



## **Membership Guidelines**

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## What is a Fringe Festival?

Fringe Festivals are a defined event with a start and a finish – lasting from a few days to a few weeks, and include many participants (audience members, artists, and other community members) at multiple venues. Fringe Festivals are also:

- **Performing Arts-Based:** Fringe festivals are usually not limited to a single discipline or genre, but rather a performing arts smörgåsbord - a mix of theater, dance, puppetry, spoken word, etc. making up the core. Some festivals also include film and visual arts elements.
- **Uncensored:** The independent participating Artists control their own content, and the festival organization does not censor them as long as no laws are broken. Some festivals may have stricter rules for participation.
- **Accessible (for Artists and Audiences):** Ticket prices are kept low for audiences. Participation fees are kept low for artists (of any experience level – amateur to professional).
- **Original:** While not required, Fringes encourage new work – with many festivals showcasing a huge array of original material.
- **Fast Paced:** Tech is minimal and time is a factor at Fringe Festivals. Shows are often kept brief (most festivals have time limits of 60-90 minutes tops) and technical requirements kept simple (minor sets, streamlined cues, nothing elaborate)

## The Global Fringe Family

### **A note about the [United States Association of Fringe Festivals \(USAFF\)](#)**

In the United States, no one organization or individual owns, controls or regulates the name “Fringe.” There are no national rules for how each individual festival operates; the festivals’ content, finances, and business model structure vary from city to city.

USAFF grants membership to U.S. Festivals who have:

- Attended a conference (in person or digitally).
- Completed at least one festival (conference attendance prior to the first festival is encouraged to learn and get assistance on starting your event).
- Located the new Fringe Festival approximately 60 miles away from the nearest member festival, or have a minimum of 3 months between dates, or have express written permission from the other festival if either of the first two conditions aren’t met.

Generally, all USAFF festivals are committed to an open forum of expression that minimizes the financial risks for both artists and audiences and strives to keep application fees and ticket prices low so that more people can participate.

### **A note about the [Canadian Association of Fringe Festivals \(CAFF\)](#)**

In Canada, the phrase “fringe festival” is trademarked and use is restricted to approved members of CAFF. To be a member, festivals must abide by the CAFF mandate:

- Participants are selected on a non-juried basis, through a first-come, first served process, a lottery, or other method approved by the Association.
- The audience must have the option to pay a ticket price, 100% of which goes directly to the artists.
- Festivals have no control over the artistic content of each performance. The artistic freedom of the participants is unrestrained.
- Festivals must provide an easily accessible opportunity for all audiences and all artists to participate.
- Festivals will promote and model inclusiveness, diversity and multiculturalism, and will endeavor to incorporate them into all aspects of our organizations.

U.S. Fringe Festivals in compliance with the five-point CAFF mandate are welcome to apply for CAFF membership. Nine U.S. Festivals are current CAFF members, including Boulder, Chicago, Elgin, FRIGID New York, Great Salt Lake, Indianapolis, Orlando, Portland (Maine), San Diego, and San Francisco.

**A note about [World Fringe \(WF\)](#):** World Fringe is the International Fringe Festival Association bringing the global Fringe community together. “WF encompasses over 300 festivals in North America, South & Central America, Africa, United Kingdom, Australasia, Asia, and Europe. World Fringe facilitates a World Fringe Congress every two years, in festival host cities around the world.”

# Starting a Fringe Festival

## Overarching principles

- **Transparency.** Think carefully about every decision, be able to articulate clearly the reasoning behind the decision, and make all subsequent actions reflect that decision. Surprises are not cool in Fringe operations - save the spontaneity for the stage. In some ways, it doesn't matter what the decisions actually are - as long as you tell the artists/audiences/volunteers what to expect, then take great care to actually deliver as told. There's no guarantee they'll like what they get, but they can't say they were surprised. It is also good to manage expectations, particularly of artists. Don't oversell what your festival can do for artists. Artists are the lifeblood of the organization, and they talk with each other. Do your best to treat your artists with respect, and make sure you don't promise things you can't deliver.
- **Community.** Fringe festivals usually enjoy a great sense of ownership by its community. The makeup of that community varies by festival, but there are many stakeholders who will make a great investment in the festival - the artists, the volunteers, the audience and the board/staff. This is a good thing - investment usually translates to support and loyalty. However, it also means that these people will all want to have their opinions heard, and some of them may overestimate their importance in the conversation.
- **Purpose.** Think about what needs your proposed festival is going to fill. Do you have local audience members who don't have enough performances to go to? Do your audience want to see new work from national artists? Do you have a large community of local artists who are hungry for performing opportunities? Do you have a lot of non-professional artists who wouldn't have a chance to be produced on other local stages? (Hint: if you're looking for a vehicle to perform your own work, this might not be the right answer - you'll be too busy running the organization to do your own artistic work.)

