

Complete NTS DRAMAFEST Guidelines

updated February 2024

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Preface and Context

This document is an overarching guideline for The National Theatre School DRAMAFEST. Teachers, festival participants and stakeholders should be familiar with all festival documents and the philosophies articulated within.

The National Theatre School DRAMAFEST is an opportunity for students to discover the complex and rewarding work of creating theatre. The skills that are developed when taking on any role or responsibility include building on skills of communication and good working habits, a sense of how to collaborate with your peers and an enhanced understanding of the rigour and diligence required to perform these roles successfully. No individual should enter into their specific role with the goal of taking charge or micro-managing the work of others – on the contrary, you will be developing leadership skills that include being able to manage large groups of people, developing an understanding about how to schedule your time and the time of others efficiently and productively as well as skills related to supporting the work onstage in a collaborative way.

One of the many outcomes of these guidelines will be that you can assemble a ‘tech package’ related to your show requirements that can be adapted to any venue in which you perform. Flexibility is the key to many of the items you will put into your tech package – it is always wise to have a ‘B’ plan when putting together your technical requirements. These guidelines also provide information for Host Venues to be able to provide suitable technical requirements for each festival. Additionally, the guidelines will also help you to prepare for adjudication as well as give you an understanding of the festival community process for awarding great work.

The guidelines are meant to provide a pathway towards good work through an overall conversation aimed at making the details about the general organization of the festival clear to all participants. They provide a set rules and regulations that are in place to support the development of best practices in order to ensure that YOUR time onstage is no more important or considered than the time of another Company. Your Company should consider these rules important to follow and ideally everyone works toward the goals of the Company (rather than the responsibility falling squarely on the shoulders of any one individual). The overarching goal should always be to realistically develop ideas that are achievable in the time you have and with the resources you have available to you.

Above all, please try to

1. Communicate clearly and productively with each other
2. Find ways to solve differences constructively in order to keep moving forward
3. Be aware of each other’s roles in the process of creating work
4. Recognize that everyone is developing their understanding of what is required to be involved in the Festival so in light of that, mentorship and collaboration become an important part of the whole process

Minimum Requirements and Room to Grow

For the purposes of this document, and to ensure that Host Venues are able to participate no matter what resources they have, these guidelines are meant to indicate the minimum that is required to host a festival. For those venues that have more resources available to them which can be shared with visiting schools, there are additional options given as applicable. Pay attention to the information provided as there are required guidelines as well as optional guidelines if you have access to more resources that you wish to contribute to the festival.

Participation is more important than fulfilling all the technical details within the whole of this document so do not hesitate to communicate when it is a challenge to fulfill some or all of the basic requirements.

The National Theatre School aims to ensure that any level of participation is encouraged and supported.

General Comportment (behaviour) and related skills

All members of the company should strive to meet these basic guidelines for comportment

1. Maintain regular attendance in the overall process
2. Be on time when you are called for a rehearsal or technical work
3. Be present and attentive to the work during rehearsals and technical work
4. Participate to the best of your ability
5. Value your own input and respect and value the input of others

Related skills that you are encouraged to strengthen

1. Openness to collaboration
2. Professionalism
3. Development of your own artistic sensibility
4. Self-motivation
5. Ability to motivate others
6. Ability to delegate tasks well
7. Development of excellent listening skills
8. Development of excellent communication skills
9. Ability to retain and apply what you learn throughout the process
10. Originality of thought
11. Imagination
12. Energy for the work

Policy to Prevent Harassment

Anti-harassment and anti-bullying policies are written in the spirit of the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, which enshrines the right of every person to be treated with dignity at all times. It follows that all forms of harassment, bullying or abuse of authority constitute a violation of fundamental human rights. The National Theatre School (NTS) declares that no form of harassment, bullying or abuse of authority will be tolerated from any party whatsoever, in the aim of ensuring everyone is free to study and work and create in a healthy, safe environment conducive to the personal and professional development of all concerned. You are encouraged to read the specific policy to prevent harassment adopted by your school and/or school board in an effort to ensure safe work and school environments.

Health and Safety

First and foremost, we must consider the safety of ALL people involved in productions and Festivals to be our primary concern and responsibility. Safety is not a concept that is only commented on at the end of a process. Rather it is a daily discipline that must be considered when approaching each aspect of the work. There are no shortcuts around safety. Attached to these Guidelines is an Appendix on safety measures which aims to give you basic concepts on how to approach the work on stage with safety in mind. The information in the Appendix is to be considered an outline only and cannot possibly cover every scenario. In light of that it is expected that the person responsible for Health and Safety at each school will have the final word on issues surrounding safety. However, you are expected to foster a safe environment, ask questions when you are not sure and seek information and advice on how to proceed so that you learn more about valuing Health and Safety on a daily basis, no matter what you do. If it isn't safe – it doesn't happen.

For more information please refer to APPENDIX B: HEALTH AND SAFETY

Smoking, Special Effects, Rigging and Weaponry

For the safety of all Festival participants as well as invited audience, the following is not permitted at any Festival Event

1. Pyrotechnics of any kind
2. Smoking onstage – including tobacco, cannabis, herbal cigarettes (Please refer to Provincial Laws regarding the use of e-cigarettes onstage as regulations vary per province)
3. Live flame of any kind (including candles and lighters)
4. Real or replica firearms – whether firing or non-firing. Please note the following regarding replica firearms from the RCMP Canadian Firearms Program

To be prohibited as a replica firearm, a device must closely resemble an existing make and model of firearm. If it is an antique firearm, as defined by the *Criminal Code* and corresponding regulations, it is not prohibited.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police Canadian Firearms Program (CFP) receives many enquiries from people wondering whether an imitation firearm would be considered a replica if it resembles a real firearm in many ways, but is made of clear or brightly coloured plastic, or has significant dimensional differences. Many of these devices need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. As a general rule, however, devices significantly smaller or larger than the real version are not classified as replica firearms.

5. Other weaponry that require a special license and/or special training to use (rapiers, certain knives, swords etc.)
6. In the event that knives or axes or other sharp instrument are required the blades of these tools must be dulled sufficiently so that they do not cause harm to anyone on stage or backstage
7. Flying effects or Stunt Rigging
8. Rigging of heavy scenic elements or special effects above the stage that does not take into account an adequate safety factor. Use of this equipment requires specific knowledge regarding safe rigging practices as well as rated rigging hardware

Stage Combat

Stage combat onstage requires access to training and the expertise of Fight Directors or people who are qualified to choreograph and execute combat requests. Without training and proper knowledge of how to ensure safe combat practices it is difficult to ensure the safety of young people during scene combat.

Participation

1. In order to encourage maximum participation, a school may enter as many productions as it wishes. However, should a school have multiple entries, each entry **MUST** have a different director and a significantly different cast and crew. In general, only one production from a school may move on to the Regional level. However, in some cases, where a Region has geographically specific participation challenges, exceptions may be made
2. All students involved in a school production must be registered as students at the school for at least one semester of the school year in which the production is entered in the festival
3. The entry fee will be set by the district, regional or provincial coordinating committee and must be paid for each production entered
4. Each school production **MUST** have an advisor officially recognized by its school's administration who **MUST** be present at technical rehearsals and performances
5. A competing production is required to participate in its district festival
6. Teachers and students are responsible for the good behaviour of the members of their company according to the guidelines established by Host schools and Boards of Education. Disturbances during rehearsals and performances will not be tolerated

7. A correct and complete list of cast and crew is required for the programme. This **MUST** also include all acknowledgements relating to script, performance rights and adult assistance. In addition, you **MUST** indicate the difference between participating students and non-students by adding (teacher) or (advisor) or (community member) beside their name/role
8. Each entry **MUST** consist of two or more performers engaging in interaction
9. Professional help is welcome as long as a fee is not paid, and acknowledgement of that person as a professional is made in the program

Adherence to the Festival Guidelines and Subsequent Repercussions

Failure to comply with the guidelines and regulations within this document may result in disqualification and non-eligibility for all awards, group and/or individual.

Problems arising from external and extraordinary circumstances may be taken into consideration by the adjudicator and the Festival Stage Manager in collaboration with the Festival Coordinator.

Such decisions and any other decisions handed down by a district or regional coordinator must be submitted in writing to NTS leadership within 24 hours of the decision.

Adjudication

Requirements

1. Each production must submit for the adjudicator(s) an **artistic statement** (of 250 words or less) that includes a **student** response to the following questions:
 - Why are you working on the play/ subject matter/ material you have chosen? (Why this piece here and now?)
 - What has been the most challenging part of your process so far?
 - What are you most excited by in this work that you are making together?

