

## **Rural Touring Dance Initiative Call Out Frequently Asked Questions**

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## **What sort of dance are we looking for?**

We welcome applications that cover a range of approaches to contemporary performance, movement and dance, and which address a range of contemporary ideas and issues. If you define your work as dance, or movement led, then we are interested to hear from you.

We are looking for performances which are suitable for a range of ages, and communicate their ideas clearly with people who might not often have the opportunity to experience dance. We are interested in shows which bring a community together and offer them a 'good night out'.

We are looking for work which engages audiences in different ways. A way of doing this might be in the form of workshops and wraparound activity to augment a performance.

We are looking for work which is technically suitable for rural touring. Rural venues are diverse, and there is no 'one size fits all'. However, there are some guidelines you should bear in mind:

1. The majority of venues you will visit are not fully equipped theatres. Lighting and sound equipment is often very limited, and many companies tour their own lights. It is advisable to plan for touring your own technical kit. Most venues will not have sprung floors, or dance floors. It is unlikely you will have technical support at each venue/village hall.
2. Your show should be adaptable to different stage sizes and layouts. The majority of performance spaces are 5mx5m, though this varies. Due to the size of most village halls, it is likely you will be physically close to the audience. You can stipulate a bigger area but this will reduce the amount of potential bookings.
3. You should be acutely aware of sightlines. Most village halls do not have raked seating and therefore an audience cannot see pieces which contain a lot of floor work.
4. Promoters usually expect an interval during the evening. This is something to bear in mind.
5. Most companies who tour rurally usually have no more than 4 people on the road to keep costs down.
6. You should consider your get-in time. Lengthy get in times are costly for promoters who hire spaces by the hour. We would recommend a get in of no longer than 4 hours.
7. Flexibility is key. Your show should be robust and adaptable to different spaces.
8. Please be aware that the majority of venues will not be accessible by public transport

We have small bursaries available (the average size of bursary will be £2,000) which companies selected for the menu can apply for to adapt a show to be suitable for

rural touring. For example, your show might have 5 dancers at present, but you think you could remake it for 3 dancers. Or, you have a complex set, but you think you could reduce it.

## **What if I have no experience of rural touring?**

That's fine. As long as you're interested in the challenges and opportunities rural touring offers, then we warmly invite you to apply.

## **What if I have lots of experience of rural touring?**

You are also warmly invited to apply.

## **How are rural tours booked?**

If successful, your show will be featured in the sixth national dance menu, distributed to rural touring schemes in January 2023.

A 'menu' is a selected group of shows which is offered to rural touring schemes and their local promoters, to choose which show they want to put on in their venue. Rural programmers will select shows they want to programme from this menu. A Producer and Coordinator will broker potential interest from schemes and local promoters alongside the availability of the dance companies they are interested in.

There is no guarantee that your show will be chosen for touring. However, we expect that each show on the menu will be booked for four to eight performances each.

The touring fee is subsidised through the scheme, and will be negotiated on a case by case basis. Companies selected for menus so far during the life of the project have received fees ranging from £ 850 - £1400 per performance. We expect that in 23/24 fees will range from £1,000 to £1,500 per performance. This is inclusive of VAT and also includes any wraparound activity linked directly with your show – workshops if offered can be paid for separately.

We aim to book touring for each show which minimizes travel and reduces the ecological footprint of each tour.

## **How long should shows be?**

We are looking for programmes which are no less than 60 minutes in length. If you are applying with a show that is 60 minutes in duration or just under, we will also need an indication of further wraparound activity you could provide in order to occupy a full evening program (for example, a post show discussion, or participation element).

## **Can I apply with a double bill, to make a full evening of activity?**

Yes, you can. Though you should consider the cost implication and also the practicalities of providing two shorter shows. Your get in time and also the fees would need to be the same as with touring one full length show.

