

*'Tall Stories sets the benchmark
for children's theatre' - Sunday Times*



**Tall Stories Short Course:
Directing Storytelling Theatre**

Background Information

Tall Stories – where everything is possible

Tall Stories is a registered charity that tours the UK and internationally with award-winning shows for family audiences. We bring great stories to life and are internationally recognised for our exciting blend of storytelling theatre, original music, innovative puppetry and lots of laughter.

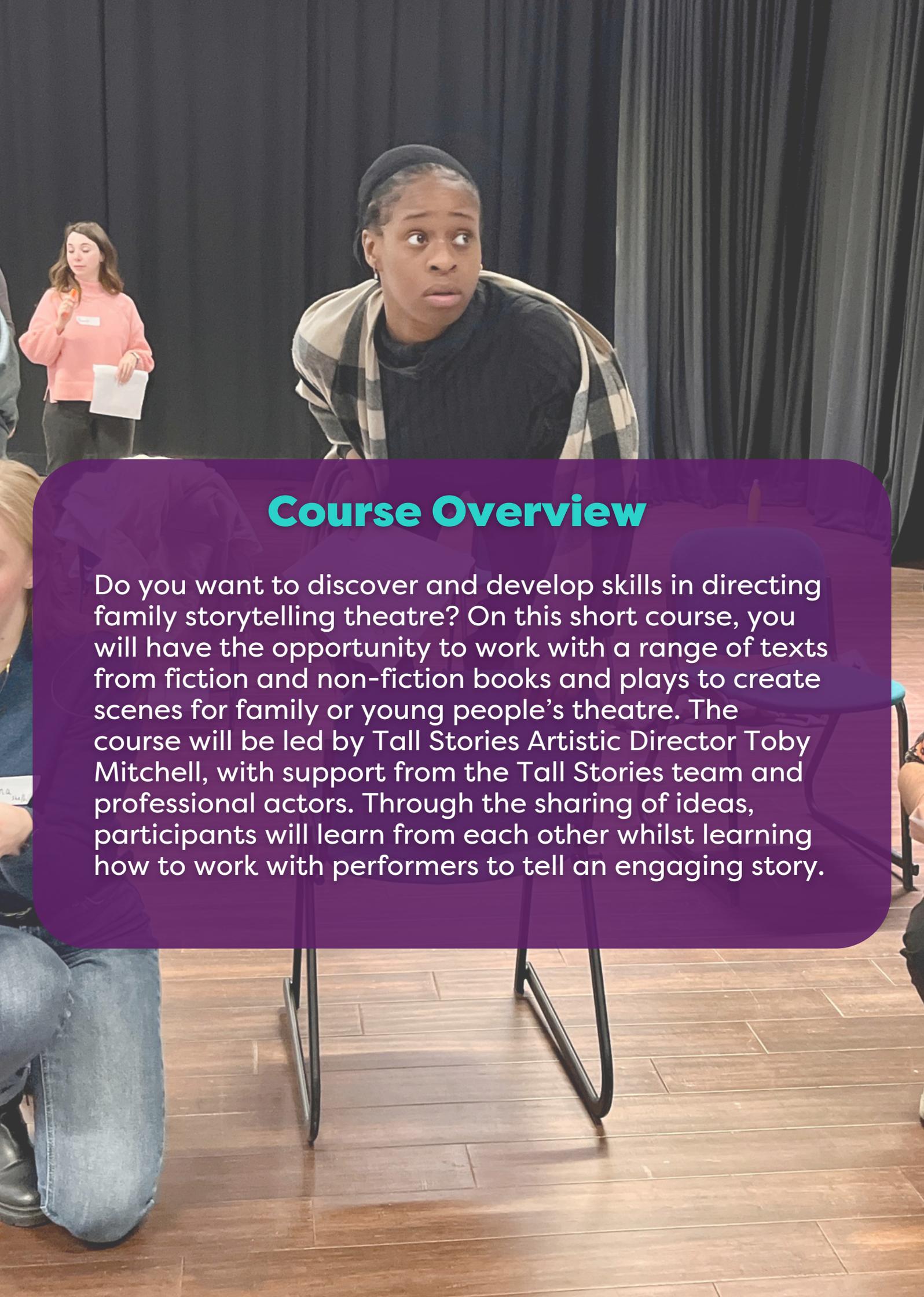
We are based at the Tall Stories Studio, a step-free 80 seat space situated in Islington Central Library, London. As well as being our administrative home, the space also plays host to preview performances. To increase our impact in the sector, we also run artist development programmes and deliver wider community activities to complement our programme of on-stage work.

