



Call Out for Contemporary Cyfarwyddion, joining the Mycelium Hub

Role: We are recruiting 2 x Contemporary Cyfarwyddion roles, ring-fenced for Black, Asian and minority ethnic storytellers working across Wales, from April 23 to Sept 24

Remuneration

Fee: £8137.50 for 12 months (April 23-March 24) plus £4272 for further 6 months (April 24 to Sept 24) based on 58 days of funded time per year, worked flexibly over that time. You will also receive £1,000 towards developing your own practice (ring-fenced time for your own creative work) and £500 towards professional development (mentoring, coaching, shadowing, courses) in year 1 of your post

Dates of the post

April 2023 – September 2024

Useful information

What is the Mycelium Storytelling Hub?

The aim of the Mycelium Storytelling Hub is to develop a **storytelling ecosystem** rooted in local communities that will connect to a larger ecosystem across Wales. What we mean by a storytelling ecosystem is a network of ongoing storytelling activities taking place across the country, supporting and enriching communities and providing regular work to storytellers. Our goal is to see oral storytelling as an art form grow and flourish across Wales and for storytellers and people who work with storytellers to thrive.

The Mycelium Project currently has 5 x storytellers (Cyfarwyddion) and 3 x Producers in place that are working in communities across Wales. Some are based in geographic communities, others shared interests e.g. Welsh learners.

The Mycelium Hub is made up of partners who want to support the development of storytelling as an art form across Wales. They support the Cyfarwyddion and the Producers in their roles. Currently, represented on the Hub are Beyond the Border International Storytelling Festival,

Citrus Arts, Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru, Menter Iaith Cymru and PeopleSpeakUp. Also supporting the project are Theatr Soar and Head4Arts.

The Hub meets regularly to support practitioners in their roles.

The Hub's work is supported by Arts Council Wales Connect & Flourish funding.

What is the role of the Cyfarwydd?

We are recruiting two storytellers to develop programmes of storytelling activity which reach widely and deeply into communities, as part of the Mycelium Story Hub project and the Anti-Racism Storytelling Pathway.

Background: In medieval Wales, the role of the "Cyfarwydd", the old Welsh storytellers, was to capture and reflect what was happening in their communities, offering subtle guidance through the stories they told. Starting as an apprentice, the Cyfarwydd would have become a highly respected member of society, travelling and bringing news back to the courts, and reflecting the society of their time through their stories – so a networking figure in many ways.

As a **Contemporary Cyfarwydd**, you will develop a programme of storytelling activity, including storytelling performances and engagement, which reaches more widely and deeply into the community where your residency is based. You might want to propose that you're based in a geographic community, but we are also open to applications based on communities of interest. Over the course of your role, your work will:

- enable more partners from across your community to connect creatively with storytelling
- enable more people to experience storytelling as a meaningful part of their daily lives
- enable more people to develop creativity and confidence in engaging with storytelling
- enable the expansion and deepening of your own practice and skills through the work you initiate and focused time on your own artistic development.

You will have ownership to develop your own ideas and programme in partnership with your community and to respond to the needs and potential of your area. Oral storytelling is a very diverse practice, and we are open to applications that reflect that diversity including across a broad range of work, health and wellbeing, language learning, education, performance, nurturing new artists, and training.

As part of your application, we will ask you to specify the communities you are most keen to work with. These could be:

- Community of interest (people linked by a shared interest/work) e.g. working with Women's Refuges across Wales, or working within a healthcare setting.
- Communities of identity (shared culture or experience) e.g. working with South Asian communities.
- Geographical Community (town/street/area) e.g. working in Rhondda Cynon Taff.

- Communities of Circumstance (people knitted together by a shared experience) e.g. working with people who have experienced grief and loss.

For more examples, you can look at the work completed by our current postholders towards the end of this recruitment pack.

