

The Blue Room Theatre

**2020 Development
Season Application
Information Pack**

April - December 2020

The Blue Room Theatre

Located in the heart of the Perth Cultural Centre, The Blue Room Theatre has been the creative hub of Western Australia's independent theatre and performance scene for 30 years. We exist to enable the development of performing artists by providing a venue, resources and support to create and produce new work. Artists are at the heart of our organisation, and we service their needs through support (financial and in-kind), resources, opportunities, advocacy, information and advice.

In 2020, The Blue Room Theatre will present three seasons of independent theatre and performance – Summer Nights, an independently curated season presented as part of FRINGE WORLD; Winter Nights, a festival of theatre experimentation and ideas in the middle of the year; and a Development Season supporting the creation and presentation of new work from April – December.

The April – December Development Season is programmed by a rotating independent panel of peer assessors chosen by The Blue Room Theatre. Peers change from season to season, and the assessors aim to curate a program of works that fulfil our purpose of championing new artists, new work, and new ways of making work.

Development Season Applications

Applications for the 2020 Development Season are open from 14 August – 25 September 2019.

We welcome applications from artists who are looking to challenge themselves and their form, explore new territory, grow their skills, diversify participation in the arts, comment on contemporary life, push boundaries and offer new experiences. Artists and companies whose work is selected to be produced during the Development Season are offered unparalleled support across all aspects of their production.

This information pack details the support provided across venue, tech, marketing and production, along with what artists need to bring to the table; provides information on the application process for 2020 and the selection criteria through which each application will be assessed; and answer some questions you may have as well. As well as this pack, two information sessions will be held and meetings with our Producer are available but not compulsory.

Eligibility Criteria

Projects that fit the following criteria are eligible to apply for a Development Season presentation. Please consider them carefully to assess the eligibility of your project.

- Works between 50 – 120 minutes in duration
- Works that create opportunities for professional development
- Independent productions by project-based producers, companies and artists rather than annually funded or commercial organisations
- Theatre, dance or performance work
- Works by emerging and established professional artists with a range of backgrounds and experience
- Work that has not been presented in WA, including new local and international plays and timely reinterpretations of current and classic texts
- Works that have obtained or sought rights (for existing scripts only)
- Applications must be submitted by a current member of The Blue Room Theatre

April - December 2020

2020 Application Process

Timeline

Applications Open	14 August 2019
Applications Due	25 September 2019
Applicant Notification	By end October 2019
Season Dates	April – December 2020

Information Sessions and Meetings

Applicants for the 2020 Development Season are not required to individually discuss their proposed production with a Producer from The Blue Room Theatre prior to submission. For this upcoming application round, The Blue Room Theatre will run two information sessions detailing the program, application process and expectations and provide a forum for queries. One session will include an added talk from The Blue Room Theatre Board member, experienced artist and arts manager, and previous General Manager of The Last Great Hunt, Katt Osborne, on how to craft a project pitch for applications.

To book into an information session fill out the form on our website by clicking [here](#).

Information Session #1

Thursday 22 August, 5:30pm – 6:45pm

The Blue Room Theatre's Producer, Harriet Roberts, will talk artists through the program offer, the application process, form and selection criteria, and take questions from artists concerning the program and application round.

Information Session #2

Wednesday 4 September, 5:30pm – 7.15pm

The Blue Room Theatre's Producer, Harriet Roberts, will talk artists through the program offer, the application process, form and selection criteria, and take questions from artists concerning the program and application round. Additional talk and tips from Board Member and experienced artist, Katt Osborne, on how to write a competitive project application.

Contact

Though meetings are not mandatory prior to application, we are here to answer your questions about the eligibility of your project or clarifications about the assessment criteria and process. If you are unable to make it to either of the information sessions or have further questions, you are welcome to get in contact with Producer Harriet Roberts at harriet@blueroom.org.au or (08) 9227 7005.

Accessibility

All Development Season information including this information pack and the application form are available in accessible formats including word documents and large print.

For more information or to be sent an accessible document, please get in contact with Producer Harriet Roberts at harriet@blueroom.org.au.

