

ESTA Festival Handbook



ESTA Festival Handbook

Created and maintained by:
VP of Festivals
ESTA - Eastern States Theater Association, Inc.

Copies of this handbook can be downloaded in pdf format from the ESTA website,
www.estafestival.org

This handbook can be copied at will for non-commercial purposes.

For questions about this Handbook, please contact:

vpfestivals@estafestival.org

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ESTA ORGANIZATION

1. What is ESTA?

The ESTA - Eastern States Theater Association, Inc. (ESTA) is a member organization, Region II, of the American Association of Community Theatres (AACT). ESTA is comprised of active member organizations representing the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland which now includes the District of Columbia. New Jersey theatre organizations remain disconnected from ESTA.

2. What is an ESTA Festival?

ESTA Festival (ESTAFest) is an annual festival competition for member States. The goal of the annual ESTA festival is to recognize and reward community theatre productions from across its member States because they represent the best in theatrical quality in both published and original work categories. In addition to production awards, ESTA also recognizes achievement by those who excelled in their specific areas of theatrical endeavor. These areas include but are not limited to: Acting, Directing, Costuming, Sound and Light Design, Set Design, etc. When AACT holds a country-wide competition in even numbered years ... aka national year ... the winner of the ESTAFest also will represent ESTA at the AACT competition.

3. ESTA Organizational Goals

- To promote the general welfare of community theatre
- To promote the cultural growth of theatre art through the mutual exchange of knowledge and assistance
- To assist in the development of the arts and crafts of theatre by providing networking and other teaching opportunities expanding theatre craft knowledge throughout the theatre community
- To create a broad and general interest in the theatre arts

4. ESTA Festival Goals

- To provide an optimum learning experience through festival participation at State, Regional, and National levels, which affirm, support, and nurture community theatre companies as they strive toward excellence in theatrical production
- To stimulate and inspire community theatre to strive for the best work possible and to recognize companies for achievement through an appropriate adjudication process
- To provide learning experiences in artistic, technical, and management areas through performances, adjudication, and workshops
- To develop enlightened and discerning audiences for community theatre

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II. HOSTING an ESTA Festival

During national years, festival rules and guidelines to be observed are those issued by AACT via their Festival Handbook. These Handbooks can be obtained from the AACT website at www.aact.org. It is available upon request by emailing info@aact.org. It is recommended by VP of Festivals that the state level Festival chair of every potential competition participant should obtain and become familiar with their own copy of the AACT Festival Handbook.

In the case of missing information, ESTA rules will be consulted. In the case of conflicting information, the VP of Festivals and AACT festival personnel (if required) will determine a proper path forward.

During non-national years, the ESTA rules and guidelines shown in this Handbook apply.

A. FACILITY GUIDELINES TO HOST AN ESTAFest

1. The host facility needs to be a facility that is conducive to productions originally performed in both intimate and proscenium settings.
2. Ideally, the performing area should be approximately 35' wide by 25' deep. (Spaces much smaller cannot accommodate shows from large proscenium nouses, too large and intimate sets may get lost.)
3. A working fly system is nice but not necessary. There should be, however, the ability to suspend minor scenic pieces as needed for specific shows' needs.
4. There should be offstage wing space and a backstage crossover from stage left to stage right.
5. In addition to offstage space there needs to be an area approximately 10' x 10' (100 square feet total) where a company can pre-set their scenery for tech in.
6. There needs to be space available for scenic storage for companies performing in sessions other than the one currently on the stage.
7. There needs to be adequate access to the stage for off-loading scenery from a vehicle; usually pick-ups, vans and Ryder/U-Haul trucks.
8. The host facility should be available up to two (2) days prior to the festival dates to allow for stage preparation and tech in activities
9. Dressing rooms should be adequate for all companies and competitors. There should be mirrors in these dressing rooms and access to toilet facilities that are separate from the audience area.

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10. The host facility stage is required to be in working order and fitted to mount a production with basic lighting.
 - a. The use of a basic festival lighting plot will be provided to all entering companies. The basic plot should include:
 - i. A minimum of six (6) individually controlled cool and warm washes
 - ii. Any additional instrumentation necessary to completely illuminate the playing area.
 - iii. At least one (1) follow spot.
 - b. Additional instrumentation, special lighting, including one (1) follow spot, may be provided as part of the basic plot at the discretion (and capabilities) of the host facility. Companies need to remember that onstage rehearsal time is timed, and any special lighting will need to be setup during that time block.
11. The host facility may make available an on-site Stage Manager, Light Board Operator and Sound Operator for use by all participants should they choose to use same. Be aware that the host facility may charge for this personnel. Only a Stage Manager and/or Prompter for each production will be allowed backstage during the performance, unless scenery and/or technical requirements warrant additional crewmembers.
12. The host facility shall have a functioning sound system with a minimum of:
 - a. One (1) cassette player and one (1) CD player
 - b. House speakers
 - c. A means of communication between the light booth, the sound booth, backstage and the spotlight positions
 - d. A mixing board capable of accommodating various sound sources including computers
 - e. A house microphone
1. Festival Core Committee: The Festival Core Committee will consist of the VP of Festivals and 2 other Board members.
2. Festival Planning Committee: will consist of The Festival Core Committee and 2 other members (Hosting state & Hosting Facility. A strong actively involved Festival Planning Committee is essential to the success of any ESTA festivals. One person should not chair more than two (2) of the areas identified below. The VP of Festivals will always serve as the Festival Chair along with a Festival Vice-chair from the State hosting the festival for that year. The State will also be asked to provide a festival planning representative from the Host Facility. For any ESTA Festival to be successful volunteers are needed, the ESTA Board is expected to work at the ESTA Festival at any of the below positions.
 1. **VP of Festival**
 - a. Plans and coordinates the with the festival committee
 - b. Recruits Festival Planning Committee members
 - c. Develops and oversees the festival budget
 - d. Gathers information on earlier awards received by each competing theatre for the saluting of each theatre as a previous winner and the award of their ESTA certificate of participation

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- e. Secures the services of the festival adjudicator(s), conducts the festival adjudicator orientation meeting and the awards decision meeting
- f. Develops and communicates the Festival Schedule including Technical, Performance and other events to committee chairs
- g. Communicates the Technical and Performance schedule(s) – drafts and FINAL - to the participating companies
- h. Issues special Invitations to dignitaries
- i. Emcees the festival or appoints a designee
- j. Provides the Executive Committee Board with a final written report (including income, expenses and recommended improvements) within six (6) weeks of Festival close

2. Festival Vice-chair

- a. Plans and coordinates the with the festival committee
- b. Recruits Festival Planning Committee members
- c. Oversees portion of the budget that deals with Hosting State/Theater and obtains approval from the VP of Festivals
- d. Arranges for hotel/motel accommodations for participants adjudicators and attendees, as required
- e. Works with Host Facility and VP of Festivals to identify which comps will be provided to people from sister arts organizations And /or volunteers. Comps will be defined by the function being done and with a maximum comp amount.
- f. Issues special Invitations to dignitaries
- g. Emcees the festival
- h. Provides the VP of Festivals with a final written report (including income, expenses and recommended improvements) within Five (5) weeks of Festival close

3. Festival Technical Director

- a. Oversees all technical aspects of the festival: load ins, technical rehearsals and performances
- b. Provides participating companies with stage, lighting and sound specifications
- c. Oversees the technical rehearsals for each participating company
- d. Determine the most efficient operation for the festival, i.e., ability to strike/set during adjudicator deliberations

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- e. Supports the technical crew
 - i. Stage Manager
 - ii. Lighting Director
 - iii. Sound Director
 - iv. Stage Crew

