



SPILL | OPEN
TOOLKIT

A PRACTICAL GUIDE
TO SUPPORT YOU
IN MAKING NEW WORK

MADE + PRODUCED BY
PACITTI COMPANY



SPILL | OPEN TOOLKIT

CONTENTS

WELCOME _____	03
ABOUT THE SPILL OPEN _____	04
ABOUT PACITTI COMPANY + SPILL FESTIVAL _____	05
SPILL OPEN SELECTION PROCESS _____	06
A PROJECT PLANNING METHOD _____	07
TIPS ON WRITING A STRONG APPLICATION _____	09
A SUCCESSFUL SPILL APPLICATION _____	10
HOW TO PLAN A FUNDING BID _____	12
TYPES OF FUNDING _____	15
MARKETING + PROMOTION _____	18
RESOURCES + LINKS _____	21

WELCOME

SPILL is an international festival of contemporary arts and activism, presenting the work of exceptional artists from around the globe. Developed by Pacitti Company and supported by Jerwood Charitable Foundation and Arts Council England, the SPILL OPEN is aimed at early makers and more experienced artists whose practices may have been overlooked or put on hold for some time, regardless of age, working in between or across forms, with something meaningful to say. It offers 20 opportunities for exceptional artists or groups to present work as part of SPILL Festival this Autumn. We aim to support makers whose work is grounded in generosity – generous to audiences, to peers and to broad cultural dialogues.

As well as information about the **SPILL OPEN**, this toolkit includes advice on what makes a successful application for financial support or opportunities to present, some practical advice on project planning, some ideas on how to promote your work, plus links to some useful online resources. If you decide to apply for the **SPILL OPEN** please be sure to read this toolkit, to stand the very best chance of making a successful application.

Thank you for considering SPILL an appropriate place for your work and on behalf of everyone at Pacitti Company and SPILL, we hope you find this toolkit useful.

Robert Pacitti
SPILL Festival

ABOUT THE SPILL OPEN

The **SPILL OPEN** is for artists of any age, based anywhere, undertaking considered formal experimentation or investigation through research, exploring meaningful ways of looking or thinking about the world and how we are in it together. We are also keen to hear from people developing new forms tailored to the needs of kids or teenagers.

Applications are welcome from makers working with, across or in between:

- Activist Actions
- Cabaret + Club Arts
- Craft + Folk Methods
- Digital
- Experimental Theatre
- Film + Video
- Heritage + Place
- Installation
- Live Art + Performance
- Museum Collections
- New Dance
- Science + Social Sciences
- Sound + Music
- Spoken Word
- Street Art
- Text
- Visual Art
- Walking

Each artist or company selected for the SPILL OPEN will receive support totaling £2000

- A fee of £750
- A contribution towards travel
- Accommodation at the festival
- Per diems
- A package of producing, technical and marketing support
- High quality photographic and video documentation plus inclusion in SPILL TV

To apply for the SPILL OPEN visit spillfestival.com and complete the online form. The deadline for applications is 12 noon on Wednesday 4 April 2018.

ABOUT PACITTI COMPANY

SPILL Festival is produced by Pacitti Company, an arts charity based in Ipswich in the east of England. We create art, we make the SPILL Festival of Performance and we run events, groups, and courses from our Think Tank studio building. Drawing on a background of punk, activism, fine art and club land, Pacitti Company formed in 1990 then spent 20 years making and presenting award winning performance works worldwide. We approach performance making as investigation through research, blending formal disciplines and techniques with social sciences and personal politic. This bespoke process enables us to serve diverse local, regional, national and international audiences. Our work now spans a range of areas, from creating live and screen based works, to making the SPILL Festival, running the Think Tank and partnering with lots of other folk to make it all happen.

Find out more at pacitticompany.com

ABOUT SPILL FESTIVAL

The SPILL Festival of Performance is an international festival of contemporary arts and activism. Created in 2007 by artist Robert Pacitti and produced by Pacitti Company, SPILL presents the work of exceptional artists from around the globe, featuring live performance, sound + music, film + video, plus projects exploring heritage + place. The festival is for anyone interested in the arts, people that might not think they are, and kids + families. Large scale SPILL Festivals have taken place across London in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015 and across Ipswich in 2012, 2014 and 2016. The SPILL Festival of Performance 2018 is themed ON TIME.

Find out more at spillfestival.com

SPILL OPEN SELECTION PROCESS

The SPILL OPEN is an opportunity to showcase work to an audience made up of national and international presenters, other artists, members of the public, and to be part of a community of artistic peers attending the wider festival together.

