

# Application Guide

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## INTRODUCTION

Live Five is a non-profit organization run by volunteers that are passionate about supporting local professional artists with their productions. However, our resources are limited. We currently do not have any operational funding – simply dedicated board members and a couple of very small paid contract positions. So, let us be clear that we do not produce the plays in our season. We provide a support structure to ease the burden of self-producing.

### What we're looking for:

High quality theatre projects that will attract and excite an audience, and that have a strong plan for execution. For our 17<sup>th</sup> season we will be selecting five (5) companies as well as a +1 production for a total of six (6) shows.

### What we provide:

- PROMOTION
  - Design and print Season Brochure, coordinate its direct mail to our patron database, and distribute to locations around the city
  - Design and print Season Passes and other materials as needed throughout the year
  - Co-ordinate program advertising sales and season pass sales
  - Secure sponsorships (currently Saskatoon Media Group, Planet S, and CFCR)
  - Promotion on our website and social media (facebook, twitter, instagram, youtube)
  - Create ads and pursue opportunities to advertise/promote individual shows and the season as a whole (Planet S, Flow Magazine, 98Cool, CFCR, Tourism Saskatoon, the Fringe, Planet S Fall Arts Guide, program swaps with Persephone, GTNT, Station Arts, and other opportunities as they arise).
  - Send out one mass email to our database as each show approaches via On the Boards.
  - Coordinate video interviews (subject to board member availability) for promotion on social media
- MATERIALS FOR YOUR SHOW
  - Programs
    - We'll supply you with a program information template and deadline, and we'll take care of designing, printing and distribution.
  - Media
    - We'll provide you with a template and collaborate with you on creation of the media release. Our Marketing Coordinator will then either provide a list of media contacts or coordinate media for you, depending on his/her availability and your company's preferences.
  - A pre-show speech
    - We provide the copy, and you arrange to have the speech executed. Whenever possible, the opening night speech will be performed live by a board member, but should this not be possible, the speech should be done by your stage manager or another member of your team.
  - Opening Night celebration (ie. food!)
- OTHER PERKS

- Priority booking with the Refinery, and built-in audience via subscriptions and promotion to past attendees.
- A company liaison from the board to be your sounding board and assist with your preparations as needed.
- A printing stipend to help pay for posters and handbills.
- We'll coordinate mentorship opportunities for emerging artists to learn from experienced professionals on your team.
- And we'll arrange a post-mortem to discuss what worked well and what to improve upon.

### What you provide:

- Your Project
- Secured producing rights and permissions from professional associations (as applicable).
- All the important information necessary for us to promote your show (any required billing credits, promotional copy, your target audience, funding logos, photos, etc).
- The design of your promotional image:
  - This image will be used for posters, handbills, programs, various advertisements, and more throughout the season. We will provide you with a guide to give to your graphic designer with the image specs and files we will need. It is important that they understand their design will need to be cropped/adjusted by Live Five's designer in order to be used for all of our various advertisements and materials, and the best way to ensure the integrity of their image is to send us the working files.
- Sale of ad space in the programs (minimum one quarter page which is \$400 at present). If you do not sell an ad, then you will be required to pay a fee (currently \$400), which will help us to cover a small portion of what Live Five will spend on your production.
- Aid in the distribution of Season Brochures.
- Help with Season Launch and Winter Fundraiser (currently Chefs' Gala).
- Two volunteers to offer aid to all other Live Five productions in your season.
- Poster and handbill printing and distribution (Live Five will finalize the design of these items and provide you with a printing stipend; distribution is up to you).
- A post-mortem meet with Live Five to discuss what worked well and what improvements could be made.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

### The Selection Committee:

The Selection Committee is made up of a mixture of Live Five board members and professional theatre artists from the community. The Chair of the Selection Committee is a member of the board who has served on the committee in the past, and is responsible for assembling its members and overseeing all areas of the selection process. Members of the Selection Committee may not apply to produce with Live Five in the term that they are serving. The majority of the Selection Committee must consist of established professional theatre artists. There is a minimum of five members and a maximum of nine members. This must include, at minimum, two non-board members, and will include more whenever possible. Board members are included on the committee in order to provide continuity and historical knowledge to the process, and to weigh in on the organization's ability to support the proposed producers.

To begin the application process, the Chair pursues potential committee members with the aim of gathering a team that has expertise in various areas of the theatre and includes diverse voices and perspectives. The Chair presents their proposed members to the Board for approval by majority vote. Potential committee members must disclose any possible conflicts of interest they may have to the Chair when they are approached, and the Chair presents this information to the board (with plans to remove conflicts as they arise) prior to the vote for approval of the committee members.

