

Magnetic North Theatre Festival

Expression of Interest

Table of Contents

Host Community Guidelines 2
Preamble 2
Attendees 3
Host Community Bidding Checklist 3
 Performance Venues..... 3
 Infrastructure..... 4
Accommodations 5
 Staff Accommodation 5
 Visitor Accommodation..... 5
 People 6
Local & Community 6
Direct Support 7
To be Included in Bid Package 7
Terms of Reference 8
Appendix 1 9
Appendix 2..... 10

Host Community Guidelines

The Canadian Theatre Festival Society's mission:

To produce a Canadian theatre festival with a national scope, that has strong artistic vision and that meets high artistic standards, to promote dissemination of Canadian work through presenters to audiences, and to increase the awareness of Canadian theatre amongst artists, audiences, producers and national and international presenters.

Preamble

Magnetic North is focused on celebrating the maturity and diversity of Canadian theatre. We work closely with the host community in order to promote the profile of local professional theatre in that community, and to offer professional development for that community. The festival also offers through its Magnetic Encounters a range of educational and outreach opportunities for youth as well as local audience development.

A host community for Magnetic North will need to have a thriving professional theatre community with a minimum of five professional theatre companies that are able to support the festival's goals. There must also be a minimum of five venues (which may be those used by the professional theatre companies, or different venues, or a combination) ideally in the 100-500 seat range, available for a two-week period to accommodate programming. It is expected that these venues be professionally equipped with lighting and sound systems. In past festivals, these venues have been provided to the festival with no charge, although the festival covers all technical and hard costs. The theatre community in the host community is expected to support the festival through marketing and promotional activities.

Magnetic North Theatre Festival takes place in June/July each year, alternating between Ottawa and a different host community. Normally, the Festival is 11 days long, with a period of approximately five days during which out-of-town visitors have an opportunity to see every show during this time frame.

A permanent core staff, with a base at Ottawa's National Arts Centre, is responsible for the festival on an on-going basis. Every second year, when Magnetic North takes place outside of Ottawa, that staff is supplemented by staff hired in the Festival's host city. The permanent staff works in collaboration with the host community staff to produce the festival in that year.

Timeframe for bids: 27 months before the festival, for instance bids for the 2010 festival should be received by March 2008.

Attendees

The festival is attended by a range of audience members/participants:

- Theatre-going audiences from the host city and its adjacent communities
- members of the Canadian theatre community who gather to see the work of peers and participate in professional development and networking opportunities
- presenters and producers from across Canada and abroad who gather to see the programmed work and participate in the professional networking opportunities
- representatives of funding agencies who attend in order to stay connected to their client base
- Representatives from the academic community, including educators and theatre students from the region and from across the country.

Host Community Bidding Checklist

Performance Venues

- Minimum of 5 venues of varying sizes for performances (available 4 days prior to the festival)
- Venues will not charge rent; all hard costs – including personnel - will be paid by festival
- Minimum of 5 professional theatre companies or presenting companies
- Demonstration of sufficient theatre-going audience to support the festival. Identify the theatres with subscription bases, their combined subscriber base and estimate of total theatre attendees in a season.
- Commitment of marketing support from venues/theatre companies/presenters by agreeing to such things as mailing to their subscribers (paid for by festival), piggyback materials, and including festival information in their season brochures, newsletters and websites etc...
- Indication that professional sound and lighting systems, as well as stage draperies, risers, etc. are available for any venues not equipped with them

- Indication that there are sufficient trained stagehands to support multiple simultaneous performances and setups