In addition to the SPILL OPEN call out, we are asking a network of about 50 artists and presenters to make recommendations of artists they feel might benefit from this opportunity. Recommended artists will then be encouraged to apply, but they are not given any special priority over other applicants during short listing.

All applications will be read by us here at Pacitti Company and a recommended shortlist shared with a group of selected advisors for their opinions, including people from Jerwood Charitable Foundation and invited artist peers. This process is being run by SPILL's Director Robert Pacitti, SPILL's Senior Producer Lauren Church, and SPILL OPEN's Project Manager Rhiannon Wilkins.

Based on previous experience of running the SPILL National Platform, we estimate that we'll receive a high number of applications. Please do not apply for SPILL OPEN just because it is another opportunity doing the rounds. There are lots of other strong and appropriate contexts for live art, dance, theatre and site-specific work out there. If you are unsure whether your work is new or experimental, ask peers, research what has gone before, and then look again at whether applying for this high visibility opportunity is right for you at this time.

A PROJECT PLANNING METHOD

Here is a project planning method that we find useful at Pacitti Company. Start with a good idea and then follow these 5 key stages to plan effective delivery.

1. DEFINE

- Write down the various aims and objectives of your project, however disparate.
- Go through each element to re-draft and refine until you feel it is clear.
- Then create a single definitive document which concisely describes these aims.

2. PLAN

- Using post-it notes, brainstorm every task that you need to undertake to achieve each of your objectives.
- On a large sheet of paper write out key areas of project operation (i.e. hands-on making, technical, project management, funding, marketing etc.).
- Cluster the post-it notes around the key areas they correspond to.
- Draw lines to show the links between tasks and key areas (some tasks might be linked to more than one area).
- Then write up all the tasks you've identified for each key area.
- Number the tasks in order of urgency to establish the order of tasks – this is your skeleton project plan.

3. BUDGET

- Consider and list the budget needed for the project.
- Are there resources which can be provided in kind?
- Does there need to be a Plan B contingency budget for the project?

A PROJECT PLANNING METHOD (CONTINUED)

4. ALLOCATE

- In a new document list the key stages which are required to complete the project.
- Work through and note down what resources are needed for each, and what is available.
- Review all of this information and look for any gaps or overlaps.
- Are you making any assumptions, such as securing funding or venue confirmation?
- If so, highlight these.

5. SCHEDULE

- Work the key stages into your skeleton plan to create a week by week calendar of tasks against key stage dates,.
- Reallocate tasks if need be.

This will now provide you with a robust project plan to work from and to share with others as need be.

TIPS ON WRITING A STRONG APPLICATION

We receive lots of strong applications and shortlist work we feel is the best fit with SPILL. Some applications really stand out, and time and again the reasons are the same: clarity of thought, using plain English and straight forward writing, no complex jargon, understanding a match with our aims, and having a great idea for something that feels urgent now. Reasons for applications not making it through include work that isn't ready, applicants that tell us how innovative and new they are when the idea or form isn't, complicated theories that aren't backed up by practical explanations of what we might see, unrealistic technical needs, half-completed forms, or plain opportunism.

- Let the reader know what makes you tick
- Tell it straight and keep the language simple
- Keep it real - honesty always shines through
- Don't just apply for the sake of it - mean every word
- Be realistic - is there enough money to make it?
- Be brief where you can, like it or not this is a sell
- Crazy fonts and coloured inks do not work
- Edit, check, check it again - it's your reputation
- Trust the reader is an expert and don't patronise
- Aggression never works, nor does self-pity
- Have faith in yourself - if you believe it we will
- Only submit good images, poor ones fail you
- Do some research - is your idea really new?
- Be brave, take a risk, put something at stake
- Frame your own practice meaningfully - why you?
- Describe the making process - what will you do?
- Describe the outcome clearly - what will we get?

A SUCCESSFUL SPILL APPLICATION

The following are real answers given to two questions on a 2016 SPILL application from an artist who was selected.

Q: PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF:

"As a person I have quite a gentle and optimistic sensibility, often choosing to focus on the more positive elements of day to day life. My work is very much an opportunity for me to explore this optimism upside down, presenting works that are constructed around images of violence, hopelessness or imbalance and seeking to probe and challenge them for some kind of catharsis or more profound understanding. Creating performance that is highly politicised and aggravated, before attempting to rediscover or reach some kind of outcome with the audience.