## Key Initial Decisions

Think carefully about these choices, as once you've set off in a given direction, changing gears is surprisingly hard.

- **Why do you think your area needs a fringe?** What is the primary purpose of creating the event? Who is it for? Who will benefit from participating?
- **How will the participating artists be charged? And be paid?** Will you pay 100% of the box office income to artists or will you keep a portion to cover festival costs? Will you have an up front participation fee? Will it cost to apply to the festival? Just be upfront and as transparent as possible about costs. It is also helpful to outlay the whole amount upfront, even if some of the costs don't show up until later in the process. Ideally you even lay out all the optional costs up front.
- **What kind of venues do you have access to?** Are you working in established spaces or are you building out venues from scratch? Will you be renting or buying tech? Always compare buying to renting, as some equipment costs almost the same to buy as to rent. (But then you need storage, so don't forget about that!)
- **What sort of performances or other arts activities do you want to include?** Theater, film, dance, kid-friendly programming, fashion, burlesque, etc. There are a lot of extra events that fringe's offer, but it may not be wise to overcome yourself in the first year. You can always add a kid fringe later.
- **Do you want to attract national artists (eventually), or do you want to focus on local talent?** This may affect your choice of dates – if you're looking for national artists, try not to overlap with other fringes' dates. You may also want to consider if you can create a mini-tour with fringes within a drive from yours by choosing dates in before and after their festival.
- **What are your local audiences like?** Adventurous and accepting of new material, or do they prefer vetted entertainment options?
- **What's your local arts community like?** Are there natural local partners to work with? What are your funding options, outside of ticket sales?

## Producing Models

There are three basic models that encompassed most every Fringe to select participating artists and companies:

- **Unjuried/Uncurated:** Some fringes, primarily CAFF festivals but not exclusively, choose to select all of their participants randomly, based on a first-come first-served or lottery system where artists are randomly selected from all applications received. In this model the selected shows are in venues that are festival-managed, up to the maximum number of available show slots.

This model allows the organizers more control over the size of the festival and protects the quality of experience for Artists. Some festivals set up sub-lotteries to guarantee a certain quantity of desired shows (out-of-town companies, for example, or artists of color) while still maintaining a random element.

Unjuried festivals lower the barriers to performance and create opportunities for inexperienced people to get a producing opportunity, which many feel is a core part of the fringe festival ethic. One trade-off is great fluctuation in the quality of the shows. An uncurated festival may draw in wider audiences, including nontraditional theatergoers, by reaching outside the "usual suspects" in the local theater scene. The flip side is that it may take longer to establish artistic credibility due to the variable nature of the shows.

- **Juried/Curated:** Some festivals curate, or jury, their selections. Applications and supporting materials are reviewed by either festival staff or an adjudication committee of qualified panelists.

This model can give the festival organization some additional credibility within their Arts community, as it enables me to keep the quality high for new entries. It also allows the organizers to balance the content in terms of genres (limiting the number of solo shows, dance shows, etc.)

The downside of this model is the open door for nepotism and division/resentment within the community. This also is a very time consuming and subjective way to select acts, and many believe it goes against the spirit of "Fringe."



- **Open Access/BYOV:** Also known as the “Edinburgh Model” because of its roots in the original Fringe Festival. The basic idea of this model is “if you can find a venue, you are in.” Some festivals work on this model in which artists arrange, pay for and staff their own venues, or independent producing venues curate their own content and negotiate their own deals with Artists.

In this model, the festival organizers provide centralized marketing support and centralized ticketing services and often other Artist services, but do not directly select or present the shows. This is also known as the BYOV (Bring Your Own Venue) model in many Festivals that use this model along with another model to create a hybrid.

The other variant on this model is the bifurcated festival, where you may present a few highlight shows (in a way imitating the International Festival in Edinburgh of which the Edinburgh Fringe is a fringe). This gives the festival a few shows to anchor the festival around. Ideally these shows attract audiences, who then go on to attend fringe shows.

