



**BORDERLIGHT FRINGE FESTIVAL 2023 | CALL FOR ARTISTS**  
**2023 BORDERLIGHT FRINGE APPLICATION GUIDELINES**  
**& FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

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## **BORDERLIGHT FRINGE FESTIVAL 2023 | CALL FOR ARTISTS 2023 BORDERLIGHT FRINGE APPLICATION GUIDELINES & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**DEADLINE TO APPLY: FEBRUARY 28, 2023.**

### **WHAT IS THE BORDERLIGHT FESTIVAL?**

Founded in 2015 by Dale Heinen and Jeffrey Pence, BorderLight's mission is to present visionary international theatre and build cross-cultural understanding.

The **BorderLight International Theatre + Fringe Festival** is a hybrid festival model, featuring a) a curated selection of international touring productions, b) collaborations between Cleveland professional theatres and international artists, and c) a fringe festival programmed through an open call for submissions, featuring all genres of theatrical performance self-produced by local and national artists. BorderLight values the Fringe artists who make the Festival possible and splits its box office income 70/30, with **70% of ticket revenue paid to the artists.**

### **2023: BorderLight, Heavy on the Fringe.**

You spoke, we listened! BorderLight returns in 2023 with our first all-fringe devoted, three day festival! Up until now, BorderLight has been a biennial festival hosting domestic and international artists in Cleveland. But instead of going dark in 2023, this year we are creating an all-fringe festival focused only on domestic artists (local and national!), and supporting work at many stages of development. We hope that BorderLight 2023 touches new communities, brings diverse creativity to Cleveland, and highlights the many talented artists we are lucky to share a home with! Cheers to BorderLight 2023!



## HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL:

Visit <https://www.borderlightcle.org/2023-festival/> to access all the application documents and links.

- 1) **READ ME FIRST:** “2023 BorderLight Fringe Application Guidelines” — It is a long document, but it will most likely answer all of your questions!
- 2) Download the [SAMPLE APPLICATION](#). Please note, *your actual application will be submitted through an ONLINE FORM (step #3) and there is no saving mid-process. Use this sample to prep and save your answers as a separate doc before copying them over.*
- 3) Pay your \$25 application fee and attach proof of payment to your application.
- 4) Submit the [ONLINE APPLICATION](#). Important note: the online form must be completed in one session (no saving mid-process)—see step #2.

## WHAT IS A “FRINGE” FESTIVAL?

The “fringe” concept first developed in 1948 in Edinburgh, Scotland, when groups of local actors, performers, and musicians—in reaction to the more conventional lineup of the Edinburgh Theatre Festival—launched an alternative program to run concurrently to the main event. Now almost 73 years later, the term ‘fringe’ widely refers to work that resides on the edges of the mainstream—and fringe festivals have served as a critical launch pad for independent artists to self-produce, showcase original work, engage new audiences, and network with fellow indie artists and producers inside of a vibrant festival environment.

There are now hundreds of fringe festivals in North America and across the world... and each has its own structure and personality. The BorderLight Festival is a proud member of the **United States Association of Fringe Festivals (USAFF)** and **World Fringe Network (WFN)**.



## WHO CAN APPLY?

The **BorderLight Festival Fringe** is an open call submission process—**the application fee is \$25**. The Fringe welcomes work from both established and emerging artists!

BorderLights seeks to offer a culturally, racially, and geographically diverse program representing a variety of theatrical approaches, styles, topics, and genres including (but not limited to):

- Theatre
- Physical / Movement / Dance Theatre
- Circus
- Street Theatre
- Burlesque
- Children's Theatre
- Solo Performance
- Performance Art
- Puppetry
- Immersive / Interactive Experiences
- Music / Cabaret
- Multimedia
- Spoken Word (storytelling performance and/or poetry)
- Roaming Performances
- Stand Up Comedy
- Site-Specific Work / "Bring Your Own Venue"
  - Performance installations
  - Walking tours
  - Hotel room
  - Alley
  - Rooftop garage
  - Storefront performances (artist behind glass)
  - Drive in/Drive Up performances (audience in cars)



- o Other ideas? – We welcome your proposal!

## IMPORTANT 2023 DATES / DEADLINES

- **November 30:** BorderLight Fringe Applications Open
- **February 28:** BorderLight Fringe Applications Close
- **April 1:** Festival acceptance / waitlist / decline notices sent by this date

**\*\* Tech rehearsals will be scheduled for the 2-3 days prior to artist performances.**

## THE SELECTION PROCESS

Due to the limited number of venues and schedule slots, the BorderLight Fringe program is determined through a selection process. **Application does not guarantee acceptance.** All proposals are reviewed and adjudicated by a diverse panel of industry professionals and theatre practitioners, in collaboration with BorderLight Festival staff.

Productions that are not chosen during the initial selection may be placed on a waitlist in the event of a cancellation.

