

## The Optimists - FAQ's

1. *How much does the course cost?*

The Spring 2021 Optimists course is offered **free of charge**.

*The course usually costs £500.*

2. *Who can apply?*

Places are available for up to **20 freelancers working in the theatre industry** – this can include emerging producers, members of theatre companies or those wanting to gain producing skills.

Applicants must have at least **18 months of professional/industry experience in the arts sector**. This course is not aimed at those with more than 3 years of professional experience working as a producer.

3. *What do you mean by freelancer and how do I know if I qualify?*

Please refer to the HMRC test below, taken from the ITC website.

### **Employed**

If you can answer 'Yes' to the following questions, you are probably employed.

- Do you yourself have to do the work rather than hire someone else to do it for you?
- Can someone tell you at any time what to do or when and how to do it?
- Are you paid by the hour, week, or month? Can you get overtime pay?
- Do you work set hours, or a given number of hours a week or month?
- Do you work at the premises of the person you work for, or at a place or places he or she decides?

### **Freelance (or Self-employed)**

If you can answer 'Yes' to the following questions, it will usually mean you are self-employed.

- Do you have the final say in how the business is run?
- Do you risk your own money in the business?
- Are you responsible for meeting the losses as well as taking the profits?
- Do you provide the main items of equipment you need to do your job, not just the small tools many employees provide for themselves?
- Are you free to hire other people on your own terms to do the work you have taken on?
- Do you pay them out of your own pocket?
- Do you have to correct unsatisfactory work in your own time and at your own expense?"

4. *Why are there 10 prioritised spaces and who are they for?*

China Plate's aim is to nurture a more diverse group of producers/theatre-makers, widening the representation of arts managers, producers, leaders, and policy makers in the sector to reflect the communities we live and work in both on and off the stage.

Our recruitment process for The Optimists is open to all, but **10 of our spaces** will be prioritised for those who have **faced racism, discrimination and/or cultural barriers due to their ethnicity, disability, D/deafness, gender identity or socio-economic background.**

5. *Where can I state that I would like to be considered for one the prioritised spaces?*

There is a specific section in the application form where you can say whether you would like to be considered for a prioritised space and why.

6. *Where and when will the course be taking place?*

The course will be taking place online on Zoom from the **2nd March** to the **29th April 2021.**

There will be **10 sessions**, taking place over 9 weeks (including 1 week off over the Easter period).

Dates are as follows:

Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March	Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> March
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> March	Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> April
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March	Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> April
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> March	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> April
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> April

7. *If there are two or more of us applying from the same independent theatre/arts company, do we each need to fill in an application form?*

Yes – each individual will need to submit an application form and state the company name in the application.

8. *Is there an expectation to attend all of the sessions?*

Yes – if there is a date(s) in the schedule you are unable to attend, please state clearly in your application.

The Optimists is a popular course and there usually always a waiting list of applicants every time we run the course. Successful applicants that miss two sessions may be asked to give up their space for an applicant on the waiting list.

9. *Is the course pre-recorded?*

No, the course will be delivered live on zoom, and will include Q&A's with China Plate and guest speakers, and moments to connect with the other people on the course.

10. *I need access provision in order to attend the sessions. How do I let you know?*

China Plate will provide access provision for online learning where required.

All participants will be asked if they require access provision once offers have been made.

11. *There are certain barriers (financial or otherwise) that make applying for and/or participating in this course difficult for me. How do I let you know?*

There is a specific section in the application form where you can tell us about any barriers (financial or otherwise) that may prevent you from applying for, or participating in, the course. China Plate will follow this up with you directly.

Please be assured that this will not be taken into account during the selection process.

12. *How do I apply?*

**Applications should include the following:**

1. Completed application form / questions
2. CV / information about your work
3. Equal Opportunities form ([click here to download](#))

**You can apply for a place on the Optimists course using one of the options below:**

Click on [THIS LINK](#) to complete the application form online

**OR**

Download [the application form here](#) to email it directly

**OR**

Write the application directly into an email using the questions from the application form (above)

All emailed applications can be sent directly to [info@chinaplatetheatre.com](mailto:info@chinaplatetheatre.com).

Write **Optimists application / your name** in the subject line.

13. *I do not find it easy to / cannot provide written applications. Is there another way that I can apply?*

Yes - The application form includes the opportunity to upload or email video / voice files or filmed BSL sections if preferable.

If you need to provide the whole application via video / voice files or filmed BSL please contact [info@chinaplatetheatre.com](mailto:info@chinaplatetheatre.com) before applying, so that we can ensure that your files are received, and file the accompanying paperwork.

14. *Where can I find the equal opportunities form?*

It is available to download from our website here:  
<https://chinaplatetheatre.com/opportunities/>

15. *What is the deadline for applications?*

The deadline for applications is **10am Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

16. *When will I be notified if I have been successful?*

Successful applicants will be notified on email by **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

17. *Will I get feedback on my application if I'm not successful?*

Spaces on our Optimists courses are usually oversubscribed, and due to the number of applications received we are unfortunately unable to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

18. *I can't make any of the links work...*

Here are links to cut and paste...

Application guidelines, FAQ's & equal opportunities form -  
[chinaplatetheatre.com/opportunities](https://chinaplatetheatre.com/opportunities)

Online application form -  
<https://form.jotform.com/203214906823047>

**If you have any further queries please contact [info@chinaplatetheatre.com](mailto:info@chinaplatetheatre.com)**