- **Hybrid Models:** Many festivals are designed by combining multiple models.

Most common throughout CAFF is the Unjuried Model (for Festival-managed venues) meeting the Open Access/BYOV model. This gives the organizers control over the size of the festival and the quality of experience, while also providing an option to Artists not selected into the festival-managed venues to participate.

Other festivals use Curated and Open Access/BYOV models. This combines a curated element of the festival in festival-managed venues with the independent venues and shows filling out the rest of the festival.

All of the Above. Surprisingly, more and more festivals have some form of an everything model. This could be a festival that is primarily one model but has elements of the other models (i.e. an Unjuried with some BYOV and a curated busking element).

## Important Considerations

### Paying the Artists

This is a big decision to make right at the outset of planning. Some fringes pay 100% of box office proceeds to the artists, while others retain a portion of the box office to cover their staff and producing expenses. Other festivals split the box office proceeds between the artists and the venues.

Some fringes give ticket revenues back to the artists while requiring audience members to purchase a one-time festival admission button, the proceeds of which go to the festival itself. Some festivals have buttons, but they are optional for audiences and give some additional benefit to audience members (like special access to events, discounts to shows, and discounts to area restaurants and shops).

You can (and should) make this decision based on two primary factors. First, the principle.

- Some fringes feel that giving 100% of ticket sales is inherent in their mission to support artists and a core part of being a Fringe. Others feel that keeping some of the money allows them to offer support to artists in different ways, by providing more staff time or better-equipped venues. There's no right answer overall, only what's right for your festival.
- And second, you also need to look at the overall costs for the artists. Some artists would rather allow the festival to have a % of the box office, if the upfront producer fee is lower. Some artists feel this makes sure the festival has a stake in the overall attendance. Basically, you need to find a way to make sure the festival stays solvent (you can't help artists if you go bankrupt and can't pay the artists), and you treat the artists as fairly and as best as you can.

Figure out how much it will cost to do your festival and how much money you think you'll be able to bring in from all avenues. Unless you're deliberately intending to lose money on the venture, those two numbers should be pretty close to one another. There's more information below in the budgeting section.

### Staffing the Festival

Making the choice to use a largely volunteer staff, a frequent corollary of making sure you keep prices low for artists, makes the implicit statement that, while paying artists for the work they do is important, paying administrators, technicians and house managers is less important. The practical downside of volunteer staff members is that it's hard to hold someone accountable who's working for free. Having staff members who work other jobs to supplement their Fringe income (or lack thereof) is very common, and it's manageable as long as the person can balance the workload and have flexible time off when necessary. There are many festivals, especially new ones, that are run entirely by volunteers on a part-time basis. There are also festivals that pay some key staff members (full or part-time) during the year, and some that pay key positions as needed (like during the festival).

## **Venues**

Technical capabilities and aspirations will affect your budget, your staffing needs and the level of show complexity that you're able to accommodate. Think about the kind of performers you hope to work with. The space requirements for a one-person stand-up show and a 20-person musical are very different, as are their technical requirements. Questions you should ask yourself include:

Are you using regular theater venues, or are they "found spaces" that you'd have to outfit with lights and sound? If you're building out venues, do you have the time, money and expertise to do so? If you're using existing venues, are you selecting a time of year for your festival that many of those venues will be available to you for rental? Would you provide/pay for/staff the venues, or would artists bring their own? Do you have to use union crews, or can you bring in your own technical people?

## **Performances and Activities**

Performance options might include theater, dance, music, musical theater and opera, film, multimedia, kids' programming, visual art, or fashion. This will be dictated in part by the personal interests of the people organizing the festival, as well as reflecting the local arts scene. Remember, some genres such as dance or film require specialized venues. Whatever you decide, be sure you can articulate clearly why you include/exclude certain genres when someone asks.

## **Attracting National Artists vs. Focusing on Local Talent**

If your festival focuses on local talent, is there enough local talent/interest for a new performing arts event in your area? If you're trying to attract national artists, give some thought to what sort of housing support you can offer - many US and Canadian Fringes offer free billeting for visiting artists - nothing fancy, just couches or spare bedrooms - to help minimize their travel costs. If you're interested in international artists, keep in mind that visa procedures are time-consuming and expensive.

