

# **Festival director to step down**

**The festival director of the Edinburgh International Children's Festival, Noel Jordan, is stepping down after 10 years.**

He has ensured the continuation and growth of the festival with around 300 delegates from 25 countries attending the event each year. During his tenure the festival has commissioned 13 original productions.

After his departure later this year Mr Jordan plans to return home to Australia and recruitment for a new festival director will begin next month.



Lynne Halfpenny, Chair of the [Imagine](#) board, said: “Noel has made an incredible contribution over the last decade with Imagine, building the Edinburgh International Children’s Festival’s reputation for artistic excellence both locally and globally. The joy that his programming has brought to the lives of children and young people (and their grown-ups) across Scotland is evident at every festival. We thank Noel for his fantastic contribution. He leaves the Festival in great shape and as he prepares to hand over the baton to a successor, we wish him all the very best for the future.”

Noel Jordan said: “I am incredibly proud of my time at Imagine as Festival Director. During the past ten years there have been so many highlights including an entirely outdoor festival at the beautiful Royal Botanic Garden in 2021, celebrating creativity and resilience after the challenging period of the COVID pandemic. Particularly close to my heart has been the introduction of annual productions

specially programmed for children with additional support needs. This in turn has inspired local artists to make their own work for this often-neglected audience. Throughout my time I have been so impressed by the dedication of the staff and artists who play a crucial role in building the Festival's strong global reputation. Their commitment has made a lasting impact on me.

"A special mention must also be made to our key audience members, the children of Edinburgh who engage with the Festival so enthusiastically each year. They attend with open hearts and open minds, eager to go on unknown theatrical journeys, exploring not only the complexities of our contemporary lives but the wonder of imagination. Their responses never cease to amaze me. Whenever I have questioned why I do the work I do in a field so often seen as the 'poor cousin' of the adult sector, I sit amongst a packed audience of children at the Festival and marvel at their thirst for the liveness of theatre and delight in our shared connection."

The [festival](#) this year celebrates 35 years in existence and the full programme will be announced on 25 March.

[www.imaginate.org.uk](http://www.imaginate.org.uk)