
The Rockwell

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The Boston Fringe Festival Handbook

We're so glad you stumbled on our handbook for The Boston Fringe Festival! We are the first Boston (and Massachusetts for that matter!) Fringe Festival! This guide is here to help you dream up your project to submit to our beloved Boston Fringe Festival!

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Our Mission

As the first Massachusetts Fringe Festival the mission of the Boston Fringe is to provide a space for work that is unconstrained by curation, judgment, or the status quo. We are proudly members of CAFF and USAFF. We are here to inspire Boston artists to dream, create, & be a BOS.

What is Boston Fringe?

The Boston Fringe (*Bos Fringe* for short, *Bo\$ Fringe* if you're cool) is a week-long festival championing new work where 100% of ticket sales are returned to the artist! During the week you'll see performances of all levels, amateur to professional, in various genres, uncensored, unjuried, and completely original. The festival formally begins on Monday, May 11, and ends on Sunday, May 17.

Tickets are available per performance or a festival pass to see EVERYTHING is available for less than the price of 5 shows! And be sure to check out the free events and visual art around the venue!

Venues

This year we will be showcasing works in three different venues, all the heart of Davis Square in Somerville, Ma\$\$ which is accessible via public transit and surrounded by delicious restaurants, cool shops, and unique bars.

The first is The Rockwell, a hidden 200-seat venue underground, which provides a great stage space, lighting, sound, and projection capabilities to artists, and comfortable seats with a full bar for attendees.

The second venue is The Dragon's Lair, an open bar area connected to Dragon Pizza. This space is better suited for low-tech shows, and offers excellent foot traffic for performances.

The third venue is Dente's barber shop, a unique space that pushes our vision that great art can happen anywhere!

When applying, you will have the option to apply for "Only the Rockwell", or "Open to Any Venue".

- We will first accept Rockwell shows from anyone who selected "Only the Rockwell" OR "Open to Any Venue".
- Should we set up a second venue, we will then accept shows from anyone who selected "Open to Any Venue"

Timeline

- Initial Announcement: DEC 1, 2025
- Application window opens: SUN, DEC 14, 2025
- Applications window closes: WED, JAN 14, 2026
- Performer Acceptances sent: SUN, FEB 1, 2026

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- Waivers, fees, and production info due: SUN, FEB 8, 2025
 - Performance schedule set: WED, APR 1, 2026
 - Tech rehearsals at venues: MON - FRI, MAY 11 - 15, 2026
 - BOSTON FRINGE FESTIVAL: MON - SUN, MAY 11-17, 2026

How To Apply

1. Decide your show type & desired venue! We are accepting applications for **Full Length Shows** (45-50 minutes) as well as **Shorty Shows** (25-30 minutes)
 - **Full Length Shows** will take place Monday-Sunday evenings, with performances spaced out throughout the week.
 - **Shorty Shows** will take place Saturday-Sunday afternoon at the Rockwell, and Monday-Saturday evenings at our alternate venues, with two Shorty Shows in the same genre sharing one 60 minute timeslot.
 - We only need [basic information](#) for your show (length, genre)
 - **You do NOT need a completed show in order to apply!**
2. Apply! The application form will open on Sunday, December 14, at 12pm EST. The link will be available on [Boston-Fringe.com](#), the [Boston Fringe Instagram page](#), the [Rockwell Instagram page](#), the [Rockwell website](#), and sent out on the [Rockwell email list](#).
 - There is a \$30 non-refundable application fee - this goes towards marketing and production for all BOS Fringe shows.
 - If accepted, there is a registration fee dependent on show length & location:
 - **Full Length:**
 - The Rockwell: \$450
 - **Shorty:**
 - The Rockwell: \$250
 - Alternate Venues \$180
 - Remember that all ticket sales are returned to the artist!
 - You can find the exact questions that we will ask in the application form in the [Application Form Questions](#) section of this handbook

Selection Process

Slots Available

- **11 Full Length Shows** (45-50 minute, only at the Rockwell.
 - Each will receive 3 total performances spread across Monday-Sunday evenings
- **28 Shorty Shows** (25-30 minute, 8 at the Rockwell, 20 at Alternate Venues)

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- Each will receive 2 performances: Rockwell shorties on Saturday & Sunday afternoon, and Alternate Venue shorties on Monday-Saturday Evenings.
 - Shows will be assigned performance times - please be available for all dates!

