



The Fringe Guide to Touring

For many artists the opportunity to generate touring invitations is a major reason to attend the Fringe, as it provides a platform to gather press attention and to get your work seen by potential bookers. If you know you are looking to tour or maybe doing so in the future, this guide contains some starting points for developing a touring strategy.

Before packing up and hitting the open road take a look at the following ten considerations:

The first stage

1. The show
2. Mobility
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4. Touring options
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The High Street (2014)
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1. The show

The first stage

- Is your show of a high enough quality to garner invitations from presenters/ programmers? It is almost impossible to be objective about one's own work but you need to be realistic about its likelihood of standing out from the many other shows being performed in Edinburgh during the Fringe.
- Has this show or previous work by the same artist/s been the subject of favourable reviews, great audience word of mouth, awards, enthusiastic feedback from other artists? Have you supporters in the arts world who think highly of your work: promoters who regularly book you, venues who offer developmental support?
- Technical constraints are the norm when performing at the Fringe but have you ensured that the work will be presented in a way which will show off its qualities as best as possible?

2. Mobility

The first stage

- Is your show designed to be on tour or could it be made so without huge additional expense? Give thought to the design: can it be made portable, perhaps by being broken down into smaller pieces? What are its minimal requirements in terms of lighting and sound?
- Can set, props or any particularly specialised lighting or sound equipment be sourced locally by the inviting promoter? What size van (if travelling by land) and what size flight boxes or packing crates (if travelling by sea or air) will your set, props and equipment require? Is your cast committed and contracted to touring, should the invitations arise?
- Pulling together a tour is a time consuming affair. Be aware that international bookings can take place anywhere between six months to two years in advance so make sure the work you are selling is available. Do the company have up-to-date passports and are any members likely to have problems with immigration to other countries? Do you have the administrative support necessary? If you lose a member of the cast to other work, what sort of time and cost would be needed for re-rehearsal?

3. Extras

The first stage

- Are there any additional elements that would make a difference to the desirability of the show? Is the company good at giving workshops? If so, what ages and skill levels could you serve? Many performance programmes are connected to universities. Could your company deliver workshops to the student body? Does the show include unusual elements or performance skills?
- Does the show include interesting sets or props, puppets or found objects used in interesting ways? If the show is technically complex, though not ideal for a touring situation, could lighting and sound technicians offer workshops or master classes? Can the company offer post-show discussions or a Q&A?
- Does the theme of the show lend itself to broader debate and would the director, writer or performers be willing and able to sit on a panel to discuss that theme? Bear in mind that, particularly overseas, a good post-show activity programme may be the element that makes a company seem like good value for money.



4. Touring options

The second stage

- Be realistic about where you can perform but remember that if a promoter likes your show enough they may be willing to go to a great deal of effort to present it. Think about what size and type of space suits your show best: rural and community halls? Schools? Small, middle or large-scale venues? Outdoor or unusual spaces?
- Nudity, swear words, sexual or political themes are all elements of a show that can limit its audience. If you are planning an international tour, be aware that other additional elements may impact on where you can tour, particularly language or cultural constraints. If your show contains very dense or colloquial text, give some thought to how it might be made more accessible by accommodating surtitling, plot synopses and amendments to text or accent.
- Once you are reasonably sure which venues and audiences your show would best reach, think about identifying promoters to target. Review your existing connections and networks for suitable matches and first target existing supporters of your work. Invite them to see your performances in Edinburgh and, where appropriate, to suggest and introduce to you suitable contacts of theirs. Work with the Participant and Industry Development Manager and with your own networks to identify who else is in Edinburgh that you should be approaching and encouraging to see your work.
- Answers to some of the questions already posed around set, technical requirements and cast availability will contribute to the fee that you charge and the additional costs that a programmer will need to find. Keep in mind that, depending on the size of your company, travel, freight and subsistence may present the largest cost element that your promoter will have to cover. When planning your tour, think carefully about your existing commitments to avoid criss-crossing the country (or the world) to get to your next gig.

