

# MERCURY

## Finance Officer

March 2024

## Welcome from the Executive Director and Executive Producer

Thank you for your interest in the Mercury in Colchester and the role of Finance Officer.

As one of the most ambitious producing houses in the East, we pride ourselves on the high-quality, relevant and inclusive nature of all of our work. We have an ambitious programme of activities with our local community, schools and creative talent in the region.

We are looking for a Finance Officer with experience of payroll to join our team. It's an opportunity to use your existing skills in a fast paced setting. The finance department interacts with every department at the theatre. The work will always be varied!

In this pack you will find:

- Background information on the Mercury Theatre, Colchester
- Job description and person specification
- Information about how to apply.

Further information about the Mercury can be found on [www.mercurytheatre.co.uk](http://www.mercurytheatre.co.uk) .

We recognise that these are challenging times for theatre, but we are committed to maintaining and building our audience, delivering artistic excellence, and growing the Mercury's reputation as a launchpad for talent and innovation in the East of England and on tour across the UK.

We look forward to receiving your application.



Tracey Childs  
Executive Producer,



Steve Mannix  
Executive Director



## Introduction

The Mercury Theatre, designed by Norman Downie, was opened on 10th May in 1972. Since its foundation the Mercury has become one of the main centres of artistic excellence in the East of England, having built a large and diverse audience for its critically acclaimed programme of drama, musical theatre, family theatre and dance at home and on tour.

The Mercury reopened in June 2021 with 529-seat theatre, a 98-seat studio theatre, full on-site workshop and wardrobe facilities, rehearsal rooms and creative learning studios, and a fully renovated café bar and foyer.

The Mercury is a significant local employer and a major driver of Colchester's creative economy. The theatre plays a key leadership and strategic role in the cultural life in Essex and the wider geographical area of East Anglia. It is the only full-time producing venue in Essex and one of only three in the eastern region.

In the newly nominated City of Colchester, we are a placemaking organisation for Essex. We seek to connect with and support artists, freelancers, performers and industry professionals across the region to ensure our work remains as accessible and inclusive as possible, reaching as many people as we can.

## Mission

The Mercury creates and shares stories that are exhilarating, revelatory and relevant. Through the reinvention of classic texts and the creation of bold, new writing, we believe that the transformative power of theatre can enrich the lives of our community.

The Mercury is a significant regional developer of new talent, working with a range of partners across the arts, education and creative industries to deliver a studio programme and a learning, participation and professional development programme aimed at nurturing the next generation of theatre makers.

Everything we do is driven by our values of quality, innovation, diversity, and connection.

We are Colchester. We are for everyone.

## Vision

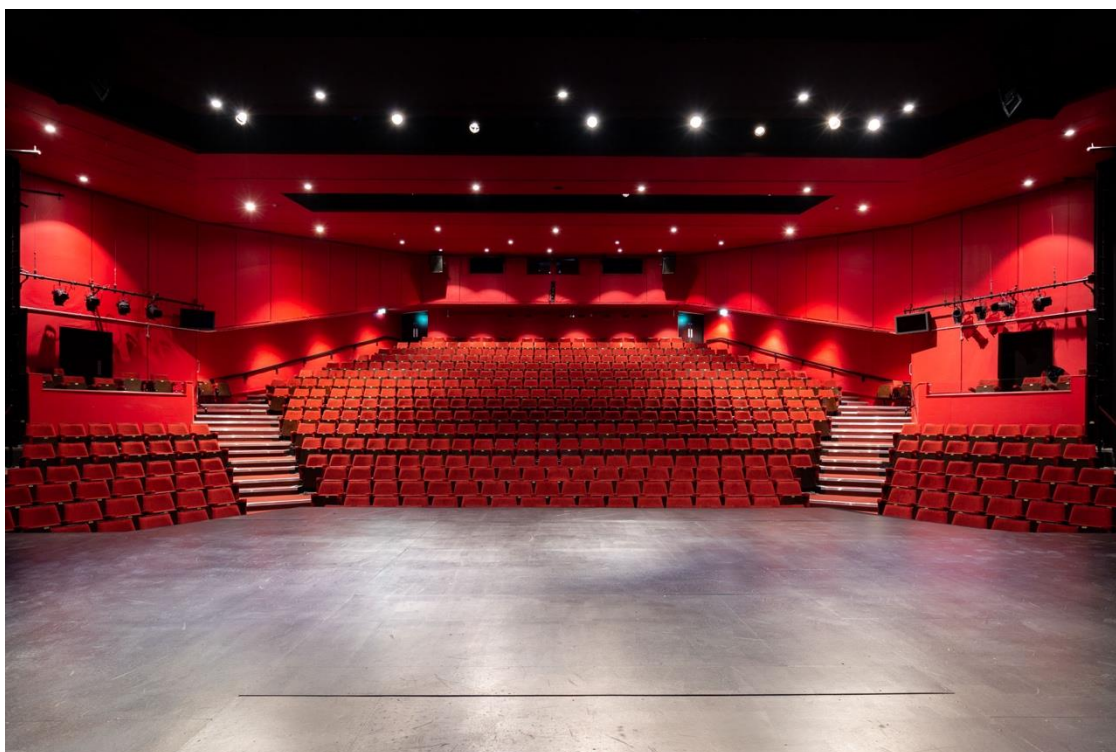
Our vision is of the Mercury as a vibrant, welcoming artistic hub at the heart of the cultural life of Colchester and Essex; a place where the diverse communities of the city and its surrounding region can come together to experience exceptional live theatre and a rich programme of other performing arts; a place where anyone, regardless of background, can get involved with our creative processes and start to realise their own creative potential.