Criteria

This is an unjuried and uncensored process. The only limit is space. We have a number of slots dedicated to each genre. Please only one submission per producer max.

- Genres
 - Cabaret / Variety (Burlesque, Magic, Puppetry)
 - Children's Shows
 - Comedy (Improv, Sketch, Stand Up, Clown)
 - Dance / Physical Theatre / Circus
 - Music
 - Musicals / Opera
 - Storytelling / Spoken Word
 - Theatre
 - Visual Arts / Exhibitions
- 50% of shows will be selected first-come, first-serve when the application opens on December 14, 2025, at 12pm EST.
 - These are the first half of Full Length and Shorty shows that have submitted the application with all information properly filled out, submitted non-refundable application fee, and accepted all terms & conditions
- 50% of shows will be selected by Random Lottery
 - Once the first-come, first-serve spots have been taken, shows will be added automatically into the Random Lottery
 - The Random Lottery is exactly what it sounds like
- Acceptances for both the first-come, first-serve selections and random lottery drawing will be sent on February 1, 2026
- We will prioritize **variety** in the final lineup - Once we've reached a certain number of submissions in a genre, additional applicants in that genre will be placed on a waitlist.
- We will also prioritize **locality** in the final lineup - once we reach a certain number of non-Massachusetts submissions, additional applications will be placed on a waitlist.

What We Provide

- 100% of ticket sales to the artist
- Each **Full Length** show gets 3 x 50-minute performances
- Each **Shorty** show gets 2 x 30-minute performances

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- Performance venues for tech rehearsal and the days of the festival
 - Basic sound and lighting equipment
 - Tech and front of house personnel
 - Ticketing through our website and walk-up ticketing at the venue
 - Volunteer staff to take tickets and manage audiences
 - Publicity and promotion of the Boston Fringe

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

Application Form Questions

Have these answers ready for when the application form opens!

*Indicates required field

Show Name*

Main Admin Name*

Main Admin Email*

Main Admin Phone Number*

Show Genre*

- Cabaret / Variety (Burlesque, Magic, Puppetry)
- Children's Shows
- Improv
- Sketch
- Stand Up
- Clown
- Dance / Physical Theatre / Circus
- Music
- Musicals / Opera
- Storytelling / Spoken Word
- Theatre

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- Visual Arts / Exhibitions

Show Description*

Show Run Time*

- 45-50 minutes (Full Length)
- 25-30 minutes (Shorty)

Website / Socials (If Applicable)

Are you local to Massachusetts?*

Regardless of acceptance, are you interested in volunteering at Boston Fringe?

We are excited to potentially offer a second venue around Davis Square.

Would you like to apply to perform at an additional venue?

Note: Answering "Open to Any Venue" will not reduce your chance of being selected to perform at The Rockwell.

What to Do if Accepted

- Build your show!
- On February 1, 2026, we will send out acceptance notifications to accepted shows.
 - If accepted, you will have one week to provide your show details, sign the required documents and waivers, and pay the production fee.
 - Failing to do so will release your spot to the waitlist
- By April 1, 2026, we will have the full festival schedule set, including tech rehearsal dates, and begin promotion.

FAQs

- How are ticket sales returned to artists?

For **Full Length** shows, 100% of individual ticket sales are returned to artists.

For **Shorty** shows, where there are two shows sharing an hour-long window, we will ask patrons if they are attending for a specific artist - if so, that patron's sale will go to that artist, otherwise the sale will be split between the two artists.

Full festival pass sales will be split among all performing artists.

- How does the waitlist work?

Once the First Come First Serve (FCFS) shows and lottery shows are selected, the remaining applicants will be placed on a FCFS waitlist. If an accepted show is not able to participate, the next act on the FCFS waitlist will be invited to join the festival.

Note: We will maintain our [variety & locality prioritization](#) as we select off the waitlist.

- Can I volunteer?

Yes! You can fill out our volunteer form to get involved with the festival, and receive a free festival pass as well!