5. Budget

The second stage

- It is important to understand the real costs of your show being on tour. Once you have identified these and fixed upon a fee that you wish to charge, or a box office income that you need to reach, you can then negotiate with confidence.
- To calculate your basic fee, the main things to consider are salaries of cast and crew, royalties, marketing costs and a proportion of both the original production costs and your ongoing overheads. This last is important to calculate since the administration of a tour can come with considerable costs, particularly if it is an international tour.
- Be aware of what you are including and, importantly, what you are omitting. If you are leaving certain elements out because their cost is dependent on where you are touring like travel, subsistence, freight costs and equipment hire, make sure that the person with whom you are negotiating realises that these additional charges will need to be covered. Do your best to mitigate these additional costs - companies willing to share rooms will substantially lower their host's accommodation bill.
- Finally, ensure you have allowed for some contingency and get a reality check on your final fees from someone you trust: a programmer, funder or friendly touring company who can tell you whether your fee is high or low compared to others.

6. Information packs

The second stage

- If you have already performed your show elsewhere then it is likely that you will have already gathered positive press, good audience numbers, interesting images and possibly recorded footage. Collate all of this and have the information available to give or send to promoters that you meet in Edinburgh. Ideally your information pack should contain:
 - Two or three good images.
 - A video clip (five minutes or less) which allows the booker to get a feel for your work if they haven't already seen it. Ensure that the quality of the clip is good; badly filmed footage will not show your work off to its best advantage.
 - A press release.
 - A description of the piece that is easy to understand. Keep it simple. Get someone who does not know your work to proofread this to ensure it is clear.
 - An artistic statement about the ambitions of the company, if it is not already clear from the show description.
 - Information on any extra activity that the company can undertake including post-show discussions/education workshops etc.
 - Technical information for the show including lighting, sound, AV, set and stage management.
 - A tour schedule (if you have one) so they or their colleagues can come see your work if they haven't already.
 - Examples of your promotional material and reviews, quotes from audience members etc.
 - Contact details.
- Many promoters prefer not to carry publicity material back home in their suitcases so be prepared to give them a small card or leaflet with contact information and an image that will remind them of your show and to send them the full information pack once they have returned home. You should ensure that your website has an up-to-date 'Promoters Section' which also houses all of the above information so this can be accessed by interested promoters at any time. Make sure any printed material you're handing out has your website address on it.
- Keep notes of any conversations you've had, even if some of that conversation was about football or politics or the dreadful weather. This is so you can send them exactly what they asked for in terms of your show but also to personalise your letter of introduction, subtly reminding them of the discussions – football, politics or weather – that you have already had and thus who, of the many people they met, you are.
- If, you are sending your information pack to people who will not have seen the show during the Fringe, be sure to include any additional reviews, awards or feedback that you received while at the festival. If a promoter particularly liked your show, ask them whether they would be happy for you to use their name in introductions to other promoters in the same region or country.
- If a promoter is not interested then ask for feedback. This can be difficult for both of you. Be positive, listen and learn from any feedback. It may not be anything to do with the quality of your work. They may have a very specific remit or are operating under particular constraints or be restricted in terms of their audience, timings or budget. Ask for recommendations of other venues who might find your work of interest.

7. Venue contracts

The second stage

- Be aware that each venue you negotiate with may offer you a different kind of agreement. Most companies would prefer to be paid a guaranteed fee, but you may be offered a box office split or a guarantee against a box office split. Before accepting these deals, you will need to ask questions about the likely box office income and your share of it: have they programmed similar work and how well has that done? How did they market similar shows and how will they be marketing yours? What, if any, costs (credit card charges etc) will be extracted from the gross box office income before it is split between you? If you have accurately budgeted your own costs you will be able to decide how big a risk you are taking and whether you are willing to take it.



8. Audience development

The third stage

- One of the main reasons for touring a production is to build an audience for your work outside of your home base, and as a result, to grow as a company/artist. It is important to work with your venue to get an audience; it is in both your interests to get the work seen by lots of people. There are a number of ways to do this:
 - Invite marketing and box office staff to see your show so they can sell it and talk about it with confidence.
 - Write a blog and use other social media such as Twitter & Facebook to create a following for the tour and to gather your audience. You can update your audience on interesting things that happen throughout the tour, post pictures and announce local press response.
 - Compile an FAQ sheet for your venue's box office that lists all the potential questions you think an audience member might ask – Who is in it? Is it suitable for children? How long does it last? Also make sure that you give details on any unique performance elements so that staff can answer questions knowledgeably.
- Venues normally require your marketing materials fairly far in advance so ensure you have them ready. It is your responsibility to produce marketing materials for your tour as required, so make sure you print enough and that they are of good quality. Standard requests might include the following:
 - Three or four high-resolution digital images for publicity (landscape and portrait, min. 300dpi).
 - High-resolution digital copies of your company logo and any sponsor logos if applicable as well as show copy and images for inclusion in the venue's brochure.
 - A sample mail-out.
 - A press release.
 - Flyers and posters with space for overprinting. Venues may stipulate a quantity that they require but increasingly venues will print their own posters in line with their regular marketing campaigns and, if so, you may want to ensure that you have copy approval of the final design.

