



Job Description

Conservatory Teaching Artist – Part-time

High School Program

Organization Summary

The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company's (USTC) mission is to mentor, educate, and enrich youth in under-resourced communities by creating 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 Los Angeles uprising, USTC has grown from a small, volunteer-led youth intervention program into an award-winning leader in arts education, youth development, mentorship, and community building. After nearly three decades of service within disinvested and underrepresented communities, our work focuses on ensuring the equitable enrichment and development of Los Angeles County's under-resourced youth and their communities. Our free, theatre-arts programs go beyond the reach of typical arts education workshops to offer personalized mentorship and a safe space for self-expression, empowering those we work with to identify and leverage their innate talents and overcome inequitable circumstances.

For more information, visit: theunusalsuspects.org

Job Summary

We seek Teaching Artists (TAs) to support our high school level Conservatory Program, a multi-year, ensemble-based training model where students create, write, and perform original theatrical work through a structured devising process.

This is not a traditional after-school theatre class. Teaching Artists facilitate a rigorous, fun, & process-driven environment where students build skills in playwriting, acting, and collaborative creation.

Teaching Artists work within a defined instructional framework that includes:

- A sequenced curriculum across four levels.
- A shared Story Development Process.
- Structured classroom models and lesson plans.
- Ensemble-based creation and performance.
- Teaching Artists implement this model with clarity, consistency, and responsiveness to student needs.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Facilitate bi-weekly Conservatory sessions using the provided curriculum and lesson structures.
- Guide students in generating, structuring, and performing original work.
- Support both whole-group instruction and individual student development.
- Apply core storytelling tools in real time.
- Maintain a focused, respectful, and creatively rigorous classroom environment.
- Collaborate with co-teaching artists and program staff.
- Participate in training, planning, and feedback processes.
- Track and submit student attendance accurately and on time.
- Flag patterns in attendance, engagement, or classroom dynamics.
- Communicate proactively with program staff regarding student needs or challenges.
- Support follow-up with students and families as needed.
- Maintain consistency with curriculum, session structure, and program expectations.
- Uphold program standards across instruction, classroom culture, and student experience.

Minimum Qualifications

- Professional or academic training in acting or playwriting, with working knowledge of at least one established methodology in that branch. Examples include objective-based technique, Meisner, Viewpoints, text analysis, dramatic structure, or new play development.
- Minimum two full program cycles, or two academic terms, of sustained instruction with students ages 13 to 18 in a recurring program rather than one-off workshops.
- A degree in theatre, education, or a related field, OR an equivalent body of professional theatre practice and teaching experience.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience devising or developing new work with an ensemble.
- Experience teaching within a structured, sequenced curriculum.

- Experience with students in special education programs or with neurodiverse participants.
- Fluency in Spanish.

We are seeking Teaching Artists who are:

- Comfortable working within a structured methodology rather than only leading open-ended activities.
- Able to balance facilitation with clear instructional guidance.
- Strong communicators who can explain complex ideas clearly to young people.
- Responsive to student needs while upholding program expectations.
- Collaborative, reflective, and open to feedback.

What Success Looks Like in This Role

- Students are actively generating and developing original material.
- Sessions are structured, focused, and purposeful.
- Teaching Artists are guiding, not just facilitating, student work.
- Classroom culture supports both creativity and accountability.

Work Environment & Physical Requirements

- Must be 18 years of age or older.
- Must be authorized to work in the United States.
- Must complete mandated reporter training within 30 days of hire.
- Must be able to lift 30 pounds.
- Must be flexible working in a fast-paced, non-profit environment.
- Must have access to reliable transportation.
- Must be willing to work at multiple and various locations throughout Los Angeles County.
- All Teaching Artists will participate in scheduled ongoing trainings.
- Must be willing to use personal equipment such as a cell phone and a laptop/tablet.
- This position follows the public-school calendar, with peak activity in fall and spring.
- Candidates must be open to working a flexible schedule, including some evenings and weekends.
- Employment with USTC dependent upon clearance through Live Scan background check(s).

Schedule & Compensation

- Part-time, non-exempt position.
- Compensation: Teaching \$60/HR; Planning \$20/HR.

- Accrued sick Paid Time-Off (PTO) as designated by the State of California.
- Workshops are scheduled during after-school hours with occasional work in the evenings and on weekends.

How to Apply

Send your **resume** and **cover letter** (including a brief statement of interest, including your experience working with youth and/or theater) to jobs@theunusalsuspects.org. Please include the subject line; the position title and your name. E.g., "Conservatory Teaching Artist - John Smith." No calls, please.

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 regardless of 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.