

# **Opera Warwick Submissions Policy**

2022-23

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## Overview

Hello there! If you're reading this document because you have the tiniest interest in putting a show together with Opera Warwick, then you're in the right place!

This document should explain everything you need to know about submitting a show with us, from the slots available, what you need to submit and how the process will work. If you do have any other further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the OpWa Exec who will be able to help you no matter how small an issue it may be.

If the Exec includes a Productions Manager, then that person would usually manage the Panel process. This year, we do not have a PM, and therefore, if you need anything, please contact:

OpWa President:	Megan Livermore	<a href="mailto:megan.livermore@warwick.ac.uk">megan.livermore@warwick.ac.uk</a>
Musical Director:	Han Zhao	<a href="mailto:han.q.zhao@warwick.ac.uk">han.q.zhao@warwick.ac.uk</a>

OpWa holds submissions to allow any group of its members to come forward as a production team and create a show. Submissions exist to decide which productions should go ahead for a given slot. The aim of the submissions process is to get the best out of the teams submitting; allowing them to show why their submission should be awarded the slot whilst also giving the team and the society the chance to think through the practicalities and ensure the feasibility of the production. This may sound scary but please don't worry, the process will be a supportive one and the Exec will be able to give you a hand along the way!

## Submissions Timeline - Term 2 Main Theatre Show 2022-2023

Shortlist released - July

Deadline for draft packs - 4th September at midday.

Deadline for submissions - 25th September at midday.

Panel meeting - Week 1 of term, exact date TBC

## **What is a “Pack”?**

A pack is basically a document that you and your team will put together, containing information all about your submission. You will find later in the document what you need to put in a pack.

## **What is “Panel”?**

Panel is a meeting that happens after pack submissions. It is a chance for teams to present their submission to a group of society members and associates (e.g. representatives from orchestra, arts centre, tech crew, etc). The deadline for pack submissions occurs approximately a week before Panel, to give the panel a chance to read the pack. After presenting, the panel will ask some questions to the team. The panel will then deliberate and vote on the submissions for a given slot.

## **What slots are available?**

We have 2 slots a year in the Warwick Arts Centre to put on established Operas. One of these is in Theatre and one in the Studio (see below for more information). These slots are 3 show runs, 3 nights Thursday - Saturday. When choosing which slot you want to go for, think carefully about how your chosen show can work in the venue you are staging it in.

## **Tell me more about the venues!**

### THEATRE

Submissions from Term 3, Show performed in Term 2 the following academic year.

The theatre is a 550-seater auditorium with a large permanent stage, orchestra pit and flying capabilities. Great for: Spectacle, large cast shows, orchestral/rock operas



### STUDIO

Submissions in Term 2, Show performed in Term 3.

The studio is a flexible space with no fixed stage or seating that can sit up to 150. It also has two balconies and is kitted out with both lights and sound equipment.

Great for: Intimacy, immersion, great for acoustic, folk or jazz Operas and heavy acting shows



Note that instead of putting on a full opera in the Studio, we will also happily consider putting on a staged concert.

## **A Note on Production Team Roles**

Before submitting a pack, you should have ensured that major production roles you require have been filled for your submission. If you have difficulty, let the Exec know.

### **Examples of production team roles:**

Producer, Director, Musical Director, Choreographer/Movement Director, Marketing Manager, Publicity Designer, Diversity and Outreach Officer, Costume Designer, Hair and Make Up Designer, Fight Choreographer, Accent Coach, Lighting/Sound/Set Designer, Stage Manager

\*Please note that Directors of a submission for a given slot cannot be on another submission for that slot\*

You are also encouraged to find or think about the possibility of having assistants for production team roles, especially for key roles on large scale shows. Co-Producers and Assistant (Music) Directors are greatly encouraged for OpWa submissions.

With regards to technical crew members for your submission you are encouraged to find your own team members in conjunction with Tech Crew. Again, if you are struggling to find members you are strongly advised to get in touch with the Exec or the Tech Crew President. You are required to meet with the Tech Crew President to discuss your pack before submission, you should do this as early as possible.

The Tech Crew President 2022-23 is Jon Kowalski.