My practice is fully inclusive and embraces strongly feminist and queer perspectives, using them as core tenets for my performance work. My practice is also based around the body – informed by practices such as contemporary dance, butoh, and of course performance art. I view each piece as a refined chaos, a deliberate and tightly choreographed madness.

I make the work that I make because I feel strongly that it exposes themes/ideas/concepts that need to be seen - to be experienced. People need to be presented with something raw and live and challenging, instead of being distracted and subdued by online entertainment. I also attempt to make work that can be accessed by anyone and everyone – performance and art should not be insular forms, they should have the potential for real connection and communication with anyone."

A SUCCESSFUL SPILL APPLICATION (CONTINUED)

Q: WHY IS THIS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY NOW?

"SPILL Festival is critically important both for performance art and activism in the UK, providing a very real and high profile space for bold and radical ideas. For me to be able to present at such a platform would be enormous. On a very basic level, SPILL states that it is a festival displaying the work of 'early makers' and people at the beginning of their professional practice. This is me. And I feel very strongly that my work would be a fantastic fit with the festival.

I feel as an artist there is a substantial amount of risk in my work – risk that is vital to give the work charge and relevance – but also risk that discourages performance venues across the country from programming my work, especially in combination with my current position as a relatively recent graduate and unknown artist. The opportunity to perform at SPILL would give me access to the audiences I want to connect with without diluting politics or content, as well as the artists that I've begun to share space with. Previous performances at festivals including Buzzcut and Latitude have given me a foundation to build from, SPILL would allow me to continue this journey. Also with this particular piece in it's final stages of development ahead of a tour, this opportunity could seriously boost my work into other venues nationally – allowing me the potential to progress my career as an artist massively."

HOW TO PLAN A FUNDING BID

Before you start writing a funding application, plan it properly. The following are useful to think through when planning any project. Funding forms can have fixed word counts which prohibit including the level of detail you may hope to include. But knowing a project well before writing can help you distil your plans on the page. Check out our top tips across the next three pages to help you plan strong applications.

- Always think about your practice before you start thinking about funding.
- Are you, or your organisation, eligible to apply? Check through all the guidelines very carefully, making notes if helpful.
- Does your project fit within the eligibility criteria?
- Clearly address the aims of the fund. Write how these will be achieved, and the outcomes you can deliver.
- Do you know when you are going to start the project? Maybe including a timeline is helpful, for yourself and the funder.
- Do you know where you will carry out the project? Get that information in if you can – it demonstrates good planning.
- Have you considered what needs the potential funder has, and how you can meet those? Funding relationships are always two way.
- Have you asked anyone else if they think there is a need for your project? This might be peers or audiences. If so, say so.
- If you have involved anyone else in the planning of the project, write about it. It helps funders understand the way you work more.
- Demonstrate the need for the project, with up-to-date evidence if you can. Remember though, this can be sheer gut instinct on your part.

HOW TO PLAN A FUNDING BID (CONTINUED)

Calling the funder to talk about your project in advance of writing is always a good thing to do. Meeting in person is even better. Many sources allow you to do so. It saves time if the project isn't for them and enables you to be more targeted in your approach to them. It also means you are then on their radar if there is a good match between you.

- Do you know what resources you need to carry out your project? Have you mapped them all out, being sure to stay realistic?
- Have you fully costed your project? Are you able to pay yourself? If not, can you offset no pay against other gains? If not, why are you proceeding?
- Write individually and honestly. Funders read many applications so yours needs to stand out - don't use jargon or try to be too clever.
- Is match funding required? If so, remember that as well as cash, some funders allow you to also include support 'in kind' such as access to free space or kit, or even cost up your own unpaid time. Calculate it using a daily rate.
- Check which costs are eligible to ask for through the fund you're applying to. Be sure to match your ask to what's on offer.
- Ensure the budget is cost-effective and not wasteful. What do you really need to make it happen – what's the bottom line?
- Be realistic: don't promise more than the project can achieve.
- How will the project be sustained after the funding ends? Might you be able to tour it or show it again? Describe this - it makes funding an investment.
- Describe any financial procedures in place for running your project.

HOW TO PLAN A FUNDING BID (CONTINUED)

Strong bids almost always require you to have a great idea first, which then needs planning really thoroughly so it's robust, realistic and achievable. Write so that your aims are clear and your enthusiasm shines through.