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2020 Application Form

Application Details

You must submit the following support material for your application:

- For Scripted work – one full copy of the script
- For partially scripted, devised or choreographed works – a detailed synopsis of the piece and description of development process.
- If the script is not your own, you must provide evidence the rights have been obtained or sought
- Two letters of support speaking to the timeliness of your proposed project
- A document with a short biography of all confirmed team members
- A brief confirmation letter from each confirmed creative outlining their motivation to be involved in the project

Beyond this, you are welcome to submit up to ten pages of additional support material, which may include dramaturgical assessments, design drawings, a director's statement, marketing plan or links to audio/video content.

Your application and support material should be sent in one email to apply@blueroom.org.au, in line with the formatting detailed on the application form.

2020 Application Form

You can download the 2020 Development Season application form from clicking [here](#)

Please ensure that you have read this information pack and assessed your project for eligibility ahead of applying

The Spaces

The Blue Room Theatre has two intimate black box performances spaces; The Blue Room Theatre, and The Blue Room Theatre Studio. The small scale and intimacy of these spaces make them ideally suited for new and emerging artists to develop and showcase new work, and for experienced makers to experiment with something new.

Programmed productions gain exclusive and in-kind use of one of these spaces for four weeks, comprising of one week for production bump-in, and three weeks for a presentation season.

The Blue Room Theatre

The Blue Room Theatre is the slightly larger of our two performance spaces, and is housed in what was once the science laboratory of the Perth Central School. The space is 75 square metres with a wooden floor, limited natural light and seats up to 73, subject to the configuration.

The entry room to this theatre contains an extraordinary heritage listed floor to ceiling mural painting by Tom Alberts; and this space is masked as a backstage area which leads to the theatre space through two open doorways.

Click [here](#) for a detailed list of the available equipment and some of the opportunities for seating configuration for The Blue Room Theatre.

The Blue Room Theatre - Studio

The Studio is approximately 70 square metres in size with MDF flooring and seats up to 50, subject to the configuration.

The Studio has a small anteroom leading into the space from the bar, and also has entry point connecting to backstage hallway; both doors can be used in performance.

Click [here](#) for a detailed list of the available equipment and some of the opportunities for seating configuration for The Blue Room Theatre Studio.

Resources + Technical Support

The benefit of having exclusive use means that projects can choose the set up of the space; from the lighting rig to the seating configuration, artists can tailor the theatre to the needs of the production and the vision of the creatives. Each production has free use of venue, seating, lighting and sound equipment.

Each theatre has access to an ETC Smartfade 24/96 connected to 3 x 12 way dimmer racks, along with a range of lights including profiles, fresnels and LEDs; use of Yamaha powered mixer, speakers, a MacBook Pro with QLab with a full audio and video licence. For the full list of what's available in each space.

Our Venue and Operations Manager has a wealth of knowledge on all things tech, and is a great resource to assist in troubleshooting and ensuring your set up is as functional as possible. Please note, each production must have their own designers along with a stage manager/technical operator.

Office + Rehearsal Rooms

Producers and members of The Blue Room Theatre are welcome to make use of a co-working desk space in The Blue Room Theatre office, and have access to photocopying, wifi and shared kitchen facilities.

In addition to the performance spaces, The Blue Room Theatre has two rehearsal spaces onsite which boast reverse cycle air-conditioning, tables, chairs, hardwood floors and black curtains around the perimeter to blackout the space.

Development Season Productions have access to this rehearsal space for free, subject to availability.

Financial

Box Office Split

Development Season productions receive 80% of their box office takings after ticketing fees and other reimbursable expenses (eg. photocopying costs, black paint, projector hire).

Seed + Mentorship Fund

Each production will receive a \$2000 cash seed fund in support of marketing, technical and production material to be used as the producer best sees fit.

Producers are also able to apply for a \$300 mentorship fund to engage with an industry expert of their nomination to support in the development of skills of an artist/s on the production team. This mentor is not intended to work directly on the project, but instead to advise and teach creatives the skills necessary to complete an aspect of their production.

