



'Two Hundred Seats' Grant

ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY

Got a hot new show in the works that you think could do three weeks in a two hundred seat venue? This opportunity is for you! The Fringe Fund is all about supporting artists at every stage of their career, and this new grant is for an experienced artist with a great idea ready to go, but who needs a bit of assistance to grow their audience and push out a strong marketing plan.

We have **\$25,000 to contribute** towards your budget and will program your event for 15 nights in the 200 seat ETU Ballroom at the Festival Hub. We are particularly interested in artists or collectives with proven experience of presenting work in similar size venues or who are ready to take this on. This is a marketing grant: you will already have a balanced budget that's built around the 3,000 potential seats you can sell, you don't need this \$25k to make the show happen – instead, you'll use this grant to really amplify your marketing and publicity activities to make sure you sell the room to its full capacity.

KEY INFORMATION

Funding details

If successful, you will receive:

- **\$25,000** cash from the Fringe Fund to self-produce and market your new show to an audience of 200 people per night; and
- **Guaranteed programming** for 15 nights in the ETU Ballroom at the Festival Hub (your season will be 2 – 20 October, five nights per week).

Not included in the funding offer (i.e. there is no additional funding, you will need to budget the following items as part of your \$25k / project budget):

- Your Melbourne Fringe Festival registration fee, ticketing charges, insurance and any other costs associated with producing your work;
- Access costs;
- Venue hire in the ETU Ballroom (venue hire will be 30% of your gross ticket sales); and
- All other presentation costs, including artist fees, marketing, etc

Eligibility

This opportunity is for **mid-career** or **established artists** based in **Victoria**.

It is for a work that can be presented as part of a **shared room programming** structure at the Festival Hub (i.e. your production must be light on infrastructure, as there will only be 30 minute gaps between shows in this room).

It must be a **new development** premiered during the 2024 Festival.

How to apply

Please click on [this link](#) to access the application form.

Applications close at midnight on Sunday 25 February, 2024.

If using JotForm isn't accessible for you, please get in touch so we can better understand how to best accommodate your access needs. We can accept applications submitted as text documents, video or audio files and are also happy to work with you on other accessible application processes. Please email both artists@melbournefringe.com.au and carly@melbournefringe.com.au to start a conversation.

CONTEXT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR FUNDED ARTISTS

Receiving support through the Fringe Fund isn't quite the same as a grant, but it isn't quite the same as having your work bought by a curated Festival – it falls somewhere in-between. That's because we've raised money from trusts, foundations, government bodies and private donors, and we'll need your help to ensure certain deliverables are met so we can acquit those funds. It's the circle of (funding) life.

If you're successful in your application, you will be asked to sign a contract that requires an understanding of the expectations that we will have from you as a Fringe Fund artist, which are:

1. You will self-produce a professional, high-quality event in the Open Access program.

This means: the Fringe Fund support will help your event proceed, but **you (or your team!) are responsible for all elements of the production**, including:

- managing a creative project plan and schedule that will ensure your project is delivered as a fully realised work, not a work-in-progress or 'reading';
- budgeting for costs responsibly, ensuring you have put aside funds for the Fringe registration fee, inside charges, venue hire costs and access service costs;
- producing the event to a high standard of delivery, and completing administration tasks such as registering the event and arranging permits / licences / insurance, etc;
- marketing your season; and
- sourcing any additional funding required through sponsorship, partnerships or grants.

This is quite different to having your work purchased for presentation by a festival that pays an upfront fee, then takes care of all the producing on your behalf! On the other hand, you are presenting your work as an independent season, which means the show profits are retained by you and your team.

2. You will work collaboratively with Melbourne Fringe.

This means: Melbourne Fringe is a key stakeholder in your event, unlike a grant where the funder just wants an acquittal report at the end. Because we have a vested interest in the success of your work, we may ask you to **collaborate with Melbourne Fringe** in certain ways while working on your project. We won't encroach on your artistic vision, but we might offer support including:

- dramaturgical advice to help you position the work for a Melbourne Fringe audience;
- advice or feedback for your budget, to help you work towards financial success; or
- inclusion in marketing or publicity opportunities; or
- suggesting the scale of your project might require you to allocate funds towards a producer, production manager or designer to help you achieve your creative vision.

To support you in this way, we will ask that you:

- update us on the creative development of the project, and share your project timeline, budget and marketing plan (once they're ready to share of course!);
- attend occasional meetings to discuss the work's progress and how we can better support you;
- be open and available to listen to our feedback, built on many years of experience.

You may also be asked, as part of your funding: to participate in a public panel / conversation event discussing your work (no more than 60 minutes of your time), and/or to collaborate in our evaluation processes (which could consist of a brief interview with a member of our team, a self-filmed video reflecting on your experience, or a short survey – but definitely no long acquittal forms!)

We don't require a share of the work's intellectual property, but we do ask for permission to film or photograph the event for marketing, promotional and archival purposes. We also ask that you keep us updated on any future seasons of the work, and always credit Melbourne Fringe as an original funder.

APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS

As part of your application, you will be asked to provide a **creative pitch** of your project (maximum 300 words). We want to know **who you are** and **who you plan to work with** on the project, and **how these funds might be used** to help work towards filling the ETU Ballroom each night (250 words for each). We will then ask for you to identify **who the market is** for your show and give you an opportunity to tell us **anything else** you think is important for us to know (maximum 100 words for each). Finally, we will ask that you attach a **top-level budget** for your project to demonstrate that this grant can be primarily put towards your marketing and publicity activities rather than paying for the costs of the show itself.

In selecting the successful project(s) we will consider the following criteria:

- **Concept:** does your project put forward exciting ideas and creative thinking? Is it an interesting idea that we would want to program at the Festival Hub? Is it a marketable idea that strikes a balance between a 'general public' appeal without being too generic and commercial?
- **Capacity:** do you have the skills and the team to present what you want to achieve? Will you be able to deliver a high-quality outcome for your project? Do you have a good understanding of the level of marketing activity required to sell 200 seats per night?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the Festival Dates this year?

Your project must take place for 15 nights (2 – 20 Oct) in the ETU Ballroom at the Festival Hub as part of the 2024 Melbourne Fringe Festival.

Who owns the work?

The artist owns the work. Melbourne Fringe just has the right to premiere the work as part of the 2024 Melbourne Fringe Festival, and to capture images and/or video of the work for documentation, acquittal and marketing purposes; but the work belongs to the artist.

Can I apply to tour or remount an existing work?

Unfortunately not, as the funds for this stream are committed to commissioning new works – however, we're definitely open to ideas if how you might redevelop an existing work in a new or exciting way. As long as, hand on heart, you can say this is the premiere first season, it'll probably be fine. If you're unsure of whether your new ideas would make it a "new work" or not, please just get in touch!

Why do you ask demographic questions as part of the application process?

We have a commitment to ensuring that events Melbourne Fringe funds collectively represent the breadth of Melbourne's diverse communities, and we have specific quotas and targets of funding allocations towards our communities of focus, which include artists who are: First Nations, People of Colour, culturally and linguistically diverse people, Deaf, Disabled, and LGBTQIA+ people with a separate quota to specifically support transgender artists. Assigning quotas to our funding allocations ensures that we are properly representing lead artists from these communities.

Do you have a question that we haven't answered in this Information Pack? We'd love to chat to you! Please email jason@melbournefringe.com.au or call our office on (03) 9660 9600 (or via the National Relay Service) to have a chat.