Infrastructure

- Commercial airport with regularly scheduled flights within 60 minutes drive time
- Festival Office
 - Office should be located in a central location and close to Festival activities.
 - Office will be open February to July in the year of the Festival
 - Prior to this date it would be preferred if Festival Manager / Associate Producer, Marketing and Production Manager would be able to work from their own home or office.
 - Office should accommodate 8-10 people at its peak.
 - Office will need phone lines and access to high speed internet, photocopier and fax. (Ideally this infrastructure will already be in place.)
 - Office and equipment should be available on an in-kind or discounted basis.
- Festival Box Office
 - A centrally located walk up storefront facility with on-line capability.
 - Able to deal with multi-venue performances
 - Able to provide detail reporting on Box Office sales broken down per show per ticket price.
 - Able to provide daily ticket sale numbers per show per performance.
 - Able to deal with passes and single ticket prices.
 - Capability of working with the festival to provide Satellite Box Offices
 - Able to provide monthly reconciliation of box office sales.
- (during the festival) a centrally-located (ideally within a host venue or hotel) area for the Information/Help/Registration Desk – the hub around all festival activity whirled that ideally can be equipped with high speed internet facilities, electrical outlets and telephone lines.
- Meeting rooms or adaptable spaces for panels, discussions, forums, workshops, master classes, etc.

- Cars, cargo and passenger vans available for rental and parking space adjacent to festival office and/or help desk to accommodate rented festival vehicles.
- Shuttle service for artists and presenters from venue to venue to hotel to airport as necessary.

Accommodations

Staff Accommodation

- 3 Staff Members staying between 3 and 6 weeks
- This is longer term accommodation and should include a Kitchen, High Speed Internet, Laundry facilities, and be centrally located.
- It is necessary to have a more economical rate and preferably a monthly rate.

For the festival itself, approximately 600 room nights over a 12 -13 day period:

Accommodation for Artists in the Festival should ideally include cooking facilities, high speed Internet, Laundry, close to venues.
(artists attending 70 - 85)

Pricing should not exceed \$99.00 with an option for shared accommodation

Visitor Accommodation

- Acquire good rates with select hotels for visitors to the festival.
- Hold approximately 100 rooms for each night at a competitive price (amount of rooms held will depend on the location of the festival.)
- Pricing should include rates not exceeding \$99.00 with an option for shared accommodation for visitors with small budgets; however some visitors and attendees prefer to stay in more upscale hotels; provision and rates should be made for this as well
- List hotels on MNTF website.

Accommodation locations should be close together to facilitate transportation and attendance at events.

People

- A local “champion” to act as a link between Magnetic North and the host community before the Festival Manager/ Associate Producer is employed – this should be a present or past Board member of the Society
- A local committee [see Terms of Reference for Vancouver attached as a sample]
- Host City Festival Staff
 - Festival Manager/Associate Producer – Hired 18 months prior to the Festival
 - Marketing Manager – Hired 9 months prior to the Festival
 - Production Manager – Hired 8- 9 months prior to the Festival
 - Admin Assistant - 6 months prior
 - Outreach Coordinator – 6 months prior
 - Volunteer Coordinator – 4 -5 months prior
 - Encounters Coordinator – 2 months prior
 - Public relations – 3 months Prior
 - Special Events/ Sponsorship – 5- 6 months prior
 - Transportation/Logistics Coordinator – 4-5 months prior

Where possible the Festival relies on HRDSC to provide staff for many of these positions.

- Volunteers
 - The festival relies on a strong team of volunteers to act as our ambassadors and front line people
 - We usually try to recruit approximately 100 volunteers to fill the following positions:
 - Drivers
 - Ushers
 - Box Office
 - Front of House
 - Information Desk
 - Hospitality
 - Office Assistants
- Media – a list of expected support/coverage from and contacts with local media

Local & Community

- A supportive educational institution, to assist with outreach, young people, professional development activities

- Identification of any potential local events that would “tie-in” with the festival – such as a visual art festival, local celebrations, etc. as well as an indication of any potentially conflicting events
- Suggestions on how Magnetic North Theatre Festival can “give back” to the community and/or leave behind a legacy in or around Canadian theatre

Direct Support

- Direct funding of \$200,000 to \$250,000 (in total), from combined municipal, regional, or provincial government sources
- Confirmation that this funding will not have a negative impact on the regular, ongoing sources of funding for the host city/region’s theatre community
- Indication of any “in kind” support that can be provided by each of these levels of government
- Assistance with making contacts with and sponsorship arrangements with local, regional or provincial corporations and Foundations
- Inclusion of Festival in provincial and municipal promotional materials, whenever possible.