9. Sustainability

The third stage

- There is currently a sector-wide call for theatre makers to be conscious of the impact that touring their work has on the environment. A study was carried out by green arts initiative, Julie's Bicycle, which linked the evidence of environmental impacts with practical solutions for cutting carbon emissions. The study, and the Julie's Bicycle website provide fascinating insights and practical recommendations, tools and resources.
- It is directed at all those who are engaged in the business of theatre touring: the companies themselves, their tour bookers and funders as well as the promoters and venues who present the work.
- For more information on how to make your touring efforts more sustainable then visit the Julie's Bicycle website: www.juliesbicycle.com

10. Accessibility

The third stage

- It is in your best interest to make your show accessible to as wide an audience as possible. There are currently over 11.2 million disabled people in the UK and disability is estimated to affect 10-20% of every country's population. Eight percent of disabled people in the UK use a wheelchair whereas there are two million people with visual impairments in the UK and more than ten million people in the UK with some form of hearing loss.
- There are many different ways of making your show accessible – developing relaxed performances, working with BSL interpreters, including captioning are just a few. The Fringe [Guide to Adapting Your Show](#) has more information as well as details of organisations who can help you in developing these resources.
- You should also talk to the venues you are working with about their accessibility policies, they may be just as keen as you to ensure your performance is accessible. They may even be able to help you source interpreters or develop the messaging around your performances.

Remember, there is no one formula that fits all and there are as many different shaped tours as there are shows touring. Don't be intimidated by the challenges or assume that you need to do and bring everything that a larger company might feel the need for. If you are a small company with a simple production, then you can possibly double up on roles (i.e. director and production manager), be more flexible about your technical requirements and certainly cut back on costs.

There is not a definitive list of which schools take or don't take productions. This is because it all depends on factors such as budget, space/facilities, focus, ethos of school and most importantly the individual teacher's preferences as they are the ones that organise visiting productions.

The best approach is to send your information to the learning/education departments of each local authority in the regions where you want to tour the work. This information should include teacher support packs, tech spec and costs. These departments can then circulate your show information throughout their schools to see if there is any uptake. If you plan on touring schools in Scotland then you should write a teacher's resource pack for your show that outlines specifically how your production supports the outcomes of the [Curriculum for Excellence](#). You should demonstrate how you can accelerate learning in line with the curriculum. This pack should include information from the Director, cast and other creatives involved in creating the show. Structure it like an interview; ask the Director about the central themes of the show, ask the playwright why he/she chose to write it, ask them both about style and ideas. Ask the cast to talk about their characters; who they are, what motivates them, their relationships etc.

In addition, by directly calling each of the schools you want to target you can compile a database of drama/expressive arts faculty contacts. Teachers are incredibly busy and receive lots of proposals, they tend to book shows that are reputable, clearly outline the curricular benefits and are low budget. If the show is expensive then you might be better contacting the private school sector.



These are just a few areas to consider that will help to get you started with your planning. They are by no means all-inclusive, so make sure you do your research, ask questions and of course contact the Participant and Industry Development Manager at the Arts Industry Office for clarification and impartial advice. Amongst other things, the Fringe Society hosts a number of free networking and information events during the festival. These not only provide instruction and guidance but also give you the chance to meet producers, promoters, agents and fellow Fringe artists and can be extremely useful if you hope to take your show further after the Fringe.

We also operate a service through which promoters, producers and talent scouts register with the Fringe and ask our team for advice on what shows might be suitable for their festival or theatre. So be proactive, come and speak to us, tell us about your show and what your goals are. That way we can help you target the right people to come and see your work. Please see The Participants [Guide to the Arts Industry Office](#) for more details.

Take advantage of your time at the Fringe, make the most of it and seek out those opportunities. More information on participant development and the opportunities we offer can be found on the website www.edfringe.com/participants/touring-and-professional-development or get in touch at artistadvice@edfringe.com.