4. Festival Stage Manager

- a. Conducts the company meeting with the Festival Technical Director and other personnel as required
- b. Oversees the festival timer(s)
- c. Oversees the technical rehearsals for each participating company
- d. Notifies Festival Adjudicator(s) to start the adjudication presentation
- e. Calls personnel to places to begin each session and performance

5. Festival Box Office

- a. Needs to arrive early to be trained in use of the online credit card system
- b. Prepares festival name tags and packets; obtains additional preprinted name tags to be completed by purchase at the door
- c. Operates the festival box office and sells session admission tickets, workshop admission tickets, and banquet/brunch/Afterglow tickets.
- e. Turns all box office money over to the ESTA VP of Festivals at the conclusion of festival
- f. Provides VP of Festivals with a report on all Box Office functions and attendance

6. Publicity Chair

- a. Plans and executes festival publicity and promotion materials
- b. Collects and develops copy for the festival program
- c. Works with the Design Exhibition Competition chair
- d. Oversees:
 - i. Advertising, displays and vendor committees

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- e. Keeps Festival Vice-chair apprised of publicity activities and results

7. House Manager

- a. Works with the Festival Technical Director, Stage Manager, ushers and hospitality volunteers to insure prompt starting of each performance session
- b. Supervises the ushers
- c. Supervises hospitality volunteers including possible use of House Crier to advise audience members when a session is about to start
- d. Keeps Festival Vice-chair apprised of House functions

8. Silent Auction Chair

- a. Solicits and secures items for the Silent Auction by working with Festival Vice-chair and others involved with the festival
- b. Oversees the bidding process
- c. Announces auction winners and collects the money
- d. Provides VP of Festivals with a final report

9. Adjudication Timer

- a. Times all festival tech-ins, performances and adjudications
- b. Keeps VP of Festival apprised of issues and/or suggestions

10. Social Events Chair

- a. Makes location(s) and menu selections for the Afterglow parties and Awards event
- b. Selects the location and menu for the awards event
- c. Reports to Festival Vice-chair

11. Member Company Displays and Vendors Chair

- a. Coordinates displays and materials for distribution to Festival attendees
- b. Plans and oversees member company and vendor displays
- c. Reports to Festival Vice-chair

13. 50/50 Sales

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- a. Recruits volunteers to sell 50/50 tickets throughout the festival weekend
- b. Maintains written reports of 50/50 sale activities
- c. Turns over funds and reports to Festival Chair at the end of festival
- d. Reports to VP of Festivals

14. Festival Photographer

- a. Photographs all participating productions and festival winners
- b. Provides copies of photographs to webmaster for loading on the ESTA website
- c. Reports to VP Of Festivals

15. Workshop Chair

- a. Arranges for seminar and workshop presenters and rooms for all festival workshops if decided by Festival Planning Committee
- b. Provides Publicity Chair with biographical information on presenters
- c. Authorizes payment of workshops presenters
- d. Report to the Festival Vice-chair

16. Design Exhibition and Competition Chair

- a. Works with Festival Vice-Chair to arrange for space for the Design displays if decided by the Festival Planning Committee
- b. Secures people to judge the display not to exceed two (2) judges
- c. Works with the Publicity Chair to promote the event and encourage entries from community theatres throughout Region II
- d. Reports to Festival Vice-chair

17. Registration Committee

- a. Receives and processes all festival registrations
- b. Prepares festival name tags and packets;
- d. Forwards all advance registration checks to the ESTA VP of Festival/Festival Committee in a timely fashion
- e. Provides VP of Festivals/ Festival Committee with all registration forms

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C. DESIGN EXHIBITION AND COMPETITION

The Festival Planning Committee has the option of including Design Exhibition and Competition.

Entry guidelines and entry form samples are available in Part V. Appendix. Design Exhibition and Competition

D. WORKSHOPS

The Festival Planning Committee has the option of including workshops.

E. PLANNING TIME LINE

It is important that the Festival Planning Committee begin their efforts at least one (1) year in advance of the festival dates.

F. BUDGET

The Festival Planning Committee must develop and submit Income and Expense Budgets to the VP of Festivals. The VP of Festivals, upon the recommendation of the Festival Vice-chair & the Festival Committee, will approve the following festival fees:

1. Participating Theatre Entry Fee
2. Participant Superpass and individual session tickets for cast and staff members of participating shows including Early Bird fees if used
3. Superpass for attendees not affiliated with a performing show including Early Bird fees if used
4. Individual Session Ticket
5. Individual Workshop Ticket
6. Awards Brunch Ticket
7. Afterglow Party Ticket
8. Design Competition Entry Fee

Other income sources include:

1. 50/50 Sales
2. Silent Auction
3. Donations
4. Ad Sales in Program

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An Income and Expense Budget Sample is available in Part V. Appendix. Festival Planning Committee Samples.

Upon approval the VP of Festivals will submit the Budget to the ESTA Executive Board and the Board of Trustees/Board of Directors

G. PROGRAM

All ESTA Festival programs are to include basic information regarding censorship, production timing, adjudication guidelines and criteria for consideration.

The entire text of required basic information can be found in the latest version of the AACT Festival Handbook and the ESTAFest Handbook

H. PROGRAM ADVERTISING

Local businesses, theatre supply houses, community theatre groups in Region II and individuals, should be contacted and asked to support the festival as an advertiser.

The VP of Festivals, with the recommendation of the Festival Vice-chair & Festival Committee, will approve the fees for the following ad sizes.

Full Page	8.5" x 5.5"
Half Page	4.25" x 5.5"
Quarter Page	2.0" x 3.0"
Business Card Name Only	

A Program Advertising Contract Sample is in Part V. Appendix. Festival Planning Committee Samples.

I. SCHEDULE

A tentative Festival schedule should be developed as soon as possible. While it may be too early to indicate specific tech in and performance times for productions, participating companies should see the general outline of the weekend. This is also vital for the Festival Planning Committee's purposes.

NOTE: There will be many revisions between original issue and FINAL copy used during the festival. This schedule and its revisions should be available both in hard and soft copy.

Performance and Technical Festival Schedule samples are available in Part V. Appendix. Festival Planning Committee Samples.

J. EVALUATION

At the conclusion, the Festival must be evaluated by selected participants and attendees. The Festival Vice-chair can request people to complete the festival evaluation form. Results of the evaluations should be included in the Final Report provided to VP of Festivals by the Festival Vice-chair.

A Festival Evaluation Form sample is available in Part V. Appendix. Festival Planning Committee Samples.

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III. INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPATING COMPANIES

ESTA reserves the right to modify this ESTA Handbook at any time (maximum of once per year).

Any failure to comply with the ESTA rules as set forth in this Handbook are grounds for disqualification.

Sample forms can be found in Part V. Appendix. Participating Company Forms.

A. PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

All participating theatre companies must be members in good standing of their respective State organizations and, in national years, must be members in good standing of AACT.

B. RULES AND FORMS

During national years, festival rules and guidelines to be observed are those issued by AACT via their Festival Handbook. These Handbooks can be obtained from the AACT website at www.aact.org. It is available upon request by emailing info@aact.org. It is recommended by VP of Festivals that every competition participant should obtain and become familiar with their own copy of the AACT Festival Handbook. These handbooks are modified every two (2) years so check with AACT routinely to ensure that the handbook currently in your possession contains the latest rules and procedural details

In the case of missing information, ESTA rules will be consulted. In the case of conflicting information, the VP of Festivals and AACT festival personnel (if required) will determine a proper path forward.