To be Included in Bid Package

- Name and contact information for bid representative
- Letters indicating required levels of support from (all that apply): municipality (ies), provincial government, regional government, educational institution(s), performance venues, supporting local theatre or presenting companies, local chamber of commerce, local tourism organization
- Letters indicating that the required number of rooms of the required price levels are available and being held by hotels/motels/residences/etc.
- A proposed time frame for the Festival (in order to tie in with or avoid other events in the community)

- Listing for proposed locations for performances, offices, etc. as listed above, including details as to existing infrastructure (phone lines, etc.)
- Map showing venues, hotels, proposed office and hospitality desk locations
- Host city checklist

NOTE: In unusual circumstances, the Festival may be able to be flexible on some of the above requirements, though a compelling case must be made for such a variance.

Terms of Reference – Host Community

The Host Community Advisory Committee is to be constituted as an Ad-Hoc committee of the Board of the Magnetic North Theatre Festival, and will be chaired by a Director of the Board of the Magnetic North Theatre Festival

Additional members to be added at the discretion of Board members with input from staff.

Functions of committee are:

1. To support the mandate and vision of Magnetic North Theatre Festival. - (see attached appendices)
2. To advise staff and provide support to staff on aspects pertaining to host city festival.
3. The committee will be provided with up to date information on the festival in a timely fashion by the Managing Director i.e. draft budgets, programming information etc. Their function is not to approve these items but to lend their expertise in providing input and advice in a timely fashion, which the Magnetic North Festival Board and staff would benefit from in furthering the festival's objectives in host city.

The committee chair will set an agenda for each monthly meeting in consultation with staff. A committee secretary should be appointed to keep minutes. The Committee Chair should report monthly to the Magnetic North Board of Directors. It is advisable that the committee chair should be a MN Board member (or Advisory Board member)

Appendix 1 **Mandate**

1. Build recognition for Canadian theatre nationally and internationally and provide an environment where professional theatre practitioners and presenters can discuss and debate their work.
2. Strengthen and encourage the promotion of Canadian theatre within Canada. If community presenters are given greater access to Canadian theatre through the theatre festival, then the possibilities of them programming these works increase.
3. Provide a means by which new audiences for theatre can be developed.
4. Promote Canadian theatre to international markets and provide new economic opportunity for theatre professionals.

The Festival has the ability to increase Canadians' access to their theatre audiences exponentially. It will also provide myriad other opportunities for Canadian theatre such as the inclusion of diverse cultures, greater support for new ways of practice and an increase in the presenting capacity of the theatre community as well as an increase in the number of Canadian productions hosted by the arts/presenting community.

Appendix 2

Goals & Objectives

1. To produce a national festival with a strong artistic vision.
2. To promote awareness of the diversity of Canadian theatre among Canadian audiences, Canadian artists and Canadian presenters through the presentation of a Canadian theatre festival.
3. To provide a gathering place for artists, producers and presenters to share work and exchange ideas and promote professional development. This gathering, or symposium, is called 'Magnetic Encounters'.
4. To provide contact between artists, producers, presenters and the general public through the *Magnetic North Theatre Festival* and 'Magnetic Encounters' for the benefit of Canadian audiences.
5. To help Canadian theatre companies reach a larger and more diverse audience nationally and internationally.
6. To celebrate and provide a forum for artistic innovation in Canadian theatre.

To achieve these goals a national festival will:

- offer a wide-ranging program
- provide a national meeting place
- be well grounded in its community
- increase the artistic capacity of the theatre community
- be hosted throughout Canada
- be annual rather than biennial
- offer a national voice to non-traditional, non-western theatrical form and minority language performance where the programming criteria allow
- challenge theatre companies to present their best work
- create partnerships that foster tour network development
- promote its program internationally
- increase appreciation of an artistic vision
- offer professional and educational opportunity

The Festival's artistic values include:

- Independence of artistic direction/programming
- Development of a touring culture for Canadian theatre
- Diverse Canadian content
- A focus on excellence

- Accessibility for a national audience, regardless of geography
- Professional development