If you're hoping to get national artists, pay attention to other festival dates - you'll want to avoid conflicts with other festivals, but you might want to set your times close to nearby fringes to increase the odds that touring folks could include you on their circuit. It's also useful to be able to describe yourself in a standardized way to artists familiar with the circuit - the easier it is to explain what you've got to offer, the more attractive you'll be. And be realistic about the attendance numbers, profit potential, and set expectations appropriately. As a new Festival, why would an Artist want to come from out of town to perform with you? Are there things you can offer besides profit? Reviews? Awards? A chance to try a new show before going to other festivals?

## **Audiences**

Is there a well-established culture of going to see theater, or will you have to work to develop that? Are audiences up for adventurous, unknown theater work, or are they the sorts of people who prefer pedigreed entertainment? (This may also inform your decision to be juried or unjuried.) Are you in a relatively liberal climate or are your audiences more conservative? Will they be willing to pay to see performances, or are they accustomed to free entertainment?

## **Arts Community**

Is there a theater company, venue or service organization that you could partner with while you're in the start-up phase, or are you creating something from scratch? Either answer is fine, but it'll dramatically affect your start-up costs. Also, look at what else is going on in your area when setting your festival dates. You might want to plan your festival in conjunction with other local events, to capitalize on the buzz they're creating. Alternately, you might want to pick a time when nothing else in town is happening, to increase the number of performance spaces that might be available. If you're in a college town, think about the impact that the academic calendar has on your plans.

## **Funding Options**

On the earned income side, some fringes sell mandatory admission buttons (sort of like a festival cover charge), then keep those proceeds to support the organization. Application fees from artists also count as earned income, as do ads (print and web) and merchandise sales.

If you're looking for contributed income, you'll do better if you become a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, set yourself up as a program of a pre-existing nonprofit, or find yourself a fiscal sponsor. It is now recommended in the non-profit world to at least start with a fiscal sponsor. If you are not doing your festival full time, maintaining a 501(c)(3) can be a burden. Also, most grant organizations recognize how most organizations don't need to be a 501(c)(3), and many have changed their grant requirements to include fiscally sponsored organizations. As a non-profit or fiscally sponsored organization, you will be able to access individual donations, corporate and foundation support, government support, etc.

Festival start-up funding can also come from your personal savings, loans from friends and family, and crowdfunding.

# Festival Management

## Marketing

- **Graphic Design.** A consistent visual identity will help you gain recognition. Ditto for a consistent “voice” in your written communications. Both should be clear and simple.
- **Website.** Consider what it'll cost for hosting, design and maintenance. Free hosting is great, but if you don't have the bandwidth to support opening-day traffic, a crash could be very expensive. There are many sites now that do everything for you and make it very easy to create the design. Don't make it more complicated than necessary. It is great when anyone on your staff can go in and make changes themselves (with your permission), and you don't have to wait a week for a web designer to make changes.
- **Social media.** There's often a temptation to hand this off to an intern or young staff member. Remember that this is the official voice of your organization, and the person writing for you will be responding quickly to people who have complaints. Things can get out of hand quickly, and it's best to have someone you trust writing all public communications.

Using social media for an organization is not like using it personally. There are a lot of articles and online videos to help you learn more about being a strong social media user for your organization. And rules and algorithms change all the time, so never stop learning and reading about social media news. Something that worked one year may not work at all another year because of a change in algorithms.

- **Program.** If you make a print program, you'll have printing costs and distribution costs (depending on whether you distribute it around town yourself, have it inserted in a local publication or mail it to people directly). If you go with an online program, you'll save money but risk not reaching people who are still reliant on hard-copy media for information. Either way, you'll need someone to collect the data, design the layout and proofread the copy.
- **Advertising.** Costs range widely, from free to wildly expensive. Consider social media such as Facebook and Twitter as well as more traditional print ads in newspapers and magazines. If you create a partnership with a local newspaper, TV or radio station, this might get you more extensive advertising than you could otherwise afford. Don't forget things like Facebook groups, Meet Up, and asking local groups that already have a strong list to help get the word out.

- **Mobile Apps/Website.** Platform-specific apps are very desirable, but also very expensive, and require a lot of time spent communicating needs you may not have had the time to articulate yet to an outside developer. Mobile sites will work on all platforms and are easier to develop but are harder to explain to audiences and require a working data connection to function. Either way you go (and neither is essential in your first couple of years), remember to budget time and resources for support calls.

