DENVER FRINGE FESTIVAL

2026 HANDBOOK

Welcome to the 7th annual Denver Fringe Festival, June 3-7, 2026! Please read this handbook carefully before you apply and feel free to reach out with questions to info@denverfringe.org.

ABOUT THE FRINGE

The Denver Fringe Festival is an annual open-access performing arts festival and like all Fringe festivals around the world we are set up to support independent artists. The Denver Fringe Festival is non-juried and non-curated. If we have more applicants than we can accommodate we hold a lottery and implement a waitlist. We review all applications strategically to be able to support as many productions as possible.

The Denver Fringe provides opportunities for performers to bring new work to audiences by providing venues, tech and FOH personnel at each venue, ticketing, and promotion of the festival. We believe in making the arts more accessible to all - both performers and audience members. Our goal is to keep the cost of participation low and ticket prices accessible.

WHAT WE PROVIDE

- performance venues for tech rehearsals and the days of the festival
- basic sound and lighting equipment at the venues
- tech and front of house personnel at the venues
- ticketing through our website and walk-up ticketing at the venue
- volunteer staff to take tickets and manage audiences
- publicity and promotion of the Denver Fringe Festival
- panel discussions, meetups, workshops and other community-building events

WHAT WE DON'T PROVIDE

- rehearsal space
- costumes, props or set pieces
- all lighting and sound options for technically complicated shows
- crew to set up or strike your show
- guaranteed storage for set pieces, props or costumes at the venues
- publicity and promotion of your show beyond the website
- guaranteed audience numbers

WHAT IS A FRINGE SHOW?

Denver Fringe shows must be:

- original work
- between 45-60 minutes
- designed with simplified tech
- safely and effectively performed in a modest playing space
- one of the following categories: burlesque, cabaret, circus, clown, comedy, dance, devised, drag, kids theatre, immersive theatre, improvisation, magic/illusionism, musical theatre, physical theatre, puppetry, solo performance, spoken word, storytelling, theatre.

If it's not listed, reach out and let us know what you have in mind.
Please note: you may only apply with one show. If you have performed at a previous Denver Fringe Festival, you must apply with a different show.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be submitted between December 15, 2025 and February 1, 2026 along with your non-refundable $25 application fee. We welcome all work in the categories listed whether it is a premiere or has been performed elsewhere, and we understand that your performance may still be in development at the time you apply. We welcome national and international performers, but we reserve a percentage of performance slots for Colorado artists.

We ask that you apply with a stand-alone solo performance of at least 45 minutes or a group show that meets our requirements. If you don't have a stand-alone show and if you wish to explore the potential of being placed into a show as a solo performer, please email us at info@denverfringe.org.

If you are applying with a family-friendly production for our KidsFringe please keep in mind we look for kids shows that are between 30-45 minutes.

****When completing the online application: please prepare your application responses in a document you've saved in case you encounter a problem when submitting online.****

We'll inform you by March 1 if you've been accepted or placed on a waitlist. To participate you must submit the Production Contract and Liability waiver and pay production fees by March 15, 2026.

PERFORMANCE VENUES

We will provide a variety of performance spaces in and around the Five Points/RiNo Art District area and a few satellite venues. Many of our venues are not traditional theater spaces. All venues will have sound and lighting options, some more limited than others, and *we strongly encourage technical simplicity in productions*. If you have a site-specific production, please apply with a proposed location. While we can't guarantee your first choice, you'll be asked in your application to select your preference from the following venue options:

TIER I VENUE	Seating capacity 100-250	More comprehensive lighting options; can accommodate aerial rigging	$500
TIER II VENUE	Seating capacity 65-100	Fairly comprehensive lighting options	$350
TIER III VENUE	Seating capacity 35-65	More limited lighting options	$250
BYOV Bring Your Own Venue		For site-specific productions or if you wish to make your own arrangements with a venue in the Five Points area. Venue must be pre-approved by DFF and you must provide your own tech.	$150

PRODUCTION FEES

Production fees range from $150-$500. Our goal is to provide a variety of venues to accommodate everyone who applies. In the application you'll be asked to select your preference of venue type and number of performances. Once notified of your acceptance to the festival we will assign you to a specific venue and the number of performances will be finalized with the performance schedule.