During non-national years, the ESTA rules and guidelines shown in this Handbook apply. It is strongly recommended that any organization that is participating in an ESTA competition obtain a copy of the ESTA festival handbook. The latest version of the ESTA Festival Handbook will be available in pdf format on the ESTA website. It is the theater company's responsibility to read the entire ESTAFest handbook to ensure compliance with all rules.

C. PRODUCTIONS

Host facility may notify their patrons in advance if they have reason to believe a festival performance may be locally unacceptable, or publish a disclaimer, but in no case may they refuse to allow the company to perform.

Dates and times of rehearsals and performances for the festival are set by joint agreement between the VP of Festivals, Festival Vice-chair and the host facility.

A staging area will be established (if possible) and will be used by all festival participants.

Each participating theatre company is required to furnish all sets, props and furniture required for its production. The host facility may provide standard articles of furniture or platforms if they are available and have been requested in advance.

The production shall begin after the Festival Stage Manager has turned the stage over to the director or stage manager of the production.

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A production must be performed in the same form from the state level to ESTAFest, with changes permitted only if based on adjudicator comments.

D. PRODUCTION TIMING

During a **National Year** the 10-60-10 rule will apply. Each production is allowed a maximum (10) ten minute set-up time and (10) ten minute strike time from an on-deck area. The total length of the performance may not exceed (60) sixty minutes (including introductions, scene changes, and curtain calls). Any element that brings the audience into the world of the play (music, sound, movement, lights, etc.) will begin the sixty-minute period. The complete cessation of such will complete the timing period. If a setup or strike is intended to set mood, establish character, or otherwise begin the experience of the play, it will be considered part of the sixty minute performance time.

During an **Original Works Year** the total length of the performance may not exceed (80) eighty minutes (including setup, introductions, scene changes, and curtain calls and strike) bare stage to bare stage. Any element that brings the audience into the world of the play (music, sound, movement, lights, etc.) will begin immediately after setup.

Suitable timing notices will be given to the audience prior to performances.

Appointed timekeepers will maintain and enforce time requirements for each production with respect to technical rehearsal, set-up, duration and strike.

On an National Year an allotted rehearsal time shall be a total of 80 minutes per show per AACT rules.

During an Original Works Year an allotted rehearsal time shall be determined by the VP of Festivals, based on the availability of attending shows, availability of hosting location, etc. An automatic minimum of 30 minutes will be allotted to all theaters participating in all cases. Since all shows will not use the allotted time, it is recommended that rehearsing shows be available 15 minutes prior to their scheduled time.

E. HOUSE RULES

The Festival Vice-chair and/or Host Facility may establish house rules as necessary. This includes establishing the use or prohibition of special effects, i.e., fog, haze, smoke, open flames, cigarettes, cigars, pipes and firearms. **NOTE: State legislation and enforcement rules apply.**

VP of Festivals will make available a recording of basic competition rules which can be played on a loop in the lobby of the host facility. Using this recording would eliminate the need to have the Fest Chair repeat them for each session as new patrons arrive.

In the festival opening remarks, the Festival Co Chair will salute each participating group and announce previous awards the theatre and/or the production have won on their way to ESTAFest. Each participant certificate will be given at this time.

Each Festival Vice-chair will receive from the VP of Festivals information about the next steps involved for the winning production, i.e., what they will receive from ESTA and, as required, the next steps for moving on to AACT

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F. Censorship

If is the policy to permit the widest possible range of dramatic material to be performed in a festival and does not permit censorship of any company's production

G. Waivers

Any request for a waiver, may only be granted by the ESTA VP of Festivals and must be submitted in writing prior to Festival. The solution must be maintaining equality for all companies.

H. Entry Requirements

- a) Warranty of permission to perform the property from the leasing agent and/or author, and warranty of permission to perform the property as cut or altered; warranty that the theatre has obtained all other necessary rights (Form T2). It is wise to obtain performance permission for all three levels prior to the state festival.
- b) Festival Entry/Information Sheet (Form T1).
- c) Four scripts marked as intended to be performed. Do not photocopy any scripts without proper permission from the playwright or publisher. Additional scripts may be required for interpreters or other personnel, but only with sufficient notice to the company. Note: Because of the addition of an alternate adjudicator, five scripts will be required for the National festival.
- d) Entry and registration fees as required by specific festivals.
- e) Affidavit of ESTAFest Eligibility for each actor (Form T3).
- f) Technical Information Form (Forms T4 a, b).
- g) Program information as requested by the festival.
- h) Proof of membership in state associations

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IV. State to ESTA Festival Rules

A. STATE RULES for State Festivals going to ESTAFest.

- If a show is submitted at the state level and the Festival Chair has any involvement in the show then ESTA can request one or any combo of the below.
 - a) Festival Chair can either step down as Chair and a replacement needs to be assigned by the state or ESTA can step in and assist with that state festival.
 - b) ESTA always recommends if possible having a festival committee consisting of at least 3 members.
 - c) The participating theater can recast the role in question
- If the adjudicators are assigned by the state festival chairman before knowing his/her involvement in a show going to regional then:
(Reasons for involvement: Festival Chair involvement in show, adjudicator involvement in show as director... etc.), ESTA can request one or any combo of the below recommendations.
 - a) ESTA can ask to have the new adjudicators assigned.
 - b) ESTA can ask that the alternate adjudicator be used to adjudicate said show
 - c) The alternate also be the one to ballot said show.
 - d) That an assigned ESTA representative be in while balloting is being done to assure rules are followed. The VP of Festivals will assign the representative.
- All States need to use ESTA approved adjudicators.
- All States must follow ESTA Handbook Rules.
- All States need to send their festival adjudicators list to ESTA VP of Festival ASAP and prior to festival along with their Bio's. .

If a show is submitted at the state level and wins and it comes to light after the fact that a Festival Chair has any involvement in the show then ESTA can request one or any combo of the below recommendations.

- a) ESTA reserves the right to disqualify the show and or State from the ESTAFest.
 - b) ESTA reserves the right to choose an alternate show to represent the state at ESTAFest.
 - c) If an AACT National Year, then a recommendation from the ESTA VP of Festival to the AACT VP of Festival will be made, with final determination being done by the AACT VP of Festival.
- ESTA must be notified immediately if A Festival Chair or any member of the Festival Committee has any involvement in any show at the State level that might go to ESTAFest.

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B. ESTAFest with no State Festivals.

- A. If ESTA along with the States agrees that there will only be ESTAFest then:
- 1) Each state has the option to have a state festival if they choose
 - a) If the state chooses not to have a festival they can send any show that asks to go to ESTA.
 - b) If a state chooses to have a festival they can send the winner of their festival, along with any show that wishes.
 - 2) All shows must be in good standing with their state organization.
 - 3) All shows will be adjudicated before the ESTA Festival within 18 months of ESTAFest date
 - a) By a State adjudicator (supplied by the state).
 - b) Or by an ESTA assigned adjudicator (if the state chooses not to supply the adjudicator).
 - c) The Fee for an ESTA assigned adjudicator will be _____ and be charged to _____.

C. ESTAFest.

- 1) ESTA will allow as many shows as want to attend, attend (min limit 12). This rule can be waived by the VP of Festival at anytime.
- 2) ESTA would encourage all shows attending to be Original Works, but not necessary.
- 3) Theater/Show Assignment to VP of Festival.
 - a. If the state does not have a festival then that state need to send the name of the theater and shows to the ESTA VP of Festival no later than Jan 30.
 - b. If the state chooses to have a festival then no later than 2 days after the conclusion of that state festival, the ESTA VP of Festival will be notified of **ALL SHOWS** (festival attended or not) attending ESTAFest.
- 4) If a state chooses to hold a festival, then the ESTA Handbook will be in effect, all rules and regulations will need to be followed.
- 5) All States must submit all shows going to State Level festivals along with Cast and Crew lists
- 6) A welcome letter will go out from the ESTA VP of Festivals at the State level
 - o A letter every theater will have the ability to contact ESTA if they have any question or issue about their state festival.

