Call for Expressions of Interest to Conduct a Critical Literature Review

Title of project: Youth Theatre in Ireland (Phase 1)

The Arts Education Research Group (AERG) in the School of Education in Trinity College Dublin, in partnership with the National Association for Youth Drama (NAYD), are seeking an experienced candidate to undertake a literature review to place youth theatre practice in Ireland within a cultural, educational, and societal context, on a national and international level. This research is funded by the Irish Research Council (IRC), AERG and NAYD, and was recently awarded a prestigious IRC ‘New Foundations award: Engaging Civic Society’.

Expressions of interest are sought from suitably qualified researchers to undertake an exhaustive critical literature review. It is expected that the literature review will provide a comprehensive overview of relevant documents (books, journal articles, reports, reviews, theses and minor dissertations) that describe methodologies and practices in the youth theatre sector - detailing what has already been written on the topic, what the prevailing theories and hypotheses are, what claims/questions are being cited, and what methodologies and methods are appropriate and useful.

Youth theatre is a thriving youth arts sector in Ireland with an established practice dating back to the late 1970s. The youth theatre sector has drawn heavily on professional theatre, educational drama, applied drama and youth arts practice to shape its own distinctive ethos and methods, and to impact on the lives of the young people and communities where youth theatres are based. However, there appears to be an absence of peer reviewed published research specific to this sector. In phase 1 of the study, the School of Education and NAYD wish to carry out an ‘exhaustive’ rather than ‘exemplary’ literature review to examine existing, relevant literature within related areas and lay the groundwork for future phases of this research project.

The literature review will be directed and supervised by the principal investigator, Dr Carmel O’Sullivan, and her colleagues in AERG, and NAYD will play an important role in directing the successful candidate to relevant resources in this area. The successful candidate will be provided with access to the Trinity College Dublin copyright library and other relevant academic sources and supports as required, and to NAYD’s extensive resources both in bibliographic material and relevant community, voluntary and professional contacts and networks, nationally and internationally.

The successful candidate is required to:

• Situate youth theatre within the context of the wider academic research in the areas of theatre, educational drama, applied drama and youth arts;
• Report a critical review of the relevant literature;
• Provide an interpretation and a synthesis of the relevant published work;
• Use the framework of the literature review to explore issues surrounding the historical context of youth theatre practice; definitions of youth theatre; and methods, practices and contexts;
• Identify gaps within that literature;
• Work with the principal investigator to draft a report and several articles for publication.
As phase 1 of a larger study, the literature review will provide vital groundwork for the research project proposed in phases 2 and 3. It will establish an academic context for youth theatre practice in Ireland within academia and related areas. The literature review will also help refine important definitions key to subsequent project phases and provide an interpretation and synthesis of existing published work.

The successful candidate will need to demonstrate the ability to critically assess material identifying where the weaknesses and gaps are, contrasting the views of particular authors and raising questions. The candidate is expected to add comment and bring out themes and trends, and be alert to the range of contexts, stakeholders and practices that constitute the field of youth theatre in Ireland and internationally. Experience of using NVivo and excel databases is desirable.

The literature review will be undertaken between April and July 2015, and the successful applicant will work with the principal investigator on the preparation of a final report and scholarly articles to be ready in final draft format by November 2015.

**Terms and conditions**

Undertaking this literature review does not constitute a contract of employment, and the successful applicant will be paid a set fee to cover the period of April 20th 2015 to November 20th 2015. Details available from Mr David Worsley (Tel: 01-8963583).

**Application process**

Applicants are invited to submit a letter outlining their interest in this role, highlighting previous relevant experiences, particularly in relation to completing literature reviews in arts or cognate areas. Applicants are also asked to submit a detailed curriculum vitae (CV) as part of the application process, and examples of published work, where relevant.

Applications should be emailed to Mr David Worsley: worsleyd@tcd.ie
Or posted to the address below before 1pm on Friday 10th April 2015. The successful applicant will be notified on or before the 17th of April, and must be available to undertake the work immediately.

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