

Teaching Artist Job Description



Organization Summary

The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company's (US) mission is to mentor, educate, and enrich youth in under-resourced communities through the creation of collaborative original theatre. Our mission powers our vision of a world where all youth are given the opportunities and support they need to succeed; and to be heard, valued and respected. We strive to be a bridge that helps youth make positive life choices.

Founded in the wake of the 1992 LA Uprising, US has grown from a small, volunteer-led youth intervention program into a recognized leader in arts education, youth development, mentorship, and community building. With the launch of a new Alumni Residency, we now serve 1,600+ participants annually via 7 program models that use theatre-arts education & mentorship to mitigate the underlying environmental risk factors that threaten healthy youth development. Each modeled after our core Youth Theatre Residency Program and reimagined for virtual delivery during our health crisis. US programs collectively provide holistic prevention & intervention benefits and open educational/career pathways for LA's most underserved youth. Please visit our website to learn more about our organization: www.theunusalsuspects.org

The Unusual Suspects is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion and strongly encourages people of color, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and those with protected class backgrounds to apply. We value the individuals that we hire and look forward to creating a positive, diverse work environment for all identities.

Job Summary

The Teaching Artist (TA) is a leader for our programming in the schools and afterschool hours, community centers, youth detention centers, parks, and other sites we serve, and plays a critical role in the success of the programs. They take on a variety of responsibilities within our programming including; facilitator, mentor, coach, actor and teacher.

The Unusual Suspects TA should have established experience in theatre arts or playwriting disciplines and be passionate about teaching school-aged children in public school settings, community centers, parks, and detention centers. Our team of TA's are dedicated to creating a safe learning environment, fostering prosocial development, modeling positive behavior, and supporting our participants' accomplishments. Working hand-in-hand with school administrators, teachers, and other partners, our TA's are responsible for all daily program goals.

The Teaching Artist role is a non-exempt, part-time, temporary position and will report to a US Program Manager.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Brings theatre to life and cultivates a creative space for youth to find their voice, make friends in an ensemble, and deepen their appreciation for the art of their cultures and communities.
- Implements US arts integrated curriculum and or create lessons to support social and emotional development through theatre arts instruction, both in-person and online
- Collaborates with Programs team, US Teaching Artists, and other US staff
- Proficiency in one or all of the following theatre arts disciplines; acting, improvisation, playwriting, movement, vocal production or technical theatre production
- Ability to succeed in a hybrid work environment, both in-person and virtual (Zoom, MS Teams, etc.)
- Guides students to full-scale culminating presentations, both in-person and virtual
- Allows students to "share out" what they have learned and reflect on their learning at each workshop
- Plan and establish a safe learning environment for all participants and artists

- Participates in pre-plan and post-planning meetings with co-teaching artists, US staff, and or mentors
- Documents workshop agenda and successes and challenges for each session and share with administrative staff
- Reports weekly to manager and/or administrative staff any workshop concerns including any issues with; lessons, learning, attendance, and the facility
- Is committed to on-going professional development as an arts practitioner and educator, and to participate in US community events
- Submits participant attendance and sign-in sheets, and other required documents in a timely manner in accordance with the administrative deadlines
- Adheres to US guidelines & policies and to the guidelines & policies of the facility, reporting any incidents or problems to US leadership and the school or camp management
- Is a positive role model to students, school staff, Volunteer Mentors, and fellow Teaching Artists
- Performs other duties as needed

Desirable Skills & Qualifications:

- A Bachelor degree (BA, BS, etc.) in a related field is preferred, but not required
- A minimum of two (2) years of working experience in a similar role!
- Works well with people in various communities, institutional and governmental organizations
- Cultural competency to work with individuals from diverse backgrounds
- Work with diverse set of community-based organizations, residents and stakeholders
- Foster open communication within and among diverse groups
- Work in a team environment with minimal supervision
- Some experience in community organizing, team building and group dynamics is helpful
- Experience in meeting facilitation, and/or community relations
- Ability to work independently, be flexible, and manage multiple priorities
- Work well in a team-oriented environment and maintain harmonious relationships
- Proficient computer skills, especially using Microsoft/Google Suite and/or Apricot applications
- Detail-oriented with excellent communication, organizational, interpersonal, and writing skills
- Experience with public speaking and presentations
- Experience working with Neurodiverse participants of all ages
- Fluency in Spanish is highly desirable
- Must have reliable transportation

Personal Qualifications:

The candidate has a commitment to developing leaders and coalition building. Strong commitment to social change through community empowerment and the arts. Personal values align with the mission, vision and values of the Unusual Suspects organization.

Physical Requirements & Work Environment:

Must be able to lift 30 pounds. Must be flexible working in a fast-paced, non-profit environment. Experience or interest in theatre and youth arts education is a plus. This position works primarily at program sites. Must be willing to use personal equipment such as cell phone and laptop/tablet when working remotely. Must be willing to undergo clearances/ background checks for school and probation camp sites. Must have proof of up-to-date COVID 19 vaccinations.

The information presented above indicates the general nature and level of work expected of employees in this position. It is not designed to contain, or to be interpreted as, a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities, qualifications and objectives required of employees assigned to this job.

Salary & Schedule

- Non-exempt, part-time, temporary position
- \$55/hr Teaching rate, \$20/hr Training rate, \$18/hour Planning rate
- Position is expected to work 10-20 hours weekly, based on schedule and availability
- Candidates must be open to working a flexible schedule, including some evenings and weekends

Equal Employment Opportunity

The Unusual Suspects provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetics. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.

Apply Today!

Email cover letter & resume to jobs@theunusualsuspects.org. Include in the subject line of your email: Teaching Artist position. Please include a theatre sample lesson plan. In your cover letter, tell us about your Teaching Artist experience, classroom management style, and your particular area(s) of expertise. Share any other information you deem relevant. No phone calls please.

Seeking to fill multiple openings ASAP! Accepting materials until all positions are filled.

We at The Unusual Suspects acknowledge the Tongva, the Keech, the Chumash, and the Pakoivitam, as well as all Indigenous Peoples of the unceded land upon which this organization operates and serves. We recognize that Indigenous Peoples are still here and commit to uplifting their stories, culture, and community. We acknowledge that many of the institutions that make up our society, and that we benefit from, were founded upon exclusions and erasures of many Indigenous Peoples.

We are committed to beginning the process of dismantling ongoing legacies of settler colonialism through the intentional actions of our organization and ourselves.

Additional Information

The information presented indicates the general nature and level of work expected of employees in this classification. It is not designed to contain, or to be interpreted as, a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities, qualifications and objectives required of employees assigned to this job. The Unusual Suspects provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetics. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.