

Call for Submissions // 2026

SummerWorks Performance Festival

We are now accepting applications for the 2026 SummerWorks Performance Festival, as well as future Festivals and other programming initiatives.

Scroll down to uncover more detailed information about SummerWorks, learn more about our Festival processes, and apply!

DEADLINE: November 5th, 2025 at 11:59 PM EST

APPLY NOW: <https://airtable.com/appEYksADf13xHvWK/pag08B0UxgmxXTvip/form>

SummerWorks expands the possibilities of performance.

We are thrilled to welcome project submissions for our next Festival: August 6 – 16, 2026 in Tkaronto (Toronto), Canada, as well as other year-round programming initiatives and presentation opportunities.

We are seeking proposals for contemporary performance projects that challenge disciplinary boundaries and engage with form and content in innovative and imaginative ways. We strongly invite inter- and multi-disciplinary experimentation.

Each year, SummerWorks presents:

- fully-developed performance works;
- works-in-process, at various stages of creative development;
- works that engage with public space; in outdoor settings and in alternative venues.

Proposals are encouraged from established and emerging creators working across all performance disciplines and artistic traditions. Works for in-person theatre, gallery,

outdoor, and non-traditional settings are welcome, as are proposals for online, site-specific, and immersive contexts.

All proposed works should have some previous research, creation, and/or presentation history, depending on the stage of development.

Projects curated from this Call will be provided a guaranteed fee of \$1,000 CAD to \$5,000 CAD (depending on the overall scale of the project and number of performances).

KEY INFORMATION

DEADLINE: November 5th, 2025 at 11:59 PM EST

APPLICATION: Online, via Airtable (below)

ACCESSIBILITY: If you require an alternative method for your submission, please contact submissions@summerworks.ca

NOTIFICATION: All applicants will be notified of curatorial decisions in *December 2025

*We anticipate a high volume of applications for this Call for Submissions, which will impact our timelines. All applicants will be notified of any shifts or changes via email.

ABOUT SUMMERWORKS

As an organization that brings together performance from across this land and beyond, we wish to acknowledge that SummerWorks takes place on the traditional territory, Tkaronto, “Where the Trees Meet the Water,” “The Gathering Place” of the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Haudenosaunee Peoples from the Six Nations Confederacy of the Grand River, and the Wendat, as well as many other

Nations who have cared for this land since time immemorial. We pay our respects to all our relations who have gathered and will continue to gather in this place.

OUR MISSION AND VISION

SummerWorks expands the possibilities of performance.

Founded in 1991, SummerWorks is a leader, collaborator and community builder at the forefront of contemporary performance – supporting bold artistic exploration, reflecting on critical questions, and presenting creative expressions from diverse artists that reflect the complexity of our society.

We collaborate with emerging and established artists and curators to explore new directions, experiment in form, and develop their professional capacities.

We curate, produce, and present programming that provokes, excites, and engages the public.

We cultivate and contribute to progressive practices that foster greater diversity, accessibility, equity, and sustainability across our sector.

We create networks and engage in creative exchange locally, nationally, and internationally.

OUR VALUES

Creative Risk

We support bold ideas and artistic experimentation, with space to innovate and be creatively adventurous – to try, to fail, and to succeed.

Connection and Collaboration

We prioritize ongoing dialogue and community gathering, to build trusting and reciprocal relationships that are generous and long-lasting.

Complexity and Difference

We work to hold dynamic perspectives and centre practices that are welcoming, equitable, and accessible – encouraging meaningful participation from different communities.

Curiosity and Flow

We stay reflective, nimble, and responsive – questioning and adapting to our community of artists and audiences, and to the land and water.

SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS

SummerWorks year-round programming and activities are generously supported by a variety of public and private sources. [Click here for a list of our current partners and supporters.](#)

KEY DATES

INFO SESSION:

- October 11th, 2025 // 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM
 - Zoom (ASL interpretation provided)
 - [**REGISTER HERE**](#)

In this session, Michael Caldwell, Artistic Director reviews the application materials and the overall curatorial process, responding to questions from online attendees. A recording will be made available after the event.

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Applicants may be contacted via email in November or December with questions about their submission, and possibly, to schedule a brief online meeting to follow-up on project proposals.