Our vision is of the Mercury as a strategically important part of the national theatre ecology and the wider creative sector, providing an important regional pipeline for creative and technical talent and contributing to the range and quality of middle-scale touring theatre, with a particular focus on drama and work for children and families.

## **Mercury Governance and Staffing**

The Mercury is a registered charity and a private limited company. As such, we are overseen by a non-executive Board of Trustees which is chaired by Rob West. The Board delegate day-to-day management of the theatre to its Executive Team: Steve Mannix (Executive Director and Joint CEO) and Tracey Childs (Executive Producer and Joint CEO). In 2019, Ryan McBryde joined the leadership team as Creative Director. We have a talented and dedicated team of around 77 full time equivalent staff when the building is in full operation, and we employ numerous freelance artists, practitioners and casual staff.



## **Finance**

The Mercury Theatre is a charitable, non-profit organisation that exists for the benefit of the local community. The finance department works across all areas of the organisation, ensuring that all finance aspects of the Mercury's activities are recorded and paid in a timely and efficient manner.

Our activities include our own productions in the theatre and studio alongside performances that visit Colchester as part of their tours. We also run a café bar where we serve a wide selection of cakes, pastries, snacks and light meals, alongside a range of teas, coffees, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages. Alongside this we hire available spaces to community and commercial organisations for celebrations, conferences, meetings and showcases.

Throughout, we strive to offer a warm friendly welcome to everyone – whether they are coming in to book tickets, watch a show or visiting the town, our accessible café bar caters for all.



## Living in Colchester

Boasting strong commuter links, a world class arts scene and charming old rustic pubs serving up gastro delights, the list of reasons to move to Colchester is endless.

Renowned for being Britain's first city and former capital of Roman Britain, its rich history dates back over 2000 years and is ripe for exploring. Colchester Castle is one of the standout attractions as one of England's most significant heritage sites.

For a city steeped in so much history, it is surprisingly contemporary in its outlook, providing residents with all the amenities we've come to appreciate from modern living. Foodies will rejoice at the plethora of food options available - these range from budget dining to world class Michelin star restaurants - and shoppers are presented with a mixture niche independent shops neighbouring the usual big-name retail giants.

Colchester is home to an enviable range of attractions which provide a wide selection of things to do. Colchester Zoo is listed in the top 2 zoos in the UK and the 11th best globally. It is also home to many rare and endangered species and stages late-night meet and greets. Alongside the Mercury, there's also the Firstsite art gallery, the Colchester Arts Centre and the new Curzon cinema.

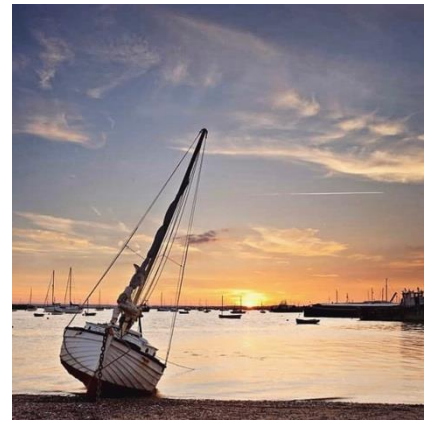
Colchester is surrounded by the green pastures of the picturesque Essex and Suffolk countryside, 135 square miles of coast and countryside. The idyllic villages of Wivenhoe and Dedham, famed as Constable country, are a short drive away, and you're less than 25 minutes away from Mersea Island, a postcard perfect seaside resort with a world-famous oyster bar.

Situated in the north east of Essex, Colchester has a population of 195,000 and is extremely popular with commuters, because of its excellent train links to London Liverpool Street - only 50 minutes away. The A12 takes you straight into London and Stansted airport is only 30 miles away.

It is perhaps stating the obvious but the cost of living in Colchester is substantially cheaper than London. Rent for a one-bedroom apartment is approximately 58% cheaper than the capital.

With a balance of urban city lifestyle and a rural living, there are many reasons why Colchester is so desirable.

For more information about our wonderful city check out <https://www.visitcolchester.com>



## Job Description

Job Title	<b>Finance Officer</b>
Department	Finance
Responsible to	Finance Manager
Key working relationships	Finance Director Executive Director Senior Management Team Head of Customer Experience Producer

### Purpose of the Post

The Finance Officer will assist in the smooth running of the finance department of the Mercury.

