

ONTARIO  
PRESENTS

# Virtual Networking Series

**A Guide to the Artist Showcase  
Application Process 2024**



# Who is Ontario Presents and what is the purpose of this document?

Ontario Presents is a province-wide network of [performing arts touring and presenting organizations](#) that work collaboratively to facilitate an equitable distribution of live, diverse performing arts shows – and their engagement with all citizens – into communities across Ontario.

This [Slide Deck](#) will inform artists or their representatives about the [application process](#) for the 2024 [Virtual Networking Series - Artist Showcase](#).

We encourage all those curious about the application process to read this document [BEFORE starting the application form](#).



# What is the Virtual Networking Series?

The **Virtual Networking Series** is a **sequence of events** in the fall that provides opportunities for performing arts professionals to connect virtually. Events include the following:

- **Artist Showcases** (Oct 1-3, 2024) - an occasion for artists to have their work viewed by presenters from across Ontario.
- **Agent Pitches** (Sept 10-25, 2024) - an opportunity to share information about various projects with presenters.
- **Small Venue Pitches** (Sept 3-5, 2024) - a platform for presenters from small venues to view work suitable for their facilities. [For more info.](#)

This series intends to support artists at **various levels of their careers** from emerging, self represented artists with low fees, ranging all the way up to artists who are more expensive and represented by agents.

# What is a Virtual Artist Showcase?

A **Virtual Artist Showcase** is an opportunity for thirty **30 performing artists** to showcase their performances online to a wide range of Ontario based venue presenters.

Each showcase will feature **5 minute pre-recorded presentations** that span the genres of theatre, dance, music, circus, young audience and variety.

Artist selection will be made by an **independent jury**. Artists from **all regions of Canada and the US** are welcomed to apply. Artist applications are open from **May 1 to June 3, 2024 at 11:59 pm**. Selected artists will be notified by late July 2024.

# Ontario Presents' membership

Ontario Presents' membership of performing arts centres, volunteer presenting associations, and municipal venue presenters will be watching the virtual artist showcases. This membership is varied in their **organizational capacity, venue size/capabilities, and audience.**

Presenting members represent both **volunteer-run and professional organizations** and their venues range from small halls to large soft-seat theatres and from school gymnasiums to community halls.

**Discover more** about Ontario Presents' vast touring network [here](#), or visit Ontario Presents' [Network Directory](#) for individual member profiles.

# Who's watching the showcases?

Presenting Organizations	Type	Venue Description
Community Presenters Network	Professional and Volunteer	Small venues. 100-350 seats in community theatres/halls, school auditoriums/gyms
Northern Theatre for Young Audience Network	Volunteer	Small venues. 100-350 seats in community theatres/halls, school auditoriums/gyms, libraries
Northwestern Ontario Network	Volunteer	Small venues. 100-350 seats in community theatres/halls, school auditoriums/gyms, libraries
Ontario Classical Music Network	Professional and Volunteer	Small venues. 100-350 seats in community theatres/halls, school auditoriums/gyms
Southern Ontario Block Booking Group	Professional	Midsize to large venues. 350-2,000 seats in performing arts centres and municipal theatres.

# Presenter decision making criteria

- High quality, professional work in a **variety of genres**.
- Engaging performances for **diverse audiences** (child, youth, family, adult)
- Projects/performance that **reflect the cultural richness of their communities**.
- Artists/companies who can be flexible and accommodate a broad **range of performance spaces, technical capabilities, and travelling** in a single tour.
- Artists/companies with **varying price points**.

# How do presenters make their decisions?

Both professional and volunteer presenters make the important programming decisions either **independently**, as part of a **larger network or collective**, or as a **hybrid of both scenarios**.

Presenters working in a **network as a collective unit** work collaboratively to create viable tours, share resources, negotiate fees, and encourage high-quality live performing artists/companies to their communities.

Not every presenter wants to participate in a network, and it is completely acceptable to have **independent goals and presenting styles**. Many presenters will book some artists independently and others as part of a network, this **hybrid scenario is very common and mutually beneficial**.



# When do presenters make their decisions?

Presenters working in a network or a collective unit, often begin their decision making process in the fall in the form of **block booking calls** and other **networking opportunities**. These discussions continue into the winter months with final contracts being issued and signed throughout the process but no later than early spring.

Not all presenters follow this timeline, some may **choose a faster or slower path** to programming their season. Presenters working independently are able to book artists/companies and sign contracts at a time that is determined by the relationships made between the presenter, artist/company or agent.

# What is the jury looking for?

Showcase decisions will be made by a jury committee. The jury will be evaluating each submission for the following criteria:

- artistic excellence,
- audience impact, and
- feasibility for touring a broad range of presenters (small to large venues)

Special consideration will be given to applications from Ontario based artists. Emphasis will also be placed on applicants who identify as Indigenous, Black, or a Person of Colour, Deaf, Mad, Disabled, members of the LGBTQ2S+ community and other marginalized groups.

# Application Hints & Tips: Company Bio

## Section 2 of 6

### Tell Us About You as an Artist/Company

Using 75 words or less, tell us about you as an **artist/company/collective**.