These questions should be discussed and answered as a company. *The group's* thoughts on these matters can be *summarized* by the director, the writer, another member of the creative team or, ideally, composed collectively. **Please indicate the authors of your artistic statement.** Teachers are expected to *guide* and *participate* in the process of generating artistic statements but *should not* be the lead or sole author.

Please consult your District Rep/Regional Coordinator regarding deadlines by which to submit your script materials and artistic statements. Materials may be sent to either via the District Rep/Regional Coordinator, or directly to the Adjudicator – the specific channels of communication vary district to district or region to region. Ask your District Rep or Regional Coordinator where and when to send these items electronically. Please make sure to submit your materials in a timely fashion to respect the Adjudicator preparation time.

If you move on to the Festival Regionals or Provincials, you will be expected to *revisit* your artistic statement and create a new draft to submit to the next adjudicator.

2. If you are working from a previously published or original script, you will need to send a copy of the script to the adjudicator(s). Some productions are more movement/ score / improvisation based: in these cases, you may send text for your piece with accompanying notes as you deem appropriate.

Production evaluation

Adjudicators will consider all elements of a production: scenic design/ lighting/ sound/ directing/ performance/ new writing/ music/ choreography... And, most importantly, how those elements work together! That said, no production will be penalized for more or less or the absence of any of these elements. For example: one company may choose, for artistic reasons, to use a bare stage and employ no set pieces at all, while another company may create a set that is a crucial element to the point of feeling like another character in the piece! There is no point system and there are no 'marks' to lose in this way. The adjudicators feedback is qualitative not quantitative.

Note: It is important that students know that while adjudicators have been selected for their expertise and have insight to offer, each adjudicator will have her/his/their own points of view. Teacher-advisors or directors should model receptiveness to feedback for their students while communicating that the participant's job is to listen to the adjudicator, consider the feedback and determine for themselves and as a company what is most valuable.

Adjudication process

Adjudication consists of Private and Public Adjudications.

Public Adjudication happens at the conclusion of a program of festival shows and should not exceed 15 minutes total at the end of the day/evening. It consists of a general assessment of each production and includes the adjudicator's strongest impressions of the whole. The adjudicator, in general, approaches each of the productions in order of appearance although an adjudicator might weave some feedback together in order to draw connections for the audience. The adjudicator may start and conclude by finding formal or thematic connections among the productions to help close the evening for participants and audience. Contextualizing the script, devised or collectively created material may also be a way to enrich the audience's experience of the program of work. Some local festivals have experimented with using Public Adjudication time for a talk back or Q&A with performers, hosted by the adjudicator. These approaches are up to the local festival discretion. In the case of any format, best practices/ conduct for adjudicators is outlined in the Adjudicators' Guide.

The place for a deeper critical discussion is in the **Private Adjudication** where there can be a more layered conversation. Private adjudications ideally last 20-30 minutes for each production. They are sometimes scheduled immediately following the final performance in a program and other times scheduled the following day, depending on each local festival's schedule. Private Adjudication should be a conversation inside of which **concrete and specific feedback** is offered. Hearing student talk and articulation of ideas can help adjudicators decide how to distribute awards. The adjudicator should *provide detailed assessment* of the production, focusing on both individuals' work as well as the work of ensembles and production teams, while asking and encouraging specific, productive questions of and from the company to encourage engaged dialogue.

The adjudicator may also provide positive observations and constructive feedback to teacher-directors in a collegial way within the framework of providing support to students together. Teachers and adjudicators both should encourage students to think both openly and analytically about feedback.

Some local festivals offer Private Adjudication to each group/ company individually and other districts do all Private Adjudications together, as one large group. There are pros and cons to each approach:

Individual private adjudications give the adjudicator the opportunity to speak confidentially and dig deeper with each group rather than spending time/ diplomacy making sure all groups feel equally valued in each other's presence. Student may also be more inclined to speak frankly about their process with less fear of exposure amidst other groups. One group at a time Private Adjudications can make the adjudication more like a "rehearsal hall" moment than an exhibition or lecture. At most Regional Festivals, as well as at Provincials, the Private Adjudications are also done individually so this also allows the kids to get familiar with that process.

From another point of view, it can be valuable to do Private Adjudications collectively as that approach can provide the opportunity for each group to learn from the adjudications of their peers from other schools. Sometimes, collective adjudication is also just what works best for a particular festival schedule.

Ultimately, at the district level, each adjudicator should decide how they can be most effective, in consultation with the host school/ District Rep. Different adjudicators will have different approaches. Host schools may also have strong feelings about individual/ vs collective.

For more details on adjudication standards, expectations and best practices, please refer to the Adjudicators' Guide. (A revised and expanded Adjudicators' Guide will be available by December 2019.)

Preparing for Adjudication: Things to consider

Talk about adjudication before it happens. Talk about what to expect and what can be gained. Talk about the importance of listening deeply to what adjudicators have to offer and then using critical reflection to decide what feedback is most valuable. Some teachers and students organize mock adjudications for their companies and practice receiving feedback together.

Adjudicators are not the only ones who should try to be specific: students should ask specific questions and steer away from general seeking of affirmation such as "Did you 'get it'?" or "Was I 'good'?"

Another thing to prepare for is how to **share space**. One good way to address this is to talk about knowing when to '**get up**' or '**get back**'.

In other words:

- Do you tend to talk more the other members of your company? If so, maybe this is an opportunity to encourage others to '**get back**' to questions and responses.
- Do you rarely offer your thoughts? If so, then maybe this is an opportunity to '**get up**' to perspective or raise your questions.

How can adjudication be an occasion for each member of the company to consider what they offer the group dynamic in sharing ideas or creating space for others to do so?

Please communicate clearly to students — and parents — the expectations around timing of private adjudication. This will help address the issue of some participants leaving before having a chance to participate in private adjudication. Still, some students may not be able to stay due to family restrictions or geographic distance. The following are recommendations to help ensure that ALL company members are able to benefit from private adjudication:

1. Make an audio recording of the private adjudication. This can be done simply using a cell phone. This can then be shared with the whole group back at school. These recordings are for company use only and to be deleted after use. Confidentiality of these recordings is the responsibility of the teacher-advisor.
2. A teacher advisor may arrange a subsequent Skype or Google Hangout meeting with the adjudicator and students, subject to the discretion / availability of the adjudicator and company. This should *not* replace the more crucial in-person adjudication but rather offer an addition opportunity to students with barriers.

How are adjudicators selected

District Adjudicators are usually selected/ engaged locally by District Reps. In some cases, a regional coordinator or NTS staff may provide a district adjudicator upon request. At the regional and provincial levels, adjudicators are invited by NTS DRAMAFEST leadership.

All adjudicators should be professional theatre artists and/or arts educators and should be approached based on their experience, expertise, training and commitment to creative learning.

The central role of the adjudicator is to provide useful critical feedback, in a thoughtful, caring way. Adjudicators should provide feedback that helps participants to grow as artists and people through enriched understandings of their own collaborative work.

Guidelines for selecting adjudicators

Restrictions

- No adjudicator may adjudicate the same District, Regional, or Provincial Festival two years in a row
- No Regional Adjudicator can adjudicate any district within a region for which they are adjudicating the Regional Festival in the same year
- No Provincial Adjudicator can adjudicate any regional or district festival in the same year
- Adjudicators must be professional artists, professional arts educators/ facilitators, or both
- Adjudicators must have previous experience with working with youth, young artists or high school students

Recommendations

- It is recommended that districts choose adjudicators with different professional backgrounds from year to year. For example, if an actor adjudicates in 2018, perhaps select a director or designer for 2019 or if a physical theatre expert adjudicates in 2019, perhaps choose a specialist in post dramatic theatre in 2020 etc.
- Bilingualism and cultural representation: In order that students may see themselves reflected in their adjudicator-mentors; District Reps should consider the demographics of their districts. If there are French schools participating in a particular district, adjudicators must be bilingual (French/ English). Adjudicators should also reflect, year to year, the cultural demographics of communities. Adjudicators should not be from a homogenous cultural identity, year after year, especially amidst diverse student populations. NTS is in the process of developing an artist-educator roster for workshops and adjudication. This should be available in 2020. In the meantime, if District Reps are having difficulty connecting with new adjudicators, they should reach out to NTS for support in meeting new artists/ educators.
- Where possible, it is best to have new adjudicators shadow a more experienced adjudicator, or at least attend a festival in another district or at another level in order to observe the process and gain a better understanding of the festival context.

* **Note** that all District Reps, Regional Coordinators, and NTS Festival staff & leadership who select adjudicators should adhere to these same guidelines.

Rights and Royalties

The following has been updated in accordance with current Canadian Copyright and Intellectual Property Laws.

C1 - Performing rights, royalty payments, and/or letters of permission relating to each production are the responsibility of the producing school. The written proof from the copyright holder with a receipt of payments and permission granted by the copyright holder will be submitted to the district coordinator in advance of the performance.