- Does the project have an effective management structure? What are the safeguards? This is crucial to have in place for larger projects.
- Who will be responsible for project management? Funders want to know this.
- What will the differences be as a result of your project? If so, can you explain these differences and why they are important?
- What is the evaluation process you will use for your project? This is essential to plan for from the off - don't just think of evaluation as additional, but rather as a key aspect of your project planning.

AND REMEMBER:

- ✓ Always be completely professional in how you deal with funders: be polite, honest, punctual and pay attention to detail.
- ✓ Always keep your eyes open for all kinds of development opportunities and think about how they might work for you, your research, your practice and your project.
- ✓ Embrace fundraising - it can become a truly creative and inspiring aspect of your work.

TYPES OF FUNDING

Getting money can be difficult at the best of times, and experimental work is tough to fundraise for. Identifying a real match between yourself and the funder is crucial, as is ensuring each application is specifically targeted to the body you're approaching. Here are some different types of funding that might work for you:

ARTS COUNCILS

Arts Councils provide funding for individual artists and for companies. When applying, you will need to demonstrate why your work is important and how the public will benefit from your project. The Arts Council in England have a fast-track Grants For The Arts application scheme meaning that applications for less than £15,000 are now processed in six weeks. It is always best to meet with an officer before applying, although this is not always possible.

GOVERNMENT & LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Government and Local Authorities may also provide funding support in your area, particularly if you can express and deliver a social agenda that is part of their arts strategy through your project. Search online for your local strategy, note what they are looking to accomplish and try and arrange face to face contact with someone from the local Arts Development Team.

TRUSTS & FOUNDATIONS

Trusts and Foundations tend to provide funding for registered charities or groups with a constitution, but some may also provide support for individual artists. With these types of organisation it is important to remember that the money they award is private. You need to be respectful of this and build relationships with Trusts and Foundations that demonstrate clearly why your request is worth their support.

TYPES OF FUNDING (CONTINUED)

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

Corporate sponsorship is a commercial transaction between yourself and a company, where they give you cash in return for branding or logo placement. Companies may also provide donations or in-kind support to improve their image through philanthropy. The rules with corporate sponsorship differ from all other types of funding, because you are essentially in a commercial relationship. It is a highly competitive arena and almost always comes with strings attached. It is also advisable to think about any ethical implications of corporate sponsorship.

BURSARIES & DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Bursaries and development grants are sometimes available to develop your work and projects, especially for smaller amounts. Check out independent bodies such as the Live Art Development Agency and Artsadmin that offer this type of support for experimental work through bursaries or development schemes, such as DIY.

EARNED INCOME

Think of ways to sell your work that generate income, like charging for tickets. This may require some financial risk, so you have to consider the feasibility of supporting your project this way, but it's always useful to show income on a budget too, and not just expenditure.

RESEARCH & EDUCATION FUNDING

There are a number of funds available to support academic research and education. You will need to have a good academic track record and clear ideas of your research. Funding may also be available from charitable organisations and Trust funds for projects that support particular areas of learning or specific groups.

TYPES OF FUNDING (CONTINUED)

CROWD FUNDING

You don't need to know a millionaire donor to get money for your project. Many small donations can add up quickly and online sites such as Kickstarter are successful platforms to generate support. You need to offer something in this exchange— people will only support something they feel genuinely connected to.

IN-KIND SUPPORT

There are many areas where support can be provided in-kind. Some venues may provide you the space for free – either through goodwill, or being involved in the production process. There are a number of ways to exchange favours with your friends and peers in your community. This kind of support can be invaluable and it also builds stakeholder relationships with folk that support you.

MEMBERSHIP

If you have some form of company identity then it is worth exploring a membership scheme. This enables you to ask people to support your ongoing activity, rather than on a single project by project basis. There are lots of models available online of companies that offer membership schemes, with many starting from as little as a tenner a year, with no upper limit.

BROADEN YOUR OFFER

Explore what other opportunities your project might offer, over and above final performances of outcomes. Is there any potential to run workshops or other educational strands, to generate an income? Or maybe the work could serve a particular group other than arts attenders? What else have you got to share?

MARKETING & PROMOTION

Here are our top 10 tips on marketing your work to represent you and your practice well:

1. COPY

You will always need good copy about your projects and yourself. Prepare this carefully and make sure it is descriptive, honest and jargon-free. Avoid clichéd statements and never say you are 'the most innovative / radical / best thing since sliced bread'. There's lots of amazing work out there - respect that. Copy needs to say who you are, why you do what you do, and something that tells the reader what to expect. Have a range of different length copy options ready to go – prepare versions that are 50, 150 and 300 words.