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FESTIVAL DATES: August 6 – 16, 2026

SUMMERWORKS MODEL & RESOURCES

Selected projects will be featured during the 36th SummerWorks Performance Festival: August 6 – 16, 2026, in Tkaronto (Toronto), Canada.

Additionally, artists may be considered for our Associate Artists program, and selected projects may be considered for future Festivals and other year-round programming initiatives.

SummerWorks supports artists and creative collaborators with production resources and professional development opportunities, while sharing their work with diverse communities of practice, dedicated and enthusiastic audiences, and industry professionals.

We provide mentorship and guidance for all productions in the Festival, so if an artist is unsure if something is possible, we encourage them to connect with us. We want to engage in big ideas and support artists' efforts to realize them, within our organizational capacity.

SummerWorks is a presenter, and not a commissioner or a producer of new work. In the context of the Festival, artists and creative collaborators are the producers and owners of their work.

Projects curated from this Call for Submissions will be provided a guaranteed fee of \$1,000 CAD to \$5,000 CAD (depending on the overall scale of the project and number of performances).

The guaranteed fee is a Presentation Fee provided for the performance(s) in the Festival. The guaranteed fees are based on industry recommendations from various organizations, including CARFAC, CAEA, and CADA East.

The Festival provides a robust framework, which includes a venue, select technical staff, an overall Festival lighting designer, Festival publicity and marketing, technical and performance scheduling, and box office, front-of-house, and volunteer coordination and management. SummerWorks does not provide a stage manager for any Festival projects, and it is expected that all artists include this role/position as part of their own creative team.

Selected projects are typically offered 1-3 performances/showings in a Festival venue or location. Short-form projects (40 minutes or less) are considered for presentation within shared double or triple bills, or as multiple shorter performances, providing the opportunity for audience cross-over and greater access and attendance. The number of performances/showings for outdoor, online, site-specific or site-responsive projects, immersive environments, as well as projects designed for a small audience capacity, will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

In addition to this overall project support, SummerWorks artists and creative collaborators also receive access to free professional development workshops, as well as discounted tickets and rates for all performances, events, and activities during the 11-day Festival.

ACCESSIBILITY

SummerWorks is committed to continually increasing accessibility for our artists and audiences. This includes extending accessibility practices throughout the entirety of artistic and administrative processes.

At present, our primary application method is online, via Airtable (below).

If you require an alternative method for your submission, please contact submissions@summerworks.ca

If you have any accessibility needs or requests during this submission process, or if you have a question about accessibility at the SummerWorks Performance Festival, please contact submissions@summerworks.ca.

We strive to go beyond the bare minimum standard of accessibility practices in the performing arts and to support artists, programmers, and partner organizations in considering how access can be incorporated throughout all aspects of a production and throughout all stages, from development to presentation. It is our expectation that the artists we work with will also strive to put accessibility practices at the forefront of the creative process and implementation of their work.

To uncover more about accessibility at SummerWorks, [click here to view our most recent Festival Accessibility page](#).

OUT-OF-TOWN ARTISTS

We welcome national and international applicants. However, all artists and creative collaborators are responsible for all expenses related to bringing your project to Toronto. We do not cover travel, accommodation, per diem, or freight costs. SummerWorks will gladly provide letters of support to Festival artists for any of their own travel and/or touring funding applications.

OBTAINING RIGHTS

All artists and companies participating in the Festival are responsible for obtaining the relevant production rights for their shows and performers.

If any individual in the company or group has a membership in a guild, union, or other professional association, the artist or company must acquire the necessary releases, or pay the required fees to the respective organization. Please note: SummerWorks is currently covered under Canadian Actors Equity Association's Festival Policy, which allows Equity and ACTRA members to perform in the Festival. More information on how to engage Equity/ACTRA members under this policy can be found at this [link](#).

The artist and/or company is responsible for acquiring permissions, licenses, or rights for any and all copyrighted material in the project.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

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Check out our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for the 2026 Call for Submissions. Please visit our [website](#), for further information about SummerWorks' mission and mandate, our history, and for archives of previous Festivals.

For additional inquiries, please contact: submissions@summerworks.ca.

APPLY ONLINE

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We look forward to reviewing your submission to SummerWorks!

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