We create opportunities for everyone to get involved with theatre and offer accessible performances (including but not limited to integrated BSL, audio descriptions and in relaxed environments). We also provide free shows and experiences as part of our commitment to removing barriers that might otherwise prevent children and families from experiencing live theatre.



Our Promises

- We keep it simple, do try this at home
- We put a pause on life to transport you into another world
- Everything we do has a touch of magic
- We invite children and their grown-ups to feel and talk
- We encourage play and silliness
- We open up the wonder of Tall Stories for all children
- We value and care for one another

A woman with a surprised expression is the central focus, wearing a black and white plaid shirt over a black top. She is in a workshop or rehearsal space with dark curtains in the background. To her left, another woman in a pink hoodie is visible, holding a paper and a drink. The floor is made of light-colored wood. A purple rounded rectangle is overlaid on the bottom half of the image, containing text.

Course Overview

Do you want to discover and develop skills in directing family storytelling theatre? On this short course, you will have the opportunity to work with a range of texts from fiction and non-fiction books and plays to create scenes for family or young people's theatre. The course will be led by Tall Stories Artistic Director Toby Mitchell, with support from the Tall Stories team and professional actors. Through the sharing of ideas, participants will learn from each other whilst learning how to work with performers to tell an engaging story.

When and where is the course?

The course will be held over three days on Saturday 31 January, Saturday 7 and Saturday 14 February 2026, 10am to 6pm, at the Tall Stories Studio in Islington.

Who is the course for?

We are inviting applications from emerging directors interested in learning more about family storytelling theatre, aged 18 or over. Seven places will be offered out of eight with the eighth place being offered through commendation from another Tall Stories artist development application process.

You should have experience of theatre directing and/or assistant directing but as this is an introductory course, no family storytelling theatre experience is needed.

We are committed to identifying and reducing barriers which may ordinarily exclude people from continued professional development. We particularly encourage applications from people whose backgrounds or lived experience are underrepresented in previous applications to our artist development opportunities this includes people from the global majority, carers and from low socio-economic backgrounds.

We are also interested to hear from directors who live in Islington and neighbouring North London boroughs.





What will we cover?

Day One

Introductory day. Participants look at examples of direct narration and family storytelling theatre, working with a short text to discover ways in which Tall Stories creates shows.

Day Two

Participants share ideas and thoughts developed from the previous week. Participants experiment with a longer text, directing a two- or three-person scene, working with professional actors. They will receive feedback and support from the Tall Stories team.

Day Three

Participants continue to rehearse their two- or three-person scene, working again with professional actors. Participants will take turns to direct and assistant direct for each other. Scenes will be shown to the Tall Stories team, and feedback and support is given. This will be followed by debrief sessions for participants.

What do you need to bring?

Day One

Participants do not need to bring anything. Tall Stories will provide narrative texts written in the first or third person for everyone to work with. In family storytelling theatre, direct address narration is used to talk directly to the audience, to involve them and guide them through the story.

Here is an example of first-person narration/family storytelling:

**I sat there with Sally. We sat there, we two.
And I said, 'How I wish we had something to do!'**

Here is an example of third-person narration/family storytelling:

