**Bloomsbury Studio – usage by UCL - application guidance**

This document contains important information for anyone applying to use the Bloomsbury Studio under the UCL usage arrangements for public events. Please read it carefully. It is unlikely that your application will be successful if you do not follow this advice.

**What’s in these guidelines?**
1) What is on offer
2) How successful applications are chosen
3) A step-by-step guide to the application form
4) What happens if you’re successful
5) Where to get more guidance

1) **What is on offer?**

The Bloomsbury Theatre was built by UCL in 1967 to provide a performance space for both academic events and extracurricular activity. In 2014-15 a rehearsal space in the basement was transformed into a separate studio performance space. From the outset it has been the intention that a majority of the events in the studio will be from the UCL community with a bias towards public events and/or events which showcase UCL research.

Applicants can apply for any amount of time Monday-Saturday although it is expected that most events will be on just one day. Applicants can apply for any available time. Decisions will be made on an ‘as required’ basis. It is expected that most if not all of the weeks will be allocated to multiple projects.

UCL Users of the studio get the following:
- Use of the studio and its dressing room during times notified to the organiser
- Ushers and bar staff for public shows
- Technician(s) to assist in the presentation of events and to supervise preparations
- Use of all the studio’s technical equipment (not including consumables)
- Access to theatre staff for advice and guidance
- Access to marketing advice and guidance

The theatre will also operate any ticket sales operation through the Box Office (UCL Event Ticketing).

**Finance:**
The theatre will retain 25% of ticket sales for all events or £150 per event (whichever is greater). For UCL staff led events any surplus ticket income (minus VAT and a 5.25% box office fee) will be sent to a UCL project code only. It is likely that there will be some costs over and above the 25% / £150 to cover consumables and if additional time is required, particularly past 11pm. Any time to be paid for is charged at a heavily discounted rate.

**Please note that theatre staff must approve all aspects of every event in the studio in order to ensure that licensing as well as health and safety regulations are met.** If you are proposing something which is unusual or may include something that is dangerous or potentially dangerous seek advice prior to making an application – see section 5.

UCLU have pre-arranged access for student societies under their ‘Garage Theatre’ arrangements. Contact UCLU for advice on this. Student societies are welcome to apply under this system for activity outside the ‘Garage Theatre’ scheme.
2) How Successful Applications are chosen

The Public and Cultural Engagement Management Team will make its decision based on three considerations which will be considered in order:

Consideration A – Strategic and Artistic
Does the application meet the five strategic aims of the theatre with regard to this time?:
- Does the project involve performance/film or is it otherwise appropriate to the space?
- Is there sufficient collaboration/involvement of UCL staff and/or students?
- Does the project engage with public audiences?
- Is the project likely to attract an audience of 60+ at all performances?
- With the exception of student activity applications, will the event share research in innovative ways?

Additionally, it is expected that from time to time the Head of Operations/Director will issue further guidance.

Consideration B - Logistical
Does the application provide assurance that the people involved are capable (with support) of making the event happen? Is there adequate funding in place?

Consideration C – Timing
Is it possible to fit the project into the Studio schedule around other successful projects?

3) A step-by-step guide to the application form

Potential applicants are strongly advised to discuss their proposal with the Head of Operations in advance of submitting an application. See Section 5 for details.

Basic details
Completed forms must be no longer than three sides of A4 in 11pt Calibri font. This rule will be strictly adhered to.

At the start of the form, we ask for information about you, your planned project, and how we can contact you. This information will help us to administer the project if it is successful, and to monitor whether we are receiving applications from a cross-section of the UCL population.

Question 1
Please give a short description of what the event(s) will be. This is your opportunity to ‘sell’ your event to the decision makers and give them a real idea of what the audience, participants and others involved will experience.

Question 2
You may want to use bullet points to answer this question. What are you hoping to achieve? This may be around artistic excellence, but don’t forget what originally made you want to apply – this is probably related to an aim in itself. Is there a clear teaching or research objective? Does the event fit into your department or faculty strategic plan? Or, if you are an individual, will this develop your skills? Is this event a trial to see if more events could be beneficial in your area of work?
The decision makers want to see that you have thought through what this is actually all about – don’t assume that they can see clearly what you want to achieve – spell it out clearly!

