



Cash to Create Commissions: \$10,000 to \$20,000

ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY

Melbourne Fringe is thrilled to offer \$10,000 to \$20,000 commissions for artists to premiere new works in this year's Festival. This opportunity is open to any artist or collective based in Victoria, working in any artform. We are especially keen to hear from creative leads who are First Nations, Deaf, Disabled, People of Colour and/or transgender.

The base commission is \$10,000, with the potential for an additional \$2,500 – \$10,000 for projects that are highly ambitious and require further investment to bring to life.

Examples of where a strong case could be made for additional funding include the costs for:

- An ambitious marketing plan
- A comprehensive accessibility plan
- A consolidated approach to engaging our communities of focus as your primary audience
- Presenting work in unique or high-cost venues
- Elements unique to the work that other applicants are unlikely to have to pay for, such as large ensembles or specific equipment hire

This application process aims to be easy and artist-friendly with fewer requirements than the grant applications you might be used to – we just want to get excited about your idea and hear about your plans to make it happen.

KEY INFORMATION

Funding details

If successful, you will receive:

- **\$10,000 to \$20,000** cash from the Fringe Fund to produce and present your new idea

Not included in the funding offer (i.e. there is no additional funding on top of the awarded amount, you will need to budget the following items):

- Your Melbourne Fringe Festival registration fee, ticketing charges, insurance and any other costs associated with producing your work; and
- Presentation costs such as venue hire, artist fees, support staff, marketing and promotion costs, permits, licences, etc.

Eligibility

This opportunity is for **any artists** based in **Victoria**, working in any form.

You can be emerging in your practice, but the successful recipients for these grants will most likely have at least a few works in their repertoire

The selected works must be **new works** and must be **premiered** during the 2025 Festival (30 Sept – 19 October).

How to apply

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

Applications close at 11.59pm on Sunday 30 March, 2025

If using Airtable 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 milly@melbournefringe.com.au to start a conversation.

You can find more details on the application process and format below.

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 standard 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 400 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 make your idea a reality (250 words for each). We will then ask for a **draft timeline** for your development 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 for a top-level budget that will show you have thought about the practical nature of your idea.

To start your application and look at the questions, [please click here to go to the EOI Form](#).

Video or Audio Applications

We expect most applications to be submitted in writing using the EOI form. However, we are also accepting applications submitted as a video or audio file. If you submit a video or audio application you will still need to fill out some of the applicant details in the form linked to above. But you will submit your answers to all assessable questions by uploading a video or audio file. If your video is in another language, such as Auslan, you are welcome to suggest a preferred interpreter for us to engage.

Please note, this option to submit by video or audio is not about creating something with high production values. **It is an option provided for access purposes.** The following formats will be accepted: *MP4, MOV, WMV, AVI, MKV, M4A, MP3, WAV or AAC*. You may submit a single file for each of the questions, or one file per question. If you submit multiple files please ensure each file is clearly named. The Dropbox link to submit your file(s) is in the EOI form linked above.

Applications in Other Formats

If the Airtable form is not accessible for you, or if there is another way you would prefer to submit an application, please get in touch to let us know. You can call our office or email Milly Cooper at milly@melbournefringe.com.au. Please let us know how you would prefer to submit your answers to the questions. We are open to your ideas around process. However, we cannot change the timeframes unfortunately – you'll still need to get your proposal in by 30th March, 2025.

Questions you will be asked

Whether you are providing written answers on the EOI form or submitted them by video or audio response, you will need to provide us with answers to the following questions:

1. **Tell us a bit about your idea** - *what do you want to do? How will the project be presented? How do you imagine the audience would experience your event? What do you hope to change or achieve with this work? What is the genre/form? What themes are you engaging with?*
2. **Please tell us a bit about yourself and your experience making work of a similar style.** *We want to know about your your skills, your inspirations, and what is most important to you in creating art. By “you” we mean you personally, as well as any other people that you consider as a “lead artist” on this work. As part of this you can share some highlights of your past work with us, and you may also provide links to up to three reviews. Please also give us a sense for*

your level of experience in making art: do you feel at the beginning of your career, or well established in your practice?