C2 - Neither the National Theatre School of Canada nor NTS DRAMAFEST-Toronto will accept legal responsibility for any violation of copyright by a school participating in the festival.

Additional information regarding scripts

- IF you are using a published play YOU MUST include proof of rights and royalties having been paid when you submit your electronic script to the district coordinator on the form provided. You MUST also confirm in writing that you have been given permission to use the script and/or make any adaptations by the publisher in the NTS Festival program. In some cases, an artist may give permission for use of an unpublished text. In these cases simply indicate that artist's permission.
- IF you are submitting a play written by a teacher, a former teacher or a friend, please be sure to indicate that in the program, for example by using parenthesis (teacher) or (community member). This will avoid any potential confusion when it comes to selecting student award winners.

Music/Video rights information

- While schools may download music from the internet '**in a classroom setting**' for educational purposes, schools **MUST NOT** use music in a NTS DRAMAFEST production without permission. NTS DRAMAFEST productions are beyond the domain of a classroom and include a paying audience, and therefore proper rights/permission must be obtained.
- IF a teacher or school's drama or music department purchases sheet music for a band or choir, this **grants permission** to play the music live during a staged production -- either on stage or in the pit. However, this **DOES NOT** grant permission to record the music and play the recording. Credit for the music and arrangement should be in the program.
- IF music is being played during a performance or for pre- / post-show, SOCAN fees apply; you will need to check the SOCAN website (www.socan.ca) for specifics. However, if music used within a play was EITHER copyrighted as part of the script OR else the playwright was granted permission to use it by the composer, this info will be found within the script. If you have any doubts, contact the playwright or his/her representative (agent or publisher) directly. And, of course, if it is a published musical for which you have received permission and paid the required royalties, use of the music is part of the contract.
- IF you are using video clips projected onto a screen or cyclorama (other than those you have filmed yourself), you must get permission to use that clip, including any music in it, from the copyright holder. This also applies to photographed images, video clips, and music which are posted on You Tube. YouTube has guidelines regarding the use of material on their website, which teachers should refer to. Some content is free to use (marked as part of the Creative Commons).

Practical Suggestions for Teachers

- If you use music from a local artist or indie band, permission is generally easy to obtain. It can be a good experience for students to practice reaching out to more established artists. Many artists will be happy to help / give permission to student work.
- Purchase sheet music and include live singers and/or musicians.
- Create original sound recordings using Garage Band, similar programs.
- Try live analogue folly.

- Give yourself ample time if pursuing the rights to a song from a publisher and be prepared to be turned down. Have a back-up strategy ready in advance. Note that this is especially true if seeking permission for U.S. copyrighted material or that from other countries outside North America.
- There are web sites listing music in the public domain that can be downloaded and which are copyright free: www.freeplay.com www.creativecommons.com www.musicnotes.com
- A guide to using literary, musical and artistic works protected by copyright in Canada in ADÉSAM member schools is available free online at [Adesam Guide](#).

District, Regional and Provincial Awards

Important Notes

It is a valued and important tradition of the festival that students are recognized and receive awards for their achievements.

An evaluation of the awards structure is underway and there may be some new developments in awards this year or next. Until further notice, please follow the guide below. You should also refer to Appendix C: Awards Matrix

In the District and Regional Festivals there are two different categories— Awards of Merit and Awards of Excellence — in addition to the OUTSTANDING PRODUCTIONS (which are awarded to schools moving on the next Festival level).

The precise number of awards to be given is determined by the overall number of shows.

- Only students involved in a participating production are eligible for awards
- Adjudicators have the right to refuse to adjudicate productions for which they have received no artistic statements and scripts as applicable.
- In a team adjudication situation, all adjudicators must attend all productions
- Festival SM's should, for information, connect with adjudicators regarding Stage Management Awards. Conversely, adjudicators will consult with the Festival SM's regarding the selection of recipients of any awards for technical excellence in order to confirm eligibility

Awards Formula

Categories

The formula to determine the total number of **Awards of Merit** is to take the number of plays in and to match that with the total number of Awards of Merit. For example, if there are 12 productions altogether, there will be 12 Awards of Merit. If there are 5 productions, there will be 5 Awards of Merit.

To determine the number of **Awards of Excellence** subtract the total number of **Outstanding Productions** from the total number of productions that have been performed in the District or Regional Festival. For example, if there are 15 productions in total, subtract 4 (the number of Outstanding Productions) for a total of 11 Awards of Excellence. If there are only five shows, subtract 2 for a total of 3 Awards of Excellence.

(Number of Shows) - (Number of Outstanding Productions) = Number of Awards of Excellence

Awards Breakdown

District Awards

- Outstanding Production Awards
 - 12 – 24 shows *
4 outstanding productions (plus 8 – 20 Awards of Excellence; 12 – 24 Awards of Merit)
 - 8 – 11 shows *
3 outstanding productions (plus 5 – 8 Awards of Excellence; 8 - 11 Awards of Merit)
 - 5 – 7 shows
2 outstanding productions (plus 3 – 5 Awards of Excellence; 5 – 7 Awards of Merit)
 - 4 or less shows
1 outstanding production (plus 2 – 3 Awards of Excellence; 2 - 4 Awards of Merit)

(*Pending regional availability. Please consult with the district and/or regional coordinators)

- 1 Stage Management Award in eligible districts. All districts that hold the festival in one host venue will present a Stage Management Award, awarded by the Festival Stage Manager in conversation with Festival Crew and adjudicator. Some districts who hold the festival in multiple venues may not have a Festival Stage Manager consistently in attendance who is then able to evaluate Stage Managers. Every effort should be made by districts to recognize the work of SMs.
- Other Local Awards as applicable

Regional Awards

- 2 Outstanding Production Awards
- 6-8 Awards of Excellence
- Awards of Merit
- 1 Stage Management Award
(Awarded by the Festival Stage Manager in conversation with Festival Crew and adjudicator as appropriate)
- Regionally approved Awards as applicable

Provincial Awards

*There are distinct awards given at the Ontario Showcase as follows:

- 6 Mira Awards for Excellence
- 12 Outstanding Achievement Awards
- 1 Outstanding Achievement Award for Stage Management
(Awarded by the Festival Stage Manager in conversation with Festival Crew and adjudicator as appropriate)
- 1 Wayne Fairhead New Play Award for excellence in Playwriting
- 4 Ken and Ann Watts Scholarships and Bursaries

Production Staff - Definitions and Responsibilities

General Notes

Below are general definitions of the various roles and responsibilities held during a Festival. It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list, there are many other roles that people take on in order to ensure the success of any individual production and Festival. **Also, please note that one person can perform more than one role in the list below.**

While these definitions describe individual responsibilities, we want to stress that communication is the key to running the Festivals successfully. Each member of the team should endeavour to collaborate with all other members – better communication ensures a better experience. It should be the goal of all involved to respect and support the work of others in achieving collective goals.

A full glossary of terms will be available as an Appendix to this document before December 2019

Roles and Responsibilities

This is a list of possible roles within any given Festival. It must be noted that you are **not required** to fill all roles.

Company – All collective members of the Producing schools' show. This includes crew, actors, designers, director, Stage Managers and anyone else involved in the performance in any way

Festival Coordinator/Production Manager– Performs administration required by the school and the NTS Festival. Remains an impartial consultant to be involved alongside the Production Coordinator as needed by the Companies or the Festival Stage Manager

Production Coordinator/Technical Director – reports to the Festival Coordinator and is responsible for coordinating all technical elements of the Festival in accordance with the Technical Guidelines

Festival Stage Manager – Reports to the Production Coordinator or Technical Director. Supervises the Host Venue at all times during its use and ensures that all equipment is functioning correctly. Is responsible for timing when applicable as well as noting all production details for which the Festival Crew may be responsible. The Festival Stage Manager should be considered to be the lead resource of the venue and all participants should be aware of who they are. The role is specifically responsible to provide best practices. They may be required to arrange lighting or sound equipment rentals if applicable

Assistant Festival Stage Manager (if applicable) – reports to the Festival Stage Manager and is responsible for supervising either backstage left or right at all times. They are also responsible for acting as general crew when required

Festival Lighting Designer – reports to the Production Coordinator or Technical Director. Is responsible for creating the lighting plot to be used in the Festival in accordance with the Festival Guidelines. Oversees the installation and focus of the lighting plot.

Festival Lighting Crew – Report to the Festival Lighting Designer during pre-production and load in and to the Festival Stage Manager during the Festival week. Responsible for installing the Festival lighting plot to the specifications set by the Festival Lighting Designer. Responsible for maintaining the system throughout the Festival week. Will hang and focus specials for the Companies, explain the use of equipment to the Companies' crews and operate the lighting console if necessary

Festival Sound Operator – Reports to the Festival Stage Manager and is responsible for installing and maintaining the PA system as well as the communication equipment. They explain all equipment to the Company's crew when required and will operate the sound console if necessary.

