



**DANCE IRELAND**

# **Producer Toolkits**

## Outside the Studio





TOOL KIT

# Compiling a Production Pack

The what, why, who and  
how of Production Packs

# About

- The Outside the Studio programmes are part of Dance Ireland's support for artists to further develop skills and knowledge to build and enhance their career, beyond the creation of work.
- In Autumn 2020 Dance Ireland appointed international dance and theatre producer [Gwen Van Spÿk](#) as our Producer in Residence. This three-year initiative started at a timely moment for the dance sector, and our Members, as we worked collectively to recover from the impact of Covid-19, future proof and evolve our practice.
- From Autumn 2020 to 2023, Gwen led a programme of masterclasses, exchanges, support sessions and the Evolve producing programme for the dance sector in dialogue with Dance Ireland. This activity provided an opportunity to explore producing culture within the dance ecology in Ireland while connecting dance artists and producers and provide opportunities to develop skills in practical aspects of self-producing for artists. These [toolkits were developed](#) as part of this programme.

# Please Note

- As we deal with the continuing changes in our sector, we recommend approaching these toolkits as flexible guidelines and principles to inform your work.

# How to use this Tool Kit

- This tool kit is designed to guide you through the process of compiling an effective Production Pack
- It's designed to help you provide presenters with the information they need to evaluate your project and its suitability for their programme.
- The contents of this Tool Kit are not fixed in concrete; it's a guide not a bible and as the operating context changes what you need to provide may also change.
- The kit aims to answer key questions that come up when artists and producers who have not created a pack before begin the process of compiling one.
- You can read from beginning to end, or dip into particular sections.

# What is a Production Pack?

A production pack is a clear and concise document that gives an overview of your production or show, including information on:

- you, the company and/or key artists involved
- the art/show/production
- technical and logistics needs
- any access needs
- marketing information
- financial information
- contact details

# Why make a Production Pack?

## *To*

- Help promote your show to potential presenters and partners
- Enable presenters to know if your work is suitable for their venue and their programme
- Begin to establish key information to be contained in potential future contract(s) between you and presenters / venues.

## *Plus*

- Help you to establish and understand the needs of your show.

# What should a Production Pack include? (1)

- A production pack may be the first thing that a presenter will see of you and/or your work
  - Make sure it represents you well and accurately
- Presenters are busy and receive many tens of proposals, packs and invitations each day
  - Keep yours simple, factual, easy to navigate, comprehensive and to the point.



# What should a Production Pack include? (2)

## Suggested contents/sections:

1. Summary introduction (see slide 12)
2. About the lead artist/company and key collaborators (see slide 13)
3. About the Work (see slide 14)
4. Technical rider (see slide 15 & 16)
5. Access Rider if relevant (see slide 17)
6. Engaging the Public (see slides 18 and 19)
  - audiences the work is suitable for
  - A summary of key selling points
  - The marketing assets you can provide to market the show
  - any wrap around activities you can deliver
7. Financial info (see slide 20)
  - Fees and/or financial arrangements you are able to offer/work to.
8. Contact details for further information, including website. Include contact info for Lead Artist/Company Producer and Production Manager

# Who is the Production Pack for?

- The person curating the venue season programme or festival programme
  - They will want to know how your production/show complements and/or adds value to their plans and vision for their programme
  - Each venue and/or festival programme has its own distinct character. Make sure there is a good fit between your production, and the people you are sending the pack to.
- The technical/production manager of the venue or festival
  - To establish that the venue has the technical capability to present your show
- The marketing lead of the venue or festival
  - To establish if the audiences you are wanting to target are within the venue's reach and if the assets you are offering are appropriate.

# Who is the Production Pack created by?

Ideally your production pack is co-written by the people with the detailed and up to date knowledge of the content in each section:

- The lead artist and/or company producer
  - To generate/compile the information for sections 1,2,3,5,6,7.
- The Production Manager
  - To generate/compile the Technical Rider/section 4
- The Marketing Associate/or Producer
  - To generate/compile the information in section 6

# Section 1: Introduction

An enticing 150 words summarizing you and the work you are proposing:

- Key information about you / the lead artist / producing company
- What the work is i.e. type of work, what it is about, who it is for.
- How it can add value to the presenter's programme of work.
- When it is happening/available.

## Section 2: About You

- *Short* biogs for lead artists and key collaborators/ contributors, include:
  - recent/noteworthy information
  - relevant, attributed, press, expert, or audience quotes
  - links to websites, additional info.

## Section 3: About the Work

- Description of the work: max 250 words
- Link to trailer and full-length video if available
  - Trailer should be between 90 – 180 seconds.
  - If not available – say when they will be/and provide links to other relevant work, explain why it is relevant.
- Factual info about the work:
  - Genre
  - Duration
  - Scale
- Type of venue/context it is for e.g: black box studio or a particular type of space?
  - If its site specific – know exactly what kind of space/site you are needing and elaborate on this in the tech info/section 4.
- When it is/will be available to present/tour
- Use quotes if you have/can get them from press, other presenters, audience, 'experts' + inks to full length reviews
- Include 1 or 2 good quality production image (and a link to more)
  - If the work does not exist yet include a link to drawings of set, costume or append/link a pin-interest type document of relevant references
- Mention if any partners and/or funding secured or applied for.

