

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe has a long tradition of welcoming international companies. We work with the authorities in the UK to ensure that our international visitors are informed about the immigration requirements and that the process is as smooth as possible. Please read the following notes carefully and make sure you are aware of all the necessary information in advance.

What these guidelines cover

The guidelines below cover those coming to Edinburgh to take part in a show or event that has been registered with the Fringe Society.

They do not cover

- Those coming to work at the Fringe who are not connected to a registered show e.g. those working at a venue or in a bar
- Any shows that have not been registered with the Fringe Society
- Any performances or activities outside the Fringe e.g. tours or engagements before or after the festival or appearances at other festivals
- Foreign Entertainers' Tax – please see the separate information available on edfringe.com

Please make sure you have also read the Home Office guidance on entering the UK as a Creative. You can download this from our website.

Questions

If you have any questions about visas or immigration at the Fringe, please e-mail participants@edfringe.com. For general information about coming to the UK please visit the [UK Government](http://www.gov.uk) website.

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society Disclaimer

Please note that the Fringe Society has no jurisdiction over the visa process and is not an immigration authority. These notes are for guidance only, we cannot guarantee any group or individual will gain entry to the UK and we will not be liable for any issues that arise during the immigration process as a result of this information. The Fringe Society will also not be liable for any costs or inconvenience caused by failure to gain entry or delayed entry to the UK and we will not reimburse registration fees due to cancellations caused by immigration issues. For individual advice you should contact your local UK embassy or consulate or an immigration lawyer.

Visas for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe

The first thing you need to know is that the Edinburgh Festival Fringe is a "PERMIT FREE FESTIVAL" which means that performers and their "legitimate entourages" do not need to obtain work permits to appear in the UK. Performers and entourages at permit-free festivals enter the UK as a VISITOR (standard) and do not need to apply for entry under the Points Based System or as a Permitted Paid Engagements visitor. However you may still need to apply for a visa in advance and the requirements depend on which country you are coming from.

Please note that legitimate entourage may include directors, producers, technicians, stage managers, creative team, publicists and anyone involved directly with a specific production that has been registered with the Fringe Society.

The Home Office approves our inclusion on the permit free festivals list and confirmation of our permit-free status can be viewed at page 36 of this document:
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/423477/20150424_mmigration_rules_app_v_final_v2.pdf.

Which section applies to me?

The below guidelines are split into three sections; on the next page you will find a guide to which section applies to you. Please make sure you follow the correct guidelines for your nationality.

SECTION 1 - EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA AND SWITZERLAND

Citizens of the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Irish Republic, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, United Kingdom.

SECTION 2 - VISA NATIONALS

Citizens of the following countries:

Afghanistan	Central African Republic	Ghana	Lesotho	People's Republic of China	Syria
Albania	Chad	Guinea	Liberia	Peru	Taiwan
Algeria	Colombia	Guinea Bissau	Libya	Philippines	Tajikistan
Angola	Comoros	Guyana	Macedonia	Qatar	Tanzania
Armenia	Congo	Haiti	Madagascar	Russia	Thailand
Azerbaijan	Congo, Dem Republic of	India	Malawi	Rwanda	Togo
Bahrain	Cuba	Indonesia	Mali	Sao Tome & Principe	Tunisia
Bangladesh	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Iran	Mauritania	Saudi Arabia	Turkey
Belarus	Djibouti	Iraq	Moldova	Senegal	Turkmenistan
Benin	Dominican Republic	Ivory Coast	Mongolia	Serbia	Uganda
Bhutan	Ecuador	Jamaica	Montenegro	Sierra Leone	Ukraine
Bolivia	Egypt	Jordan	Morocco	Somalia	United Arab Emirates
Bosnia Herzegovina	Equatorial Guinea	Kazakhstan	Mozambique	South Africa	Uzbekistan
Burkina Faso	Eritrea	Kenya	Nepal	South Sudan	Venezuela
Burma	Ethiopia	Korea (North)	Niger	Sri Lanka	Vietnam
Burundi	Fiji	Kuwait	Nigeria	Sudan	Yemen
Cambodia	Gabon	Kyrgyzstan	Oman	Surinam	Zambia
Cameroon	Gambia	Laos	Pakistan	Swaziland	Zimbabwe
Cape Verde	Georgia	Lebanon	Territories formerly comprising the socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia		

*****Some exceptions may apply to the above list, for full details and to find out if you need to apply for a visa before you travel, please visit the Visas and Immigration tool, [check if you need a UK Visa](#).**

SECTION 3 - NON-VISA NATIONALS

Citizens of any country not listed in 1) and 2) including citizens of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA.

