

TOP TIPS FOR OPEN- CALLS

Top Tips & Hints for Open
Calls
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RAZE
COLLECTIVE

Facilitated by Raze Collective
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In conversation with....
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THIS RESOURCE IS A SUMMARISED WRITTEN VERSION OF OUR AUDIO EPISODE “TOP TIPS FOR OPEN CALLS”.

CASSIE LEON & FRASERFAB, CREATIVE PRODUCERS, DISCUSS THEIR TOP TIPS AND HINTS FOR APPLYING TO OPEN CALLS. DRAWING ON THEIR PRODUCING PRACTICE AS WELL AS INDIVIDUAL ARTISTIC PRACTICE.

WE HOPE YOU FIND IT HELPFUL!

Please note: this is **general** advice for open call applications. Each application has different questions and focuses.

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT....

CASSIE LEON:

Cassie Leon is an arts and cabaret producer focusing on the experience and care of the QTIBPOC community working in live performance.

Her practice centres on ensuring the representation, inclusion and participation of marginalised people within arts and culture. She is interested in creating viable and sustainable opportunities, facilitating creative action and developing culturally rich experiences through live performance and documentation.

FRASERFAB:

fraserfab is a queer creative producer, multi-disciplinary artist, dancer & lecturer who works primarily in queer dance ecologies, artist development & LGBTQIA+ community support.

fraserfab is a creative producer of Raze Collective, a charity supporting queer performers & performance making in the UK. They are also cofounder of club night MIND UR HEAD, a queer dance platform & party, alongside dance artist Pierre.

Important Things to Remember When Applying for an Open Call?

- **Be clear to say what you do & what your project is:** For example, if you're applying to do a one-person show incorporating circus, theatre, and drag, make sure that's clearly stated within the first line. Often, key details such as **what is the actual art form(s)** are missed.
- **Take your time to read and understand the terms and conditions of the grant are.** For instance, is there a certain time frame the project has to happen in, is there a works-in-progress sharing date you already can't make or are you trying to apply with a live arts project for a digital arts open call?
- **Read, tailor and respond to the application's specific questions.** It's smart to reuse content from previous applications, but always ensure you're answering the specific questions they've asked as each application is different. You may have to shift focus to fit the specific criteria of the open call you're applying to.
- **Address the question directly:** Answer questions precisely and make the most of your word count. Avoid being vague and stay focused on what's being asked.

Important Things to Remember When Applying for an Open Call?

- **Avoid abstract language:** Be clear about your project and aims. Make sure your project is understandable and you're not too 'technical' language. The person reading your application might not be as familiar with your specific art form. Aim to make your application accessible to those who aren't experts in your craft.
- **Communicate the urgency and need of your project:** Frame your project in terms of why it needs to happen now. What is the story, perspective, or issue that makes this project timely and relevant? And why should it be **you** who leads this project?
- **Focus on specific actions:** Be specific about what you're doing and how it will impact your audience. This is where your personality and passion can shine. Explain what makes your project needed to help make it stand out.
- **Use alternative formats:** Some applications allow you to submit your application in alternative forms to written such as video or voice recordings. If you're more comfortable with these formats use them! If they aren't offered, ask who you're applying to if they have alternative formats.

Important Things to Remember When Applying for an Open Call?

- **Don't be afraid to use bullet points.** It is better to be clear and concise rather than waffling throughout a paragraph.
- **Ask for feedback if offered:** if given the opportunity, ask for feedback on your application. This can help you improve for next time.
- **Have a contingency plan:** Avoid writing & submitting your application close to your predicted project timeline. Plan ahead and include contingency plans in case things don't go as expected.
- **Remember you're building resilience:** Even if you don't get the open call, applying helps build resilience and familiarity with the process. It's a valuable experience in itself. Applications get less daunting with practice.
- **Use applications to clarify your vision:** Writing applications helps you hone in on your artistic practice, clarify your goals, and push your creative boundaries. Regardless of the result, view it as a tool for personal and professional development.

What to Look Out for When Applying for Open Calls

- **Test any tech submissions or uploads:** If you've been asked to upload photos or a video of an act double check that your upload or shared file has the correct sharing permissions. Depending on the number of applications an organisation receives they may not have capacity to chase everyone who has incorrect sharing permissions. If you know you find tech bits stressful, you can always follow up with an email to confirm your application was submitted correctly.
- **The word count:** It may be tempting to go beyond the word count to get your project across however try to stick to the word or character count provided. Avoid fluff or tangents. Alternatively, if you only have a sentence to write for many questions, is it the right open call application for you now?
- **Tone:** It's important that your voice and personality come through in your application. However you want to avoid sounding too casual, as if you're asking your friend for a favour.

What to Look Out for When Applying for Open Calls

- **Read the open call offer thoroughly:** demonstrating an understanding of the open call offer, expectations of your role and resources available to you is really important for you and the organisation reviewing your application.
- **What is the size and scale of the application?:** Applications take time and effort, so be mindful of how many you're applying for at once. Consider the scale of each application and the resources (time, energy, and labor) it requires.

Raze Collective is a charity established to support, develop and nurture queer performance in the UK. Through our queer-led, artist & community driven programme we curate innovative events & performance opportunities for queer creatives.

@razecollective