## Press

- **Earned Coverage.** You'll want press coverage, because it's public exposure that you don't have to pay for. But it's your job to earn that press – no one is entitled to coverage, and it's not the newspapers/TV stations/blogs' job to drive attendance to your festival. They report on newsworthy things, so find a way to make your festival meet their criteria of newsworthy. Are there local acts? Benefits to local businesses? Tie-ins to other local arts events? New talent coming to town from across the country or around the world? A famous headliner or event host?
- **Press Releases.** Once you've figured out why your event is newsworthy, that's only half the battle. Make it easy to cover. Write press releases that are clear, concise and not overloaded with jargon or self-praise. Don't tell them that your festival will be the funnest community experience your town has ever seen, and don't say that it will leverage the unique linkages between artistic place finding and entrepreneurial sustainability. And for god's sake don't use "umbrella" or "synergize" as verbs or "impactful" as an adjective. Tell them what you're doing, tell them why you're doing it, and tell them why they should care. Exclamation points should not be necessary.

Do your homework ahead of time and know who you're sending your release to. Send it to a specific person, if possible, rather than a generic info@ email address. Tailor the angle to make it interesting to that writer/their audience.

- **Quotes, Copy, and Captions.** Provide written copy, including quotes from your leadership, which can be copied and pasted into their story. Give them phone numbers that will be answered all the time and email addresses that are monitored. When the press contacts you for more info, be responsive immediately – deadlines are often tight, and if you're not available to clarify something, you might miss out on coverage.

Put your copy in the body of your email. Attaching it as a press release is an option but not necessary – it adds a step between your information and the reporter. Also, copying/pasting from PDFs can be more irritating than copying from a text email. Don't attach high-resolution photos unless asked to do so – it fills up their inbox and you run the risk of having the email deleted before it's read. Offer to send photos upon request or provide a link to a web page where photos can be downloaded. And be sure to include caption information – name of production, people, L to R, and photographer credit. The paper may not run it, but at least they have the option.

- **Proofread.** Proofread three times (do not just rely on spell-check) and double-check every single date, time, web link and address. Typos will make you look unprofessional, and once incorrect information goes out, it is difficult to get it fixed.

### Production

- **Venues.** Will you have to pay for venue rental, or can you make partnerships with local theaters to use their spaces for free/reduced rates? Are you creating theaters out of non-theaters? If so, consider the cost of lights, sound equipment, curtains to mask backstage, seating for the audience, and any necessary city permits for public assembly spaces. Also, remember that you'll be responsible for observing fire code, ADA requirements and occupancy permits.
- **Total Costs.** When looking at venue cost, remember to factor in the actual rental cost, any associated venue labor costs, the expense for any theater equipment or seating units you need to bring in, and the time it'll take you to get the space ready to go.
- **Technicians.** Will you be hiring your own techs, using volunteers or asking your artists to bring their own? Do the venues you're using require you to hire their techs? Do you have access to professional technicians, or will you be working with more inexperienced folks? This will affect the level of tech support you're able to offer. Safety (artists, audiences, staff/volunteers) is your responsibility - having untrained people doing rigging or hanging overhead equipment, for example, is very dangerous.
- **Support.** Low-tech Fringe shows make everyone's life easier. They require shorter tech rehearsals and less storage space, and the fewer failure points, the better. With the tight schedule of the typical Fringe, there's no time to start late because the projector lamp burned out or someone forgot the cable for the laptop computer hookup.

### Front of House (FOH)

- **Consistency.** Let the art, chaos, craziness, and "Fringey" happen on stage. If an audience service cannot happen in one venue, you may not want to let it happen in the others (late seating, opening a box office early because there's no way a venue can sell out, etc. etc.).
- **Clarity.** Keep responsibilities and expectations for volunteers clear and concise. Volunteers do what they do for a number of distinct reasons and come from a variety of backgrounds. Working a festival is already inherently fast-paced and full of surprises. If volunteers are aware of both what is expected of them and what is not their job, things will be smoother.
- **Leadership.** If possible, there is great benefit in having the person in charge of the audience/volunteers out in the venues while the festival is running. This allows that person to keep their ear to the ground noticing any grumbles or issues that may be happening.