**Question 3**
The decision makers want to know that this will be a worthwhile use of the studio. The studio seats up to 70, there is an expectation that you will have at least 60 people in for the events – explain who they are going to be and how you will get them to come. Putting an event on is never simply a case of ‘if I do it, they will come’. The decision makers want to see that you have a marketing plan that fits in with the event and your aims.

**Question 4**
There is an expectation that all applicants will involve performance (or film) in their event or it will otherwise be an appropriate use of the space – clarify that this is the case. The second part of this question is the key – UCL has access to a fully functioning studio theatre with equipment and staff – explain how you are going to use it to meet your aims. If your event could take place in a centrally bookable lecture theatre or seminar room it probably isn’t a great use of the space!

**Question 5**
Please give a short summary of relevant experience held by the project team. This answer tells the decision makers why you are the right team to run this project. For example, have you done work in theatre or events before? Give a very short description of the team’s relevant experience. There’s no need to list publications or talk about your research/teaching achievements unless they are relevant to the project. If, as most successful project leaders do, you plan to work with other people, please tell us who they are, what relevant experience they bring, and what involvement they’ll have. Are there people from outside UCL involved in planning and delivering the project? Are representatives of your target audience involved in planning and delivering the project? What relevant experience do they bring to the project?

**Question 6**
It is likely that there will be costs associated with the event such as costumes, additional equipment, props, Theatre costs (see above) marketing costs etc. For this question draw up a basic budget and show how the costs will be covered. You can include ticket income but don’t forget that VAT will be deducted and there are some small charges (see above). Show that the project can fund itself even if ticket sales are significantly lower than expected. The decision makers want to know that if they offer time in the theatre the event will be able to go ahead.

**Question 7**
The theatre can only host one event at a time! However good your application is, if another is considered to be a little better by the decision makers, or is requested earlier, and neither of you have any flexibility of dates then you will lose out. Be as flexible as you possibly can. If there is a good reason for wanting a particular date or range of dates (for example, an anniversary) explain that in this box.

**Question 8**
How will you assess whether your project was a success? This answer shows the decision makers how you’ll know that you’ve achieved your aims. We don’t expect evaluation and monitoring to take up a large proportion of your time. However, we expect you to have a clear idea of what success looks like, and for your plans to include reflection by the audience, as well as the project team, on the activities, including planning if appropriate.
4) **What happens if you’re successful?**
The decision makers decision will be communicated to applicants as soon as possible, they generally meet every 2-4 weeks. If successful you will be told what dates are available to you and how many free hours are included. You will be invited to a meeting with a member of the Theatre Management Team to discuss your requirements.

Following the meeting and, if your event is felt to require it, you will be asked to attend a mandatory training session.

The Bloomsbury Theatre is not in a position to underwrite your project so all costs associated with it must be paid from elsewhere. Following the event the theatre will tell you how much money was taken at the box office, detail any extra costs and then send you what is left after deduction of VAT. Unless otherwise agreed with the theatre management it is expected that the funds will be transferred to a UCL project code by IDT. If there is no income expected at the Box Office we will need payment of our fee in advance by IDT.

After the event we need to receive a brief evaluation document. This does not need to be long or detailed, but we want you to revisit the answers to the questions and tell us how you did, particularly referencing questions 2 and 8. Include any advice you would give to yourself before you ran the event! This should be emailed to Frank Penter no more than 1 month after the event.

5) **Where to get more guidance**
If you have any queries regarding the process or you want to discuss whether something is possible in the theatre please contact Frank Penter at f.penter@ucl.ac.uk or on UCL internal extension 32981. You are strongly urged to have an informal conversation with Frank prior to submitting an application.

Frank will also be happy to put you in contact with recent successful applicants who can share valuable advice on using the theatre.