Festival Video Technician – Reports to the Festival Stage Manager. They install and maintain any projectors and video systems requested by the Companies. Involvement in maintaining closed circuit camera systems may be necessary if specific to the Host Venue.

Festival Stage Crew – Reports to the Festival Stage Manager. The crew will perform tasks onstage as assigned.

Festival Front of House Coordinator – Reports to the Production Coordinator or Technical Director. Acts as a liaison between the Festival Crew, Festival Stage Manager and FOH Crew. Co-ordinates all FOH setup and ticketing

Festival Host Services – Report to the FOH coordinator and carry out duties as assigned, acting as Hosts to the participating Companies.

General notes on Set, Costume, Sound, Lighting and Video Design

Students are encouraged to explore set, costume, sound, lighting and projections design in order to enhance and support the work onstage. Designing sets and costumes provide important opportunities for students to learn how to work on elements with a direct connection to the physical work of actors onstage. Creating music, effects, lighting states and projection elements that are specific to the thematic arc of a play can provide students with important growth and understanding of general areas of design. Students should also be encouraged to explore how their design ideas support the work of the Director, the Playwright and the actors. Additionally, the collaboration between all of these design elements should be expected and encouraged in order to achieve cohesive design choices.

It is not appropriate for schools to hire professionals to design any of the above elements. NTS strongly encourages that students are invited and given opportunities to explore design work. Volunteer mentorship and coaching can provide context and an access to information and pedagogy to help the students learn about the world of Design.

Set Design and Storage

General Notes

Your set design should function in a number of ways. Using materials that are available, you should strive to provide a theatrical space that is relevant and supportive of the play and the work of the actor onstage. You should follow safety guidelines at all times so that all members of the company remain safe throughout the process. There are certain things to consider when looking at safe or unsafe elements of your set design, some are listed below but this list does not cover every consideration. Please consult Appendix B: HEALTH AND SAFETY for more information.

1. Height of playing spaces – areas that are constructed to be higher than 3' should be carefully considered as railings could be required beyond this height
2. Soft Goods – any soft goods that are used near a heat source must be treated with a flame retardant before being used onstage. If you are unsure of these specific regulations, your Festival Stage Manager should be able to help you determine if you must treat material this way. Soft goods that are hung on a system pipe (curtains, scrim, sheets etc.) must be treated since they would be situated near 1 or more heat sources.
3. Scenery that is free standing should be stabilized with stage weights, or stage jacks
4. Any additional flooring material used on top of the venue stage floor should be secured appropriately and provide a surface that is not slippery or otherwise unsafe

Guidelines for Companies and Host Venues

1. Set Elements
 - a. All set elements are generally the responsibility of the Company, not the Host Venue
 - b. Some stock set elements may be made available by the Host Venue – the Festival Stage Manager will be clear as to what could be made available to you
 - c. The Festival Stage Manager has a duty to refuse to allow unsafe set elements onstage until repairs are made in order to make those elements safe for use
 - d. Rigging of scenic elements or special effects requires that you collaborate with qualified individuals who understand how to ensure that all equipment used has the required safety factor
2. Ground Plans
 - a. The Host Venue will provide each Company with a blank Ground Plan of the stage area which will include stage measurements
 - b. Every Company will be expected to provide a ground plan of their set and playing space. A ground plan is a view of the set from above, ideally drawn to scale. A hand drawn Ground Plan is all that is required, but you can also provide one that is drawn on CAD if you wish. Accompanying your ground plan with photos of your set onstage is recommended
3. Set Storage Requirements
 - a. The Host Venue should make every effort to provide adequate storage for all participating Companies
 - b. Storage areas should be allocated in order to allow a Company to have complete access to their set
 - i. If set elements are not accessible when the allocated set-up time commences, allowances should be made to compensate for this loss of time
 - c. Once a set is stored, no one should move or access any part of the set unless asked to do so by the Company's Stage Manager or Technical Director
 - d. If access to set elements is required (to move, adjust, repair or otherwise modify) outside of the allotted time for rehearsal, set-up, strike or performance, Company members must consult the Festival Stage Manager to arrange for the required access.
 - i. Access will only be allowed as long as it does not interfere with the technical rehearsal of another Company. Access will not be allowed during the technical rehearsal, setup, strike or performance of another Company
 - e. Companies need to carefully consider the size of set they bring to a Festival. If you have designed a set with large scenic elements, please discuss with the Festival Stage Manager to ensure that they are able to accommodate your needs – as an example, not all schools have large entrance ways to allow large set pieces to pass through
 - f. Companies must give a reasonable estimate in their technical specifications on the tech questionnaire of their set storage needs. If a Company requires more space than requested in the tech questionnaire, the Festival Stage Manager is not required to provide additional space although every effort will be made to accommodate.
 - g. If there is not enough space within the Host Venue to store all set elements, alternate arrangements should be made prior to the week of the Festival. If alternate storage facilities are required, adequate time should be allotted for the movement of set elements to the venue before the setup time commences

General Staging

Guidelines for Companies and Host Venues

1. Stage Deck
 - a. The stage deck should be splinter-free.
 - i. A wooden floor is preferable, and should be considered if at all possible
 - b. The downstage edge of the deck must be delineated with either white tape or pieces of glow tape

- c. **** Accessibility - Is your stage accessible to members of a Company with mobility issues or physical disabilities? Companies should be clear if they require this, Host Venues should be clear if this is a particularly challenging to provide for any reason**
2. Stage Drapery (if applicable)
 - a. It is not a requirement to provide stage curtains, but it can be helpful to the overall use of the stage when it is available
 - b. Stage curtain control must be accessible to the Company's running crew. The Festival House Crew will not operate stage curtains unless instructed to do so by the Company's Stage Manager or Technical Director
 - c. If the Festival Stage Manager determines that, for safety reason, the stage curtains can only be operated by trained Festival House Crew then that crew member must be provided to the Company and will operate the curtains under the instruction of the Company Stage Manager or Technical Director. For example, this would apply in larger theatres with fly galleries
 - d. Ideally the Host Venue can provide sufficient masking to hide the backstage area from the audience's view.
 - e. If possible, all stage curtains should be black. The exception would be the Main House Curtain
3. Spike Tape
 - a. Host venues must supply each Company with spike tape during their technical rehearsal in order to mark where their set and prop elements are placed
 - b. Different colours of spike tape should be made available so that each Company receives its own colour
 - c. It is recommended that set elements be spiked in the upstage corners only to avoid covering the entire stage with spike marks. The tape should be secured as well as possible to avoid losing any spike marks
 - d. When sweeping and mopping the stage floor, the Festival House Crew should use great care so as to avoid removing spike tape
 - e. Spike tape should be removed at the end of each evening in the Festival as part of the strike
4. Sight Lines
 - a. The Host Venue will make every attempt to provide an unobstructed view of the entire stage from the majority of the audience seating area
 - b. Backstage sightlines should be marked (i.e. with white tape) so as to delineate areas backstage where you cannot be seen from where you can be seen from the audience
5. Audience Seating Area
 - a. The audience seating area must be safe and in presentable condition
 - b. Fire regulations in regard to the layout of seats, aisles and exits must be strictly followed. Each Host Venue must make it clear what the fire regulations are of the region/province
 - c. Assigned seats must be reserved for the Adjudicator, Festival Administration, participating directors, Companies and sponsor
 - d. **** Accessibility - Host Venues are required by law to provide accessible seating for people with mobility issues or physical disabilities**
6. Equipment Inventory
 - a. Every Company Stage Manager and/or Technical Director should assemble a full list of elements that are used in the production. This will include set elements, properties and costumes used during the course of the performance. This list should be included in the Technical Questionnaire
7. Backstage Crossover
 - a. Every Company should indicate whether they would like to request a backstage crossover – a way for the cast and crew to cross from the one side of the stage to the other side without being seen by the audience.
 - b. It should be understood that not all Host Venues are able to supply a backstage crossover.
 - c. If a Host Venue is able to provide a backstage crossover, they should endeavour to do so if it is requested by the Companies

8. Onstage Tool Kit

- a. Every Company should provide their own onstage tool kit for use in setups and strikes as needed. Host Venues should also have a kit available as a backup. The kit should include the following:
 - i. A tape measure
 - ii. A hammer
 - iii. A set of screwdrivers
 - iv. A pair of pliers (Linesman)
 - v. A pair of cutters
 - vi. A Power drill - if available
 - vii. Extra spike tape
 - viii. Extra glow tape
 - ix. A staple gun
 - x. Scissors
 - xi. An adjustable wrench ("Crescent" wrench)

Lighting Design and Technical Requirements

General Notes

Lighting for your show should be imaginative and thoughtful but also achievable in the time you have and the equipment available for you to use. Some venues will have a large stock of instruments and the ability to control each concept specifically, but other venues will be fairly limited in what can be done with lighting. Plan for both options. Make a priority list for lighting that would include specials that you feel you need as well as options that, if available, would enhance your production.