Please note: this fund will not support the engagement of anyone who is listed formally on an application. It is an additional resource in place to support the development of skills, and comes into consideration and effect after a project has been programmed by the selection panel on the merits of its initial offer. After being programmed, access and use of the fund needs to be rationalised and applied for through The Blue Room Theatre Producer and Executive Director to be approved.

Projects are welcome to engage mentors for their application, however this person cannot be paid through the mentorship fund.

“The Blue Room Theatre Development Program is an excellent way to support artists in getting into the theatre industry in a safe, supportive and friendly environment. The program allows artists to take risks, make mistakes and try new things, but all under the kind and watchful eye of the great Blue Room team. I’m proud that we have such a strong independent theatre scene in Perth, and it’s largely because of The Blue Room Theatre!”

– Samantha Chester, *HIRO*

Marketing + Publicity

The Blue Room Theatre runs an overarching marketing and publicity campaign for the Development Season as a whole. Each programmed production is responsible for generating marketing material for, and publicising, their show. Don't fret – the last thing we do is leave you out on your own. We work with each producer and publicist to workshop and refine ideas for their images, collateral and publicity strategy.

In 2019 we refined the way that we market the season and support individual shows by creating more skills development opportunities for independent producers, publicists and artists to learn how to best sell their show. Outlined below is the distribution of marketing responsibility between us, and each presenting show.

What we will do for each production

Campaign – we will produce an overarching campaign to market and represent the whole Development Season. As part of this, we will conduct a photoshoot involving a key creative from each production.

Collateral – your show will be included in collateral we will generate and distribute to have a presence in the streets.

Video – show specific video material will be generated at the campaign photoshoot for The Blue Room Theatre to use in the lead up to or during your season.

Online – we will create our own online campaign for each show through The Blue Room Theatre's channels.

Development – we'll facilitate subsidised workshop and skills development days so you can learn how to build and execute a campaign for not only your Development Season show, but others to come.

Support – we work with each production to develop the strongest collateral and strategy for your show. We strongly encourage you to use our top photographers, designers, printers and more.

What we need from producers

Images – each production needs to supply us with their best promotional and production images for our website and the show's campaign. Your campaign images will be due 2 months prior to your presentation dates.

Online – the internet is too huge to ignore; in the lead up to your show you will need to develop an online strategy to promote your show.

Collateral – from flyers to posters to an A0 sign, it's up to you to adhere to our design guidelines, print and distribute your individualised show collateral.

Publicity – you need to get the word out there about your show, and having a dedicated publicist on the team who can set up partnerships and secure a piece in the local paper is the best way to go.

Hustle – share information about the work and keep the momentum going – make sure the whole team is involved in spruiking the show, and look for all the opportunities you can to reach relevant and new markets.

“Participating in the Development Season at The Blue Room Theatre is far and beyond the most supported way to mount new work in Australia. The generosity, resourcefulness, determination and passion of the entire organisation is and should be an example industry wide.”

– Sam Nerida, *Death Throes*

Producing + Presenting

Producer Support

We facilitate three producer support meetings with each project in the lead up to production week to touch base and support in marketing plans and execution, technical needs, FOH requirements, and production progress. Each production must provide at least one representative (ideally the producer, and sometimes the key creative and/or publicist) to attend these meetings and speak to all aspects of the production.

Artistic

The goal of our Development Season is to minimise the risk involved in independently creating new work, while giving creatives a high level of artistic autonomy in their pursuit of this. Artistic and administrative advice and support is available where desired in the development of the work, however ultimately artists are the guardian.

Front of House

The Blue Room Theatre provides ticketing and bar staff to work the season, and tickets are sold by office and FOH staff through our ticketing system, SeatAdvisor Box Office (SABO).

Accessibility + Diversity

The Blue Room Theatre is an inclusive venue committed to the sharing of stories and the breaking of boundaries for artists and audiences alike. We strongly encourage applications from and engaging artists who identify as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and artists with a disability.