## **What is wraparound activity?**

Rural Touring audiences expect to come out for a full evening i.e minimum of 90 mins performance plus an interval. As dance performances tend to be shorter we are encouraging companies to think of appropriate and creative wraparound activities to elongate an evening. It might be a good idea to think of a few options and village hall promoters can then select which activity might work best in their space and with their audience/community. You can be as creative as you like when considering what wraparound activity you might like to offer alongside your show. On previous menus there have been companies offering a post-show Q and A session, a raffle or cake competition during an interval, and also the chance for audience members to come up on stage to play with costumes or props from the show.

In the application form, we ask you to think about what wraparound activity you might consider offering alongside your show, but these ideas need not be fully formed yet. If selected for the project, we would work with you to think through what wraparound activities you could present.

## **Can I offer workshops?**

Yes we have money in our budget to help schemes and promoters pay for any workshops you can offer particularly for young people. These workshop are predominately for audience development purposes so workshops scheduled in weeks leading up to performances and not on the day of performances are particularly helpful in this regard.

## **Can I apply with a show for children?**

Yes. We expect that at least one show that we select will be suitable for children and families.

## **Can I apply with a show in development?**

No. Your show should be made and have premiered. If you have a show in creation which is close to being finished and premiered we may consider it so, please include as much information about the show in the application form, along with detailed film footage of the show in its entirety. Pieces that are clearly in research and development or early stages will not be considered. On the application form, there is the opportunity for you to list performance dates if you have any public performances of your show this year and next year.

## **Can I apply with a non-traditional performance, an installation, outdoor or promenade piece?**

Yes, though you should keep the guidelines above in mind.

## **Can I apply with an online work?**

For the first time this year, one of the eight shows selected for the menu will be a digital work presented online. This is to recognize that more dance artists are making work to be experienced online, and that presenting dance online can remove some barriers to access.

There is no required length or format for the work. Applicants should bear in the mind that the work should be accessible to those who may not often watch dance live or online.

We are not looking for films of live performances.

If you are selected for the menu with an online work you won't be required to attend the lab, but you may if you wish, and you will be paid a fee if you attend.

Please note that we expect to want to feature your work online from September 23 to June 24 so you should only apply if your agreements with copyright holders in the work will allow this.

We will negotiate the fee for the digital work on a case by case basis.

## **What is the Practical Introduction to Rural Touring for Dance Lab?**

The Lab is an opportunity for a representative from the selected companies to meet people from all aspects of the rural touring ecology and think about how we can make better dance shows for rural venues and audiences. You will learn about how rural touring schemes work, think about how to adapt your work within the constraints of village hall touring, and how to make shows for communities in rural locations.

You will look at how to minimize the environmental footprint of your touring show, using the Theatre Green Book, and develop ideas for how to make your work accessible on tour.

This lab will be accompanied by online resources, which you can share with other members of your company.

## **Do I have to attend the Practical Introduction to Rural Touring for Dance Lab?**

Yes, this LAB is compulsory, unless you have substantial previous experience of touring rurally. If you are applying as a company, you should send one representative. They should be a lead artist within the company. Please keep the dates free in your diary if you are applying.

## **Will I be paid to attend the Lab?**

Yes, selected artists will be paid a fee of £400 to attend the Lab. Travel, accommodation and meals will also be covered.

## **What should the fee I quote include?**

You will be asked in the application form for an indication of the fee you require per performance. There will be an opportunity to revise this later, but it is helpful if you can be as accurate as possible at this stage. It should include all fees for company members; any royalties, usage fees of license fees due; travel and per diems for the touring company; and production costs. Your fee should exclude accommodation. Accommodation is sometimes provided by schemes in homestays, and if it is not, RTDI will cover this cost.

## **Who is responsible for making my budget balance?**

That is you/your company/ your producer. We can offer guidance and look at budgets and have specific rural touring budget templates we can share but ultimately the responsibility of making the finances work lies with you. RTDI is an Arts Council England funded project so if you are thinking of applying to Arts Council for project funding then be aware you can't apply for helping towards touring costs of shows promoted via RTDI. Some companies often combine touring to other venues alongside any rural dates and apply for funds towards those dates that are not part of RTDI to help make a tour viable.

## **Further Questions**

If you have any further questions, please email [artistdevelopment@theplace.org.uk](mailto:artistdevelopment@theplace.org.uk).