## PRACTICAL INFO FOR APPLICANTS

### ARTIST RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **We are not producing your show, we are merely presenting it.** You or your producing organization must hire your **own cast, crew, stage manager**, etc. as well as **run the light or sound board** if needed during performances. BorderLight can assist out of town artists with locating a board operator if needed.
- For scripted work, we require that artists provide evidence that they have obtained rights. This documentation will be required at the time of contracting.
- Accepted applicants with a designated venue will pay a modest **Production Fee** (details below) to offset venue, marketing, staff, and technical support provided by the Festival. The fee is on a sliding scale decided by the needs of the production.



- Each production receives a **70/30 box office split**, with 70% of ticket revenue (minus credit card and processing fees) paid out to the artist.
- For **un-ticketed/free shows, street theatre, short form “pop-up” performances**, and other **shows without a designated venue**, pass-the-hat or other special fee arrangements may apply. Outline your proposal and we’ll have a conversation!
- If selected, Company/Leader Artist must select at least 1 delegate to complete a BorderLight led virtual session focused on communication and marketing! Date to be determined.

### **RUN TIME:**

- Standard length of a Fringe show is **45-60 minutes** long. Shorter performances are accepted. Limited slots are available for shows 60-80 minutes. Please specify show length in application.
- **Non-standard shows**—street theatre, durational work, site-specific, and shorter “pop up” presentations—are also welcome! *Please provide details (including run time, special needs, etc.) in your application.*

### **TECH + VENUES:**

- **No elaborate tech/sets.** Most venues will have a very simple tech set up (lights/sound).
- Productions with lighting/sound are required to provide their own board operator.
- Productions are permitted to bring in additional tech, but all equipment must be discussed and approved by the Festival in advance. *Please be sure to elaborate on technical needs in application.*
- Most venues will be shared by several productions. When you are striking your show, another show will be setting up.
- **Load in/load out per production is typically 15-30 minutes**, sometimes less for shows with minimal or no tech. *Please note any special load in/load out needs in your application.*
- There will be minimal or no storage facilities at our outdoor venues. *Please indicate any storage requests in your application.*



- With few exceptions, productions will be scheduled into a single venue for the duration of the Festival. Curtain times vary from day to day to ensure all shows receive a variety of start times.
- Productions are provided **(1) technical rehearsal** (typically 2-3 hours) in their venue prior to the first performance.
- Venue allocation is at the discretion of the Fringe, based on availability and information provided in the application. *The more detailed your application, the easier it will be for the Festival to serve your work.*
- Proposals for **site-specific performances are welcome**—we look forward to a conversation with you. Permitting downtown requires advanced planning, so provide as much detail as possible in your application.

## **COMMUNICATIONS + MARKETING:**

- Artists are welcome to apply with more than one show, but a separate proposal must be completed for each show. Note that only one show per Company/Lead Artist will be accepted into the Festival.
- A request for marketing materials will follow upon acceptance into the Festival. Productions will be asked to submit photos and other promo material for use in BorderLight marketing.
- Artists are responsible for publicizing their own show. Examples include: press releases, outreach, mailers, social media posting, busking and/or flyering.
- BorderLight will supply required logo files, best practice tips, regional press contacts, and will conduct a marketing workshop leading up to the 2023 Festival. At least 1 delegate from each production must attend one of the virtual sessions.
- **Promote! Promote! Promote!** Establish a plan for marketing your show—the more tickets sold for your show, the more revenue comes back to you.
- **Merch Sales.** Due to requests from artists, BorderLight is working diligently to navigate permitting restrictions in order to provide the opportunity for artists to sell merch during the festival. We cannot promise merchandise will be able to be sold



during the festival, but will keep artists up to date. It is suggested to set up a virtual mailing system for patrons if merch is important to your protocol.

## **HOUSING + TRAVEL:**

- BorderLight cannot guarantee free housing for out-of-area fringe artists, but limited travel assistance may be available. If your company requires housing, please indicate your needs in the application to demonstrate your needs.
- Artists are responsible for arranging all necessary visas and work permits—BorderLight is not able to support visas for international fringe artists at this time.
- Consider applying for support and/or travel grants from funding agencies. Even if your participation is not confirmed, BorderLight can issue letters of intent if needed for application purposes.

## **COVID SAFETY PLAN:**

We continue to encourage all fringe artists to be fully vaccinated in compliance with CDC recommendations. BorderLight will respond to COVID protocols as they evolve.

*As the festival approaches, BorderLight will provide all registered artists with an up-to-date COVID safety plan and event participation guidelines developed under the supervision of public health advisors. Company/Lead Artist may be asked to update the BorderLight team on their contingency plan in case a company member becomes ill.*

## **BOX OFFICE + TICKETING**

BorderLight Fringe functions as the presenter for independent artist-producers. BorderLight will handle all aspects of ticketing and box office via our Virtual Box Office (VBO) ticketing platform.