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V. Adjudication Process & Balloting

A. ADJUDICATION

All performances are adjudicated based on the overall production with acting and directing as the major elements. All types of productions (comedy, drama, original works, musicals, revues, avant-garde, "controversial," etc.) are acceptable entries to ESTA Festival and will be considered on a similar basis, with the best production being the one most fully realizing production values and criteria.

All entries shall be publicly critiqued by a maximum of three (3) experienced judges, selected by the ESTA Festival Committee and approved by the VP of Festivals. It is strongly recommended that at least one (1) adjudicator not be from Region II. It is also recommended that ESTA avoid using the same adjudicator(s) for more than two (2) successive years. Theatres can video and/or audio record the adjudicators' comments about ONLY their own production.

1. Criteria

- Is the acting believable and technically skillful with effective timing?
- Are the characters well interpreted?
- Does the theatre display ensemble work?
- Is the material appropriate for the theatre?
- Is the concept appropriate for the material and realized by the theatre?
- Has the structure of the production been controlled?
- Are the movements and stage pictures effective?
- Is the production well-paced?
- Do the technical elements support the overall production?
- How effective was the total impact?

2. Playwriting Criteria

- Does the story (plot) lend itself for a dramatic use?
- Is there a major thread of action or main idea?
- Does the Play have a beginning, middle, and end?
- Does the play have conflicts and problems to solve?
- Does the play keep the audience interested?
- Does the dialogue support the action of the play?

Focus is to be placed on **positive solutions** to problems the companies have with production issues by suggesting alternative possibilities. Productions may advance to other festivals; these companies should be able to benefit by incorporating the adjudicators' comments. (**Caution: the adjudicator should not redirect the show.**) Any question of rule violation must be addressed by the VP of Festival, whose decision shall be final. Adjudicators must focus attention on the performances, not possible rule violations.

The VP of Festival will decide and communicate to the adjudicators the amount of time they have for their comments to a max total of 15 min per performance. All adjudications are timed and, to the extent possible, are to be of equal length.

Panel Adjudication is used for all ESTA festivals. Three (3) adjudicators appear on stage together and are free to interact with each other. The adjudicators select one (1) of them to act as a moderator who will determine the speaking order, ensure that all adjudicators get equal time to present thoughts and impressions and help avoid any single adjudicator occupying too much time. Chairs or stools and use of microphones are suggested. The adjudication is timed, but works best when the time is bundled together for the adjudicators. Consider holding the panel adjudications after the entire session rather than after each production.

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A fourth (4) Adjudicator shall be selected by both the VP of Festivals and the Festival Vice-chair and will be on standby in case one (1) of the above three (3) adjudicators is unable to attend.

B. AWARDS

For ESTAFest held in national years, the AACT office will provide the VP of Festival hair with certificates of congratulations suitable for framing for all festival participants.

1. Required Awards

At each annual festival adjudicator will designate one (1) production as Outstanding Production. Also selected will be Outstanding Production Second Place and Outstanding Production Third Place.

Either of these productions can represent ESTA at the AACT National Festival as a competitive production if either and/or both the Outstanding Production and the Outstanding Production Second Place are not able to perform.

In a national year the Outstanding Production will represent ESTA at the AACT National Festival. From ESTA funds, this theatre company will receive an engraved plaque and a minimum stipend of \$500 to assist with travel expenses for taking their production to the location of the national festival. The VP of Festivals can recommend an additional \$500 (not to exceed a total stipend amount of \$ 1,000) be considered by the ESTA Executive Board after the final report is received, the brief summary along with details on required monies and their own fundraising efforts are received from the Recipient and the totals are tallied.

2. Discretionary Awards

The Adjudicators may grant Discretionary Awards of Merit to any individual or group who in their opinion merit special commendation. The ESTA Festival Awards of Merit (which can be multiples in each category) have recently included:

Excellence in Ensemble Acting
Excellence in Acting
Sherman C. Ward Excellence in Playwriting
Excellence in Direction
Excellence in Sound Design
Excellence in Costume Design
Spencer Charles "Spence" Watson Excellence in Technical Theater

**"People Choice Award for Best Actor "People Choice
Award for Best Actress**

****VP of Festival Award for overall theatre comradery**

3. Festival Stage Manager's Award

This award is given at the discretion of the Festival Stage Manager to the performing company that displays the highest degree of professionalism in their technical preparations.

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C. Balloting Process

The balloting process should begin after the Final adjudication and should be conducted by the VP of Festivals or Festival Vice-Chair. Before awarding the outstanding production ... etc. All other discretionary awards should be done first. Adjudicators are encouraged to discuss among themselves and arrive at a discussion. This discussion is to remind the adjudicators of the plays, actors ... etc. Following the discretionary awards the adjudicators will rank the productions 1, 2, 3 with one (1) being the most fully realized production.

ESTA Festival Handbook

VI. POST-FESTIVAL ACTIONS

A. FINAL REPORT TO AACT

In a national year, the AACTFest Commissioner is required to send a report to the AACT Office. The Festival Vice-chair must collect the required scripts for the Outstanding Production that will represent Region II at the AACT National Festival and give them to the AACTFest Commissioner.

B. FESTIVAL REPORT TO ESTA BOARD

In non-national years, the VP of Festivals is required to submit a final report to the ESTA Board of Directors no later than Five (5) weeks following the festival.

This summary should include attendance, profit/loss statement, winners, awards recipients and any other information that will be helpful to the next festival hosts. Strengths and weaknesses also should be noted together with recommendations for improvements.

VII. Responsibility for the HANDBOOK

The VP of Festivals has overall responsibility for maintaining the handbook. However, both the VP of Festivals and the Festival Committee along with The ESTA Board of Directors are responsible for the contents of the handbook. They work jointly to make it complete and useful. The ESTA Board is aware that this is a living document. Additional information, formatting, and editing to will be done periodically to make this document more useful to all persons involved. Questions and comments may be addressed to the VP of Festivals at vpfestivals@estafestival.org Please check the website each spring for an updated version of this manual

ESTA Festival Handbook

APPENDIX

VIII. APPENDIX

Festival Planning Committee Samples

- Festival Planning Process
- Income/Expense Budget
- Festival Schedules
 - Performance
 - Technical
- Program Advertising Contract
- Festival Evaluation Form
- Adjudicator Evaluation (F4)
- Adjudicator Information (C2)
- Adjudicator Contract (C3)
- Adjudicator Orientation Checklist (F2)
- Ballot Form 8s Talley (F5 86 F6)
- Timing Form (F7)
- ESTA-AACT Festival Contract

Participating Company Forms

- Submission Checklist
- Production Registration/Technical Information (T1 & T4)
- Registration and Fees
- Affidavit of Actor Eligibility (T3)
- Warranty of Company Compliance (T2)
- Production Meeting Checklist (F3)

Design Exhibition and Competition

- Entry Guidelines
- Entry Form Sample

ESTA Festival Handbook

FESTIVAL PLANNING PROCESS

Planning...

A well-planned festival is a successful festival. Mistakes will happen and snafus will occur but such minor problems will be transparent to the audience.

