

Request for Proposals

1.0 Introduction

Toronto Arts Foundation is seeking a consultant to conduct a research and evaluation study of two collaborative ventures in Toronto's theatre sector.

Why Not Theatre has created the Riser Project to foster collaboration and sharing of resources between small independent producers and larger theatre companies.

Small Theatre Administrative Facility (STAF) is changing directions by moving away from providing grant writing and marketing services and towards building skills and capabilities of independent theatre producers.

2.0 The Project

A consultant will be contracted to work with the two companies and stakeholders under the supervision of Toronto Arts Foundation. The two year research project will:

- document each initiative
- gather information from key stakeholders;
- analyze and synthesize data;
- evaluate project goals, impacts, and challenges;
- place the work within the larger context of performing arts research and shared platforms; and
- report findings, conclusions and recommendations
- develop a plan to disseminate the information.

The objectives of the project are to:

- offer program evaluation and recommendations to Why Not Theatre and STAF
- document lessons learned and outcomes for broader circulation
- support innovation, capture knowledge and share best practices.

Research findings will benefit Why Not Theatre and STAF, the larger performing arts community, and funders.

This research and evaluation project is made possible through a partnership between Toronto Arts Foundation and Metcalf Foundation. It will be administered by Toronto Arts Foundation.

3.0 Background

Why Not Theatre: Community Residency – The Riser Project

Founded in 2007, Why Not Theatre is a Toronto-based theatre company with an international scope. Under the Artistic Direction of Ravi Jain, Why Not has established a reputation as a company synonymous with inventive, experimental, cross-cultural collaborations resulting in shows featuring new Canadian writing, company-devised and site specific shows alongside revitalized interpretations of classics. Over the last 7 years we have developed over 12

productions, touring to 20 different cities on 4 continents. In recent years, the company has also become known for its presentation of international productions and workshops from diverse cultures and artistic practices, along with support for the development of local emerging artists and companies.

In order to create more access and opportunity for artists Why Not Theatre is working at innovating new ways of producing theatre in Toronto for independent artists. Their community residency brings together a community of senior leadership to support the artistic risk that independent artists must take in order to create new works. The model is designed to use existing infrastructures in order to let artists be artists and not primarily producers. The innovation is in a kind of collaboration that is founded on the ideas it takes a community to build a community.

The project's goal is to build a healthy performing arts ecology in Toronto. The senior partners of the 2015 round of productions are Necessary Angel, Nightwood Theatre, fu-GEN Theatre and Theatre Centre.

The project is supported through Toronto Arts Council's Open Door Program and Department of Canadian Heritage.

Small Theatre Administration Facility (STAF) – New Directions

STAF is undergoing a transformation that will allow it to stay committed to the long-term health and vitality of independent theatre while changing its mission to build the skills and capabilities of Toronto independent theatre artists.

This will require STAF to become a mentoring, teaching, and innovation incubator that empowers the next generation of indie creators. The measures of success will be related to how they contribute to the community by building long-term capacity and developing skills that artist/producers will apply to multiple projects.

At the core of this shift in mission is a belief STAF must move from producing and administrating for artists, to teaching and supporting artists to be cultural entrepreneurs. They will increase the capacity of independent theatre by giving artists the ability to create, produce, and be paid for their work. Practically speaking this means shifting from activities dedicated to providing subsidized administration to new activities including:

- **Living Wage Artist/Producer Training Program..** Focus of the program is new audiences and models in order to pay artists a living wage on indie projects. Some graduates will be producers for the sector; some will apply to their own work.
- **Co-Working and Hot Desks.** Inspired by the Centre for Social Innovation model this will incorporate 3 project-based annual companies who will call STAF a producing home for a year, as well as 3-month project-based hot desks for the indie community.
- **Workshops.** STAF will partner with Summerworks to create the SLIP Program as well as workshops led by resident companies and partnering with other community organizations like Fringe, Theatre Ontario and TAPA.
- **Online Innovation.** Performance-based organizations have specific needs related to online technologies. STAF will play a key role in online information and discussions, as well as act as coordinator and conduit between the artists and designer/developers required to build new tools.

STAF receives operating support from Ontario Arts Council and Toronto Arts Council.

Toronto Arts Foundation

Toronto Arts Foundation is a charitable organization that encourages artistic excellence and increases access to the arts throughout the City of Toronto. By supporting, celebrating, financing and advocating for Toronto's artists, we can improve the quality of life for all Torontonians. Toronto Arts Foundation Strategic Plan 2013-2016 sets out three strategies that reflect its vision, purpose and goals:

1. Connecting communities to the arts by leveraging Toronto Arts Foundation knowledge to direct artistic resources to priority areas of the city.
2. Turning up the spotlight on investment in the arts by developing Toronto Arts Foundation awards programs to draw attention to artistic excellence and engage private donors in focused financial support of the sector.
3. Giving a voice to the arts by strengthening the knowledge base of Toronto Arts Foundation and sharing knowledge with the broader community.

George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation

The goal of the George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation is to enhance the effectiveness of people and organizations working together to help Canadians imagine and build a just, healthy, and creative society. We advance innovative approaches to sustainability, equity, and creativity. We support our work in fostering sustainable communities by helping to create the conditions for innovation, risk-taking, collaboration, learning, and reflecting, and we support people and organizations with a range of perspectives to connect the dots across disciplines and sectors. Through Metcalf's Performing Arts Program, we support organizations and the people who work in them as they explore new strategies for addressing longstanding sectorial issues in meaningful new ways.

4.0 Scope of Work

The consultant will provide a detailed project plan and timeline which will include the following:

- Information gathering, stakeholder consultations
- Review of literature and comparable projects
- Analysis and evaluation of the two initiatives
- Documentation and reporting
- Dissemination of findings

5.0 Deliverables

The work will be disseminated locally, nationally and internationally. Resources should be useful and in accessible formats. Potential outputs include:

- Internal reports for each company
- Written report for larger circulation – on-line and print versions;
- Videos, blogs
- Creative responses to the research findings
- Compilation of resources on shared platforms

6.0 Project schedule

RFP Issued:	April 8, 2015
Proposals Due:	April 22, 2015
Interviews, selected Candidates:	April 23 – 28, 2015
Selection of Consultant:	April 30, 2015
Project Commencement:	May 1, 2015
Project Completion:	April 30, 2017

7.0 Budget

Please provide a complete budget, including:
Consultants' Fees broken down by time and deliverables

The budget for the consultants' fees has been set at \$17,500, exclusive of HST. If your proposed budget differs from this amount, please indicate which elements, if any, could be changed to meet this budget.

Additional expenses such as travel, meetings, materials, etc. will be approved separately and are not part of this budget.

8.0 Statement of qualifications

Please provide information about the consulting team including resumes, corporate profiles, and examples of comparable projects.

9.0 Evaluation of Bids

Bids will be evaluated based on:

- Consultant's analysis and understanding of project
- Consultant's proposed plan for the project
- Consultant's relevant experience
- Price

10.0 Contact Information:

For questions, please contact:

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Please submit completed proposal by email to margo@torontoartscouncil.org by 5:00 p.m. on April 22, 2015.