

Partnerships

Globe Education and Deutsche Bank

Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank, a 10-year-old flagship project which makes the Bard's work more accessible for young people, has been extended for another three years. Patrick Spottiswoode, director of Globe Education at Shakespeare's Globe, and Lareena Hilton, global head of brand communications and CSR at Deutsche Bank, discuss its success

Vital stats

Partnership Formed in 2002

Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank Launched in 2006

Tickets More than 20,000 free tickets a year are offered to all state secondary schools in London and Birmingham

Audiences Over 137,000 pupils across both cities have attended a Shakespeare performance for free since the project began

Staff engagement Since 2014, Deutsche Bank employees have purchased more than 4,000 tickets

How many shows? 139 performances over 10 years – for many young people, it was their first experience of live theatre, let alone a Shakespeare production

Words
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Patrick Spottiswoode Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank provides young people with free access to a full-scale Shakespeare production that is created specially for them. The idea is to engage them more with Shakespeare and to think playfully about a work that they may have to study at school.

Lareena Hilton It's an opportunity to open their minds to a cultural experience, giving them an opportunity to engage with the Globe and a text in a way that Shakespeare intended.

Patrick Spottiswoode It involves three weeks of production although in advance of that we have workshops for teachers and in schools, and our online resources are used by students around the world.

Lareena Hilton The partnership started in 2002 with a smaller education-based programme. Back then it was about developing something that was aligned to educational needs and could bring Shakespeare to life, and that has continued to grow over the years. We're proud of the fact we innovate; we don't just do the same thing.

Patrick Spottiswoode We've encouraged each other to be bolder. Our first project focused on sonnets with students writing sonnets about bridges – both literal and metaphorical – in their community. But when Shakespeare was made compulsory at Key Stage 3, we felt we should offer students the opportunity to see their first live Shakespeare production at the Globe. This should not be small-scale but have the same production qualities as a show in our theatre season. The only difference is that it is high octane and shorter, to fit in with the school day.

Lareena Hilton Our role is to fund the programme and provide

direction on the educational impact to beneficiaries. We ensure that it supports our global Born to Be youth engagement strategy and secures a social return for the bank, as opposed to a financial one. So we worked intensively with the Globe on that basis, but we are not experts in this space so we leave them to do what they know about best.

Patrick Spottiswoode We each have our own spheres of expertise and ambitions for the project. We talk and meet to make sure that Playing Shakespeare is fulfilling

“We make sure that the programme is fulfilling both our missions – we draw on each other's expertise and that's the magic of it”

Patrick Spottiswoode

both our missions and their core objectives. We draw on each other's expertise and that's the magic of it.

Lareena Hilton My team are interacting with Patrick's constantly in terms of what's coming up; how do we get it out of the door, how do we get our people engaged so they buy tickets, how many performances? We do this all the way to post-production.

Patrick Spottiswoode As soon as the production is over, we're talking about next year. We've done so many innovative things over the years. We suggested together that we should invite Deutsche Bank staff and families along. The complimentary tickets were gone in about three hours, which was mind-blowing. Two years ago, the staff were asked to pay for their tickets and they're still buying them, so that's been a real vote of confidence for us.

Lareena Hilton The idea of asking employees to pay was a risk, but the tickets sell extremely quickly. It enables employees to experience the vibrancy and impact first hand. Their contribution also enables more young people to attend for free.

Patrick Spottiswoode It was clear that the partnership wasn't just about a bank writing a cheque – it was also about engaging the staff. Support of this magnitude from Deutsche Bank is amazing.

Lareena Hilton It gets harder for funding to be agreed because it's a tough environment, so we have to prove its strength, its impact, and the fact that we can open doors to these schoolkids and enable them to come for free. It's by no means easy, so we work very hard to ensure that each time we can improve and prove that it has continued to scale or innovate.

Patrick Spottiswoode The logistical challenge is to show 1,500 young people to their seats! It is a military operation. The show has to start on time as students have to be on their coaches to get back home.

Lareena Hilton Getting each group into a different part of the theatre must be done with warmth and a welcome. That is an art and we are so proud of the teams who do that. Looking forward, we're going to be spending a lot of time thinking about creating a lasting legacy. We're not ready to let go of it, so we will definitely be looking to see how we can continue to expand the project.

Patrick Spottiswoode This project develops and grows but its essence remains constant. It's why it inspires us as much as the students. **Ⓛ**

To find out more about Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank, visit playingshakespeare.org

Backing the Bard: Lareena Hilton of Deutsche Bank with Globe Education's Patrick Spottiswoode at Shakespeare's Globe in London