2. IMAGES

If you submit images for anything being printed they need to be 300 dpi in size, or 72 dpi for online use. Only provide good images and always try to have both landscape and portrait shaped options available – you're less likely to see your treasured pictures cropped weirdly if you supply a range of options upfront.

3. WEBSITES

This is pretty obvious but a website is an extremely useful tool. They don't have to be complex or expensive and there are loads of really great ready made providers out there. Wordpress offers a range of adaptable website templates, Squarespace is easier to use if you don't work with code, whilst Weebly is pretty much 'drag and drop'. Keep content clear and make sure your contact details are easy to find.

MARKETING & PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

4. SOCIAL MEDIA

If used well then Facebook and Twitter are your own free PR tool. They are great for networking and help to give you context of what else is out there. But remember to engage your audience, and never just blind sell to them - it's not cool and tends not to work. These platforms are overloaded with folks sharing info, so it really is essential that you use them for long term audience development, not just a quick hit when you want bums on seats.

5. DOCUMENTATION

Prioritise documenting your work. It is always useful to have images and video to share with presenters but time and again planning good documentation gets left until last when making new work. Experienced presenters will be able to see past poor camera work, but invariably would choose to see something over nothing at all. It really can be the difference between getting a gig or not.

6. PRINT & DISTRIBUTION

There are varying opinions on whether producing print is useful these days. Only make posters, leaflets and catalogues if they are good quality and you have clear ways to distribute them. But decide on this carefully as they can be expensive and do not guarantee results. We offer particular caution around making expensive promotional packs to send out far and wide - we are inundated with them at SPILL but we rarely follow up on unsolicited materials. If you do decide to produce print, then be sure to know in advance what you plan to do with it and why. This should determine the amount of print you make and allow you to target it appropriately. A range of companies offer arts targeted distribution services, but you have to pay for them.

MARKETING & PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

7. BUSINESS CARDS

Cheap and easy to create, always carry a clutch of cards with your contact details on them. They should carry an email contact and web links to your work.

8. MEETINGS

Wherever possible try and get face to face meetings with presenters if you are serious about wanting to show your work in the context, venue or festival they facilitate. But be careful to read the signals someone gives off clearly – if they are not forthcoming they've probably decided there isn't a good fit, or their programme is already in place. We know it can be tricky to gauge these relationships and our best advice is to make yourself and your work known, then leave it for the presenter to follow up if they choose to.

9. CONNECT APPROPRIATELY

Using a presenter or funder's personal Facebook, mobile number or similar to connect when what you want from them is something professional can irritate and often doesn't go down well. Always use work email addresses or phone numbers when making initial contact.

10. NETWORKING

One of the best ways to promote your work is to view it as being part of something larger. Seek out opportunities to connect with others through artists' networks, professional development opportunities, and generally just getting out and about to see other artists' work and meeting folk. We cannot stress enough the potential of simply being yourself and letting the world know you're an artist. Be open to opportunities and trust your instincts.

RESOURCES & LINKS

Check out these useful resource links:

ARTSADMIN

London based Artsadmin produce artists' work and run an advisory service for practitioners. They offer an events programme at their base in Toynbee Studios, have bursary schemes and a great mailing list: artsadmin.co.uk

LIVE ART DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (LADA)

A one stop shop for advice, study and information on live art. Check out the Study Room - a free, open access research facility used by artists, students, curators, academics and other arts professionals. Keep an eye on their programmes and schemes such as DIY by joining their mailing list: thisisliveart.co.uk

LIVE ART UK

Live Art UK is a UK network of promoters and facilitators to support and develop a Live Art infrastructure for the benefit of artists and audiences: liveartuk.org

LIVE ART WORK

Live ArtWork is a great place to find out information on international performance resources. Sign up for the mail shots and make time for their extensive directory, covering venues, festivals and individual makers worldwide: liveartwork.com

PACITTI COMPANY

As well as making SPILL Festival, we also run a rolling programme of events and professional development activities out of our Think Tank building in Ipswich. Join our mailing list to keep up to speed with it all: pacitticompany.com



SPILL | OPEN TOOLKIT

IF YOU FOUND THIS TOOLKIT HELPFUL,
OR IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS FOR
OTHER STUFF WE COULD INCLUDE,
PLEASE LET US KNOW

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PACITTI COMPANY