Once the Selection Committee has convened to program the season, their selections are presented to the Board for endorsement by majority vote. The Board must endorse the committee's proposed season unless the Board deems that any conflicts of interest were not appropriately addressed, or that the selected season otherwise endangers the organization and/or its mission. In the event that the board does not endorse the proposed season, the identified conflict(s) must be removed, and the selection committee has an emergency meeting to amend the season as necessary. The new proposal is then put to the board for endorsement.

### Adjudication:

The Selection Committee begins by adjudicating applications based on artistic integrity and feasibility. To do this they look at the following (tips and highlights are included here for potential applicants):

- The Play
  - Why you are choosing to produce this particular play and why Saskatoon should see it. Do not underestimate the importance of this argument. We may receive two or three applications that are equally great, but the projects have too many similarities to include in one season. Convince us why your play matters right now and why you're the right team to bring this story to life.
  - Is this high-quality material? If this is a new script or creation of the production team, is it ready for an audience now? If not, are we confident that it will be ready given the history of the playwright/artist(s) and the dramaturgical plan?
  - Is this a good fit for Live Five? Will it help to grow our audience? Will it challenge them in an exciting way? Will it provide opportunities for interaction or discussion?
- Company History
  - Do you have experience producing? Do you have a body of high-quality work behind you? We need to have confidence that the team you have assembled will be able to handle all of the artistic and practical demands of this project. If your company doesn't have a production history, then we'll be looking at the past work of the artists involved so give us an idea of any relevant experience on the team. (As a side note for the producer: You will be making connections with local businesses to sell ads and perhaps secure sponsorships, and you'll need to get bums in seats for your show. The Live Five subscribers/past audience will only get you so far; having lots of personal connections in the community will be a tremendous boon for you. If your team is not from Saskatoon, then you will have a harder time selling. We note this now so that you can plan accordingly.)
- The Team
  - This starts with the Director. As the artistic head of the project, their involvement is a vital piece of information to us and they must be confirmed in order for you to apply. New producers sometimes don't realize that the director needs to have the final say about who will make up the creative team for the project. They begin by assembling a collection of artists, and then have a difficult time finding a director because they have taken away the director's ability to make critical decisions. Start with the artistic head.

- If your team is in place, then (in addition to the director) please let us know the cast, stage management, and design team. If you don't have a full team confirmed at the time of the application, then let us know who is being approached for each spot on the team and/or if you are holding auditions. We want to know that you have fully considered everyone needed to bring your show to life, and that you will be ready to get started right away if we select you (especially for an early slot in the season).
- This should go without saying, but anyone you list as part of your team must have given consent to be included on your application.
- Please do not assume that the committee members will be familiar with all of the artists on your team. The more you can speak to their merits, the better.
- Does the proposed team make sense for the project? (ie. will the play be served well by these artists?)
- Again, we'll be looking for depth of experience. Mentorship (learning under the guidance of a professional in your discipline) is important to us. If you have a group of emerging artists, then we want to see some experienced professionals on your team (particularly in leadership roles). Find people who know the ins and outs of producing, and/or who have spent many years honing their craft and will strengthen the artistic integrity of the work; this will only help you grow. On the other hand, if you have a team full of experienced professionals, then please consider taking emerging artists under your wing. This is also something we can help you do through our Mentorship Program.
- **Completeness and Achievability of the Work Plan**
  - How are you going to make this play happen? There is room within your detailed project description to talk about the practicalities of your production and we encourage you to do so. We will be considering the demands of your play and we want to be confident that you are aware of them and prepared to meet them. A twenty-person cast, a multi level stage with a revolve, an orchestra, some very specific casting requirements - these kinds of challenges will bring up red flags to the committee so let us know your plan to tackle them.
  - Budget. We provide you with a template that will give you a good indication of what it's going to cost to produce a Live Five show at The Refinery. The amounts on the template are based on what the On the Boards fees were this past season. Please note that the fees typically increase slightly every year. We want to see that you're working on a plan for funds to pay your team and that you will not lose money on this venture. Your budget must balance, and reflect your awareness of the demands of your project. If your script calls for a giant set and you haven't budgeted for one, then you should discuss the choice to forgo it in your project description or we'll assume you haven't thought the project through. If you've already secured funding, then let us know.
  - Rights. If you can't secure them, then we can't include you. You must confirm that the rights are available before you apply to us, and subsequently, if you are selected, confirm that they are secured.
- **Performance Dates**
  - Availability can absolutely make or break an application. Changes to your availability after submission not only affect the success of your own application, but potentially that of other applicants as well so this is critical information to us. Please check availability with your team before you apply, be honest with us about wants vs. needs so that we can do our very best to accommodate you, and keep us updated throughout the process. Don't forget to consider the time you'll need for rehearsal in order to be able to perform on the dates that you confirm availability for.

