

Callout for Playwrights – June 2025

Strange Town offers opportunities in the performing arts to young people aged 5 to 25 in Edinburgh.

As a company, our aim at Strange Town is to enable young people to fulfil their creative potential. Whatever your background or experience, we believe everyone has creative and artistic abilities. We help young people to recognise and develop these abilities through peer and professional encouragement, participation, and example.

We are looking to commission up to **2** playwrights to write short plays to be performed by our older youth theatre groups.

These plays will be performed by our two **14-18s** classes. Each class typically contains 20 members, and the plays would need to have at least one part for all of them.

We are looking for writers **keen to devise** with our young people for several sessions and **then** create plays approximately **60** minutes long.

Each play would be shown for **2** performances in our **Summer Term** (June 2025). Recent performances by the 14-18s have taken place at the Traverse Theatre.

We vastly prefer our young people to play parts written for their age (e.g 14–18-year-olds playing characters suitable for those aged 14-18) rather than pretending to be adult humans.

Note that there is plenty of leeway here. Scripts with non-human characters for instance (spirits, gods, choruses, ghosts, magical creatures, animals etc) are definitely doable – we're not saying that all your characters need to be humans aged 14-18, just playable by them!

For our **June 2025** plays, we would like our writers to base their initial ideas around the prompt of **Nobody Wants To Work Anymore**.

[A series of tweets by Paul Fairie](#) in 2022 listed newspaper articles between 2022 and 1894 complaining about the next generation's apparent lack of appetite to work.

With each generation seemingly mimicking the generation before decade after decade, we want to explore the true impact of **Work** on young people today and what that means in 2024/25.

These words are simply a starting point and may mean a whole array of different things (not just literal examples or recreations of the prompt) We are excited to see what new and fresh ideas you present to us. We are particularly interested in ideas that are relevant to our young members today and which excite them.

We are also keen to see ideas that have **clearly considered the age group they are applying for**. Writing for 14-18s is not the same as writing for adults.

Playwrights must be available to attend devising sessions and readthroughs in-person in Edinburgh, although we aim to offer as much flexibility as we can and amended deadlines are also possible.

- **Up to 3** devising sessions across **September 2024** (2 hours per session on a Tuesday or Thursday evening)

The exact dates of these devising sessions would be finalised with you. You won't need to lead these sessions as the director and dramaturg will be present, but they can be shaped however you like according to your needs!

- **1** draft-in-progress readthrough on **Tues 29th** or **Thurs 31st October**
- **1** draft-in-progress readthrough on **Tues 3rd** or **Thurs 5th December**.

We would also highly recommend applicants attend the performances of these groups in June 2024 if possible ([Wed 19th – Sat 22nd June 2024 at the Traverse Theatre](#))

Each playwright will be paid **£700** for their writing. **This is not a fully professional rate, and we are well aware of this.** As a small charity, our resources are limited and unfortunately do not allow us to pay what we would like to. However, we are

currently committed to a process of increasing our fee year-by-year to bring it more into line with the accepted standard.

We also endeavour to help develop our writers fully and provide every assistance possible. This includes one-to-one dramaturgy sessions, additional opportunities to interact and devise with your group members as desired, and a lot of flexibility to fit our deadlines and schedule around your existing work.

For more information about this and anything else you'd like to know before applying, please don't hesitate to get in touch using the details below.

If you are interested, please send us the following things:

- **A short document (no more than 2 pages) of your responses to the prompt.**

This document should include **at least 1 story idea/starting point** but could include more and could also include other aspects you feel would be helpful. These might not be topics or stimuli for devising, sources of inspiration, photos, videos, music – it's entirely up to you!

- **A writing sample of a stage play no more than 10 pages in length.**

Whilst we accept samples written for all audiences, we **strongly** recommend your sample demonstrates your ability to write for your chosen age group as **young performers**. The sample does not have to be a finished play or have had a previous performance of any kind. *It could even be a newly written sample.*

- **A short bio/CV detailing your writing experience to date (no more than 2 pages)**

Please send these to James at james@strangetown.org.uk by no later than **9am on Monday 22nd July 2024.**

Interviews requests will be sent out to successful applicants for the week commencing **Monday 29th July**, which will be either online or in-person.

We strive to provide our young members with a variety of scripts and **avoid repetition**. Here are summaries of recent commissions for this age group, plus our upcoming play for our new 8-25s group:

June 2025

- **Like A Prayer** (Working Title) – overworked and overachieving Greek Gods try and fail to relax in Dionysus’ karaoke bar, unable to shake the feeling that they need to ‘catch-up’.

June 2024 (The Tides Trilogy – 3 linked plays all set on Portobello Beach in 2024)

- **Tide 1: It's Not the End of the World!** – On the night a comet appears over Edinburgh, friends gather together to contemplate whether their lives have any meaning – and eat chips. An existential comedy about the possible end of the world
- **Tide 2: Adrift** – a girl discovers her missing friend might be alive and endeavours to build a raft to find her. A heartfelt drama about grief and the difficulty moving on.
- **Tide 3: My Kind of Weird** – love is all around, just not quite in the ways you might be used to. When a guy refuses to accept ‘no’ as an answer, an almost-Shakespearean farcical turn of events leads to chaos, breakups and ill-judged ‘big gestures’. An anti rom-com dealing with the lesser seen sides of teenage relationships.

June 2023

- **Over the Waves** – a chalk outline sparks a murder investigation in the Immortal Museum, as the family histories of the audience are brought to life.
- **The Kind Complex** – accepting an internship in a factory run by teenagers creating artificial life, one girl seeks to expose the truth behind the machines.
- **Haribo Wedding** – gathering on the final night of secondary school at an abandoned chapel, gathering spirits take a group of friends on a surreal dive into nostalgia, to a ‘Haribo Wedding’ that happened during their own childhood

June 2022

- ***Beneath the Surface*** – a group of friends, keen not to miss out and waste their summer, become trapped in a cave network and face their deepest fears and anxieties.
- ***Seven Minutes in Heaven*** – a house party gone wrong results in a cover-up by those in attendance.
- ***On Air*** – a student TV station fight to meet their impending project deadline by creating segments of fairytale characters dealing with modern life.

If you have any questions about the application, commission or Strange Town, please email James at james@strangetown.org.uk