Consider the use of specials to enhance certain moments of the performance. Think about how colour can shift the feeling of the play and give an audience a sense of time and place. Lighting design can provide focus within the storytelling that can aid the audience in understanding intentions and themes.

Guidelines for Companies and Host Venues

1. General lighting will be set for the entire Festival and each Company will share those resources equally
 - a. General lighting consists of front light to the acting area, top light whenever possible and any other concept of lighting that will provide light in a general way to the stage
2. It is the responsibility of the Festival Coordinator to inform all Companies of the available lighting at the Host Venue.
3. All lighting levels and cue operations are the responsibility of the Company Crew
4. All lighting levels will happen during the technical rehearsal time allotted to the Company
5. Equipment Inventory
 - a. The Host Venue will provide each Company with a list which details all lighting equipment beyond the house plot that is available for use
 - b. Every Company Stage Manager and/or Technical Director should assemble a list of lighting equipment they request for their production beyond the house plot. This list should be included in the Technical Questionnaire
6. Control
 - a. Dimmers/Circuits
 - i. The Host Venue should have an adequate number of dimmers and circuits available in order to provide enough control and power for as much specified lighting as possible (including house plots and specials)

- ii. The Host Venue should provide paperwork that represents how the lighting plot is organized. This can be a Channel Hookup or a Magic Sheet – the goal being to provide each Company Lighting Designer with straightforward information about how the lighting plot is set up
 - b. Lighting Console
 - i. Ideally the Host Venue can provide a memory-based Lighting Console that is straightforward to program and operate
 - ii. If the Host Venue only has access to a preset-based Lighting Console, this must be made clear to the Company Lighting Designers
 - iii. A reference sheet or 1-page manual of the console should be provided to the Company Lighting Designer at least a week before the Festival
 - iv. The console should be located in the Front of House with an unobstructed view of the stage
7. House Plot
- a. Acting Areas
 - i. The Stage should be proportionally divided into equally spaced acting areas
 - ii. The front light to acting areas should not be heavily coloured. The use of saturated colours should be kept for top light, backlight or other concepts coming from directions other than the front light
 - iii. The use of warm or cool tones of light for acting area front light is generally encouraged
 - iv. Instruments used to add front light to these areas should be in good condition and provide adequate light for the purpose
 - v. It is recommended that each area also have a dedicated top light to allow for more definition
 - vi. Whenever possible each focused light should have a separate control channel assigned to it on the lighting console. If you must gang 2 lamps together on the same control channel, it should be done to allow for as much Area definition as possible
 - vii. If the available inventory allows, it is recommended that area front light be designed from 2 directions in order to reduce shadows and add definition
 - b. Colour Washes
 - i. If a large number of Companies request a colour wash (whether from the top, front or back), the Host Venue should make an attempt to meet this request
 - ii. These lights will not replace other lighting elements. If the Host Venue does not have sufficient dimmers to provide a colour wash, this request may be excluded from the final lighting setup
 - iii. Specific colour wash colour choices will be made by the Festival Lighting Designer
 - iv. If a cyclorama is available in the Host Venue, this element will be considered when colour washes are requested (see below)
8. Specials
- a. A single instrument added to the general plot OR a refocused instrument that is part of the general plot is considered a special. Specials are generally focused for a specific purpose for one Company only but each special will be made available for all Companies to use in their production
 - b. The availability of specials is dependent on the Host Venue and limitations they might have in providing specials
 - c. Each Company is allowed a maximum of 3 specials (when the Host Venue inventory allows)
 - d. Specials must be setup during the technical rehearsal time available to the Company. This should be considered when requesting specials since it will use up some of your onstage time
 - e. Any specials from other Companies used by another Company are to be considered within their maximum count (i.e. if Company A uses the DSC (downstage centre) special that has been hung by Company B, it is to be considered one of Company A's specials as well – they cannot add 3 other specials)

9. Set Lighting

- a. If the information provided in the technical questionnaires indicates that many of the Companies are using tall set pieces or elevations in their set design, the Host Venue should make an attempt at lighting these areas
- b. If the Host Venue is unable to provide this lighting, the Festival Stage Manager should inform all effected Companies of the choices made to best accommodate these specific needs
 - i. The method of lighting special areas is left to the discretion of the Festival Lighting Designer
 - ii. Instruments should not be specifically focused to meet the needs of a particular Company

10. Cyclorama

- a. It is helpful but not a requirement that the Host Venue should be equipped with a cyclorama
- b. When a cyclorama is provided, the Host Venue will ideally supply a black backdrop used to cover the cyc when not required
- c. When possible, the cyclorama should be lit with a minimum of three colours
- d. Colours should be determined through an examination of the requests of the Companies. Choices such as Red-Green-Blue or Cyan-Magenta-Yellow can allow for colour mixing options
- e. Specific colours are to be decided by the Festival Lighting Designer and information sent to the Companies at least one week in advance of the Festival

11. Follow spot

- a. While not a requirement it is helpful if the Host Venue is equipped with at least 1 Follow spot (with sufficient power to operate it)
- b. 2 Follow spots are preferred when available
- c. The follow spot must have sufficient candlepower to be effective from the installed location
- d. The follow spot must be located where it can effectively light the acting areas
- e. A follow spot is not considered to be one of your specials.

Sound Design and Technical Requirements

General Notes

A sound design that you provide for your performance can be approached in a number of ways. Often there are sound effects required to bring specific and realistic sounds into the performance (i.e. a clock ticking, a bird, an offstage crash). You can also provide music or soundscapes underneath scenes to enhance the overall momentum of the scene. If you are taking this approach, you should do so carefully with the Director and actors so as to bring the sound design into the work onstage, rather than imposing something on top of the play. Transitional sound (sound cues that take us from one scene into the next) could also be considered in your sound design.

If you are using music, please read carefully the Copyright guidelines provided in this document. If you are bringing musicians, please remember to ask for adequate space for your band/orchestra plus their instruments to be placed onstage or offstage – and always take into consideration the balance between live sound and the actors.

Guidelines for Companies and Host Venues

1. All sound levels and cue operations are the responsibility of the Company.
2. All sound levels will happen during the technical rehearsal time allotted to the Company
3. Sound levels for any loud sounds (gunshots, explosions, other sound effects) must be precisely set and tested so as not to cause harm. Any such loud effect should be tested during a sound check prior to each performance during your setup time
4. Equalization of the room is determined by the Host Venue and should not be adjusted

5. The Host Venue will set a maximum sound level that cannot be exceeded when setting levels
6. Additional sound equipment brought in by any Company that has been pre-approved by the Host Venue should not interfere with any other production in the Festival. This equipment must be setup during the allotted technical rehearsal time.
7. All live musicians MUST be eligible participants if they appear on stage. Musicians (even in the “pit”) must NOT be paid performers. Volunteers are always welcomed but must be indicated
8. Equipment Inventory
 - b. The Host Venue will provide a list of sound equipment that may be used including details of the house setup for each
 - c. Every Company Stage Manager and/or Technical Director should provide a description of how they intend to use the sound equipment in the Host Venue. This information should be included in the Technical Questionnaire.
9. Playback
 - a. The Host Venue will provide the following playback equipment whenever possible
 - i. Sound console (mixer) – to be setup in the FOH in order to provide information to the operator about what the audience is hearing during the performance
 - ii. CD Players – if requested by Company Stage Managers or Technical Directors
 - iii. Audio interface or DI Box for connection to a Laptop for Q-Lab (or other) playback
 - b. The Host Venue should be notified in the tech questionnaire about any other source of sound playback brought in by the Company
 - c. **Please refer to the section in this document regarding Copyright and use of pre-recorded music and sound effects
10. Speakers
 - a. The Host Venue should endeavour to provide the following equipment
 - i. 2 FOH main stereo speakers
 - ii. Amplifiers (if speakers are not self-powered)
 - b. The PA System should be as noise free as possible
 - c. The FOH PA System should be setup to avoid blocking the view of the stage from the audience
 - d. The Host Venue can provide the following if they are equipped to do so
 - i. Additional FOH speakers to fill in sound to the audience
 - ii. Amplifiers for extra speakers (if speakers are not self-powered)
 - iii. Backstage monitors in suitable locations for the playback of onstage effects and sound
11. Microphones
 - a. The Host Venue should provide the following equipment
 - i. 2 microphones
 - ii. 2 stands
 - iii. 2 – 50 to 100’ runs of XLR cable
 - b. Wireless microphones can be provided by the Host Venue if available
 - c. Adequate sound patching should be provided to the stage for the number of microphones and backstage equipment required
 - d. It is not recommended that you use microphones to amplify the voices of your actors. The setup and use of this gear is simply not practical given the limited setup and strike time as well as the tech time. The use of microphones should be limited to the following:
 - i. For special effects that need to be played through the sound system
 - ii. To amplify an actor’s voice with special enhancement (echo, reverb etc.)
 - iii. When specifically called for in the script (radio announcer, newscaster etc.)

