

As a result of our Money Talks survey in late 2017, we identified that there were a [range of issues at play](#) when it comes to artists and finances. Some are more systemic (eg the relationship between [artists and venues](#)) and others are knowledge or skills based. In an attempt to help with the latter, Theatre Bristol has commissioned these new help sheets (Dec 2018), written by Emily Williams and Carrie Rhys-Davies, on four hot topics:



- ways to calculate how much your work costs
- understanding financial deals
- understanding fundraising options
- building a case for support

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Ways to Calculate How Much Your Work Costs

A helpsheet for artists by Emily Williams

For the purposes of this help sheet I have split 'your work' into four of the most common milestones when creating a piece of new work:

1. Research and Development (R&D)
2. Creation
3. Touring
4. International Touring

When working out your costs for any of the above milestones it can be a good idea for use the following questions as a guide to informing your budget:

Who?

Where?

What?

How?

R&D

R&D periods are different for every new piece of work and depending on whether you are looking for funding or partners for this stage of the process the costs can vary.

Following the questions above to work out your R&D costs you might do something like this:

Who?

Who might I want in the room and what do they charge?

Do collaborators offer a reduced rate when it is R&D?

What are the industry standard rates and which ones do I want to use?



Where?

Do we need rehearsal space?

Do I need to include travel and accommodation?

What?

What do we want to test during this period?

Do I need to include costs for materials?

How long is the R&D going to last?

Is it an intensive period or across a long timeframe?

What other running costs are there during this time?

How?

Do we need a grant to cover this?

Can we ask our commissioning partners to support the R&D through cash or in kind support?

Following these questions the next step would be to look at what the potential costs or rates are in relation to the answers. Here is a simple R&D budget to use:

Item	Description	Unit	Amount	Cash
Collaborators	Performers + Designers	5 people x 2 weeks	£471 (ITC rate)	£4710
Rehearsal Space	Mivart Studios, Bristol	2 weeks	£300	£600
Travel	Based on average ticket price from London- Bristol R	5	£59	£295
Accommodation	ITC rates for Accommodation (Digs)	5 people x 5 nights x 2 weeks	£39	£1950
Materials	Lights/Sound/Costume/Set testing	1	£500	£500
Total				£8,055

You can also download this template here [\(links to a public google drive folder\)](#)

CREATION

The creation phase is often just an larger, extended R&D period with an increase in people's time and therefore fees as well as the production cost elements.

The best way to gain a sense of production costs, if you haven't made something of this scale before is to speak to your designers, who hopefully will be able to give you a sense of cost (whilst bearing in mind you may have to lower expectation/budget limits at the point of gaining the money), the other option is to get quotes.

Particularly relating to production costs it is very important to consider VAT.

The other element to include when working out your costs for the creation phase is to include a contingency – my suggested amount is 5% but this could go up to 10% or down to 3%.

By working out the cost of your creation phase using the steps above, will enable you to be able to work out the income that you need to cover these costs and more importantly who you are asking for what.

TOURING

To understand the kind of financial deal you want from a promoter (please see my other help sheet ‘Understanding Financial Deals’) you need to have a true understand of all of the associated costs of touring your piece of work.

Each cost is based on industry touring rates, current fee levels and quotes (i.e. Sixty Van Hire) or exciting costs (i.e Yellow Storage)

I use a template to work out these costs and ensure that I include as many of the core/operational costs that would need covering during this time (assuming you are not core funded)

This template is based on a 37 date tour. **You can also download this template here [\(opens a public google drive folder\)](#)**

By setting the amounts and then changing the unit column on the budget above I can see how much 1 performance costs to the artist or company and then how much 2 performances and so on (remembering that some costs will stay the same i.e. van hire if it is just return costs).

I would then project 2 or 3 different price brackets for income per show to see where there a possibility for profit or where I would need to find funding to support the tour.

The brilliant thing that this template gives you is your minimum cost and therefore makes the negotiations much easier. Of course, there are always instances where you may decide to take a deal because of another benefit but on the whole this budget should ensure that you always have all of your costs covered when booking your tour.

Please note that this budget should not include VAT but if you are VAT registered you should always make sure VAT is additional when negotiation fees or box office splits.

	Expenditure							
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Core or Project	Item	Description	Amount	Unit	Total	Funded by elsewhere (i.e. ACE)	Funded by Tour
	Performers	Touring		1	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Stage M	Touring (inc time in prep)		1	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Producer			37	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Per Diems	No. people travelling	£25	37			
	Van Hire	based on £75 each way + excess + petrol	£95.00	16	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
C	Storage	split across year	£3.83	37	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Accommodation	Rounded up		10	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
C	Accountant	split across year	£41.67	3	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
C	ITC	split across year	£4.17	3	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Royalties			37	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
C	Bank charges	split across year	£1.25	3	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	BSL	2 shows + travel		1	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Print and redesign			1	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Marketing	Social Media etc		37	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Trailer	Editing days		2	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Mobius	Press support		1	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Running costs	Project running costs		37	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Hires	i.e. lighting equipment		2	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Sound Designer	Remounting and get in support		4	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Lighting Designer	Remounting and get in support		4	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Travel for Design team		£35.00	4	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Contingency		10%	1	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Total				£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

INTERNATIONAL TOURING

For international touring you would follow the same principle as above for TOURING but follow these additional rules:

1. Make sure that when budgeting you include Visa costs and request that these are covered by your promoter
2. VAT is not applicable when touring internationally
3. Usually travel and accommodation is covered by your international promoter so these costs can be taken out but you will need to confirm this
4. Include paid travel time e.g. if you are travelling to America you may want to include 1 day for travelling and 1 day recovery additionally to your usual time allocated for the show
5. It is very unusual for there to be a box office split when touring internationally and usually a straight fee/guarantee

In my experience I have usually proposed a weekly fee rather than per show for international touring which would include all costs excluding travel, accommodation and visas. This weekly fee would then be divided by the number of shows needed.

For example:

1 week (6 performances) might cost £10,000

If the promoter then wanted 3 nights this cost might be: $\text{£}10,000 / 6 = \text{£}1,666.66 \times 3 = \text{£}5000$

Useful links

ITC rates

<https://www.itc-arts.org/rates-of-pay>

House Theatre – guide to international touring

<http://housetheatre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/International-Touring-Guide-for-download.pdf>

UK Theatre – rates of pay

<https://uktheatre.org/theatre-industry/rates-of-pay/>