- **Hiring.** If there is any kind of interview process for seasonal front-of-house staff / volunteers and it comes down to a choice between someone with a long history in working front of house "regular" theater and someone with no theater experience but a history of working retail or customer service positions (assuming neither have Fringe / festival experience), choose the latter. Fringe is first and foremost a festival - it's not like working in a theater where there is one show at one time in one venue.
- **Training.** It's important to arm your team with as much knowledge about the festival (all areas) as possible to be prepared for any patron question. This could be as simple as "what's playing next?" or "how do I get to..." or "So, what is this Fringe thing?". If there is sensitive information that should be only handled by "upper staff" (for lack of a better term), make sure that seasonal staff/volunteers know to refer to leadership to answer the question, and not to try to make something up themselves.

Artists feel better if they arrive at the venue knowing what's expected and feeling things are organized. They can set up, take moments to get ready to perform, and know that audience procedures will be followed as they've been told.

- **Coping.** This is a stressful job. FOH, more than I think any other department, is the one that deals in unknown variables throughout the run of the festival. But it should also be fun. If it's not fun, you're doing something wrong.
- **Other Questions to Consider.** Who will sell your tickets and manage your lobbies? Will you pay them or use volunteers? How/when/where will you recruit and train staff? Are you renting credit card machines, using computers at the venues to track sales, or using the traditional checks/cash and paper record-keeping? How will you handle money securely, both at the venues and on the way to the bank? Will you offer advance ticket sales (walk-up to a central ticket kiosk, phone or online) or will all tickets be sold at the door? Will you allow late seating?

### **Finances / Budgeting**

You'll probably want to set up a checking account for the festival that's not your personal account, as well as a PayPal account, or other software/hardware to make it easy/affordable to swipe/read credit cards. Whatever you choose, make sure there is enough reporting functionality to provide sales insights you require. Keep records as you go – don't toss the receipts in a box with a promise to sort it all out later. You can use an Excel spreadsheet, or you can use software like Wave or QuickBooks.

Keep as many things in writing as possible, especially agreements about who you're paying to do what. Verbal agreements between friends are a lovely idea, but get the duties, dollars and deadlines clarified in writing to save disagreements later. The same holds true for volunteer help – even more so in some cases, because the person who agreed to design your program for free might have to leave you stranded if paying work materializes from other sources.



Ditto with artist payouts. Ideally this should all be in a contract you and the artist sign. Be sure that your financial arrangement with your participants is clearly spelled out from the beginning. Consider making a list of What Fringe Does and What Participants Do. Be very clear on how box office money is tracked and divided up, as well as when/how the box office payout gets made.

One note about cash flow - you'll have a chunk of money that comes in up front when you get application fees from your artists, then a drought until you get box office money during the festival itself (which may not be yours anyways). The month before the festival, however, tends to be expensive - venues want their rent money, and you'll need to pay for insurance, programs and ticket stock, advertising, any gear rentals, etc., etc.

If you're selling things like program ads, try to set your payment due dates so they pay you BEFORE the festival opens; on the flip side, try to negotiate all the money you owe people until AFTER the festival, when you have money.

Following is a basic chart of accounts – not every festival will have every category, but it'll give you an idea of the areas to consider. It is also good to look at your future tax form, and choose categories that correspond with the categories listed on the tax forms. That will make it easier in the future.

## **REVENUE**

### Support Revenue

- Grants (government and foundations)
- Individual Donations (including advisory committee or board of directors)
- Special Events (fundraisers, house parties)
- Corp Sponsorships Grants (foundations, plus city/state govt)

### Non-Support Revenue

- Application Fees
- Box Office Sales
- Admission Button Sales
- Ad Sales – print and online
- Merchandise Sales (T-shirts, hats, etc.)
- Concession Sales (beer garden, water/soda at the venues if managed by the festival)

### Other Revenue

- In-kind Income (especially in the beginning, you might be relying on donated goods)
- Miscellaneous Income

## **EXPENSES**

### Production Expense

- Artist Payout
- Contract Services (technicians, house managers, bartenders)
- Venue Rent
- Production Equipment (lighting/sound gear, walkie talkies, credit card machines)
- Ticket Processing Fees (both advance sales and credit cards at the door)
- Entertainment (parties, receptions)
- Transportation (rental van for venue load-in)
- Misc prod costs (event permits, blocked-off parking meters)

### Administrative Expense

- Salaries for core staff
- Taxes/Employee Benefits
- Accounting Fees (who is keeping track of your bookkeeping?)
- Payroll Fees (if you have got people on salary, it's easier to use a payroll service)
- Professional Legal Fees
- Consulting (might be especially relevant in start-up phases)
- Office supplies
- Computers/software
- Phone/internet service
- Postage
- Office/storage rent
- Equipment rent/maintenance
- Printing and copies
- Conventions and meetings
- Memberships and dues