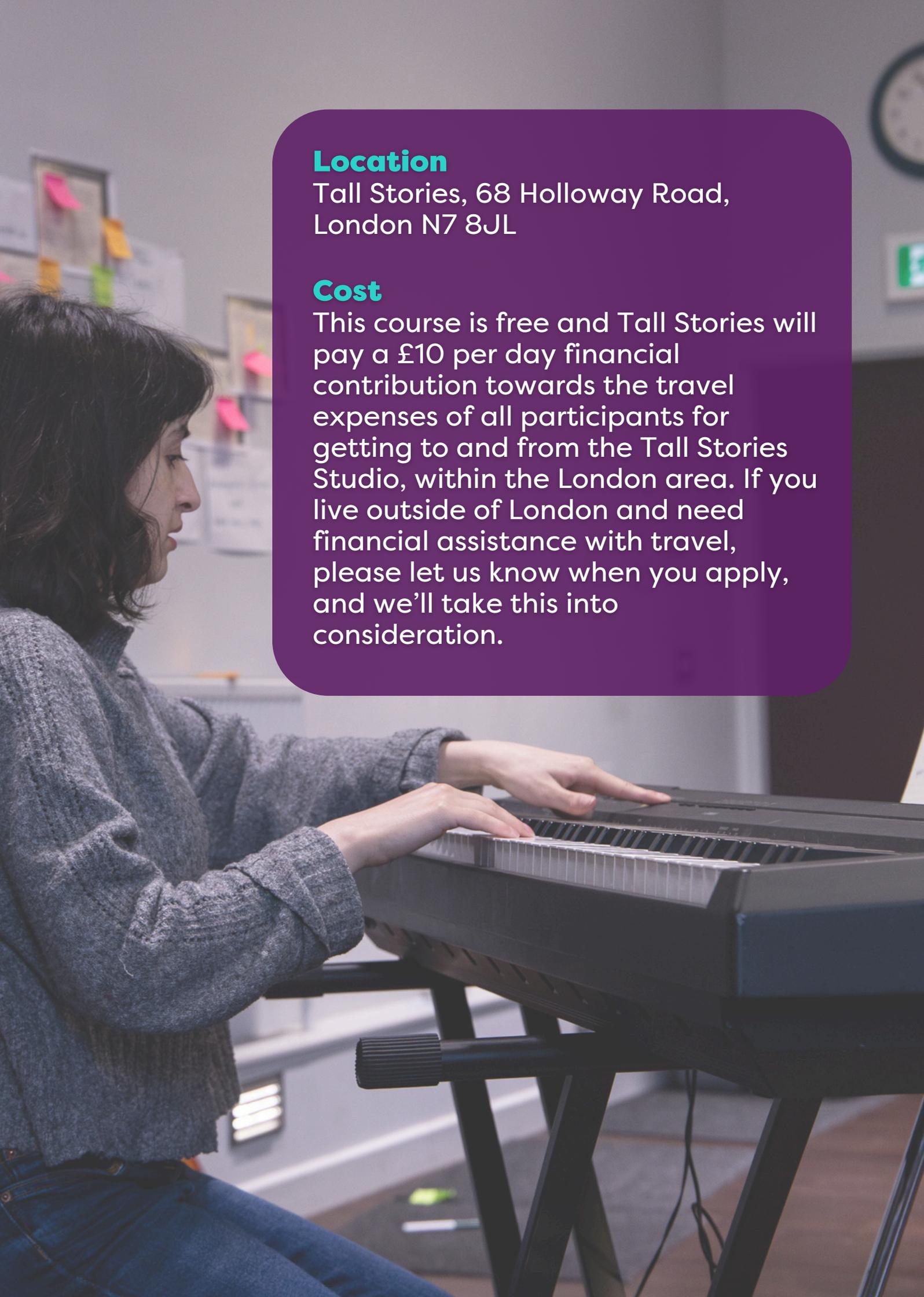
Alice followed the White Rabbit down the rabbit-hole, then found herself falling down a very deep well...

Day Two

We would like participants to bring a piece of narrative text that they would like to work on, influenced by new knowledge they have gained from the week before. We encourage participants to bring text that resonates with them, or which is the kind of work they would like to direct. The text should be up to two minutes (when performed) long.

Day Three

Participants will continue to work on their texts from Day Two.



Location

Tall Stories, 68 Holloway Road,
London N7 8JL

Cost

This course is free and Tall Stories will pay a £10 per day financial contribution towards the travel expenses of all participants for getting to and from the Tall Stories Studio, within the London area. If you live outside of London and need financial assistance with travel, please let us know when you apply, and we'll take this into consideration.