SECTION 1 - EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA AND SWITZERLAND

Please also see [Countries in the EU and EEA](#)

Most citizens of the EEA and Switzerland are free to enter and live in the UK without applying for permission and in most cases are also able to take part in the Fringe without needing any visa or work permit.

Please note that the Workers Registration Scheme, which previously affected citizens of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, closed in April 2011 and no longer applies.

SECTION 2 - VISA NATIONALS

If you are a Visa National you WILL need to obtain a visa before travelling to the UK. The type of visa you should apply for is a STANDARD VISITOR VISA.

How and where do I apply for my visa?

Details of how to apply can be found in the [Standard Visitor Visa application form](#). You must apply online for a Standard Visitor Visa and the cost is £85.00

***You cannot apply online if you're applying from **North Korea**, please follow [these instructions](#).

Biometrics

All visa applications will require you to attend your local Visa Application Centre (VAC) to submit your biometric details (10 digit finger print scans and a digital photograph) as part of your application process. Your application cannot be assessed until these details have been submitted.

How long will it take to process my visa?

You can apply for a visa up to three months before you travel and you should allow weeks rather than days for the process to be completed. You will need to submit your passport as part of the visa application process. Check on the [UK Visas and Immigration](#) website what the processing times are for the country where you are applying from.

What documents will I need to support my application?

When you fill in your visa application form either online or on paper, it will outline exactly what supporting documentation you will need, including passports, evidence of funds and photographs. You can find out what you will need to include in your application on the [UK Visas and Immigration](#) website.

You will also need a letter confirming your participation in the Fringe. This is called a welcome letter and these are processed by the Fringe Society through [edfringeware](#), the database where you register your show. You can find out how to request a welcome letter by following the instructions on [this page](#). As well, you can always ask us any questions on participants@edfringe.com.

To support your visa application, you may also want to present a welcome letter from your venue and your venue contract which confirms that you are booked to perform.

Under 18s

If you are under 18 and applying for an Entertainer Visitor Visa, you will be issued with a Child Visitor Visa, and also need written consent to travel from your parent/guardian in your home country. You will need to show that you have proper travel, reception and care arrangements in place for your stay in the UK. If you apply as an "Accompanied Child" you must travel with the adult named on the visa. If you apply as an "Unaccompanied Child", you may travel alone or with any adult.

What happens when I arrive in the UK?

Before arrival in the UK, you will be asked to fill in a landing card which will collect details of your visit. When you arrive, follow the signs to passport control for your nationality where a Border official will ask to see all your documentation including your visa. Once the official is satisfied, they can grant you entry into the UK.

More information

More information on Standard Visitor visas can be found on the [UK Visas and Immigration](#) website.

SECTION 3 – NON-VISA NATIONALS

As a Non-Visa national you DO NOT need to apply for a visa before travelling to the Fringe. On arrival at the border, you can seek entry as a STANDARD VISITOR at a PERMIT FREE FESTIVAL and you should have supporting documentation with you to confirm that this is the purpose of your trip.

Please note that this guidance only applies if the primary purpose of your trip is to take part in a show registered at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe; if you are intending to undertake any other work outside your Fringe show or remain in the UK for more than 6 months, then you should contact your local UK visa information office to find out what type of visa you need.

What is the process for gaining entry as a non-visa national?

You do not need to apply for entry or a visa before travelling but you will need to gather the supporting documentation to confirm why you are seeking to enter the UK. You should carry this documentation in your hand luggage so that it is available at the border.

We recommend that you have with you:

- **A welcome letter from the Fringe Society** confirming that your show is registered and that the Fringe is a permit-free festival. Welcome letters are processed by the Fringe Society through [edfringeware](#), the database where you register your show. You can find out how to request a welcome letter by following the instructions on [this page](#) or email participants@edfringe.com.
- **A letter of invitation from your venue** confirming you are performing there and / or a copy of your venue contract Proof of booked accommodation in the UK.
- **Evidence you can support yourself** whilst in the UK without recourse to public funds e.g. a credit card / bank statement showing available funds / cash.
- **Evidence of sufficient funds** for a return journey.

What happens when I arrive in the UK?

Before arrival in the UK, you will be asked to fill in a landing card which will collect details of your visit. When you arrive, follow the signs to passport control for your nationality where a Border official will ask you the purpose of your trip and to see your supporting documentation. Once the official is satisfied, they can grant you entry into the UK.

More information

More information on Standard Visitors can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/standard-visitor-visa/overview>.