... to Apply

This planning needs to begin as soon as you've decided you want to host. Be sure to meet your Association's deadline for application. If no deadline exists, make this application at least 14 months prior to the anticipated festival. Most festivals occur around the same time each cycle and usually have a three or four week "window" in which they can be held. Pick open dates at your facility within that time frame and include them with your application/proposal. If it's impossible to work a festival into your production schedule, submit alternate dates. The association may be willing to switch. Most of these dates, by the way, stay the same "because we've always done it then," not necessarily a good reason. Make your application as complete as you possibly can and always include a proposed budget, proof of board and volunteer support, and a general layout of the facility, including technical capabilities. When you've received confirmation that you are hosting, follow the timeline.

... twelve months out

1. Form your Festival Committee. This group is responsible for all the planning and it works out best if your various "Chairs" are drawn from this group. For example:
 - Accommodations
 - Advertisement
 - Entertainment
 - Afterglows
 - Meals
 - Banquet
 - ETC

The bulk of this group's work occurs before the festival. Determine the various chairs and make assignments to be completed for your next meeting in three months. The core committee should probably be no more than eight or ten people. If you choose responsible volunteers and delegate, your job as Festival Chair will be much more enjoyable. Each committee Member should read both the ESTA and AACT handbooks. Update your budget.

2. Find your adjudicators. You need at least one, but three will be better. Some states use only two. That may be understandable because of cost but if they are equally stubborn and disagree on placement, it could be a long night waiting for the results. Stick with an odd number if you can. Good adjudicators are often booked at least a year in advance so make this a priority. You may choose to bring in experts from different parts of the country but many good adjudicators can be found closer to home. Remember that adjudicators need to understand community theatre but occasionally local colleges & high schools or theatres in larger cities close to you may be a resource. If you have more than one adjudicator, it typically works best if at least one is from out of your immediate area, preferably from a different state. It's also wise to choose adjudicators from different backgrounds, i.e. one whose forte is directing; another acting;

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another from academia. Be sure you have them sign a contract. A sample contract can be found in the ESTAFest Handbook as Appendix I. Your adjudicator(s) should receive an honorarium and must have all travel & lodging expenses paid. If you can pay more when the time comes, great! Note: Regional festivals must have three adjudicators, one of whom needs to be from outside the region.

3. Find hotel(s). Work with one or more hotels and reserve a block of rooms for the festival. Most hotels will discount these rates through a certain date. If you have a large enough hotel for everyone, it's often best to work with only that one for the best rates. If you are using the hotel for meals or parties, get a quote on those rates as well. Specific "head counts" usually don't have to be known until a few days before the event. The number of rooms may equate to credit for comp rooms for the adjudicators, festival representatives, or others.
4. Find restaurant/caterer. If you will be providing any food, make initial arrangements now with either a restaurant or caterer and get preliminary prices.
5. Initial Mailing. Inform all the theatres in your state (region) that you are hosting the next festival and urge them to participate. This can be a simple postcard with dates, a note that more detailed information will be coming, and contact information. Put the info on your web site as well.

... nine months out

1. Committee meeting. Have each separate chair review what has been accomplished thus far. Confirm that things are being done. It's better to address problems as early as possible if committee people are not performing. Continue to closely check your budget and update as necessary with current information.
2. Sponsors. Look for sponsors, corporate and individual, to help support/underwrite portions of your festival. If a business doesn't want to give you money, perhaps they'd supply you with logo items for a registration packet. Items such as plastic bags, pencils, pens, magnets, note pads, etc. will be appreciated in a "goodie bag" for all registrants. If the company has no suitable logo items, perhaps they'd donate a prize you could raffle during the festival. If you choose to raffle, be aware that some locales require a permit. Check with your city.
3. Determine basic price structure. Although your prices may need to change based on the number of entries you ultimately have, you should be able to establish a basic price at this time. You know facility costs, meal costs, party costs, and some incidental costs so determine your base price now. You may keep updating it until you send out the official registration forms in six months.
4. Auction items. A number of festivals have had success with silent auctions. Now is the time to start gathering items for this. Companies will often donate items for this purpose. In addition to local companies, be sure to ask play publishers and theatrical suppliers for items.

... six months out

1. Committee meeting. Once again, have each separate chair review what has been accomplished thus far. Confirm that things are being done. It's better to address problems as early as possible if committee people are not performing. Continue to closely check your budget and update as necessary with current information.
2. Invitation/Application mailing. Invite theatres to participate and include applications. Include all the following in the mailing:
 1. Festival dates
 2. Entry fee amount
 3. Deadline for application

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3. Begin preparing technical specifications for the theatre space. At the three month point you'll need to send tech specs to all entering theatres. Get started on them now if you haven't done so already. You'll need all stage dimensions; door dimensions to enter building and stage areas; light capabilities including wattage available, board manufacturer and model, number of available dimmers, type of plugs used, available floor pockets, stage lighting plot, etc.; sound capabilities including source decks available, microphones available and mic options, speakers used, additional speakers available, fly systems, traps, etc.; space available in both the "on deck" area (if not the standard 10' x 10') and other storage; directions to theatre plus address, phone numbers, and e-mail; contact information for festival chair and technical director; and any other information you think would be helpful for a cast and crew's first visit to your space. In general, just follow the ESTA Handbook.

... three months out

1. Committee meeting. Once again, have each separate chair review what has been accomplished thus far. Confirm that things are being done. It's better to address problems as early as possible if committee people are not performing. Continue to closely check your budget and update as necessary with current information.
2. Go over the technical specs and prepare to send out the final mailing to the participating companies. This mailing should include all the information you know including: order of performance, performance day and time, rehearsal day and time, all performing companies and pieces, adjudicators' names, final price structure and registration forms, all the technical information you have prepared, request for technical information and needs, and request for scripts. See "Final Mailing" checklist (Page 17). Also send all scheduling, hotel, and adjudicator information to the Festival Commission Representative at this time.
3. Determine order of performance. This is normally done by lot and often determined by either the board of directors or the festival committee. Exceptions may be made but don't do anything for one group that you wouldn't do for any other group. (This is done much earlier for regional festivals.)
4. Send out the final mailing to all participating companies. This needs to go out as soon as possible since you'll be requesting information you need as early as possible (scripts & tech information).

... two months out

1. Committee meeting. In addition to the normal review, make final preparations regarding schedule, meals and or parties, volunteer assignments, etc. These things may have to be tweaked later but you can determine the basics at this point.
2. Layout program with info received from companies. Try to include cast pictures if possible since this helps adjudicators identify people for awards.

... six weeks out

1. Mail scripts to adjudicators. If you have a large number of shows, you may wish to begin sending scripts as soon as you begin receiving them. If there are just a few shows, send them all together. In any case, give your adjudicators enough time to read them all before the festival. Check to be sure that these scripts show cuttings as the piece will be produced! Don't forget to also send copies to the Festival Commission Representative.

... four weeks out

1. Committee meeting. Do the usual stuff and begin in earnest your "troubleshooting" phase. If you've followed the guidelines thus far, troubleshooting is about all that's left.. .that and enjoying the festival.