SCHOLARSHIPS

As part of our efforts to encourage access a diversity of voices at the Denver Fringe, we are offering a limited number of scholarships to cover production fees for performers from historically marginalized or underrepresented communities. To inquire about this option, please email us at info@denverfringe.org.

ACCESSIBILITY

If anyone on your team has specific disability-related needs, please let us know in your application so we can take that into consideration when placing you at a venue.

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

All performers will be asked to submit complete information about their show by April 1 including title, brief description, full description, cast and crew bios, images, link to trailer (optional but encouraged). These materials will be used for performer pages on our website, in the festival program, and may be used in press releases and for promotion of the Denver Fringe Festival.

WHAT TO EXPECT

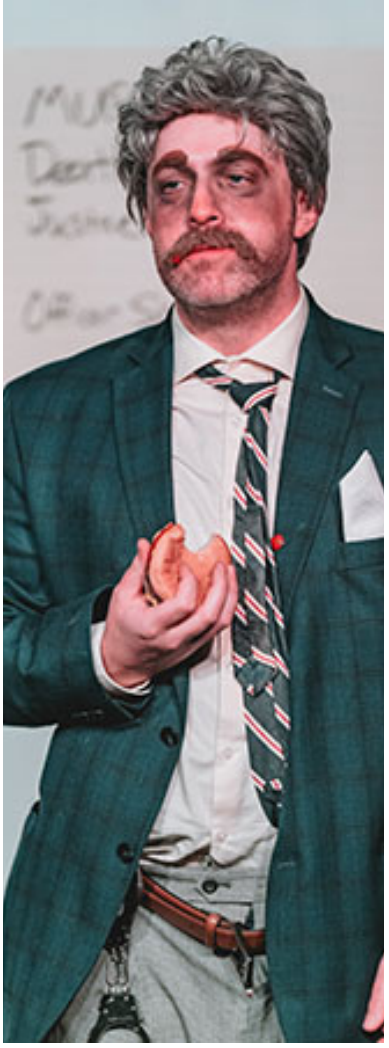
The performance schedule will be released to participating artists by May 1 and will include your assigned venue and final performance schedule. You'll get:

- 1-3 performance time slots on a rotating schedule at the same venue throughout the festival
- a venue guide describing the space and the audio equipment and lighting options that will be available to you
- basic lighting and sound system that will be shared by all performers (no advanced tech)
- tech personnel to run sound and lights for your production, plus a short tech rehearsal (most no longer than one hour)
- full ticketing and front of house management as well as advance ticket sales online
- listing of your show in our festival program, on our website, and social media
- artist badges that allow you and your core team to see other productions at the festival for free
- 70 percent of net box office for your performances, paid within four weeks of the festival

WHAT'S EXPECTED OF YOU

We ask that you:

- Sign a Denver Fringe Artist Agreement and Liability Waiver
- Submit all required material and fees on time
- Secure the rights to all music or artwork used in your production
- Actively promote your own show in any or all of the following ways: press releases, Instagram, Facebook, FB events, posters, postcards or flyers, busking, email and word of mouth
- Design your show so that it can be set up and struck in no more than 15 minutes to allow for a quick changeover between shows
- Adhere to the performance schedule and your assigned time slots
- Inform the Denver Fringe Festival no later than April 15 if you have to withdraw from the festival



IMPORTANT DATES

Application window opens: December 15, 2025
Application window closes: February 1, 2026
Performer confirmation letters sent: March 1, 2026
Signed contract, liability waivers, and production fees due: March 15, 2026
Production information submitted: April 1, 2026
Performance schedule set: April 15, 2026
Tech rehearsals at venues: June 2-4, 2026
Dates of festival: June 3-7, 2026

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Before applying, please also read our performer FAQ.

FOR OUT OF TOWN PERFORMERS

For planning purposes, if accepted you should plan on being in Denver from June 3 through June 8. Our opening night party on June 3 will be a ticketed event and will offer an opportunity for all performers to do a "speed preview" of their show. If you're interested in being hosted by a community member we will try to connect you with a host.

FOR LOCAL PERFORMERS

We are expanding our programming to include year round events for the local creative community including networking, workshopping and performance opportunities. Check for upcoming events here.

THE FINE PRINT

The Denver Fringe Festival has the right to photograph or video your production for marketing or archival purposes. All information in this handbook is subject to change; we will notify applicants of any changes. If you have any questions about the application process or how the festival works, please feel free to contact us at info@denverfringe.org.