- iv. Backstage voiceover
- v. An essential artistic reason determined by the Creative Team
- vi. When a student has been identified through an IEP as requiring assistance with voice amplification for the purposes of communication, in which case the whole company may wish to be equally amplified
- e. Microphones should be tested during a sound check prior to each performance during your setup time

Video Design and Technical Requirements

General Notes

Some Companies would like to incorporate Video or Projections into their production. When considering adding this element, please remember to consider the following. Video is a design feature that is both a lighting element as well as a scenic element. In both of these cases, the placement of the video projector is a key factor in how successful your projections design will be executed. Most schools will have a video projector in the Front of House but the image from the projector will come into the playing space directly from the front – this often means that the actors create shadows in the projection. Some schools will have an onstage projector that can project onto a set element or the cyclorama. The position and available lens of this projector will determine the size of image you will see on your scenery or cyclorama.

If adding a projection element to your production – it is recommended that you keep the overall design simple to ensure that you have adequate time to realize your ideas in your technical rehearsal. You are encouraged to consider the fact that Video often takes a lot of time to setup and operate successfully. What can you do with the tools and time that you have available to you?

Guidelines for Companies and Host Venues

1. Video Projectors
 - a. Providing a projector is not considered a minimum requirement for Host Venues. For some schools this is simply not possible
 - b. If an in-house projector is available at the Host Venue, the following information must be provided
 - i. Location of the projector(s)
 - ii. Focus of each projector (where it is focused, what size image is projected etc.)
 - iii. A list of additional equipment required in order for the Company to connect to the available projectors
 - iv. Type of video connection to the projector(s) (VGA, HDMI, S-Video etc.)
 - c. If an in-house projector is not available at the Host Venue, the Festival Coordinator will make this clear in all communications and will provide a list of video equipment that may be used including details of the house setup for each
 - d. Every Company Stage Manager and/or Technical Director should provide a description of how they intend to use the video equipment in the Host Venue. This information should be included in the Technical Questionnaire
2. Content Playback Equipment
 - a. The Company is required to provide both the computer and software for playback of video content
 - b. The Company Stage Manager should include a list of computer equipment and cables that they will be bringing in the Technical Questionnaire
 - c. The Company Stage Manager should attempt to describe the desired outcome of the video design to provide as much information to the Festival Stage Manager as possible
3. All video levels and cue operations are the responsibility of the Company
4. All video cues will be set during the technical rehearsal time allotted to the Company

Production Communications

Guidelines for Companies and Host Venues

1. Whenever possible the Host Venue should be equipped with a headset communication system consisting of at least 2 headsets
2. If there are only 2 headsets, they should be located
 - a. At the Stage Manager's location
 - b. Backstage Left or Right for the Assistant Stage Manager

(If only 2 headsets are available, the Host Venue must ensure that the Stage Manager is closely situated next to the Lighting, Sound and Video Operators so that cue call points can be communicated)
3. When more headsets are available, they can be located
 - a. Backstage (left or right depending on above)
 - b. At the sound console
 - c. At the lighting console
 - d. At the Follow spot location(s)
 - e. At the video console/computer (if required)
 - f. In the FOH during technical rehearsals for the Director
4. The headset system is to remain dedicated to the Company's use only. Festival crew should find alternate means of communication (two-way radios are highly recommended to allow for added mobility and flexibility)
5. The Festival Stage Manager should be able to monitor the headset system so that they can be reached at any time during the technical rehearsal or performance
6. Headset and radio protocol
 - a. Appropriate use of the headsets and radios is essential for good communication. All members of the Company as well as the Festival Crew who communicate this way are expected to maintain a high level of discipline and protocol when communicating
 - b. Communications over headset should be brief and to the point. Neither technology is private so if a longer conversation is required it should happen in person
 - c. Polite and courteous language must be used at all times
 - d. Sensitive information should never be communicated over headset or radio
 - e. Before beginning to speak over headset or over radio all users are expected to listen for a short period of time in order to be sure that they are not interfering with a conversation already in progress
7. Headset Specifics
 - a. Please secure the belt pack to your belt or similar location where it can be safely used
 - b. Never leave a belt pack or headset on the floor or elsewhere where it can be damaged
 - c. Be careful of your headset cord and where it is located, especially if you are backstage. It can be a tripping hazard if not minded carefully
 - d. Be mindful at all times of where your headset and belt pack are – in the dark it is easy to kick or step on equipment like this that is left unattended
 - e. Remember to TURN OFF your headset before removing it or putting it down
8. Radio specifics for Festival crew
 - a. When initiating a conversation over radio, always identify the person you are calling first, followed by identifying yourself ("Steve, this is Anne")
 - b. Upon the completion of a conversation, the person initiating the call should clear the call ("Anne, clear")
 - c. Carry the radio safely on your belt or in a case at all times. Never leave it unattended
 - d. Monitor battery use and recharge batteries once you replace with fresh ones

- e. During a performance you will be required to wear a headset with your radio to avoid radio noise from making its way onstage or into the auditorium

Technical Rider and information

Guidelines for Companies and Host Venues

1. Festival Stage Manager's Report
 - a. Each Company will be provided with a Festival Stage Manager's Report which will provide up-to-date information about the facility and the configuration of the technical equipment
 - b. This report will be provided as early as possible and will be updated a week prior to the Festival
 - c. The Festival Stage Manager should provide additional information to the Companies as it becomes available
 - d. All Reports will be dated and signed by either the Production Coordinator or the Festival Stage Manager
 - e. Whenever possible, the report will contain the following information (but is not limited to)
 - i. A Ground Plan of the stage and auditorium – including location of stage drapery
 - ii. A Section Plan of the stage and auditorium
 - iii. An Elevation of the stage
 - iv. A Festival Lighting plot
 - v. A list of lighting equipment used in the house lighting plot as well as for specials
 - vi. A list of sound equipment being used in the PA System
 - vii. A list of available video equipment and a description of the standard setup
 - viii. A list of stage drapery available for use
 - ix. A list of stage information that is relevant to the venue
 - x. A list of specific procedures to be considered when using the venue
 - xi. A map and directions to the venue
2. Technical Information Sheets
 - a. Every Company Stage Manager and/or Technical Director will receive the Technical Information Sheet with the Festival Stage Manager's Report
 - b. Technical Information Sheets should be completed and returned two months before the Festival.
 - c. The Host Venue should attempt to fulfil requests made by the Companies if it is within the parameters set out within the current guidelines
 - d. It is important to note that NOT being able to fulfill a request made by a Company does not make the Host Venue ineligible to participate. Participation is more important than having a fully equipped venue
 - e. The Host Venue is ultimately responsible to the National Theatre School Festival organizers regarding its communication practices. This oversight is to ensure best practices between Festival Venues for all Festivals
 - f. Companies who do not provide a completed Technical Information Sheet should not expect that their requests will be granted – nor should it be considered the responsibility of the Host Venue to do so
 - g. The Festival Coordinator should oversee the creation of the form to be issued as the Technical Information Sheet
 - h. The Technical Information Sheet should contain information to be found in Appendix A

Timing

Companies must complete their activities during their allotted times for setup, technical rehearsals and strike. You will not be permitted to go overtime since it would greatly affect the work of the Company that follows you. Please remember to respect the work and time of other Companies as you would want your work and time to be respected.

It is the Festival Stage Manager's responsibility to stop all onstage activities before the end of the 2-hour technical rehearsal in order to begin the strike and load out. In the event that a Company has not completed what they planned during their technical rehearsal; you simply will not be allowed to continue. Respecting the allotted time is not only necessary for the fair treatment of all Companies but using your time well will ensure that your performance in the Festival is not adversely affected because you were unable to complete the technical elements of your production during your technical rehearsal.

