Marketing: Propel

February – June 2027

A practical introduction to theatre marketing, creative campaigns and reaching new audiences.

Placement: Approximately two/three days per month
Department: Marketing
Productions: As You Like It (more or less) and The Hound of the Baskervilles

Intro and aims

This Propel placement will provide an opportunity for a young person to become part of the Stephen Joseph Theatre's marketing department, gaining practical experience of how a professional theatre promotes its productions, engages with audiences and communicates its work.

Over five months, the young person will work alongside the marketing team, following two very different production campaigns:

- **As You Like It (more or less)** – exploring how we market a Shakespeare comedy with a distinctive 1970s setting, music, romance and a festival atmosphere.
- **The Hound of the Baskervilles** – exploring how we promote a much-loved classic mystery, combining the appeal of Sherlock Holmes with comedy and theatrical entertainment.

Alongside these production campaigns, the young person will undertake a special project exploring how the SJT can better engage younger audiences through social media, digital content and creative marketing.

We want the placement to be practical, creative and enjoyable, giving the young person the opportunity to contribute ideas and develop skills while gaining a genuine understanding of working in a theatre marketing department.

Monthly Propel Programme

MONTH	THEME	ACTIVITIES	PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENT(S)	OUTCOME
FEBRUARY: **Getting to know the SJT and As You Like It**	**Theme: Understanding theatre marketing, productions and audiences.** The first month will introduce the young person to the marketing department and give them an understanding of how we promote productions and communicate with audiences.	**Day 1 – Introduction to the marketing department** **Activities:** • Meet the marketing team and understand everyone's roles and responsibilities. • Introduction to the SJT, its history, programme and audiences. • Tour of the theatre and an introduction to its different spaces. • Explore the SJT website, social media channels, email marketing and printed materials. • Understand how marketing supports ticket sales, audience development and the theatre's wider work. • Explore the customer journey, from discovering a production to booking a ticket.	Research three theatre or entertainment marketing campaigns and identify what makes them effective.	An understanding of the SJT, the marketing department, the As You Like It campaign and the importance of understanding audiences.

		Day 2 – As You Like It: The production and its creative identity **Key milestone: Attend the As You Like It company readthrough – February (date TBC).** This will provide an opportunity to experience the beginning of the production process and understand how the creative team brings a show to life. **Activities:** • Attend the company readthrough. • Explore the story, characters and themes of the production. • Understand the 1970s setting and how this informs the marketing campaign. • Discuss the production's key selling points with the marketing team. • Identify potential audiences, including Shakespeare enthusiasts, comedy audiences, younger theatre-goers and those attracted by music and nostalgia. • Consider how we can make Shakespeare feel accessible and exciting to different audiences.	Develop ten potential marketing messages or social media ideas inspired by the production and readthrough.	

MARCH: **Marketing As You Like It**	**Theme: Social media, content creation and live campaign delivery.** March will focus on the practical delivery of the As You Like It campaign, including the opportunity to experience a production press night.	**Day 1 – Social media and creative content** **Activities:** • Review the As You Like It marketing campaign. • Explore how Facebook, Instagram and other digital platforms are used to reach audiences. • Understand the differences between promotional content and engaging content. • Explore photography, video, graphics, captions and calls to action. • Look at how to create content that encourages people to book tickets.	Create a small package of promotional content for As You Like It, including: • An Instagram story sequence. • A Facebook promotional post. • A short-form video concept. • A post highlighting the production's 1970s setting. • A post highlighting the comedy, music and romance.	Experience of a live production campaign, social media content creation and a professional press night.
		Day 2 – Preparing for press night **Key milestone: As You Like It press night – 23 March 2027** Explore the role of press night in a production's marketing campaign. **Preparation activities:** • Understand the purpose of press night.	.	

		• Explore the role of critics, journalists, reviewers and invited guests. • Look at how photography and video can be used to capture a production. • Understand how reviews and audience reactions can support future marketing. • Develop ideas for press-night social media content.		
		23 March – Press night experience Where appropriate and under supervision: • Observe the marketing team's press-night activity. • Assist with approved social media content and behind-the-scenes coverage. • Understand how press and invited guests are welcomed. • Explore how the team captures the atmosphere of opening night. • See how audience reactions and reviews can be incorporated into the campaign.		

		Young audience project – TikTok and short-form video Explore how we can make theatre more engaging to younger audiences.	Develop five short-form video ideas for As You Like It, such as: • Meet the cast: quick-fire questions. • A 1970s-inspired trend or challenge. • Behind the scenes of rehearsals. • What happens at a theatre readthrough? • Five reasons why you should see this show.	
APRIL: **Evaluating As You Like It and introducing The Hound of the Baskervilles**	**Theme: Campaign evaluation, audience research and understanding different productions.** April will provide an opportunity to reflect on the As You Like It campaign before moving on to a very different production.	**Day 1 – Evaluating the As You Like It campaign** **Activities:** • Review the campaign from announcement through to performance. • Explore social media reach and engagement. • Look at website traffic and ticket sales information where appropriate.	Produce a short campaign evaluation identifying: • Three successful elements of the campaign. • The content or activity that attracted the most interest. • Three things we could learn for future campaigns.	Experience of campaign evaluation, audience research and understanding how different productions require different marketing approaches.

