

Choosing a storyteller to suit your needs.

The Society for Storytelling does not recommend individual storytellers. As with any art-form tastes vary and although many storytellers work in a variety of settings some have more experience in certain areas. A storyteller used to working in large venues or outdoor settings may be overpowering in a more intimate setting, and storytellers who work well with small groups may be less successful telling to a very large audience. With an ever-increasing variety of storytellers to choose from, how do you find the one who will suit you?

Whatever the event you are planning give yourself plenty of time. Many popular storytellers are booked up months in advance.

Have a clear idea of the sort of storyteller you require and what you want them to do.

- Do you want someone to work intimately with a small group or someone to perform to a large audience?
- Will the event be formal or relaxed?
- How much audience participation do you want?
- What age groups will be in the audience?
- Are you looking for stories on a theme or from a particular culture?
- Do you need a specially created programme of stories?
- Has your intended audience any special needs the storyteller should be aware of?
- How long do you want the storyteller to work for?
- Will the storyteller be working continuously or for short sessions between other events?
- What sort of venue will the storyteller be working in; will it be indoors or outdoors?
- Is the storyteller required for a one off event or a residency?
- Do you want the storyteller to organise a workshop or do reminiscence work?
- Do you require more than one storyteller?

When you are clear what your requirements are, look through the Directory and make a shortlist of storytellers who seem to be in tune with your ideas. It is often easiest to make first contact over the phone, you can discuss the type of event you are planning, ask for suggestions and comments. Let them know you found their details through the Society for Storytelling Directory.

<http://www.sfsdir.org.uk/>

Request that the storyteller provide a reference from someone they have done similar work for. Ask what they would charge for the work and whether travel is included in that charge. If you wish to see them at work ask if they are performing somewhere where you can observe them. Remember you do not have to make a firm booking at this stage.

Having chosen your storyteller(s) and agreed a date and a fee, always confirm the agreement in writing and contact those storytellers you have not chosen so they can accept other work.

If you want to see storytellers in action, or ask someone for a recommendation, look in the Storytelling Diary. http://sfs.org.uk/news_areas/select/?category=Events

There you can see who is performing where and ask event organisers if they would recommend someone who would suit the type of event you are organising.

Remember if you are organising an event that is open to the public the Storytelling Diary is a good place to publicise your event.