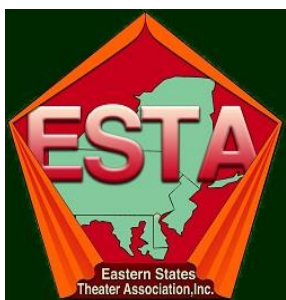
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2. Follow up with vendors. Contact the hotel(s) and confirm reservations and available space. Contact caterer(s) and confirm meal selection and give them an updated head count. Contact entertainer(s) and confirm plans. Contact trophy shop or other awards vendor to order trophies/plaques, etc. Be sure printer is on track for your program.
 3. Follow up with volunteers. Be sure your volunteers are prepared in the various areas. Plan and conduct training sessions if necessary.
 4. Follow up with adjudicators. Confirm that they have received the scripts and know their itineraries.
 5. Clean up. Determine clean-up needs and make sure the facility is at its best. You'll soon have visitors from out of town and you want their lasting impression to be a good one.
 6. Advertise. Begin advertising as much as you can afford. A large local audience is beneficial in many ways: It helps to educate them to the festival process and may get new supporters for your programs; it increases your box office receipts; it makes it more enjoyable for the companies to play to larger houses; and if you have an entry yourself, it gives you excellent moral support. Advertise, if you can, through the beginning of the festival.
- ... two weeks out
1. Committee meeting. Make sure everything that has been assigned and planned has been carried out to satisfaction. Make specific committee member assignments for festival week if this hasn't been done already.
 2. Continued follow-ups. If the four week follow-ups weren't satisfactory, follow-up again and check until completed as you wish.
- ... one week out
1. Committee meeting. Follow the Festival Week Checklist and confirm that all duties have been performed to your satisfaction and enjoy the festival!

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FORMS

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ESTA Festival Registration and Fee Form

Complete form and make all CHECKS payable to ESTA and send checks to:

VP Of Festivals
PO Box 4378

Wilmington, De 19807-0378

To pay online: (complete form and email to vpfestivals@estafestival.org) and pay online at www.estafestival.org

SECTION 1		PARTICIPANT THEATERS COMPLETE THIS SECTION					
Theater Name						State	
Contact Person							
Production Title 1		Production Title 2					
Production Title 3		Production Title 4					
Mailing Address							
City		State		Zip Code			
Phone (H)		Phone (C)			Phone (O)		
Email							
Attach list of all participants & roles for SuperPass or Performance Sessions		# Shows and / or People	X	Amount	=	Total \$	
Production Entry Fee			X	75	=		
Discount Participant SuperPass for Cast or Staff Members (includes all events, workshops and awards banquets)			X	75	=		
Performance Session ONLY fee (for any member of a cast or crew not purchasing a SuperPass, the \$20 individual performance session price applies.) <i>This will allow you into your session only</i>			X	20	=		
Workshop Pass <i>(for those not purchasing a SuperPass)</i>			X	20	=		
Individual AfterGlow Ticket – XXXXXXXX <i>(for those not purchasing a SuperPass)</i>			X	20	=		
Awards Banquet – XXXXXXXX <i>(for those not purchasing a Super Pass)</i>			X	25	=		
				Total	=		

Note: You may list up to four (4) productions on one form. To enter more than four please complete additional form.

SECTION 2 PRODUCTION PARTICIPANTS:

Please list all participants associated with your production and the type of fee paid. Participant Passes are for those participating in your production. All others must purchase a Non Participant SuperPass or Session Ticket. If you need more space please use back of this form.

Cast/Crew Member Name	Role (i.e. Actor, Director, Playwright, etc.,)	SuperPass	Session Only

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Form Submission Checklist

Forms for Entering Companies

		Submit To	When should it be submitted? Insert deadline set by VP of Festival
Entry Information Form	T1	VP of Festival or Designee	
Applicable Fee		VP of Festival or Designee	
Warranty of Company Compliance	T2	VP of Festival or Designee	
Affidavits of ESTA Actor Eligibility	T3	VP of Festival or Designee	
Program Information		VP of Festival or Designee	
Technical Information	T4 (a,b)	VP of Festival or Designee	
Scripts (as Cut)		VP of Festival or Designee	

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ESTAFest Entry Information

T1

This form or a similar form from the festival must be completed and submitted to the festival chair prior to the stated deadline

Festival Level		Festival Dates	Submitted by
State of	Region #	/ /	Theatre
		Month/Dates/Year	Submission Date

ESTA/State Membership: Yes No

Theatre Information

Theater Name _____
Contact Person _____ Position _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (O) _____ (C) _____ (H) _____
(F) _____ Email Address _____

Production Information

Production Name _____
Author/Composer Name(s) _____
Performance Rights Secured From _____
Estimated Set-Up time _____ Estimated Run Time _____ Estimated Strike Time _____

Entry/Production Representative

Entry/Production Representative Name _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (O) _____ (C) _____ (H) _____
(F) _____ Email Address _____

Technical Representative

Technical Representative Name _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (O) _____ (C) _____ (H) _____
(F) _____ Email Address _____

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Warranty of Company Compliance

T2

Festival Level		Festival Dates	Submitted by
State of	Region #	/ /	Theatre
		Month/Dates/Year	Submission Date

This representation is a guarantee to the Eastern States Theater Association (hereinafter ESTA) and Festival Host(s) by _____ (hereafter Theater)

- a(n) nonprofit corporation
 unincorporated organization
 other

Whose legal notice mailing address is

C/O Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

As and for partial consideration for the entry of its production in the ESTAFest for the

State of _____ Region # _____

The Theater hereby warrants that:

- a) It has secured performance rights and paid royalties for this production to the licensing agency listed below and, if needed, has secured written permission to cut the script _____ (initials)
- b) It has obtained all necessary music rights for art, photographic (still, movie, video), visual, and others that may be utilized in the production, that are not in the public domain, and holds ESTA, its agents, employees, and subcontractors harmless and free from all financial responsibilities connected with the production and the acquisitions of rights _____ (initials)

Licensing agency (ex. Samuel French)

Website: _____

If agency is a individual or not well known

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

In Witness whereof, the theater by one of its officers, executes this warranty under the express formal authority of the theater's governing board, on the _____ day of _____ 20_____

ESTA VP of Festival

Signature

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ESTAFest Affidavit of Actor Eligibility

T3

Festival Level		Festival Dates	Submitted by
State of	Region #	/ /	Theatre
		Month/Dates/Year	Submission Date

To be filled out by individual representing entering theater company



THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE SENT TO THE APPLICABLE STATE
ESTAFest CHAIR NO LATER THEN TWO (2) WEKS PRIOR TO THE
FESTIVAL DATE

To be filled out by actor given to the individual representing entering theater company



I, _____ hereby certify that

1. I am receiving no payment (direct or indirect) for my participation in ESTAFest as a member of

In the production of _____

2. I am no an active member of Actor's Equity of SAG/AFTRA at this time and will not become an active member of Actor's Equity of SAG/AFTRA as long as I am involved in ESTAFest production eligible for competition.

Signature

Print Name

Date

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Technical Information

T4a

Festival Level		Festival Dates	Submitted by
State of	Region #	/ /	Theatre
		Month/Dates/Year	Submission Date

Technical Representative

Technical Representative Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (O) _____ (C) _____ (H) _____

(F) _____ Email Address _____

Production Information

Production Name _____

Author/Composer Name(s) _____

Performance Rights Secured From _____

Estimated Set-Up time _____ Estimated Run Time _____ Estimated Strike Time _____

Number of headset needed and their locations _____

Cast Size Male _____ Female _____

Technical Requirements

– Please detail any specials you intend to use including instruments types, preferred hang location, approximate focus location, and weather you will be providing it (them) or if you would like festival host to. Please note any equipment you plan to bring.

Sound Needs -- Please detail any equipment you will need such as cassette desk, CD player, computer for USB drive, off stage Microphone(s) etc. Please note any equipment you plan to bring.

Continued on T4b

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Technical Information

T4b

Set Specifications -- Please detail any soft goods needed including trim and opening. Please attach a floor plan and sectional view of your set if available.

Fly Space Requirements -- Please detail the number of fly lines you want. Include your preferred location, their intended use, and the approximate load weight.