Sustainability

One of The Blue Room Theatre's core values is to pursue ethical and sustainable practices holistically across all facets of our organisation, and we ask the same of the producers and artists who work with us. Programmed productions are strongly encouraged to use resources in an environmentally sustainable way; employ ethical, equitable and transparent processes; address financial, environmental and social sustainability for all artists involved; and place a priority on the health and wellbeing of artists involved in their production. The Blue Room Theatre team will work with programmed producers and teams and provide resources and advice to pursue these core values together.

Presenting Producers are responsible for:

- Administering and managing their own budget, inclusive of all additional production costs (set, costume, consumables)
- The communication to and management of the artistic and creative team, including their engagement in the production and contract with the producer
- Meeting production and administration deadlines with the Blue Room Theatre
- Being answerable to the status of the project during its development as it approaches the presentation season
- The generation and provision of all show specific marketing materials
- Publicising the individual show
- Coordinating volunteer ushers
- Delivering a production to the highest possible standard, with rigour in rehearsals and presentation

April - December 2020

Selection Criteria

Each project application will be assessed by a panel of peer assessors against the following three selection criteria. Points they may consider, which you may wish to address, are outlined below. This list is not exhaustive, but is a prompt – you are welcome to respond to the criteria in the way which best fits your project pitch.

Viability

The project demonstrates:

- that the skills and abilities of the people involved are artistically and professionally suited to the activity, with appropriate cultural protocols in place where applicable
- realistic and achievable planning, management and use of resources and a fitting creative process
- the ability of the company/group to deliver the project as it is laid out in the application

Timeliness and Relevance

If the project:

- is likely to inspire engagement with themes that are relevant to contemporary culture
- contributes to a dynamic and impactful theatrical output in Western Australia and Australia, which may be achieved through subject matter, theme, form or in other ways
- makes good use of the opportunity and format afforded through The Blue Room Theatre Development Season program

Artist and Audience Development

How the project:

- contributes to the professional development and growth in artistic practice of the artists and participants involved
- contributes to a program engaging with a diverse range of forms, artists and communities
- will identify, build, reach and engage with audiences

“All the staff were really attentive to our needs and went above and beyond to make some of our crazy ideas happen! I’m grateful that a space like the Blue Room exists and emerging and established artists can push boundaries of form, content and theatre-making practice to make bold and radical theatre.”

– Noemie Huttner-Koros, *Unrule*

Questions

We've answered some of the most relevant questions about applying for the Development Season below, but if your question isn't answered, please don't hesitate to get in contact with our Producer Harriet Roberts via harriet@blueroom.org.au.

Can I apply with a classical text?

Yes you can, however keep in mind that The Blue Room Theatre champions new work and new ways of making work. Projects that present a timely and innovative reinterpretation of a classical text, from conception to presentation, are more likely to be prioritised by the panel. Read the selection criteria closely and ensure you articulate the project in consideration of these points.

My project has already been presented in WA, but I want to redevelop the work. Is this eligible for a Development Season application?

To be eligible for the Development Season, the project needs to be a West Australian premiere. Remounts are not eligible, and this existing work would need to be redeveloped to an extent that it would essentially be a new presentation. Within your application, ensure that you advocate for why there is cause to redevelop and/or expand the work.

Will you buy my show to be part of the Development Season?

No. The Blue Room Theatre is not in a position to commission or buy shows; the Development Season exists for independent artists to create and present new work.

Can I apply with an established script?

You can apply with any script provided you have confirmed and proven that rights are available in principle for you to produce and present the work. In your application, we encourage you to demonstrate why this text is relevant and timely for West Australian artists and audiences to be exposed to.

I am an artist based interstate, can I apply?

Independent artists based interstate are welcome to apply for a Development Season presentation. Please note that this program is not a touring platform for an existing contemporary work, and should be approached as an opportunity for project and skills development. Interstate artists are encouraged to engage with West Australian artists in the production, performance and/or design of the work to strengthen their application.

Why do I need to supply a campaign image for my production if The Blue Room Theatre already produces a photoshoot involving us?

The Blue Room Theatre runs an overarching campaign for the season; though an artist from each production is engaged in the photoshoot, the images produced for this campaign are designed to service the season as a whole. The images are generated in consistent consideration of each other, and are not intended to directly speak to, nor are they necessarily the most suitable representation of, each individual show.