As a Contemporary Cyfarwydd, you will fulfil the role of storyteller within your specific community, responding to community needs and potential, fostering diverse cultural partnerships while also nurturing your own artistic growth.

We are especially keen to hear from artists who are interested in working through co-creative principles, working with or alongside people and communities to develop skills and showcase people's capabilities. We would also like to prioritise the involvement and experience of young people and families, D/deaf and disabled people, Black, Asian and global majority people, the LGBTQIA+ community, and Welsh speakers.

Person Specification for the role of Contemporary Cyfarwydd

Essential:

- Experience of developing and delivering participatory storytelling or spoken word activities with people from a variety of backgrounds
- An understanding of a community development approach
- Experienced storyteller or performer with an understanding of a wide range of audiences/participants
- Experience of developing effective working relationships with partners
- Experience of fulfilling project outcomes
- Has experience of monitoring and evaluating projects
- Is self-motivated and has the capacity to be administratively self-sufficient
- Knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and child protection
- Imaginative, enthusiastic and flexible approach
- Great communication skills
- Is committed to equal opportunities and social justice
- Is able to represent Beyond the Border Wales' International Storytelling Festival at all levels

Desirable:

- Has existing creative networks within communities in Wales
- Has capacity to offer training and mentoring to other storytellers
- Experience negotiating partnerships and fundraising
- Capacity to work in Welsh language

The successful candidate will be subject to a DBS check and satisfactory references.

These roles are ring-fenced for Black, Asian and minority ethnic candidates. This is based on a commitment to anti-racist practice and reflects under-representation in our sector which we want to address.

We will offer support to people making applications. We will run an open session for people to find out more and can chat about the role.

Support and Networking: The Mycelium Hub, made up of a number of partners, will support your work. You will also be supported by a member of Beyond the Border's team who will arrange regular chats and points of contact with you.

Evaluation: BTB has appointed an independent evaluator to help document and evaluate the strengths and learning from this initiative, to help shape future opportunities. Contribution to evaluation will be a requirement for all postholders.

To Apply:

Send your CV with a letter of application to us:

Please include:

1. Your relevant skills and experience as a storyteller.
2. What you are interested in exploring as a Contemporary Cyfarwydd, in relation to both community activities and your own development
3. Details of the community you are particularly keen to be based within – whether community of interest, identity, geography or circumstance
4. A short explainer of your storytelling experience, why storytelling is important to you, and why you want to do it.

You can also apply by video, filming yourself answering these questions.

Please send your application to recruitment@beyondtheborder.com by Sunday 12 February at 5pm.

We will be holding an online webinar to share information about the project and the jobs available on these dates:

Tues 7 February, 7 – 8pm

Thurs 9 February, 7 – 8pm on Zoom.

If you have any questions about the role that you would like to discuss before sending your application, please email recruitment@beyondtheborder.com.

If you have any accessibility requests that we can put in place to support your application, please email us too.

Example of current Cyfarwyddion role (based as an associate at People Speak Up)

Phil Okwedy (in partnership with PeopleSpeakUp)

Phil is a performance storyteller and myth-maker based in Tenby who draws deeply on his dual heritage and multiple cultures. He regularly performs in storytelling clubs and festivals across Wales, as well as at Kea Festival in Greece and Fabula Festival in Sweden. His first book, *Will & the Welsh Black Cattle*, is a set of Welsh folktales that are woven together and framed around the mythology of the ancient cattle drovers. Phil has recently been working with National Theatre Wales on *Go Tell the Bees* and was commissioned as part of Literature Wales' *Representing Wales, Developing Writers of Colour* programme.

Like Deb, Phil had already worked with PeopleSpeakUp as a storyteller before he became a Contemporary Cyfarwydd. He has worked on a number of projects that were personally important to him part of his role, including the *Men in Conversation* project, supporting groups to explore and talk about things they would not normally talk about.

Watch more here:

<https://www.facebook.com/BTBStorytelling/videos/1143577409775478/>

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