3. **Please provide a brief list of any other key people who are involved with you on this project.** *Are there other creatives involved? Do you have a producer yet? Who else is helping you make this happen? As part of this: also let us know if you have a venue presentation partner in mind, or if you need our help to find one. And please make it clear whether your proposed team members and presentation partner have been approached already, or if they are just ideas for now.*
4. **Are you applying for any funding in addition to the \$10k?** *The base commission is \$10,000, with the potential for an additional \$5,000 – \$10,000 for projects that are highly ambitious and require further investment to bring to life. If you apply for more than \$10,000 you will need to provide details on what specific costs the additional funding will be used on and why it's essential to the project.*
 - a) **How much additional funding are you applying for?** *This must be between \$2,500 and \$10,000*
 - b) **What specific costs will the additional funding above \$10,000 cover and why is this essential to the success of your project?** *We want to know why your project requires additional funding to achieve it's ambitious goals.*
 - c) **If you're not successful in your application for additional funding, could your project proceed with the base funding only?**
5. **Please provide a top-level budget.** *This must demonstrate that you have thought about the practical nature of your idea. (2,500 character limit, approximately 400 words).*
6. **Please provide a draft timeline for the development of your project, if you are successful in receiving the funding.** *E.g. 2 weeks of creative development with full cast (3-14 April). 4 weeks of full time rehearsal with full cast (1-26 May). etc. (1,200 character limit - approximately 200 words)*
7. **Anything else you want to tell us?** *This is a chance to mention anything you think is important that these questions haven't asked you. This question is optional.*
8. **Do you have any access requirements?** *This question is optional.*

Selection Criteria

In selecting the successful projects we will consider the following criteria:

- **Concept:** does your project put forward exciting ideas and creative thinking? Is it something new that we might not have funded before? Does it add something unique and exciting to what is already being presented in the independent sector?

- **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 on the budget you are proposing? Are you aiming for best practice accessibility and inclusivity?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the Festival Dates this year?

Your project must take place as part of the 2025 Melbourne Fringe Festival (30 Sept – 19 October).

Who owns the work?

The artist owns the work. Melbourne Fringe just has the right to premiere the work as part of the 2025 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. If you have done a development before, or perhaps a work-in-progress showing or season – that's OK! 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!

Can I apply for more than \$10,000?

The base commission for all selected projects is \$10,000. However, if your project requires additional funding to achieve its full potential, you may request an extra \$5,000–\$10,000. This funding is reserved for projects with a strong case for increased investment.

Projects that require extra support due to specific artistic, logistical, or community engagement needs that other applicants wouldn't have to pay for may qualify for additional funding. This might include us covering the costs for:

- An ambitious marketing strategy to reach a broader audience
- A comprehensive accessibility plan that enhances inclusivity at the core of the event
- A consolidated approach to engaging Melbourne Fringe's communities of focus as a primary audience
- Costs associated with presenting the work in unique or high-cost venues (e.g. Arts Centre Melbourne, the Malthouse, public spaces like Melbourne City Baths or the State Library)
- Other significant costs unique to the work, such as large ensembles or specialised equipment hire

As part of your application, you will be asked whether you are requesting additional funding and to outline how it will be used. You will need to provide:

- A breakdown of what the extra funds will cover
- A clear justification for why this funding is essential to your project

What do you mean by “best practice accessibility and inclusivity”?

We mean that we will be prioritising projects that consider access and inclusion as central to the concept. If you haven't already had a chance to read it, please make sure you check out our [Accessibility Zone](#) for ideas of how to embed access into your early planning.

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.

QUESTIONS OR ENQUIRIES

If you want to discuss other ways to submit your application or have questions about this info pack, please contact us. Send your email to artists@melbournefringe.com.au. Alternatively, you may phone our office: Melbourne Fringe on (03) 9660 9600

[You may contact us through the National Relay Service, and the link is available if you click on this sentence.](#)

If you would like to discuss access provisions at Melbourne Fringe more broadly, or would like to discuss how Melbourne Fringe holds safe cultural spaces for Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent artists please email our Access Advisor, Carly Findlay: carly@melbournefringe.com.au or call our office on a Monday or Tuesday and ask for Carly.

SUBMISSION DUE DATE

Applications close at 11.59pm on **Sunday, 30 March, 2025.**

And just so you don't need to go looking for it, here is the link to the application form again [HERE](#)

Cash to Create Commissions are part of the Fringe Fund, which is proudly supported by:



Melbourne Fringe respectfully acknowledges the Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri people of the Eastern Kulin nation. We recognise that our interactive venues, performance spaces, theatres and offices are firmly enrooted into the soil of Australia's First Nations peoples, and with that we pay our respect to the custodians of this city; the Elders, past, present and future.