To see [Presenter Digital Showcase Handouts](#) from the 2023 Artist Showcase.

- *It is recommended that you **prepare your content** (about artist and show) in a separate document in advance and cut and paste it into this application to ensure quality and word count.*
- *When telling us about yourself, stay within the recommended **75 word limit**. Juries have to read numerous applications.*
- *If selected, your entries will be used in **OP's communication materials** such as: jury packages, information documents for presenters, and host introductions for showcase video.*

# Application Hints & Tips: Show Synopsis

## Section 3 of 6

### Tell Us About Your Project/Performance

In 100 words or less, please provide a [synopsis of the show/performance](#).



To see [Presenter Digital Showcase Handouts](#) from the 2023 Artist Showcase.

- **Give us your elevator pitch!** Tell us what your show is all about and what makes you stand out as an artist/company. Remember who your audience is - presenters.
- Stay within the recommended **100 word limit**. Juries have to read numerous applications.
- If selected, your entries will be used in **OP's communication materials** such as: jury packages, information documents for presenters, and host introductions for showcase video.

# Application Hints & Tips: Videos

## Section 3 of 6

### Tell Us About Your Project/Performance

Please share the link(s) to the **full length video** of the performance or trailer.



Click to see showcase [video pitch examples](#) from the 2023 Artist Showcase.

- *Presenters have repeatedly stressed the need for **full-length videos** if possible. The emphasis is on being able to see the full show rather than a professionally produced video.*
- *A video that illustrates the quality of your project/performance, audience engagement and technical production qualities is recommended.*
- *If you do not have a full video at time of application, a **2-5 minute trailer or promotional video** is acceptable.*

# Application Hints & Tips: Technical Riders

## Section 4 of 6

### Touring Information

Please share the link to your **technical rider** and any additional useful technical information.



Click for more information on [Technical Riders](#)

- A **technical rider** is a document that lists the technical production requirements necessary to mount your project/performance.
- *Presenters - especially volunteer presenters and those in small venues - will often make booking decisions based on whether their venues have the **technical resources** to present a particular show successfully.*
- *Technical riders don't have to be rigid. Many artists adapt their technical requirements to **meet the resources of a presenter.***

# Application Hints & Tips: Fee Ranges

Section 4 of 6

## Touring Information

Please select the option that best indicates the **fee range** of your show.



Click for more information on [Fees and Budgets](#)

- *All fees are negotiable with presenters at any point.*
- *Fee range is a pivotal piece of information required for professional and volunteer presenters to make their best programming decisions.*
- *Volunteer presenters and small venue presenters are especially bound by limited budgets.*
- *If you are selected to showcase, **more details will be required** if they have changed from original application.*

# Application Hints & Tips: Tour Availability

## Section 4 of 6

### Touring Information

Please indicate which months you will be **available for bookings** in the upcoming season.



Click for more information on [Planning for a Tour](#)

- *Tour availability* is another major factor in a presenters' decision making process.
- Some presenters have **limited dates** because they have a small series (volunteer presenters) others are **juggling multiple dates** from other artists and dates (professional presenters).
- Majority of OP presenters **DO NOT program in the summer**.
- If selected for a showcase, **more specific details** will be required.



# Need help! Have a Question?

## Section 6 of 6

Thank you for applying to Showcase

If you have questions about the **application process** or require **accessibility accommodations** contact Deb at [deborah@ontariopresents.ca](mailto:deborah@ontariopresents.ca)

- *Ontario Presents hopes this **application process** is as streamlined as possible.*
- *Please read this **entire document** before **contacting** OP for assistance.*
- *If you have any **accessibility accommodations** contact Ontario Presents.*



# What happens if my application is selected?

**Step 1:** You will be notified **by late July 2024** that you have been selected to showcase.

**Step 2:** You or your representative/ agent will need to provide a **pre-recorded 5 minute Pitch with an embedded Video trailer/sample** of your project/ performance **by mid September 2024**.

**Step 3:** You or your representative/agent will need to provide more information concerning **revised fees and tour availability** if they have changed since the initial application.

**Step 4:** You will be notified which day your **Virtual Showcase will air**.

## Next steps

Don't worry! If you are selected for a virtual showcase you will have **more than a month to film your 5 minute pitch/showcase presentation.**

Upon notification, all selected artists will be **provided with helpful resources from industry experts** that will help them craft their pitch and submit their video presentation.

In the meantime, feel free to [watch the various Virtual Showcasing Artists from 2023](#) to give you an idea of content and expectations.

# Key dates in application process

- **Call for Applications**
  - May 1 to June 3, 2024
- **Jury Selection**
  - June 4 to end of July 2024
- **Artist Notification and Deadline for Showcase Acceptance**
  - End of July to Aug 9, 2024 at 11:59
- **Deadline for Pre-recorded Showcase Material to be Submitted**
  - Mid September 2024
- **Virtual Showcases**
  - Multi-disciplinary Showcases: October 1, 2024
  - Young Audience Showcases: October 2, 2024
  - Multi-disciplinary Showcases: October 3, 2024

# Good Luck on your Application!



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