Special Equipment Needs -- Please detail any special effects equipment you may be bringing (especially those involving smoke, fog, or combustible material).

Other Special Considerations -- Please note if your production uses firearms or other weapons (real or simulated) or uses any type of open flame (including matches, candles, etc.).

Any equipment not approved by the Festival Technical Director, prior to your arrival, may be prohibited from use in the theatre.

Personnel Requirements

Please mark your personnel requirements on the grid below. Note IIIa/ due to contractual agreements in some theatres, certain positions may have to be staffed by house personnel.

Light Board Operator	<input type="checkbox"/> not Needed	<input type="checkbox"/> We will provide	<input type="checkbox"/> Please provide for us
Follow Spot Operator 1	<input type="checkbox"/> not Needed	<input type="checkbox"/> We will provide	<input type="checkbox"/> Please provide for us
Follow Spot Operator 2	<input type="checkbox"/> not Needed	<input type="checkbox"/> We will provide	<input type="checkbox"/> Please provide for us
Sound Board Operator	<input type="checkbox"/> not Needed	<input type="checkbox"/> We will provide	<input type="checkbox"/> Please provide for us
Fly Line Operator	<input type="checkbox"/> not Needed	<input type="checkbox"/> We will provide	<input type="checkbox"/> Please provide for us

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Form Submission Check List Forms for Festival Chairs & Hosts

		Action to be Taken
Festival Information	C1	Submit to ESTA VP of Festivals as soon as chair, date, or host is known. Update as needed.
Adjudicator Information	C2	Submit to VP of Festival at least six weeks before festival.
Adjudicator Contract	C3	Adapt, complete, and provide to adjudicators as soon as selected.
Program Inserts	C4	Include in festival program or otherwise share with audience.

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Festival Information

C1

Notify the ESTA VP of Festival as soon as the Festival Chair or the date of the festival is known. Submit this form even if incomplete, then notify the ESTA VP of Festival when further information is determined.

Festival Level		Festival Dates	Submitted by
State of	Region	/ /	Theatre
	#	Month/Dates/Year	Submission Date

Festival Information

Theater Name _____
 Contact Person _____ Position _____
 Mailing Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone (O) _____ (C) _____ (H) _____
 (F) _____ Email Address _____

Festival Hoist Group _____

Mailing Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone (O) _____ (C) _____ (H) _____
 (F) _____ Email Address _____

Festival Location (if different from Host)

Mailing Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone (O) _____ (C) _____ (H) _____
 (F) _____ Email Address _____

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Adjudicator Information

C2

Submit this form as soon as adjudicators are known. Please notify the ESTA VP of Festivals if any adjudicator cancels or is replaced. Help in locating adjudicators is available through the ESTA VP of Festivals.

Festival Level		Festival Dates	Submitted by
State of	Region #	/ /	Theatre
		Month/Dates/Year	Submission Date

Adjudicator Information (minimal of 3 adjudicators required unless otherwise approved by VP of Festivals)

1. Adjudicator Name _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (O) _____ (C) _____ (H) _____
(F) _____ Email Address _____

2. Adjudicator Name _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (O) _____ (C) _____ (H) _____
(F) _____ Email Address _____

3. Adjudicator Name _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (O) _____ (C) _____ (H) _____
(F) _____ Email Address _____

Alternative Adjudicator Name _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (O) _____ (C) _____ (H) _____
(F) _____ Email Address _____

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ESTAFest Adjudicator Contract

C3

Submit this Signed form as soon as adjudicators are known. Please notify the ESTA VP of Festivals if any adjudicator cancels or is replaced. Help in locating adjudicators is available through the ESTA VP of Festivals.

ADJUDICATOR CONTRACT

This contract between **Eastern States Theater Association** (hereinafter referred to as "Host") and _____ (hereinafter referred to as "Adjudicator") is fully binding to both parties to this Contract subject to the statutes of the state of _____

1. Adjudicator hereby agrees to provide adjudication of all entries for the event known as **ESTAFest** ("Festival") at the time and place specified. This festival is scheduled for _____. Host expects the Adjudicator to arrive in on _____.
2. Adjudicator is required to read all scripts provided prior to viewing the productions, to attend an orientation meeting prior to the opening session of the Festival, to present public adjudication immediately following each production, and to participate in the selection of awards.
3. Adjudicator has read, understands and agrees to abide by the Adjudication Guide of the current *AACTFest Handbook on National years (odd years) and ESTA Handbook on off years (even years)*.
4. At the conclusion of the Festival, the Host shall pay the Adjudicator an honorarium of **\$ 200.00** for services stipulated above.
5. The Host will provide lodging at the headquarters hotel for the nights of _____ to _____ pay the Adjudicator's reasonable meal expenses or a food allowance while in route and during the festival for meals not covered by festival registration; provide round trip transportation as mutually agreed, in advance of travel, from the Adjudicator's home, and transportation during the Festival to and from workshop and performance sites; and provide complimentary admission to all social and meal events that are part of the regular festival registration.
6. The Adjudicator agrees to furnish the Host a publicity photo and bio for purposes of promoting the festival no later than _____
7. This agreement cannot be assigned or transferred. Either party may terminate this agreement herein by giving a minimum of 3 week prior written notice to the other party
8. This Contract for services will be considered an offer until signed by both parties thereto. This offer may be withdrawn by the Host if not signed by the Adjudicator and returned to the Host on or before _____

Signed _____
Adjudicator

Signed _____
ESTA, VP of Festival

Date _____
Email _____
Phone _____
Address _____

Date _____
Email _____
Phone _____
Address _____

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Program Inserts

C4

Festival Level		Festival Dates	Submitted by
State of	Region #	/ /	Theatre
		Month/Dates/Year	Submission Date

STATEMENT OF CENSORSHIP

ESTA policy permits the widest possible range of dramatic material to be performed in a festival of the Eastern States Theater Association and does not permit censorship of any company's production.

PRODUCTION TIMING

The total length of the performance may not exceed eighty minutes (including introductions, scene changes, and curtain calls). Any element that brings the audience into the world of the play (music, sound, movement, lights, etc.) will begin the eighty-minute period. The complete cessation of such will complete the timing period. Each production is allowed a maximum of eighty minutes to Set-up Preform and strike from an on-deck area.

GUIDELINES FOR ADJUDICATORS

Plays are to be adjudicated based on the overall production, with acting and directing as the major elements. All types of productions (comedy, drama, original works, musicals, revues, avant-garde, "controversial," etc.) are acceptable entries to the festival and must be considered on a similar basis, with the best production being the one most fully realizing the intent of the material and the concept for the show. Design and technical competence is to be given consideration as to its effectiveness as an integral part of the total production experience.

Any and all statements made by adjudicators are strictly their own opinion and do not necessarily represent the opinions of ESTA or any other organization with which they may be associated.

CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION

- Is the acting believable and technically skillful with effective timing? Are the characters well interpreted?
- Does the company display ensemble work? Is the material appropriate for the company?
- Is the concept appropriate for the material and realized by the company? Has the structure of the production been controlled?
- Are the movements and stage pictures effective? Is the production well-paced?
- Do the technical elements support the overall production? How effective was the total impact?

The preceding information is excerpted from the *ESTAFest Handbook*. The complete Handbook must prevail in case of disagreement or confusion.

The text of this insert is available in a basic unformatted text (.txt) file that can be copied into whatever software you use for producing your program. The file can either be downloaded from the AACT website (aact.org/handbook) or obtained by email from the AACT Office.

