



Supported touring artistic policy & FAQ

The Touring Network supports promoters who enable professional performing arts events in some of the most remote and beautiful parts of Scotland. We work with more than 80 venues across a region covering half the area of Scotland – Highlands & Islands, Argyll & Bute, Moray, Orkney, Shetland and Perthshire. Many of our promoters are volunteers, and use a variety of spaces for their venues with a variety of technical capabilities – village halls, community centres, schools, and arts centres.

We wish to acknowledge the outstanding quality of theatre, dance and children's theatre that is available for rural touring - and wish to create an environment where more of our promoters, communities and visitors are able to access these performances.

What is Supported Touring?

With the financial support of Creative Scotland, we introduced our Supported Touring Scheme in Spring 2013 in order to:

- Help promoters establish good working relationships with companies;
- Support promoters in their ambitions see more performers tour more of Scotland;
- Support promoters in their desire to deliver high quality programming;
- Offer audiences new experiences.

The Touring Network's (Highlands & Islands) Supported Touring programme aims to work with promoters to fill gaps in geography, gaps in programming and to share the risk of touring and promoting.

As such it:

- Works to bring new and exciting professional **Dance**, **Children's theatre** and **Contemporary theatre** into the region.
- Works with promoters to widen their programming choices and attract new audiences.
- Works with communities new to promoting, to increase access to professional performing arts.



How does the scheme work?

We achieve the aims of our Supported Touring scheme by:

- Sharing the risk with our promoters by offering shows for a box office split.
- Supporting companies with a fair performance fee and assistance with their tour programming.

We programme **two seasons** of professional performing arts a year (Mar-Sept and Sept-Mar), and work on a 6-9 month cycle of planning. We are, on occasion, able to earmark work a few seasons ahead if a show is in development and meets our selection criteria, or if working with international artists.

We create a limited **menu** - a curated selection of shows which fit our promoters' spaces, adhere to our selection criteria, and that we believe should be programmed. From this list, our promoters actively select the shows that they want to see in their venues, and which they believe will enhance and develop their own programmes.

Shows that are on our menu are not guaranteed to be booked. We usually find that between 10-12 companies are booked each year, with a total of about 50 events, averaging at 4 nights per company. Occasionally, and following consultation with the company, we may book a one-off performance, but we try to avoid this.

The following is a timeline for the current season's (March - September 2015) selection process:

June 2014	Call out to companies for suitable productions.
Beginning of September 2014	Menu curated and published to promoters. Companies are informed if they are on the menu.
End of September 2014	Deadline for promoters to select shows from the menu.
Beginning of October 2014	We inform companies of any interest from promoters. If there is enough interest, we begin the process of confirming dates and issuing contracts.



What are we looking for - Our selection criteria.

Dance Shows - High quality work that is audience friendly, exciting, engaging and suitable for performances in rural venues.

Theatre for Early Years, Children & Young People – Work that is engaging, accessible and of high quality.

Contemporary Theatre - High quality work that is exploring and taking artistic risks in the interests of creating work that is authentic to the present culture and society.

Priority will be given to productions that:

- Would not otherwise be able to tour the region, or whose run would be limited.
- Support the development of new audiences.
- Are unique in their approach to audience engagement.
- Are of high-quality.
- Have minimal technical requirements, are self-sufficient in terms of equipment, or are willing to negotiate with us, should we need to rent technical equipment for you.
- Show flexibility to the wide variety of communities that are part of The Touring Network.
- Offer excellent and relevant publicity.

Our Supported Touring scheme is very competitive – of the 100+ applications we received for our current Autumn/Winter season, just 7 shows were booked to tour.

How do you submit a production for inclusion in Supported Touring?

If you are a professional company, with a production that meets the above criteria, and are available to tour the Highlands & Islands between March - September 2015, then please visit www.tourbook.org.uk and click the **Sign Up** button in the **Performers** section.



This will create your user profile, and you will receive an email from us shortly afterwards containing your log in details. Please be aware that this is a manual process at the moment, so you may not receive your log in details immediately if you apply outwith office hours.

Once you are able to log in to Tourbook, you will be able to create a profile for your company and for your production. Please be as detailed as you can in your profiles, as the information you provide here will be used during our selection process. Our 80+ promoters around the Highlands & Islands will also be able to view all of the details of your production through Tourbook at this stage.

What happens if your production is selected?

We will let you know if your show has been included in our menu at the start of October 2014. Our promoters will then have until the end of March to make their selections, and we will be in touch with you as soon as possible at the start of April to confirm whether or not a tour is likely.

If your show is successful, and a tour is booked to be part of our Spring/Summer 2015 season of Supported Touring, your company will enter in to a **single contract** with The Touring Network, and will liaise on all aspects of the tour directly with our Programme Manager. Likewise, each promoter involved in the tour will enter in to a contract with The Touring Network, and will liaise with the company through our Programme Manager.

It is highly unlikely that we will provide accommodation for you on top of your fee, but we will endeavour to recommend suitable places for you along your tour route, and if all parties are willing, our promoters may offer hosting. We will also advise you on travel throughout the Highlands & Islands.

You will be responsible for providing any marketing materials for our promoters to use. We will set print deadlines and liaise with you regarding the content. You will ensure that The Touring Network is clearly represented as a tour partner, and will also include our logo and Creative Scotland's logo on all publicity.

Following your tour, you will invoice The Touring Network for the fee agreed at the contract stage, and we will pay this invoice within your terms.



What happens if your production is not selected?

If you have not heard from us by 19 September 2014, you should assume that your production has not made it on to our menu this time. Your production details will however remain on Tourbook and will be visible to our 80+ promoters.

If your production is included on our list, but is not successfully booked, we will inform you at the beginning of October 2014.

It is important to note that the majority of our promoters have their own budgets, and operate a programme that extends beyond Supported Touring. By putting your company and production on Tourbook, our new online platform, the awareness of your company and show is hugely increased. Indeed promoters may wish to programme you away from Supported Touring, and The Touring Network can help you to do this via Tourbook.

Any other questions?

Please contact our Programme Manager at programme@thetouringnetwork.com.