

BorderLight

INTERNATIONAL THEATRE +
FRINGE FESTIVAL
CLEVELAND

2022 FRINGE APPLICATION GUIDELINES





CALL FOR ARTISTS | 2022 BORDERLIGHT FRINGE APPLICATION GUIDELINES EXTENDED DEADLINE TO APPLY: MARCH 1, 2022.

Greetings, artist! The biennial **BorderLight International Theatre + Fringe Festival** returns to downtown Cleveland **July 20-24, 2022**. Thank you for your interest in submitting your work.

We are so proud of the work we were able to do in 2021, and our ability to shift to a virtual festival! After a year of adjustment to provide theatre through virtual means, BorderLight will re-emerge as an in-person festival in 2022!

Although life is returning to some semblance of normality, we want to be sure to keep our artists and supporters safe! Our team will monitor public health guidelines and stay in compliance with regional COVID mandates. This year’s festival will require all artists, their crews and technical teams to be fully vaccinated in compliance with CDC recommendations for immunization. This compliance will include requiring masks for patrons and providing additional instructions and messaging to ensure safe practices.

As always, BorderLight will remain anchored in downtown Cleveland, making the festival accessible to visitors from across the city and beyond. We look forward to reimagining indoor, outdoor, and unconventional spaces to provide a platform for artistic exploration and a unique experience for our audience! We’re also seeking **site-specific proposals** to take place in locations within our downtown footprint. Have an idea? We’d love to hear from you.

The **BorderLight Fringe** is the open call submission part of the Festival—the **application fee is \$25 to create a low barrier to participation**. The Festival welcomes work from both established and emerging companies—we look forward to hearing from you!

The BorderLight Festival team
Dale Heinen, Jeffrey Pence, Jimmy Schlemmer, & Josy Jones

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL:

Visit www.borderlightcle.org/fringe-apply-2022/ to access all the application documents and links.

- 1) **READ ME FIRST:** “2022 BorderLight Fringe Application Guidelines” — I know it’s 9 pages, but I promise it’s helpful! It will answer ALL 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) Submit the **ONLINE APPLICATION**. **Deadline is March 1, 2022.**
Important note: the online form must be completed in one session (no saving mid-process)—see step #2.

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 artists who make the Festival possible and splits its box office funds 70/30, with **70% of ticket revenue paid to the artists.**

The BorderLight Festival debuted in 2019 as a biennial summer event. In its inaugural year, BorderLight hosted 40 unique productions and special events from artists from 8 countries + across the US, selling over 4.5K tickets and attracting a total of 10K visitors to downtown Cleveland for free and ticketed public performances and other special events.

BORDERLIGHT 2022: REEMERGING TO CONNECT

The **2022 festival will mark our third festival**. Like many performance art organizations, we have endured a lot of shifts in the last 2 years. After COVID forced us to move our fringe festival to an online platform in 2021, we are excited to invite our community back for an in-person immersion into the world of fringe! We hope in this new season of BorderLight to expand our reach and bring new experiences to each person the festival touches. After the last few years we've endured, we all deserve a jolt from the normal, and artists deserve new platforms for their artwork.

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 to create a low risk barrier to submission**. 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
- Roaming Performances
- Stand Up Comedy
- Site-Specific Work / “Bring Your Own Venue”
 - Performance installations
 - Walking tours
 - Storefront performances (artist behind glass)
 - Drive in/Drive Up performances (audience in cars)
 - Other ideas? — We welcome your proposal!

IMPORTANT 2022 DATES / DEADLINES

- **December 21:** BorderLight Fringe Applications Open
- **March 1:** BorderLight Fringe Applications Close
- **March 22:** Festival acceptance / waitlist / decline notices sent by this date
- **July 20- 24: 2022 BorderLight International Theatre + Fringe Festival***

**** Tech rehearsals will be scheduled over the 2-3 days prior to the 7/20 opening of the festival**

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.

- 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!
- **All artists must provide proof within their applications that they are fully vaccinated.** If accepted, the Company/Lead Artist will also be responsible for providing proof of full vaccination for their crew, technical team, actors, etc., with conditional check-ins closer to the Festival according to CDC recommendations for immunization.
- If selected, Company/Leader Artist must select at least 1 delegate to complete a BorderLight led virtual session focused on communication and marketing.

RUN TIME:

- Standard length of a Fringe show is **45-60 minutes** long. Limited slots are available for shows 60-80 minutes. Please specify show length in application.
- **Non-standard shows**—street theatre, durational work, 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 may 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 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 2022 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.

HOUSING + TRAVEL:

- BorderLight cannot guarantee free housing for out-of-area fringe artists, but limited travel subsidies 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

The BorderLight team wants to ensure the safety of all participants. Due to COVID's ever-evolving nature, the Festival has outlined a plan of action that will continue to shift to align with the CDC's recommendations for safety:

- As the festival approaches, BorderLight will provide all registered artists with a current **COVID safety plan** and **event participation agreements** developed under the supervision of public health advisors.
- In the application, the Company/Lead Artist will be **required to provide proof of full COVID vaccination.**
- Upon acceptance into the festival, Company/Lead Artist may be asked to update their CDC immunization compliance prior to the Festival opening. This will be conditional on changes in recommendations from the CDC.
- For the safety of the artists, audience members will be required to wear masks during indoor performances.) Artists may perform without masks during performances.
- BorderLight will provide messaging and instructions to patrons to encourage safe practices, and will continue to monitor its alignment with CDC guidance as it evolves.

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, 2022. **Please indicate who to make checks payable to in the application.**

In 2019, Fringe tickets were priced at **\$12 (plus convenience charges)**, with some special discounts for **4 and 8-pack bundles** and **passholders**. Ticket prices for 2022 will be announced in the coming year.

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 for details or indicate financial need in your application.

READY TO APPLY? HERE ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS!

Go to www.borderlightcle.org/fringe-apply-2022/ to download the application documents.

1. Read first: **READ ME FIRST_2022 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. Fill in the **ONLINE Application Form. Deadline is March 1, 2022.** 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).

4. Need a quick point of reference to make sure you understand everything? Check out the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet!

Accepted shows will be notified by March 22, 2022 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 in advance of the deadline. We look forward to receiving your submission!