How to apply

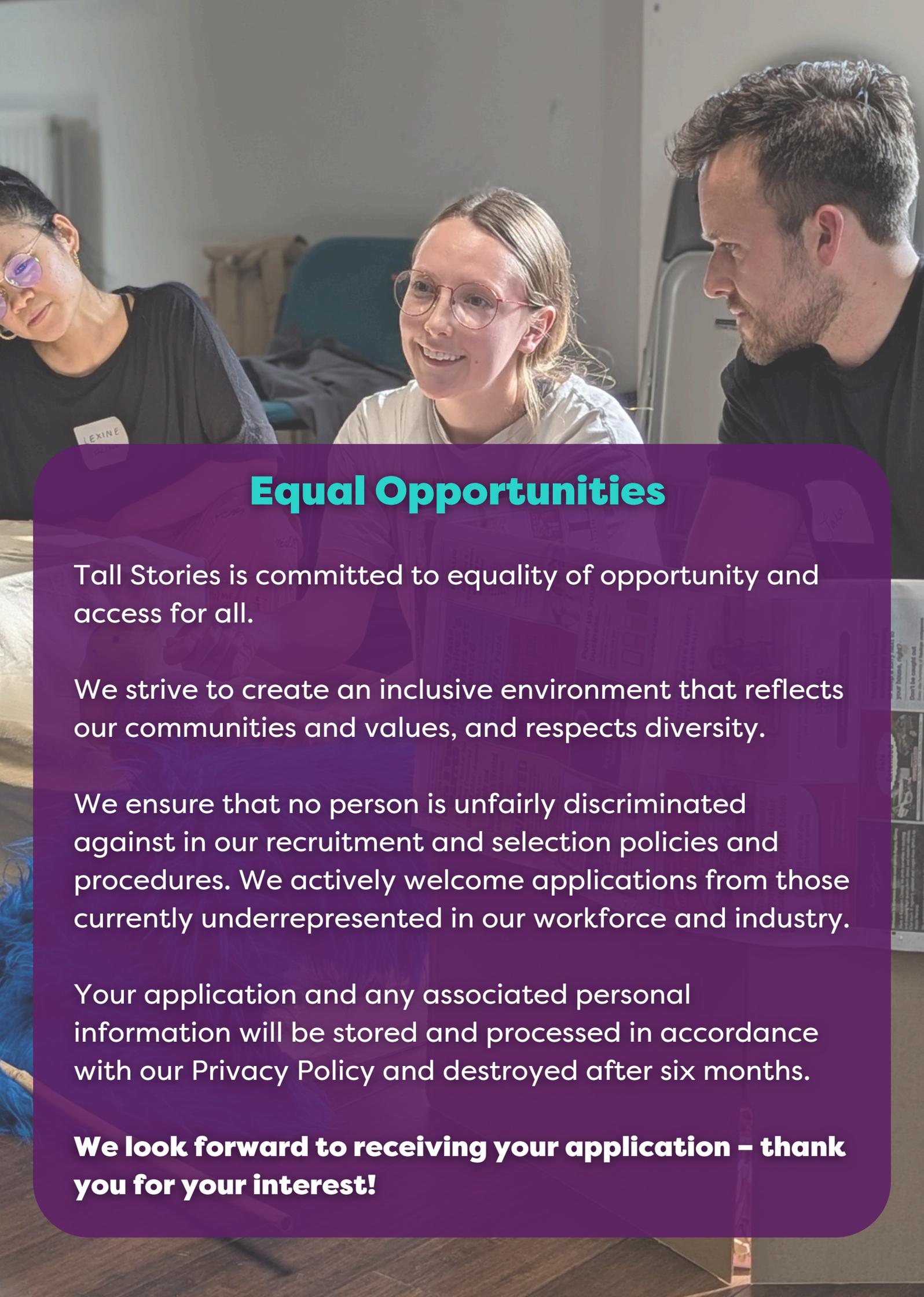
Please [click here](#) for more information and for the application form.

The questions may be answered in writing or by submitting a video or audio file. All formats will be equally considered.

Please apply as soon as you can, but no later than 9am Monday 8 December 2025

All applicants will know the outcome of their application no later than Monday 15 December 2025

If you have any questions, or if you would like this call out information or the application form in another format, feel free to contact recruitment@tallstories.org.uk or 020 8348 0080.

A photograph of three people in a meeting. On the left, a woman with glasses and a name tag that says 'LEXINE' is looking towards the center. In the middle, a woman with glasses is smiling and looking towards the right. On the right, a man with a beard is looking towards the center. They are all in a professional setting, possibly a conference room or office.

Equal Opportunities

Tall Stories is committed to equality of opportunity and access for all.

We strive to create an inclusive environment that reflects our communities and values, and respects diversity.

We ensure that no person is unfairly discriminated against in our recruitment and selection policies and procedures. We actively welcome applications from those currently underrepresented in our workforce and industry.

Your application and any associated personal information will be stored and processed in accordance with our Privacy Policy and destroyed after six months.

We look forward to receiving your application – thank you for your interest!