

# **The Blue Room Theatre**

**2021 Development  
Season Application  
Information Pack**

# 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 over 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 2021, The Blue Room Theatre will present its Development Season supporting the creation and presentation of new work. Due to reprogrammed 2020 productions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 season has six slots open for new productions to be programmed from August to December through this round.

The 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 2021 Development Season are open from 17 February until 4pm, 24 March 2021, for presentation seasons in August-December.

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 with work 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 2021 and the selection criteria through which each application will be assessed; and answers to some questions you may have. As well as this pack, a support meeting with a member of the Program team is available before applying.

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## 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)
- From lead artists who are not already a lead creative on a project that has been reprogrammed from the 2020 season
- Applications must be submitted by a current member of The Blue Room Theatre

# 2021 Application Process

## Timeline

Applications Open	17 February 2021
Applications Due	4pm, 24 March 2021
Applicant Notification	By 23 April 2021
Season Dates	August – December 2021

### Information Sessions + Meetings

Returning applicants for the 2021 Development Season are not required to individually discuss their proposed production with the Program team at The Blue Room Theatre prior to submission, but are welcome to do so if they so wish. First time applicants must meet with someone from the Program team for a 20-minute application support meeting prior to submission.

One-on-one meetings (required for first time applicants) run Monday 22 February to Thursday 18 March, with multiple times available. The Blue Room Theatre's Program Manager, Harriet Roberts, or Program Coordinator, Melanie Julien-Martial will talk through the program offer, the application process, form and selection criteria, and answer questions concerning the program and application round. They will talk through your idea and application. You can book a time [here](#).

### Contact

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 a meeting or have further questions, you are welcome to get in contact with Program Coordinator Melanie Julien-Martial at: [melanie@blueroom.org.au](mailto:melanie@blueroom.org.au) or (08) 9227 7005.

### Inclusion + Accessibility

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.

All Development Season information including this information pack and the application form are available in accessible formats including word documents and large print. If you cannot complete or have difficulty completing a written application due to a language barrier or access needs, please get in touch and we will discuss and organise an appropriate alternative submission method for you.

For more information or to be sent an accessible document, please get in contact with Program Coordinator Melanie Julien-Martial at [melanie@blueroom.org.au](mailto:melanie@blueroom.org.au).

## Venue + Tech

### 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 and applicable Covid-19 restrictions. This currently stands at 60% capacity for all theatres.

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.

Head [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 and applicable Covid-19 restrictions. This currently stands at 60% capacity for all theatres.

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

Head [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 have a full monopoly on the set up of the space; from the lighting rig to the seating configuration, artists can tailor the theatre to service 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, head to the links above.

### 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 up to 120 hours in kind use, subject to availability.

## Financial

### Box Office Split

Development Season productions receive 65-80% of their box office takings (depending on additional funding) after ticketing fees and other reimbursable expenses (eg. photocopying costs, black paint, projector hire).

If you are successful in gaining additional funding in support of your project, The Blue Room Theatre's ticketing commission will adjust as follows:

- <\$10,000 – 20% commission
- \$10,000-\$25,000 – 25% commission
- \$25,000-\$50,000 – 30% commission
- \$50,000+ - \$35% commission

### Seed + Mentorship Fund

Each production will receive a \$2,500 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 affect 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 Program Manager 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.

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“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.

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## What we do for you

**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, including a printed brochure and A0 poster outside the theatre.

**Online** – we will promote the season and individual shows through The Blue Room Theatre's channels - our website, social media and EDMs.

**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 you

**Images** – productions should supply us with their best promotional and production images for use across the campaign (note, this is separate to The Blue Room's photoshoot and undertaking your own photoshoot may be a requirement for your season)

**Online** – in the lead up to your show and during its presentation you will need to develop an online strategy to promote your show.

**Collateral** – from flyers to posters, it's up to you to meet 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 those partnerships and secure write-ups, reviews and promotions 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.

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“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 guardians of their work.

## 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, Ferve.

## 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.

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## 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

## Producing + Presenting

### COVID-19

The past year has changed things for performance considerably. The possibility of changing restrictions which may impact or cancel your season must now be considered if you are applying for the Development Season. Unfortunately we are not able to postpone works perpetually, and as such, any programmed productions in 2021 cancelled or deemed unviable due to COVID-19 will not be reprogrammed. Do consider this risk when applying.

At the time of the application call out, The Blue Room Theatre is working with COVID-19 restrictions in the following way:

TBRT will maintain a COVID-19 Safety Plan that adheres to current restrictions informed by Federal and State government advice and in-house practicalities and precautions.

Successful production teams agree to adhere to restrictions, policies and procedures in line with State and Federal government restrictions and advice.

Successful productions teams should proactively pursue a presentation season of the Project, factoring in Western Australia's physical distancing restrictions and performance conditions at the time of presentation. As it stands, this includes:

- A 60% capacity of all seats provided, with the possibility that this could be reduced if conditions change

- Gathering limits in each space determined by a 2 square metre rule, with the possibility that this could increase to 4 square metres on government advice

- Audiences to maintain 1.5m social distancing within the venue

- Successful productions understand that restrictions and capacities may change, and that they should be willing to present in line with this

Successful productions will be asked to submit a COVID-19 Contingency Plan with an alternative delivery of the project or an aspect of the project should a public season at The Blue Room Theatre be deemed unviable, unsafe or against government guidelines.

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“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*



# Selection Criteria

Each project application will be assessed by a panel of peer assessors against the following three selection criteria. Points they may consider that 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.

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## Viability + Rigour

Can you show:

- 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
- a viable and rigorous creative process

## Timeliness + Relevance

If the project:

- is likely to inspire engagement with themes that are relevant to contemporary culture
- contributes to an innovative and impactful theatrical output in Western Australia and Australia, which may be achieved through subject matter, theme, form, process or in other ways

## Artist + 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 and dynamic range of forms, artists and communities
- will identify, build, reach and engage with audiences

## Questions

We've answered some of the most relevant questions about applying for the Development Season below, but if your question is not answered, please do not hesitate to contact our Program Coordinator Melanie Julien-Martial via [melanie@blueroom.org.au](mailto:melanie@blueroom.org.au).

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### **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 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 able 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, and provided it hasn't yet been presented in WA, even by another production company. 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.

# 2021 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 and viability 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 (maximum 5 minutes)

Your application form and support material should be sent as an attachment in one email to [apply@blueroom.org.au](mailto:apply@blueroom.org.au), in line with the formatting detailed on the application form.

All support material should either be .doc .pdf or .jpg files and submitted as separate documents by group (i.e. keep all documentation and images together in one document, all reviews together in one document, all bios together in one document) and title all files as follows (as an example):

Full Script\_ Project Title  
Detailed Synopsis\_ Project Title  
Letters of Support\_ Project Title  
Design Drawings\_ Project Title  
Documentation of Previous Work\_ Project Title  
Team Bios\_ Project Title

## 2021 Application Form

You can download the 2021 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.