

INFORMATION FOR ARTISTS & COMPANIES



This is information for artists and companies who are considering putting themselves forward for work on the Live & Local community performance schemes.

We also recommend that you read the NRTF publication 'Eyes Wide Open' (available from <http://www.ruraltouring.org/>) before contacting us or submitting an online Information Form.

THE ORGANISATION

Live & Local is a network of over 200 village halls, community centres, schools and small arts venues in Warwickshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Worcestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Rutland who provide their communities with the opportunity to enjoy exciting and different professional shows on their doorstep

This network is a partnership between the knowledge and enthusiasm of local people (mainly volunteers) in these community organisations, combined with the expertise of the professional co-ordinating team at Live & Local Ltd. **The local organisations choose and promote the performances with our support.** So, for us to work together successfully we need to know that your ideas and experience fit readily into these existing partnerships.

We are not the 'promoters'. We are the network co-ordinators, acting as an intermediary between the professional artists and the local promoters by raising funding, identifying suitable performances, co-ordinating bookings and contracts (guaranteeing payments to the performers), providing marketing support and by attracting audiences from further afield with direct mail, media coverage and bi-annual What's On Listings and Newsletter.

Based in Warwick, we are a team of twelve with Business & Operations and Engagement Teams.

Live & Local is a National Portfolio Organisation funded by the Arts Council, England and by 40+ local authorities. We are also part of the National Rural Touring Forum, a network of 35 similar schemes across the country. (<http://www.ruraltouring.org/>)

THE LOCAL PROMOTERS

The majority are voluntary run organisations serving a distinct local, small rural (and some urban) catchment area. Village hall committees, parish councils, community centre committees, church groups and schools are just some of the promoting organisations. They usually organise a maximum of three Live & Local events per year, and have few resources apart from time, local knowledge and enthusiasm. We do work with a very few professionally managed venues (although not usually arts managers) serving wider catchment areas and have a regular programme of arts events.

THE VENUES

The voluntary run rural venues are predominantly unequipped non-theatre venues with 100 seats or less. Their stages are rarely suitable for drama therefore we are often dealing with flat floor spaces and need to know **how you would overcome the inherent sightline problems.** There will be no technical support at these venues.

The few professionally run venues usually have more in-house resources than the voluntary run venues in terms of staff (but rarely technical staff), equipment and administrative support, usually with 100 seats plus. Some are partially equipped with "end-on" stages, although a variety of other possible flat floor formats are possible if additional equipment is brought in. NB: These venues represent less than 2% of our promoters.

Key Point: The more adaptable you are in terms of your required performing area, the better. If you ask for 20' x 20' then only 30% of our venues can even consider you – and some of these will have to lose quite a few seats and some of them historically don't book drama. If you ask for 16' x 16' the number of potential bookings goes up considerably... and so on.

There are often restrictions on the height in these types of venues as well.

THE 'MENU' and PROGRAMMING PROCESS

Each year we select suitable shows, compile these into a 'Menu' describing the shows on offer. The information includes a description of the show, availability, target audiences, running times, technical requirements and get in times. It is distributed to the local promoters in late March and covers the year from October through to the following June. We sometimes refresh this menu in the autumn.

See [information on our website](#) for the full timeline.

The promoters request show(s) from the Menu by mid May. Live & Local co-ordinates the dates, negotiates the fees, contracts and pays the companies for the performance(s).

Generally, inclusion in this menu does not guarantee bookings. We will either (a) agree pencilled dates with companies who reserve those dates for Live & Local which are confirmed or otherwise in mid May. (b) Say the company is 'generally available October onwards' (maybe with some detail about excluded dates) or (c) and this is rare, with certain companies (e.g. international companies) we will book (i.e. contract) dates before getting requests from our local promoters.

We start to contact companies from mid May onwards to confirm bookings.

We pay the artists the full agreed fixed fee (i.e. no box office splits). The local promoter usually pays a guaranteed fee or a percentage of the gross box office receipts to Live & Local.