Below is a list of useful websites where you can find additional information on touring networks, venue resources, legal issues, contractual responsibilities and many more relevant topics.



Fringe Central (2014)
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Development and information

Creative Scotland

www.creativescotland.com

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland on behalf of everyone who lives, works or visits here. They enable people and organisations to work in and experience the arts, screen and creative industries in Scotland by helping others to develop great ideas and bring them to life. They distribute funding from the Scottish Government and The National Lottery.

Arts Council England

www.artscouncil.org.uk

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. They support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries. They invest public money in great art and culture for everyone, everywhere. They fund major organisations that serve the whole nation as well as, many smaller companies, individual artists and arts-related projects.

British Council

www.britishcouncil.org

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. They are on the ground in six continents and over 100 countries, bringing international opportunity to life every day. Arts is a cornerstone of the British Council's mission to create a friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and the wider world.

World Festival Network

www.worldfestivalnet.com

The World Festival Network brings the international festival sector closer together. Acting as a liaison between festivals and performers, audiences, suppliers and the media we provide the opportunity to strengthen and promote multi-disciplinary Festivals. We do this through education, introduction, networking, research, dissemination of information, and the cultivation and development of good working practice.

Federation of Scottish Theatre

www.scottishtheatre.org

FST is the development body for professional dance, opera and theatre in Scotland, bringing the sector together to speak with a collective voice, to share resources and expertise and to promote collaborative working. FST undertakes advocacy at a national level with government and funding bodies, co-ordinates capacity building initiatives and provides training, advice and other services to members to secure the creative future of dance, opera and theatre in Scotland.

Culture Republic

www.culturerepublic.co.uk

Culture Republic provides the tools and insights that Scotland's arts and cultural organisations need to identify and understand their audiences. Whether you're looking at attendance, participation, footfall or digital engagement, we can help you see who you're reaching now; who you're missing, and where to find those elusive hard-to-reach groups.

Creative & Cultural Skills

ccskills.org.uk

CCS are a campaigning organisation championing youth employment and fair access. Their mission is:

- To give young people opportunities to work and learn in the creative industries.
- To ensure that employers benefit from a skilled generation of talent.
- To help the creative industries continue on a course of economic growth.

ArtsHub

www.artshub.co.uk

ArtsHub has been one of the arts industry's leading online portal, providing its strong and loyal subscriber base with the latest industry news and jobs.

Independent Theatre Council

www.itc-arts.org

The Independent Theatre Council represents, supports and develops the professional performing arts in the UK. ITC is the management association for theatre's independent sector. They are a community of peers spread across the UK working in drama, dance, opera and musical theatre, mime and physical theatre, circus, puppetry, street arts and mixed media.

UK Theatre

www.uktheatre.org

UK Theatre supports theatre and performing arts organisations and individuals who work professionally in the performing arts at any stage of their career. Members have access to a range of professional services and tailored benefits to suit the needs of you and/or your organisation.

Touring networks

North East Arts Touring

www.neatshows.org.uk

NEAT promotes high quality and professional produced theatre, dance and film productions in rural communities across the North East of Scotland (Aberdeenshire, Moray and Angus)

National Rural Touring Forum

www.ruraltouring.org

The National Rural Touring Forum is a member led organisation that works strategically with partners to develop work and deliver high quality art experiences that strengthen rural and other communities. They provide the rural touring network with training, information and networking services; deliver and enable innovative work, international partnerships and commissions; and promote better understanding of the value of rural and community touring through research and advocacy.

The Touring Network

www.thetouringnetwork.com

The Touring Network exists to see rural touring be a central, celebrated and indispensable part of the cultural life of Scotland. They exist to enable live performances of the highest level, transforming people as promoters, performers and audiences to create vibrant places to live, work and visit. Their venues cover over half the area of Scotland and they have promoters working in communities across Highland, Argyll & Bute, Moray, Orkney, Shetland and Perthshire.

UK Arts International

www.ukarts.com

UK Arts International have been working with international music, theatre and dance artists for 23 years, bringing a variety of performing arts productions to venues around the world. They work in a number of ways -producing, presenting, advising and representing specific artists.

house

housetheatre.org.uk

house curates and underwrites a varied programme of around 20 contemporary theatre productions each year for our network of over 140 venues. This programming is informed by the views of their steering group, venue network and their audiences, and is supported with marketing and publicity strategies that sit alongside their audience development strands. Venues across the network have a commitment to developing the audiences that these strands highlight.