Guidelines for Companies and Host Venues

1. Under no circumstance, except in the event of an emergency or when specifically asked to by the Company Stage Manager, Technical Director or Director, will the Festival House Crew assist or interfere during the setup, technical rehearsal or strike of any Company
2. The Company will not be permitted to ask the Festival House Crew for assistance unless it is a specific Facility-based safety concern that has been previously identified
3. The Company should check with Coordinators if there are any restrictions in the venue that would affect the time to load into the school. Load in time is to be considered separate from the Technical Rehearsal Time below.
4. Timing allotments
 - a. Technical Rehearsal time – 2 hours
 - b. Performance setup time – 10 minutes
 - c. Performance running time – minimum 15 minutes, maximum 50 minutes
 - d. Performance strike time – 5 minutes
5. Timing specifics
 - a. There will be 2 stopwatches running during the setup, technical rehearsal, strike and performance
 - b. These stopwatches will be held by the Festival Stage Manager and the Company Stage Manager
 - c. The Festival Stage Manager will indicate the start for the Technical Rehearsals, setup and strike times and ALL EFFORTS will be made by the Company and the Company Stage Manager to ensure that the activity is completed in the time allotted
 - d. In order to provide guidance as to the best use of onstage time the Festival Stage Manager will announce to the Company Stage Manager when the time remaining in the setup or strike is 2 minutes and when the time remaining in the technical rehearsal is 15 minutes to be followed by a additional call at the 2-minute mark
6. Stopping during timing – the timers will stop timing for the following conditions:
 - a. Timeouts
 - i. In the event of a house-related concern affecting the Company, the Festival Stage Manager must stop the work of the Company as well as the timer
 - ii. Safety concerns may also stop the timer
 - iii. The specific concern must be solved before work can commence, and timing continues
 - b. Technical Rehearsal – the set, cast and crew are off the stage
 - c. Performance Setup - the set is onstage and ready to use. All Properties are in place. All Safety concerns are met. The cast and crew are off the stage

- d. Performance – at the pre-established end of the performance
- e. Performance Strike – the Stage is clear of sets, properties, and anything else that belongs to the Company

IMPORTANT - In the event that your performance goes over time, stage lighting will come down at the 55-minute mark. That decision is made by the Festival Stage Manager and/or Coordinator

General Recommendations

1. Choice of material (content and language) is the sole responsibility of the participating school's administration.
2. Programs should contain warnings concerning such things as strobe lights, smoke, loud or startling sound effects, strong language, mature or disturbing content, etc.
3. A representative from each production should be ready to answer any questions that audience members may have about content so that they can make appropriate choices for themselves (for example so that a parent may decide for themselves if a younger child should attend.)
4. Latecomer policies are up to the discretion of host venues and should be communicated in advance to all participating companies.
5. As the festival exists to provide a full learning experience, all school groups are expected to participate in the full programme of activities provided at each festival
6. Festival Coordinators should ensure that:
 - a. a private room is available for adjudicator use
 - b. there is a previously agreed-upon area(s) in the house for adjudicators to sit (this may include a small desk, a shielded light source, and empty seats in front/ behind and beside the adjudicator)
 - c. a lectern and microphone are available if needed/requested by the adjudicator for public adjudication
 - d. after the Festival, Adjudicators are thanked and paid by NTS or locally as applicable

Appendix A - TECHNICAL INFORMATION SHEET

Technical Information Sheets are due two months before the Festival begins.

Please include the following when you build your Technical Information Sheet

1. Title of play
2. Company contact list
3. Length of play
4. Size of cast
5. Size of crew including Stage Managers, Directors, Designers
6. Set Design parameters
 - a. Including a ground plan of the set design
 - b. Including photos of the set design and general stage setup
 - c. Storage requirements
 - d. Details of set elements (height of platforms, placement of soft goods etc.)
 - e. Number of entrances and exits requested – being specific as to onstage entrances as well as FOH entrances
 - f. Backstage crossover requests
7. Lighting requirements
 - a. colours requested to be considered in the Festival lighting plot
 - b. effects requested
 - c. if available – a lighting plot
 - d. colour requests for a cyclorama (as available)
8. Lighting specials requested
 - a. including specifics about focus and use
9. Sound information
 - a. Sound Playback specifics including computer equipment brought in by the Company
 - b. Microphone requirements
 - c. Information on special effects
 - d. Keyboard requirements (if applicable)
10. Video requests
11. Specific needs such as accessibility needs onstage or in the FOH, other special considerations

Appendix B – HEALTH AND SAFETY

Selected Safety Guidelines for the Live Performance Industry

****These guidelines are taken from the Ontario Ministry of Labour but should be considered best practices no matter the district or province your school is in****

This guideline deals with the design and construction of scenery, and its installation and use in performance venues, rehearsal venues, and temporary rehearsal installations. It does not deal with worker safety in the scene shop or during transportation. The Design, Construction, and Installation sections are not intended to be a comprehensive exploration of all the engineering aspects of scenery. They identify the health and safety considerations to be incorporated into the design and construction process and leave to the user decisions on how to address those needs.

The construction, design and complexity of the scenery may need a professional engineer to ensure the scenery conforms to good engineering practice and safety legislation. This guideline does not attempt to define when that would be necessary — the decision should be made for each project early in its planning.

Electrical materials and equipment should always be installed and used in accordance with the Electrical Code.

General Safety Guidelines

These measures are not negotiable. These are the minimum measures to ensure the safety and comfort of everyone. Failure to comply with the safety measures can be dangerous for all.

1. Personal Protective Equipment, including safety helmets and footwear is mandatory during activities as designated by the TD
2. No one should be allowed to work by themselves in the venue
3. No one is allowed to work under the influence of behavior altering chemicals (alcohol, drugs, pain relief) or in a state of extreme fatigue
4. Anyone working more than 10 feet above the ground must wear an approved safety harness attached to a shock absorber fixed to a lifeline
5. No one can be required to work in conditions where he/she feels uncomfortable or unsafe
6. Any incident involving personal injury or equipment damage must be reported to a supervisor as soon as possible
7. Genie platforms and scaffolds must be used with the safety legs in place
8. Any suspended element must be secured with a separate safety line
9. Any heat source must be placed a minimum of 10 inches away from any flammable material
10. Cables and other trip hazards on the floor must be secured and covered. Their presence must be indicated using a running light source or tape
11. Danger zones must be clearly marked and protected against entry
12. When applicable - Fire curtain travel must remain unobstructed at all times. NO stationary scenic element can impede the operation of the fire curtain, when there is one in the venue.
13. Every work team is responsible for tidying up its equipment and tools to keep the stage clear of obstructions at all time
14. All entrances and exits must remain clear of obstruction at all times
15. It is very important to locate the first aid kits in areas where technical work is conducted

Definitions

Note: These definitions are provided for clarity and guidance only.

- Deck-supported scenic elements
 - Elements that derive most or all of their support from sitting directly on the stage, or on another scenic element
- Static deck-supported scenic elements

- Elements which sit in one position and are not intended for movement after fit-up
- Movable deck-supported scenic elements
 - Elements supported by another scenic element or system capable of movement (trap, elevator, etc.), even though neither element may be intended for movement in performance
- Engineering
 - The practice of professional engineering” means any act of planning, designing, composing, evaluating, advising, reporting, directing or supervising wherein the safeguarding of life, health, property or the public welfare is concerned and that requires the application of engineering principles
- Flown scenic elements
 - Elements that derive most or all of their support from suspension. Flown elements may be brought in to touch the deck but are not deck-supported
- Dead-hung flown scenic elements
 - Elements suspended by a fixed length of chain, rope, cable or other extension from a fixed anchor point, and which are not intended for movement after fit-up
- Movable flown scenic elements
 - Elements suspended from any system capable of movement (fly system, block and fall, hoist, winch, etc.), even though the element may not be intended for movement in performance
- Hazard range
 - The area inside which injury is possible
- Load in (take-in, fit-up, set-up)
 - The delivery, assembly and installation of scenic elements at the rehearsal or performance venue, including suspension or erection as appropriate
- Changeover
 - The change of scenic elements from that of one production to that of another but which does not involve a load in or load-out
- Load-out (tear-down, strike, take-down)
 - The dismantling and removal of scenic elements from the rehearsal or performance venue
- Permanent scenery
 - All scenic elements that are normally in place on the stage and are not added for an individual production, including such items as a false proscenium, tormentor, teasers, main drape, cyclorama, masking drapery, etc
- Scenic element
 - Any unit of scenery used as part of the staging of a production, including drops, scrims, flats, trucks, wagons, etc

Design, construction and installation

All scenic elements

1. If an element is resting on the deck but is primarily supported by suspension, it should be considered to be a flown element and therefore not allowable for use in the Festival
2. If an element is supported by the deck but requires some kind of suspension for additional support, it should be considered to be a flown element and therefore not allowable for use in the Festival
3. The design, construction, and installation of scenic elements in all intended configurations should address:
 - a. unimpeded operation of emergency equipment (e.g. fire curtains)
 - b. easy exit from the stage or auditorium in emergencies
 - c. efficient response to an emergency.
4. Design and construction should address the weight, balance, size and shape of each scenic element, including:
 - a. its ability to be easily and safely transported, including being carried by crew during load in and load-out
 - b. its ability to be easily and safely assembled, dismantled, manipulated, installed and struck by the number of crew to be engaged for the set-up, changeover and strike, and the manner in which it is intended to be used and its suitability for the purpose
5. Tools, hardware, machinery and other technology should be appropriate and adequate for the intended use