- As a bonus, are your date preferences a great match with the material you're proposing? We'd love to see that you've thought about the best time of year to perform your romantic comedy or ghostly thriller. After all, we want to help you succeed!

Once the selection committee has scored the applications, they meet to choose the season. The committee uses the applicant scores as a jumping off point to come to a consensus on the best possible combination of projects. This combination will ideally offer a high quality and varied menu that showcases the talents of Saskatchewan artists, explores relevant content that excites (and potentially expands) our audience, and encourages growth for the artistic community.

As you can see, some of the things we consider are under the applicant's control and some depend entirely on the other applications we receive. Nevertheless, we hope this application process will help you prepare your project for production whether it is with us or on your own.

### Video Pitches:

For those who feel more comfortable talking to us about their work than writing about it, we offer the option of sending us a filmed pitch in lieu of certain aspects of the written application.

Your video pitch may include the information that we request in the cover letter and the detailed project description except for: the 60-word synopsis, artist resumes, and letters of reference (if applicable), which must be submitted in written format. Your budget must, of course, also remain written.

As noted on the application form, you may also use video to help illuminate work that does not have a script. This may be submitted in lieu of, or in combination with, a written treatment for the piece.

Videos should be uploaded to the Internet, and the link(s) along with any required passwords for viewing should be included in your supplementary application information. We offer this as an option, not an obligation. Please use whatever format you feel will best represent you and your project.

### Some Final Tips

If you are planning to apply, we strongly encourage you to get in touch and discuss your project with the Selection Committee Chair ([info@livefive.ca](mailto:info@livefive.ca)) who can help you strengthen your application.

No matter what:

- Please do not assume that the committee members will be familiar with you and your work.
- Remember that everything you submit sends an impression. Quality is important, and we're not just referring to using a good camera. Photos and videos should be clear, but more importantly they should be as relevant as possible and effectively sell your work.

### +1 PROGRAM:

For 2020/2021 we're accepting applications for Live Five's new offshoot producing program: Live Five's +1

**+1** is a support structure for artists wanting to produce independent alternative theatre. For reference, our past two productions include MuD Collective and Embrace Theatre's *Elemental* and Yin Yang Theatre's *Unmasked*.

What kinds of shows would best suit the **+1 Program**?

- Shows that require a different venue than The Refinery *or*
- Shows that exist outdoors or in a non-structured performance space *or*
- Shows with limited audience numbers *or*
- Experimental Theatre *or*
- Devised Theatre *or*
- Skit/Sketch Comedy *or*
- Burlesque/Cabaret *or*
- Anything that doesn't quite fit the typical Live Five line-up

What does the **+1** show get that regular season Live Five shows get?

- Box Office services from On the Boards (*on a more flexible format*)
- Administrative assistance
  - Board Liaison
- Media
  - Access to our Media Guide and Press Release assistance
- Promotion
  - On Live Five's social media pages, website, and in our Season Brochure
  - Via email to our patron database

What's different from the regular season shows?

- No paid advertisements, no poster/handbill printing stipend, no show programs
- The **+1** show will be an optional addition for regular season subscribers (ie. Pass holders will receive a discount on tickets to your show)
- The requirement for your company to sell program advertising or pay a fee in the same amount as the regular season companies. The exact requirement will be negotiated with the successful candidate, along with the details of assistance and expectations for both parties, prior to signing a contract.

There are many projects that could be a good fit for the regular season or as a **+1** show, and this is not meant to deter you from applying to the regular season if you wish. We would like to encourage and support artists that explore various aesthetics, and this program is one way for us to do so.

### How to apply:

Simply circle the **+1** option on the application form, or the option to be considered for both **+1** and regular season, and submit your application as usual. The same adjudication rubric applies to this stream of applicants, with the understanding that this project may have a greater focus on challenging an audience than attracting one.

If you have any questions specific to the +1 Program please contact the Selection Committee Chair at [info@livefive.ca](mailto:info@livefive.ca).