Dance Touring Partnership

www.dancetouringpartnership.co.uk

Dance Touring Partnership (DTP) is a network of theatres working together to bring exciting and engaging dance to audiences around the UK. The network aims to build audiences for dance, increase the range and diversity of work available and encourage new attenders into dance.

BAC – Collaborative Touring Network

www.bac.org.uk

The Collaborative Touring Network is a partnership between seven different promoters across the UK. Coming together with the joint aim of inspiring an entirely new generation of theatre-goers, the Collaborative Touring Network will navigate its way across the country to bring inspiring performance to audiences. In six seasons of work over three years, the festivals will challenge traditional touring models which exclude areas without an existing infrastructure for theatre and performance. Now in its second year the project sees four productions selected by Battersea Arts Centre and the regional partners tour the country.

Disabilities Arts Touring Network

www.disabilityartsonline.org.uk

Dao's vision is to achieve widespread appreciation for the richness and diversity of disability arts and culture. They aim to do this by transforming and enriching arts and culture through nurturing creativity and discourse from a disability perspective. They nurture and showcase talent, provide information and create opportunities for disabled artists through innovative partnerships.

Spot On Rural Touring

spotonlancashire.co.uk

Spot On works with volunteers in isolated communities promoting professional theatre, dance, music and children's shows in two seasons each year for everyone to enjoy.

International

IETM

www.ietm.org

IETM is a membership organisation which exists to stimulate the quality, development and contexts of contemporary performing arts in a global environment. It aims at proving the value of the performing arts in society by initiating and facilitating professional networking and communication, the dynamic exchange of information, know-how transfer and presentations of examples of good practice.

International Performing Arts for Youth [IPAY]

ipayweb.org

IPAY is the premiere membership organization in the world today servicing and supporting the professional community of performing arts for young audiences. Our membership is comprised of a growing worldwide network of artists, producers, presenters, agents, educators and students that are dedicated and involved in producing, presenting and promoting all forms of theatre, music, dance, circus, puppetry and more. We share best practices and industry resources, provide an annual community meeting place, and stimulate international dialogue and collaboration.

International Society for the Performing Arts [ISPA]

www.ispa.org

ISPA is a global network of more than 400 leaders in the performing arts with representation from more than 185 cities and all regions of the globe. ISPA members include facilities, performing arts organizations, artist managers, competitions, funders, consultants and other professionals working in the performing arts. ISPA is a meeting place and resource for expanding your personal and professional network.

The Association of Performing Arts Presenters [APAP]

www.apap365.org

APAP is the national service, advocacy and membership organization for presenters of the performing arts. APAP is dedicated to developing and supporting a robust performing arts industry and the professionals who work within it. APAP strengthens and advances your career and the field through professional development, resource sharing, advocacy and civic engagement.

International Theatre Institute

www.iti-worldwide.org

The International Theatre Institute promotes international exchange of knowledge and practice in theatre arts in order to consolidate peace and friendship between peoples, to deepen mutual understanding, increase creative co-operation between all people in the theatre arts.

British Council – Arts

www.britishcouncil.org/arts

Arts is a cornerstone of the British Council's mission to create a friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and the wider world. We find new ways of connecting with and understanding each other through the arts, to develop stronger creative sectors around the world that are better connected with the UK.

Visiting Arts – World Cultures Connect

www.visitingarts.org.uk/content/worldculturesconnect

World Cultures Connect is a new generation global cultural information site. It connects artists and cultural organizations across the globe. It allows them to promote their work, make new connections with other artists, identify opportunities for work and discover new partners, new markets and new audiences. It also gives the public a comprehensive insight into the cultural offer of countries and how to engage with arts and culture worldwide.

Foreign & Commonwealth Office – Travel Advice

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office

The FCO promotes the United Kingdom's interests overseas, supporting British citizens and businesses around the globe. The site provides information passports, worldwide sites and travel advice for individual country procedures.



Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society
180 High Street
Edinburgh
EH1 1QS

Telephone: +44 (0)131 226 0026
Fax +44 (0)131 226 0016
Email: admin@edfringe.com

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