limited to t-shirts and hoodies.
10. To act as the organisation's Safeguarding Lead, taking responsibility for the safety and welfare of the staff and members of the organisation in line with current safeguarding legislation and practice.
11. To recruit and manage a safeguarding team for each show, who will ensure the safety and welfare of the staff and members, and will report to the Safeguarding Lead.
12. To ensure that correct numbers of licenced chaperones are available for each rehearsal or performance, in accordance with the ratios set out by the local authority.
13. To ensure all safeguarding information is properly stored in compliance with current data protection legislation, and that members' emergency contact and medical information is securely available to the safeguarding team if required.
14. To organise, with the chairperson, the recruitment of all staff and volunteers, including arranging interviews with the committee, if required.
15. To ensure there are adequate numbers of volunteers for the productions including, but not limited to, front of house, technical and stage crew, chaperones and helpers.
16. To ensure, in association with the Steering Committee, that the organisation's insurances are valid and offer the correct level of cover, including but not limited to public liability.