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Recognition Awards

C5

Festival Level		Festival Dates	Submitted by
State of	Region #	/ /	Theatre
		Month/Dates/Year	Submission Date

Below is a suggested list of awards. There is neither a minimum nor a maximum number to be given for any award. Other awards may be given if the adjudicators agree that there is some other achievement deserving special recognition. It is best to avoid giving awards that state or imply "best_____." All special recognition awards are optional and no award needs to be given in a category where the adjudicators believe none is deserved. A complete list of available awards are in the ESTA Handbook

- Outstanding Performance
- Outstanding Set Design
- Outstanding Costume Design
- Outstanding Lighting Design
- Outstanding Sound Design
- Outstanding Makeup and/or Hair Design
- Outstanding Choreography
- Outstanding Musical Direction
- Outstanding Ensemble Performance
- Outstanding Direction
- Sherman C Ward Excellence in Playwriting
- Spencer Charles "Spence" Watson Excellence in Technical Theater

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Festival Adjudication Forms

		Action to be Taken
Adjudicator Orientation Meeting Checklist	F2	
Production Meeting Checklist	F3	
Adjudicator Evaluation Forms	F4	
Adjudicator Ballots	F5	
Ballot Tally Forms	F6	
Timing Forms	F7	
Final Report	F8	

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Adjudicator Orientation Checklist

F2

Attendee Information

Festival Commissioner
Festival Chair (if not connected with a festival production)
Festival Assistant/Co-chair (if not connected with a festival production)
Adjudicators
Adjudicator Host(s)
Timekeepers
Technical Director (or designee)

Areas To Be Covered

- Introduce all participants.
- Explain the function and responsibilities of each position.
- Determine the speaking area for the adjudication.
(This should take into account a good sight line for the timekeeper's time warning.)
- Ensure microphone and lighting are available.
- Confirm the length of the adjudications and the method of signaling "time."
- Confirm that the adjudicators have received and understand the *ESTAFest Handbook, Adjudication Guide*.
- If panel adjudication, discuss methodology (See *ESTAFest Handbook, Adjudication Guide*).
- Discuss and confirm additional awards that will be considered.
- Explain and Review the Adjudicator's Ballot with the adjudicators and explain the agenda of the balloting session.
- Distribute Timing Form ([ESTAFest Form F7](#)) to the timekeepers and explain its use.
- Explain adjudicator evaluations will be submitted online, copies will be emailed to adjudicators by the AACT Office.
- Reinforce that adjudicators may not discuss any entered production with anyone else before the awards ceremony, except they may discuss entered productions with each other if no one else is present, and during awards deliberations. **Adjudicators may not discuss ranking of productions before the balloting process**
- Ask for and answer any questions.
- Tour the adjudicators room, restrooms, etc.
- Determine the seating for the adjudicators and timekeepers.

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Production Meeting Checklist

F3

Each festival is unique, as is each performance site. Adapt this list to local conditions before proceeding. A tour of the entire facility is usually desirable to establish the overall spatial relationships. If offered, it should precede the production meeting.

Use this checklist to determine the following 11 needs.

Company	Performance Session Number
City	Performance Session Start Time
Production	Performance Number (in Session)
Name of Director	Estimated Start Time
or Designed Spokesperson	Rehearsal Dat/Time
	Load-In Time Load Out Time

Area To Be Covered

Who will call Go and Stop from the 10' x 10'? _____

What is the estimated length of the setup? _____

What is the estimated length of the performance? _____

What is the estimated length of the strike? _____

How does the show _____
begin?

Will there be a curtain call (which is included in time)? Yes No

How does the show end? _____

Will it begin immediately after setup ? after waiting the full 10 minutes?

Note: time will be given for all company members to take places after set-up is completed. before performance time begins. Walk through the timing process for setup and strike, as well as the start/stop rules for the performance

Notes:

Will the main act curtain be used? Yes No _____

Is AC power needed on stage? Yes No _____

Will any actors use the house for entrances/exits? Yes No _____

Will anyone be barefoot on stage? Yes No _____

Will any food and/or liquids be used on stage? Yes No _____

Will microphones or lighting specials be used? Yes No _____

Will any real or simulated weapons be used? Yes No _____

Will matches, candles, or other open flame be used? Yes No _____

Will pyrotechnics or other special effects be used? Yes No _____

Will smoke, fog, or haze machines be used? Yes No _____

Will a company member be prompting or calling the show? Yes No _____

Remind company not to remove their spike tape during strike.

If they are not the first show in a Performance Session, remind them to be prepared for an early start.

Any questions?

Have they received information on dressing room assignment and access? Yes No

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Adjudication Evaluation **F4**

*This is a **SAMPLE** of the adjudicator evaluation Questions.*

General Information

Adjudicator Name _____
 _____ State _____ Region Number _____
 Festival Dates _____ Number of Production Adjudicated _____

Adjudicator Evaluation

Please rate the adjudicator on the following criteria. Please include written commentary on the back of form.

Focused on the producing group, acknowledging its dignity and capability.	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Effectively communicated by establishing an appropriate rapport.	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Was open-minded, honest, and responsive to the group's work.	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Opened up new awareness and alternative possibilities in a constructive manner.	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Was clear, thorough, and appropriately specific.	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Showed an understanding of community theatre.	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Was knowledgeable and provided accurate, critically relevant responses.	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Adhered to criteria as outlined	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor

Would you like this person to adjudicate at another festival? ___ Yes ___ No (if NO, please explain on the back of form)

Are you affiliated with an entered company? ___ Yes ___ No

Adjudicator Evaluator

Evaluator's Name _____ Date _____

I certify that I have seen and heard at least 80% of the adjudicator's responses for the above named festival

Signature _____ Name (print) _____

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Festival Forms	F5
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Festival Level		Festival Dates	Submitted by
State of	Region #	/ /	Theatre
		Month/Dates/Year	Submission Date

Name _____ Ballot Number _____

Please rank all productions with "1" being the most fully realized, "2" being next... etc.
Give completed ballot to Festival Chair

	Show Name (in order of performance)	Ranking	Recommended for international Festival
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			

ESTA recommends shows for international festivals. Generally speaking, most international festivals want a 40- 60 minute show that is movement or music oriented and/or tells a universally familiar story that can be understood and enjoyed by a multi-national audience that may not speak English. A production does not have to advance to be considered, but quality should be a factor. If you believe a production in this festival is suitable for an international festival please check the appropriate column

Signature _____

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Ballot Tally	F6
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Festival Level		Festival Dates	Submitted by	
State of	Region #	/ /	Theatre	
		Month/Dates/Year	Submission Date	

					Ballot#		
Show Name (in order of performance)	Adjudicator Name	Adjudicator 1 Ranking	Adjudicator 2 Ranking	Adjudicator 3 Ranking	1st X	2nd X	3rd X
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							
11.							
12.							
13.							
14.							
15.							

Signature _____ Date _____
VP of Festival

ESTA Festival Handbook

ESTAFest Timing Form

F7

Festival Level		Festival Dates	Submitted by
State of	Region #	/ /	Theatre
		Month/Dates/Year	Submission Date

	Show Name (in order of performance)	Setup Time	Performance Time	Strike Time
1.				
2				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11 .				
12 .				
13 .				
14 .				
15 .				

Any element that brings the audience into the world of the play (music, sound, movement, lights, etc.) will begin the eighty-minute performance time. The complete cessation of such will complete the timing period. If a set-up or strike is intended to set mood, establish character, or otherwise begin the experience of the play, it will be considered part of the sixty-minute performance time.
Each production is allowed a maximum of eighty minutes to set-up time, strike time and preform

Signature _____ Date _____
VP of Festival