BorderLight's goal is to support the artists who make the Festival possible. We cannot do it without you, so you should benefit! The Festival offers a **70/30 box office split** with 70% of ticket revenue (minus credit card and processing fees) paid out to the artist. Checks will be mailed to the Company/Lead Artist by August 31, 2023. **W9s will be requested upon acceptance into the festival.**

In 2022, Fringe tickets were priced at **\$15 (plus convenience charges)**, with some special discounts for **4 and 8-pack bundles** and **passholders**. Ticket prices for 2023 will be announced.

## **PRODUCTION FEES**

**Accepted applicants will pay a standard production fee (see below for details)** in exchange for the following venue, marketing, and technical support provided by the Festival:

- Venue Rental
- Venue Manager
- Limited technical support (basic lights, sound, power)
- Front of House Management
- Box Office + Ticketing Management (web and in-person)
- Guaranteed (1) tech rehearsal (2 hours) in your venue prior to the first performance
- Dedicated show page on the BorderLight Festival website
- Show listing in the BorderLight Festival Guide (10K+ copies distributed locally and via digital download)
- Other Festival marketing and publicity (PR, media release event, etc.)
- Free access to marketing workshops, references to community resources, etc.
- Artist pass access and special discounts to other BorderLight Festival shows

**Production fees vary from \$100 to up to \$250 depending on type of show, technical needs, number of shows, and size of venue.** These fees directly fund Festival venue costs, tech & box office support, and help make the Festival sustainable. We will try our best to



accommodate your venue choices as space/schedule allows. Specifics will be noted in your contract.

Special support or fee waivers may be available for **free/un-ticketed performances**, **site-specific work**, **buskers**, and **street performance** to be discussed on a case-by-case basis. Tell us about your work and we'll have a conversation.

***Production fee waivers may be available for artists with demonstrated financial need.***  
Contact [fringe@borderlightcle.org](mailto:fringe@borderlightcle.org) for details and/or indicate financial need in your application.

## READY TO APPLY? HERE ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS!

Go to <https://www.borderlightcle.org/2023-festival/> to download the application documents outlined below:

1. Read first: **READ ME FIRST+ FAQs\_2023 BorderLight Fringe Application Guidelines**. If you've made it to the end of this page—well done, you've completed the first step! 😊
2. Download the **SAMPLE Application Form**. Use this form to draft your answers and gather your support materials before starting the application. *It does not allow you to save and return to the application.*
3. **Pay your \$25 application fee** and attach proof of payment to your application.
4. Fill in the **ONLINE Application Form**. **Deadline is February 28, 2023**. Remember, the online form must be completed in one session (no saving mid-process) so we recommend you prep your answers in a separate doc before copying over (see STEP 2).
5. Need a quick point of reference to make sure you understand everything? Check out the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet attached

BorderLight

**FRINGE**

Festival

**Accepted shows will be notified by April 1, 2023** and will be expected to reply by the requested contract deadline (TBD) to avoid the risk of your slot being offered to another applicant.

If you still have questions, email Josy Jones, the Associate Producer, at [fringe@borderlightcle.org](mailto:fringe@borderlightcle.org) in advance of the deadline. We look forward to receiving your submission!



## **BORDERLIGHT FRINGE FESTIVAL 2023**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**

This FAQ sheet is supplemental to the “2023 Fringe Application Guidelines.” We highly recommend that you read the Guidelines to better understand the application process!

#### **When will applicants know if they have been selected to the 2023 BorderLight Fringe Festival?**

All selected applicants will be notified by April 1, 2023.

#### **What is the Production Fee and what is it used for?**

Production fees vary from \$100 to up to \$250 depending on type of show, technical needs, number of shows, and size of venue. These fees directly fund Festival venue costs, tech & box office support, and help make the Festival sustainable.

#### **Why does the Production Fee vary?**

Production fees are based on the Company’s production needs, venue cost, venue size, and the amount of support needed from the BorderLight staff. For smaller productions, like short, pop-up productions, the production fee will be smaller than for a performance that requires more technical support!

#### **Are the Application Fee and the Production Fee the same?**

No, they are different. There is a nonrefundable application fee of \$25 to apply to the Fringe Festival. Production Fees will be established *after* participants are selected for the Festival, and will range from \$100-\$250, as explained above.

#### **Can I email the application?**

Sorry, but nope! We ask that you please fill out the application online. This really helps us stay organized and better serve the many performances we support.

#### **What are your COVID-19 restrictions/requirements?**

We strongly encourage all fringe artists to be fully vaccinated in compliance with CDC recommendations. BorderLight will respond to COVID protocols as they evolve.

#### **Will masks be required for performers or audience members?**

Artists are free to perform without masks. You can request for audience members to be masked for some/all of your performances.



**What COVID safety precautions are you taking to protect artists and crew in indoor venues?**

We will adhere to CDC and Event Safety Guidelines in place at that time. This may include signage, masks, and additional CDC recommendations for safety adherence as the festival approaches.

**Are there important dates/deadlines I should consider?**

- **November 30:** BorderLight Fringe Applications Open
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