		• Understand the difference between awareness, engagement and conversion. • Explore the role of reviews and audience recommendations. • Discuss which elements of the campaign worked particularly well.		
		Day 2 – Introducing The Hound of the Baskervilles **Activities:** • Explore the story of Sherlock Holmes and the original Arthur Conan Doyle novel. • Read the production synopsis and explore the adaptation. • Identify the mystery, comedy and suspense within the production. • Explore the appeal of Sherlock Holmes to different generations. • Consider potential audiences, including mystery and crime enthusiasts, comedy audiences and people looking for summer entertainment. • Review the existing marketing materials and campaign approach.	Create three audience profiles for The Hound of the Baskervilles and suggest how we might reach each group.	

		Young audience project – Understanding what makes young people visit theatres Explore the motivations and barriers that influence young people's decisions to visit theatres. **Activities:** • Research why some young people visit theatres and why others don't. • Consider barriers such as ticket prices, awareness, confidence and perceptions of theatre. • Look at examples of organisations successfully engaging younger audiences. • Explore what makes a theatre feel welcoming and accessible.	Develop a short survey or informal research exercise to explore young people's attitudes towards visiting the SJT. Possible questions: • When did you last visit a theatre? • What would encourage you to go more often? • Where would you expect to hear about a new show? • What social media content would interest you? • What might put you off visiting? Findings will be shared with the marketing team.	
MAY: **Developing The Hound of the**	**Theme: Creative campaign development, digital marketing and reaching younger audiences.** May will concentrate on developing the campaign for	**Day 1 – Understanding audiences and developing marketing messages** **Activities:** • Review the production's marketing materials.	Develop three different approaches to promoting the production: 1. Sherlock Holmes and mystery enthusiasts.	A collection of creative marketing materials and a better understanding of how to tailor content to different generations.

Baskervilles campaign	The Hound of the Baskervilles and exploring how we can make the production appeal to different audience groups.	• Identify the key selling points and messages. • Explore how to balance the mystery of Sherlock Holmes with the comedy of the adaptation. • Consider how we might attract people who don't regularly visit the theatre. • Explore opportunities for engaging younger audiences. • Discuss how we can make a classic story feel relevant to a new generation.	2. Comedy and entertainment audiences. 3. Younger audiences looking for an exciting and entertaining experience.	
		Day 2 – Creative content and campaign planning **Activities:** • Explore how visual identity and design support a production campaign. • Look at photography, video and graphics. • Understand the importance of tone of voice. • Explore how content can be adapted for different social media platforms.	Create a mini promotional package for The Hound of the Baskervilles, including: • One social media graphic. • Two promotional captions. • Three Instagram story ideas. • One short-form video concept.	

		Young audience project – Creating content for younger audiences Develop a youth-focused digital campaign for The Hound of the Baskervilles. Explore: • TikTok and Instagram Reels. • Behind-the-scenes content. • Quick-fire cast interviews. • Humorous content and storytelling. • Interactive polls and questions. • Content that encourages people to share posts with friends.	Create three TikTok or Reel concepts, one short video script and a series of Instagram story ideas aimed specifically at younger audiences.	
JUNE: **Building anticipation for The Hound of the Baskervilles**	**Theme: Campaign delivery, production readthrough and final project.** June will bring together the skills developed throughout the placement and allow the young person to experience another important stage of the production process.	**Day 1 – The Hound of the Baskervilles company readthrough** **Key milestone: Attend the Hound of the Baskervilles readthrough – June (date TBC).** This will mirror the February experience and allow the young person to see how a different production begins its creative journey. **Activities:** • Attend the company readthrough.	Identify five social media or content ideas inspired by the readthrough.	A completed creative marketing portfolio and a presentation to the marketing team.

		• Meet members of the creative team and cast where appropriate. • Explore how the production's tone, characters and comedy influence the marketing approach. • Identify opportunities for promotional content. • Discuss how the campaign will develop as the production approaches opening.		
		Day 2 – Final campaign preparation and presentation **Activities:** • Review the Hound of the Baskervilles marketing campaign. • Explore how content is planned and scheduled. • Understand how social media, email marketing, website content and press activity work together. • Look at how opening-night and press-night content is prepared. • Reflect on the two production campaigns and the differences between them.	Develop a proposed two-week social media content calendar for The Hound of the Baskervilles.	

Final project – The SJT through a young person's eyes

Bring together the research, observations and creative ideas developed throughout the placement.

The young person will prepare a short presentation to the marketing team entitled:

'Reaching the Next Generation: How can the SJT appeal to younger audiences?'

The presentation should include:

1. What they have learnt about how young people discover and engage with entertainment.
2. Which social media platforms they believe the SJT should use more effectively.
3. Examples of content that would encourage younger audiences to engage with the theatre.
4. Ideas for making As You Like It and The Hound of the Baskervilles appeal to younger audiences.
5. Three practical recommendations that the SJT could consider implementing.