Confirmed Tours, Funding and Co-Productions

It is damaging to our relationship with our voluntary promoter network if we confirm a show/date, only to have it cancelled for whatever reason. Our default position is that we will not offer a show in the Menu that is relying on any funding (or co production arrangements) for making and/or touring a show unless that funding can be confirmed before our promoter's request deadline in mid-May.

The following applies to shows/tours that are relying on an Arts Council National Lottery Project Grant:

- For less than or equal to £15,000 the turnaround time is six weeks. So, a company could put in an application after they have been successful in making it into the Live & Local menu on or before 1st April and have a decision before our requests' deadline in Mid-May.
- For over £15,000 it is 12 weeks, therefore a company would have to apply on or before 18th February. We would generally be able to tell companies whether they are in the menu or not by this point.

Please note that to offer any show in our menu that is relying on ACE funding we would need to see similar creative, technical and other information (and assurances about other tour bookings) as you would have to provide for an ACE application. Therefore, we would generally want to see relevant parts of the application.

THE PERFORMERS

Theatre Companies

Companies included in the menu are well established and generally, but not exclusively, with experience of touring into community venues i.e. administration, marketing and technical experience - as well as offering appropriate artistic product.

Companies should be able to supply good quality digital print sample and a marketing pack (ideally 3 to 4 months in advance) containing - background information, target markets, brochure copy, sample press release and direct mail letters, photographs, information on any mailing lists, local contacts etc.

NB: The need for print sample to be delivered on time is written into our contracts with penalty clauses. [Guidelines for our publicity needs are available here.](#)

We will also need high quality pictures for web and press use, access to video clips and information about social media resources/opportunities.

All shows should be self-contained, including lighting, sound and staging as required to deliver a quality show in an unequipped venue. Where necessary also an experienced technician or stage manager. A very few (larger) venues have some equipment which is generally for use on their traditional "end-on" raised stage area. However, the format of the audience/performing areas is

usually adaptable and suitable for self-contained companies. (Technical specs available). Nb These venues are less than 2% of our partners. You should assume that they are the rare exception and that your show should be fully self-contained.

Musical Groups, Bands and other Artists

Live & Local expects musical groups and other artists to be experienced in touring to community and/or non-theatre venues. We do not expect them to provide lighting, although this is a definite plus towards your inclusion in the Menu, but we do expect them to tour their own sound system.

Companies should be able to supply good quality digital print sample and a marketing pack (ideally 3 to 4 months in advance) containing - background information, target markets, brochure copy, sample press release and direct mail letters, photographs, information on any mailing lists, local contacts etc.

NB: The need for print sample to be delivered on time is written into our contracts with penalty clauses. [Guidelines for our publicity needs are available here.](#)

We will also need high quality pictures for web and press use, access to video clips and information about social media resources/opportunities.

DART

DART is an ongoing programme of support for performing artists based in the East and/or West Midlands. Since launching, DART has supported nearly 50 artists/companies with mentoring, bursaries, and connections to rural audiences/promoters. The initiative also supports the creation of new work for rural/community touring audiences and brought promoters and audiences closer to the creation of this work. DART will also support companies new to rural touring in the practical aspects of mounting their first rural tour. [For more information about DART.](#)

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU

We can only accept information submitted online via our initial [Expression of Interest](#) form.

We recommend that you read the Eyes Wide Open document available from <http://www.ruraltouring.org.uk>. We can also provide Fact Sheets on our [Marketing and Print requirements](#) as well as our Artistic and Equal Opportunities Policies.

Please read all the notes on our [Form Guidance](#) page before submitting this form.

If you wish to find out more about the DART programme, please call /email us in the first instance.

We do not give out venue or promoter contact lists.

Please read all the information carefully about publicity, pending funding and confirmed tours.

If you are an organisation based within the West or East Midlands Arts region, then we are also more than happy to arrange a meeting so that you can come along and find out in more detail about our aims and objectives and about how we work.

For more information please call us on (01926) 402173

“Live & Local actively encourages unexpected, exciting and different programming by local promoters that meets the needs and desires of their target audiences and provides a real entertainment alternative - performances that are unmistakably “live” and positively exploit the environment in Live & Local venues.”

From our Artistic Policy