### Development Expense

- Grantwriter
- Donor Appreciation
- Solicitation/Events
- Supplies
- Postage Printing and Copies

### Marketing Expense

- Advertising
- Printed program
- Promotional Printing
- PR/Outreach
- Photography
- Signage (lobby signs, venue sandwich boards, etc.)
- Graphic Design
- Web Design/hosting

### Other Expense

- Bank Fees
- Liability and Workers Comp Insurance
- Concessions Cost, Merchandise Cost, Miscellaneous

## Emergency Planning

In the event of a medical injury or emergency, it is best to have a pre-determined chain of command. If the situation is life threatening, call 911 immediately, then contact on-site personnel. Do not attempt to move an injured person unless necessary to prevent further injury. Someone should remain with an injured person until Festival Management and/or EMS is at a location to provide further support.

### Chain of Command Example

Volunteer -> Volunteer Coordinator -> Front of House Staff ->  
Staff Supervisor -> Festival Director -> Executive Director

### Calling for Help

De-escalation training for Front of House personnel can help with most conflict management. When escalation of conflict leads to emergencies of a police or security nature, notify nearby security or call the police, then notify Festival management. Volunteers or non-security staff should attempt to resolve security issues that have escalated out of control.

When calling 911, make sure to lead with the correct address of where the incident occurred. Cell calls are hard to trace through 911 as they can be routed through any number of cell towers. Providing the address first allows the operator to start dispatching assistance immediately.

### Lost / Missing Child

In the event of a lost or missing child, Festival Management will contact the police and wait with the child until the child's parents/guardians can be located.

If a parent alerts staff to a lost or missing child, notified staff should request the parent stay in place, call for additional assistance, and then contact the police. A second staff member should issue a staff-wide communication. Include in the message key details such as height, weight, age, and what the child is wearing. Do NOT use the child's name. Once the child is located, an all-clear message should be issued to all.

### Evacuation Procedures

- **Isolated Event.** On-site security or management will remove patrons and personnel from a specific area. Normal Operations continue unless otherwise directed. Operations at a specific site will resume once clear is given by Festival Management.
- **Evacuation.** If directed by Festival Management, the site may require closure prior to regular closing hours. Security will direct patrons exit from site. Announcements of closure will be made over festival stages and PA unless not possible.

## **Active Shooter**

Should there be an occurrence of an active shooter, follow the descriptor of Run-Hide-Fight.

- **RUN:** Move as fast as possible to the safe haven site.
- **HIDE:** If you cannot get to the safe haven, hide as best as you can, preferably inside a lockable space
- **FIGHT:** If in a Hide position, grab whatever material is handy that can be used as a possible weapon should the shooter close on your position.

**DO NOT** engage the shooter or change positions unless absolutely necessary. Remain hidden until police officers arrive. When police give all clear to appear from hiding or to come out of the safe haven, be sure to move only in the direction they give you, and with your hands raised above your head. It is important to remember that when police arrive at the site of an active shooter incident, their first priority is the shooter, not any injured persons or those in hiding. Remain still and quiet and await instruction.

## **Insurance**

### **General Liability Insurance**

**General Liability Insurance only covers the general public attending your events,** dependent upon coverage type and use. This is often required by performance venues for use of the space. To inquire about insurance coverage, fill out the form and you will be contacted by our collaborative partners at Kaplan Insurance Agency who will work with you to provide the right coverage to suit your needs.

**Contractors, employees, and volunteer actors are not covered under General Liability Insurance.** Contractors should provide their own coverage. You should cover employees through Workers Compensation insurance. And volunteers should be covered under a separate Volunteer Liability Insurance policy.

An insurance agent can help you with other kinds of policies, including **Property Insurance** (for damage or theft of property), **Directors & Officers Insurance** (for your board of directors and staff), **Workers Compensation Insurance** (for injuries to your employees) and **Volunteer Liability Insurance**.

### **Terrorism Coverage**

When making your decision whether to purchase Terrorism Coverage please be aware that coverage for “insured losses” as defined by the Act is subject to coverage terms, conditions, amount and limits in your policy applicable to losses arising from events other than terrorism. Coverage available under the offer is contingent on the underlying policies providing terrorism coverage and at the same limit as the Schedule of Underlying Coverages.