## Section 4: Technical Info (1)

Provide outline information giving an overview of the technical specification of the work

- what you/the company will provide re: equipment/technical resources
- what you need the venue/festival to provide provide re: equipment/technical resources
- Its important to know/understand what are the non-negotiables in your spec and to make sure these are clearly noted **and/or** highlight anything distinctive you are providing that will relieve pressure on the venue
- Append a full rider or include a link to where it can be accessed on-line/downloaded

## Section 4: Technical Info (2)

- How long is the get in?
- Dimensions of the space required
- Size of cast/tech team
- Is a dance floor required?
- No. of required dressing rooms
- How is the music presented: playback or live music?
- Requirement for a projector or other specialist equipment?
- Are children involved?
- Is there a live animal onstage?
- Will you provide a technician(s)
- A couple of sentences on sound/lighting/set
- Anything else that a venue should know about from the outset
- Running time of the show
- Any cautions? Minimum Age

E.g. Company brings its own  
dance floor/ projector/desk



## Section 5: Access Rider

To enable presenters to meet any particular needs or access requirements that you have, make sure you include or append an Access Rider.

- See separate Tool-Kit/Workshop
- <http://alexandrinahemsley.com/resources/access-rider-open-template/>

# Section 6: Engaging the Public (1)

## Wrap- Around Activities

Summarise any learning, public engagement or professional development activities that you can offer alongside the production:

- Participatory workshops or residencies
  - Who for: age, skill level etc.. ?
  - What are they about
    - thematic/issue based and/or about developing technical skills?
  - Where can/do they take place: in the venue or elsewhere?
  - How long are they?
  - How many per day? Can they be on the day of the show before or after?
- Pre–Show or Post-Show talks
  - Who is involved from the company, or can you involve a relevant expert?
  - Who will facilitate the talk, is there an 'expert' who would add value?
  - What are they about?
  - Who are talks targeted at?

# Section 6: Engaging the Public (2)

## Marketing Information

Help the venue understand your show and decide if they can attract relevant audiences.

- Who is/are the audience(s) you are targeting?
- How/why does your show speak to that audience (Women's groups, YouthGroups, Active Retirement, etc.)

## Outline the marketing assets you can provide?

- Promo video
- Publicity and production images
- Social media accounts and content
- Content for print or digital display (posters, flyers)
- Merchandise (t shirts, souvenir programme)
- Mailing lists (your database)

## Section 7: Financial Info

Provide sufficient info to give the presenter/reader confidence that you know, and have, the info that they need regarding what you need to achieve financially.

Indicate if you are looking for:

- **Guarantee:** You can indicate that your requested guarantee is between €X and €Y depending on venue capacity and that you will take into consideration the venue/festival operating context.
  - It's helpful to show you can be responsive and are open to negotiation, but know your bottom line.
- **Box office split**
- There can be an deal/arrangement that is a composite of a guarantee and a split, first call/second call etc...
- **Venue hire**

# Things to do & things not to do when compiling a Production Pack

## Do

- Include obvious information!
- Present information clearly: keep it simple but punchy!
- 4 pages is a good length.
- Provide a Contents page: guide people to the information they want to know about.
- Include technical requirements: there are always technical requirements (or limitations!) They might be logistical rather than equipment related. Even work with one performer presented outside will have requirements.
- Share a draft with other people to get their feedback.
- Proof-read it.
- Include images: dance is visual – use images to inspire bit images can make packs heavy and distract from the key information so maybe provide a link to a larger selection. Overlay text on an image if you can, to make effective use of space. [Canva](#) is a super useful app for doing your own layouts and design.

## Don't

- Assume
- Give people too much to read.

# Distributing your Production Pack

## What Format?

- Typically, packs are a PDF file that you can send as an e-mail attachment, no more than 10MB. If your work suggests another format is better, please use it, so long it can convey the suggested information.

## Who to?

- Do research to compile your own mailing list of appropriate presenters with whom you'd like to talk to about presenting your work
  - up to date, accurate contact names and addresses
  - Review the website and recent programmes and season brochures of targeted presenters to
    - make sure your work is a good fit with their vision and approach
    - The venue/festival is likely to have the technical capability to present your work
- Plan to send out between 4 – 12 presenters via email

## When to send?

- Presenters typically programme 12 – 18 months in advance, send packs in good time to be considered for inclusion in a programme/season when your work/tour will be ready.

# Terminology (1)

## General terms

- **Presenters:** Collective name for Venue Directors, Festival Directors, Artistic Directors
- **Pitch:** outlines of an idea for your show or event.

## Tech Terms

- **One day get-in:** setting up, tech and performance in same day
- **Two day get-in:** as above spread across two days with show on the end of the second day
- Pre rig
- Bare hire

## Financial terms

- **Guarantee:** where the venue will pay you a set fee no matter how many audiences turn up, but they will keep all of ticket sales revenue
- **Box office split:**, where ticket sales revenue is split between the company/artist and the venue. This can range from 50/50 to 80/20. There are others...
- There can be an deal/arrangement that is a composite of a guarantee and a split, first call/second call etc.
- **Venue hire** this is where you take on the costs of the venue /space and of marketing the show, but you'll keep the ticket sales.

# Examples of Production Packs

- Click link below
- [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7vco4gkzudopde8/AAANd\\_DSjeuWj1NBgt1PzdZ\\_a?dl=o](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7vco4gkzudopde8/AAANd_DSjeuWj1NBgt1PzdZ_a?dl=o)
- Please note some of these examples are deliberately flawed. They are included for illustrative purposes only.





**DANCE IRELAND**

# **Supporting the Development of Dance & Dance Artists in Ireland**

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