6. Scenery constructed of soft goods should be constructed using fire-resistant materials and coatings, or made fire-resistant by treatment with a flame retardant, particularly where there are proximate sources of heat, or other causes of ignition
7. Drapery shall be treated as required with flame retardant or constructed with fire-retardant materials, particularly where there are proximate sources of heat, or other causes of ignition

Deck-supported elements

1. All deck-supported elements should be designed and constructed specifically to be supported from below. Special consideration should be given to:
 - a. the weight of the element itself
 - b. the weight of any additional load to be carried by the element (actor, scenery, prop)
 - c. balance of the element, as it might affect stability in its location, even distribution of the weight on its supporting surface, and possible need for some suspension support engineering the element appropriately for its size, shape, use and anticipated load, and ensuring the size and weight of the element will fit the use and restrictions imposed by its location
2. For movable deck-supported scenic elements that are intended to be static in performance, any other supporting element or system capable of movement should be immobilised. This may be achieved by adding hardware “locks” on the movable system, locking out controls that permit movement, disconnecting power, fastening a trap plug in place, etc.
3. The overall height of your deck-supported element should be considered as well. Any height over 3’ might require a railing to allow for safe use of that element. There is no hard and fast rule about this until you reach a height of 10’ (where a safety harness is required, or a safety railing). Generally, we look at each platform, the action required to take place on the platform and determine whether a railing is required. Even a fall from a height of 3’ can potentially injure someone

Operation and use – Movable elements (deck-supported)

1. All operators of movable scenery shall be trained in the safe operation of the element
2. All operators should have a direct line of sight to moving elements under their control. Spotters should be used when the direct line of sight of the operator is restricted. There should be clear and direct communication between the spotter(s) and the operator
3. All movable elements should be tested in their normal range of motion at their anticipated speed of operation, with additional allowance being made for unexpected needs or occurrences. These tests should be conducted in the shop (if applicable), upon fit-up and before each rehearsal and performance
4. The chain of command for the routine movement of elements, and for unexpected situations and emergencies, should be established and clearly communicated to all concerned
5. All movable elements should be demonstrated to anyone who may be within hazard range during operation. During tech rehearsal, many more people may be present during movement than would be in performance; these people should also be familiarized with the movement of the element
6. Any performers, non-operating crew, and others who may be within hazard range of a movable element in operation should be informed of the appropriate action to take in an unexpected situation or emergency
7. Initial technical rehearsals should take place at reduced speed (where feasible) and in work light. Final technical rehearsals should provide sufficient opportunity for everyone involved to become comfortable with the operation and movement of the element when used under performance lighting conditions and at performance speed. When changes are made in the use of the element, new technical rehearsals should be conducted at reduced speed (where feasible) and in work light
8. In design, construction and installation, special consideration should be given to:
 - a. clearance distances from other elements
 - b. guidance to ensure the intended path of movement (e.g. track, guide wires, etc.)
 - c. controllability in acceleration and deceleration
 - d. stability in motion and at rest.

Scenic elements that carry people

1. A fall protection system shall be used where persons being carried by an element in motion are exposed to a potential fall of 3 m or more. As a best practice this height should be reduced to 1.2 m, where additional hazards are present, e.g. operating machinery, open traps, etc. According to this regulation and the rules of the Festival, these elements are therefore not allowable for use in the Festival

Ladder

1. Select the proper ladder for the intended use
2. Inspect all ladders prior to every use to ensure structural integrity. Damaged or defective ladders should be removed from service
3. Use ladders on firm, level surfaces. Stabilize the base of the ladder to prevent slipping and/or moving. Ensure ground surfaces, rungs and steps are clear of slippery substances
4. Keep the base of the ladder clear for access and for traffic control. When necessary, use cones, tape, or a spotter to secure high traffic areas
5. Do not leave tools or materials on top of any ladder. Ensure personal tools are secure when climbing ladders
6. Straight or extension ladders should be installed on a 3:1 or 4:1 slope, e.g. one foot out at the base, for every four feet up
7. When working above three metres (10 ft), secure the ladder. The top of a straight or extension ladder should be secured to an independent anchorage to prevent lateral movement
8. Independent fall arrest is necessary when using a ladder as a workstation above three metres. This includes rolling A-frame ladders.
9. Always face the ladder when climbing up or down. Always maintain 3-point contact and avoid reaching beyond the side-rails of the ladder
10. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations to determine which rungs of the ladder are appropriate to work from
11. Ladders made of non-conductive material should be used while working around energized wiring and equipment
12. Never use ladders horizontally as scaffold planks or runways, unless they have been designed for that purpose

Appendix C – AWARDS MATRIX

Number of Productions entered	Outstanding Production Awards	Awards of Excellence	Stage Management Awards	Awards of Merit (Maximum)
25+	5*	20	1	25
24	4*	20	1	24
23	4*	19	1	23
22	4*	18	1	22
21	4*	17	1	21
20	4*	16	1	20
19	4*	15	1	19
18	4*	15	1	18
17	4*	14	1	17
16	4*	13	1	16
15	4*	12	1	15
14	4*	11	1	14
13	4*	10	1	13
12	4*	9	1	12
11	3*	9	1	11
10	3*	8	1	10
9	3*	6	1	9
8	3*	5	1	8
7	2	5	1	7
6	2	4	1	6
5	2	3	1	5
4	1	3	1	4
3	1	2	1	3

* Pending Regional availability

Appendix D – STAGE MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT FORMS

Stage Management Award - Check List Part "A"													
Student's Name _____ School _____													
Criteria	Comments	Poor					Excellent						
1		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Demonstrates that they have done the homework and have a good working knowledge of the theatre space													
2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Establishes a good working relationship with the host venue staff. (i.e. Can they name the theatre's technical staff when communicating? Do they say 'please' and 'thank you'?)													
3		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
The Stage Manager is well-versed when Ensemble members or Festival Staff have questions about:	Properties												
	Spiking of Set Elements												
	Costumes												
	Required Paperwork												
	Lighting Cues												
Sound Cues													
4		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Has cast and crew ready to come onstage when technical rehearsals start													
5		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Organizes placement of furniture and props or oversees a crew member to ensure this is done correctly													
6		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Has practicals tested and ready to go. Has tested sound cues before house opens. Has made sure lighting specials are still focused													
7		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Times the run-through													
8		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Takes notes for the Director													
9		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Informs theatre staff of the needs of the production and politely follows through to ensure those needs are met													
10		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Has the play's set in place within the 10 minute set up time													
11		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Has the set cleared within the 5 minute strike time													
12		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Has actors in places when the House Manager gives them the house													
13		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Calls the show													
14		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Checks to make sure no members of their Ensemble leave personal or show items behind													
15		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Ensures dressing rooms are left neat and tidy													
16		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Actively participates/oversees the load in/load out of the Ensemble's van or truck													
SUBTOTAL MARKS							/160						

Stage Management Award - Check List Part "B"

General Impression Marks

Student's Name _____ School _____

This section allows for the evaluator to consider the Candidate's instinctive qualities as a Stage Manager. The final mark totals the marks from both Part A and Part B. Please rate the candidate on the following criteria. These marks are worth four times the marks in Part A.

Criteria	Comments	Poor										Excellent									
1		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10										
Assumes Responsibility: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Realizes that the bulk of responsibility for the smooth running of the rehearsal process and the show's performance rests on their shoulders. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remembers that responsibilities can and should be shared with their assistants <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are they self-motivated and are they able to motivate others in the Ensemble																					
2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10										
Stays Calm: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Never loses their temper, especially in front of the cast and theatre personnel <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintains a professional attitude at all times: remaining loyal to all aspects of the production and never gossiping about their company. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remembers that they are privy to many discussions that are not for the entire Ensemble to hear. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remembers to always add 'please' and 'thank you' to every conversation they have, and shows respect to other Ensembles and teachers																					
3		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10										
Demonstrates that they are organized, efficient and observant: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Always has paperwork ready, props gathered, is well-organized, always ready for the unexpected and always ready for what is to happen next <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do they demonstrate that they have good listening skills																					
4		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10										
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To what degree is the Stage Manager REALLY running the show (as opposed to the teacher)																					
SUBTOTAL MARKS		/40																			
FINAL MARK (Part A + Part B)		/200																			