## Other Helpful Insurance Links:

- [Volunteer Liability Insurance and Directors & Officers Liability Insurance from CIMA, available online](#)
- The Free Management Library has a number of reference pages you might find useful.
  - [Insurance](#)
  - [Workplace safety](#)
  - [Legal considerations for board officers](#)

## Additional Resources

Software and resources are something that we all tend to talk about at USAFF conferences. Feel free to ask others what they use. The right software / CRM database can make your job 10 times easier, but the wrong software can make everything harder. Also consider software that allows different software and programs to work in tandem and share information. Some of the following list may be outdated, so ask around and find out what folks are using!

### General Arts / Nonprofit Admin Resources

- Fractured Atlas (<https://www.fracturedatlas.org/>) National arts service organization who can help with fiscal sponsorship as well as health and liability insurance, depending on what state you work in, as well as online training programs and open-source box office technology.
- BoardSource (<https://boardsource.org/>) Guidelines on recruiting and managing board of directors
- Lawyers Alliance (<https://lawyersalliance.org/nonprofits>) Pro bono attorneys across the country
- Propel Nonprofits (<https://propelnonprofits.org/>) Accounting and finance services, strategic consulting, fiscal sponsorship, and training resources.
- National Council of Nonprofits (<https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/>) Tools, resources, and templates for operating efficiently, effectively, and ethically.

### Fiscal Sponsorship

- Fiscal Sponsor Directory (<https://fiscalsponsordirectory.org/>) A directory of fiscal sponsors

### Fundraising

- Candid Foundation Directory (<https://fconline.foundationcenter.org/>) Directory of foundation support, tips on applying
- Fractured Atlas now has its own crowdfunding site (<https://www.fracturedatlas.org/#programs-fundraising>) which would allow donors to receive a tax deduction when you are fiscally sponsored.

### **Working with International Artists**

- US Citizenship and Immigration Services (<https://www.uscis.gov/>). The best way for international Artists to work a festival in the US legally is the P2. P1 and O1 are much more difficult to secure.
- Artists from Abroad (<https://www.artistsfromabroad.org/>)

### **Billeting / Artist Housing**

- Couchsurfing (<https://www.couchsurfing.com/>)
- AirBnB (<https://www.airbnb.com/>)
- Try local colleges who might have unused dorm rooms and, of course, local community members who'd love to host a visiting artist in exchange for Fringe tickets.

### **Volunteers and Volunteer Management**

- Volunteer Match (<https://www.volunteermatch.org/>)
- Your Volunteers (<https://www.yourvolunteers.com/>)

### **General Technology**

- TechSoup (<https://www.techsoup.org/>) Nonprofit tech marketplace with deep discounts

### **Online Ticketing Services**

This is probably the one we all talk about the most at conferences. No service is perfect, especially if your festival has all access passes. Every service has pros and cons. It's best to ask around and talk to festival leaders about their experiences and your needs.

### **E-Newsletter Services**

- MailChimp (<https://mailchimp.com/>)
- Constant Contact (<https://www.constantcontact.com/>)
- phpList (<https://www.phplist.com/>)

### **Assorted Legalities**

- Are you Considering Starting a Nonprofit? (<https://boardsource.org/resources/starting-nonprofit/>) Questions to ask yourself before starting a nonprofit.
- How to apply for 501(c)(3) Status (<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/how-to-apply-for-501c3-status>)
- Copyright & Fair Use (<https://fairuse.stanford.edu/overview/>) Primer on intellectual property

### **Serving Audiences and Artists with Disabilities**

- Why It Matters: Diversity & Disability Inclusion In Arts (<https://www.kit.org/disability-inclusion-in-arts/>)
- Better Ways to Serve Audiences With Disabilities (<https://www.ideastream.org/arts-culture/2020-10-19/arts-study-highlights-better-ways-to-serve-audiences-with-disabilities>)

- NEA Researchs on Arts Participation among People with Disabilities (<https://www.arts.gov/news/press-releases/2015/new-nea-research-arts-participation-among-people-disabilities>)
- Inclusion and Accessibility for Performers with Disabilities (<https://blog.americansforthearts.org/2019/09/16/inclusion-and-accessibility-for-performers-with-disabilities>)
- The Inclusion of Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in the Arts Community (<https://publications.ici.umn.edu/impact/34-2/state-of-the-arts-inclusion>)