### Main Duties

To be responsible for:

- the accurate and timely usage of all finance systems - inputting data into PS Financials, cash handling, bank reconciliations and purchase ledger.
- Preparation of weekly and monthly payroll.

### Responsibilities

To:

- work with the Finance Director to ensure that all finance systems and spreadsheets are maintained, accurate and kept up to date
- process weekly and monthly payroll accurately and efficiently
- report payroll requirements to HMRC as scheduled
- process, monitor and reconcile pension contributions as scheduled
- take responsibility for the daily inputting of accurate financial data on to PS Financials
- take responsibility for accurate cash handling, float reconciliation and daily banking
- take responsibility for credit card reconciliations and BACS payments
- assist with petty cash disbursements and reconciliation
- ensure daily bank reconciliation is carried out and recorded
- maintain the paperless filing system for all financial documents
- take responsibility for sales and purchase ledger transactions when required
- respond to correspondence on behalf of the Finance Department as necessary
- carry out routine accounting tasks and provide support to the Finance Director

### General duties

To:

- be fully informed of all of the Mercury's products, services and facilities
- maintain an excellent working knowledge of the Mercury's wider artistic programme including its commercial activities, Creative engagement and talent development activities.
- participate actively as a member of the Finance team
- attend and contribute to staff meetings and/or training sessions
- maintain positive and effective relationships with colleagues across the organisation
- adhere to all Mercury policies included Safeguarding, Health and Safety and environmental policies
- maximise income and minimise expenditure whilst ensuring high quality delivery
- deputise for other finance team members when necessary to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of all the team's activities
- Undertake any further duties as may be reasonably requested

*This job description is a guide to the nature of the work required of this position. It is neither wholly comprehensive nor restrictive and does not preclude change or development that might be required in the future. It does not form part of the contract of employment.*

## Person Specification

### Personal Qualities

- Self-disciplined, organised and self-motivating
- Ability to work in a team, contributing ideas, supporting other team members and taking on a lead role on projects as required
- Adaptable and receptive to new ideas and initiatives
- Ability to work under pressure and manage competing deadlines
- Creative flair
- Excellent interpersonal skills with an ability to listen, build rapport and communicate with people at all levels
- A competent level of literacy and numeric skills

### Professional Competencies

#### Essential

- Knowledge and experience of accountancy routines
- Experience of payroll management
- Experience of working with leading finance packages e.g. PSF/Iris, Sage, Quickbooks
- Experience of bank and cash reconciliation
- Excellent IT literacy with knowledge of Microsoft Office (particularly Excel)
- Absolute trustworthiness in relation to the handling of cash
- Excellent time keeping
- Accurate and thorough approach to tasks and workload
- Strong administrative and organisational skills
- Excellent timekeeping
- Flexibility with regards to working hours

#### Desirable

- Experience of PS Financials and Sage Payroll
- Knowledge of Spektrix or other box office software
- Knowledge of Artifax software
- Relevant experience of working in a charity, regional theatre or arts environment
- Clean driving license
- A strong interest in the theatre and/or the arts
- Knowledge of Data Protection laws

### Outline of Terms and Conditions

<b>Salary:</b>	£23,634 per annum pro rata (£18,907.20) per annum,
<b>Hours:</b>	30 hours per week over 4 or 5 days. Additional hours may be necessary in order to fulfil the post's requirements for which Time Off in Lieu is available.
<b>Annual Leave:</b>	Annual leave entitlement is 20 days for each holiday year plus statutory Bank Holidays, pro rata. When you complete one year of service, your holiday entitlement will increase by one day and each year thereafter to a maximum of 25 days per annum.pro rata.
<b>Probationary Period:</b>	6 months
<b>Notice Period:</b>	two months by either party in writing after an initial probationary period during which time the notice period is one month by either party.
<b>DBS Check:</b>	A DBS check will be required.
<b>Pension:</b>	Colchester Mercury Theatre Ltd operates an auto enrolment pension scheme. Full details of the scheme are available from the Finance Department



## Other Benefits

- The company offers an interest free season ticket loan.
- Discount on drinks in our café bar.
- Access to the discounted staff menu in the café bar
- The company encourages attendance at performances with an allocation of tickets to employees (subject to availability and the Mercury's ticket policy)
- Discount on selected Creative Engagement activities and workshops.

## How to apply

To apply for this post, please send a letter of no more than 2 sides of A4, explaining what attracts you to this position, and evidence of your ability to meet the job description and person specification.

In addition, with your application, please supply:

- Your CV
- Names and contact details for two employment/professional referees, however, we will not take up references until an offer has been made.

Applications should be submitted via Staffology: [here](#) by **10:00am on Wednesday, 27 March 2024**. Interviews will take place on Thursday, 11 April 2024.

*The Mercury Theatre is an equal opportunities employer and actively promotes diversity in the staff team and family friendly working. We welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their race, sex, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.*

Please let us know if you need this information in a different format by contacting Valentina Borja H. by phone on 01206 577006 or by email on: [recruitment@mercurytheatre.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@mercurytheatre.co.uk)