\*Please note that Technical Managers must be chosen with the Tech Crew exec's approval to ensure adequate experience and safety\*

### **Some examples of technical roles:**

Technical Manager, Set Designer, Lighting Designer, Sound Designer, Stage Manager, Video Designer

## **Shortlist**

To put on a show, you should select one from the OpWa shortlist. The shortlist is a list of shows for a given slot that teams can pick from.

The shortlist will be revealed a few months before the slot, on all our communication channels and social media. Ask the Exec if you don't have access to it.

The shortlist is produced by the members of the Exec: mainly the Musical Director, along with assistance from a Production Manager or a President who is not making a submission. Further assistance may be sought from experienced OpWa alumni.

If you wish to put on a show that is not in the shortlist then you **MUST** discuss this with the Musical Director in the exec, but normally you should pick a show from the shortlist. The Exec reserves the right to turn down any show ideas not on the shortlist without giving reason.

When writing the shortlist, these are the criteria we look for:

Hard constraints (must have):

- English libretto
- Vocal parts match OpWa members
- Orchestra part matches OpWa orchestra
- Not too difficult vocally or orchestrally
- Everyone has to have a part (chorus)

Soft constraints (should have):

- Sound good
- It needs to be fun!
- Production team preference
- Show is in public domain

## **General Pack Information**

If you intend to submit a pack, you **MUST** inform the Exec President and Musical Director, and send them a draft pack at least 3 weeks before the submission date deadline.

The President will then announce the submissions to the rest of the society, using our usual communications channels. By keeping our members informed, we can ensure that the process is transparent and fair.

In the 3 weeks before the deadline, all submissions will get the chance to get feedback on the draft pack from the Exec. A PDF copy of the final pack must then be emailed to the President by the deadline to be considered.

An example pack is available on request.

## **Pack Requirements**

Packs should be kept as brief as possible. There are specific areas where description of artistic vision is required and these should be used to express the ideas and enthusiasm of the Submissions Team. Facts should be presented, however, simply without decoration.

The pack **MUST** be no longer than 40 pages for Theatre and 25 pages for Studio. You may attach makeup and costume breakdowns/mood boards/designs, budget, set ideas/plans, etc, as appendices which will be counted outside of your page limit. Your cover page and biographies will also be outside of your page limit.

Please arrange your pack using the headings below.

### Cover Page

- Example publicity mock up for the show
- Show and writer(s) names
- Slot name you are submitting for

### Biographies

- Name, Year, Course and Role of each team member
- Each team member should give a short biography detailing any relevant experience
- Role Clarifications - If you have any particularly unusual roles you may wish to clarify these or if you have anyone sharing a role or assistants you may wish to discuss and clarify these relationships
- Any opportunities for nurturing future production team talent?
- If any of your team have many other commitments (such as other shows, time consuming exec roles etc.) please make these known and demonstrate how they plan to manage their time

### The Show

- Plot summary
- List of musical numbers
- Character breakdown summarising the different roles and vocal ranges
  - Note that OpWa is committed to inclusion, and as such we do kindly insist on gender-blind casting where musically possible. This is ultimately down to the director and musical director to figure out.
  - It should also be noted that every person who auditions **MUST** be offered a role in the chorus.

### Artistic Vision

- Director's vision and aims of the production
- Why should OpWa do this show, how does it suit the composition of our members? How does it complement our previous work?
- Why is your show right for the Theatre/Studio slot?
- Choreographer/Movement Vision (if applicable)

## Music

- Musical vision for both vocals and band/orchestra
- Band/orchestra requirements

## Timetable

- Rough rehearsal timings/plan, from the audition process through to the show.
  - In OpWa tradition, you should include an auditions workshop, occurring at least a week before formal auditions. This gives a chance for everyone to sing through and learn the music as a group. This is very important for those with less access to rehearsal space / previous music theory education.

## Safeguarding

- Sensitive themes and how you plan to handle them
- Safeguarding and inclusivity plans (for cast, crew and audience)
- Ensuring health and safety (especially if you have any fights, lifts or special props etc.)

## Marketing, Diversity and Outreach

- Marketing strategies, including key timings
- Fundraiser/charity plans
- Diversity and outreach plans (How will you ensure a diverse cast and crew? How will you ensure the show is representative of those groups it portrays? How will you ensure extensive audience outreach?)

## Technical Requirements

- Set design
- Lighting design
- Costume, Hair and Makeup design
- Any special properties? (such as guns etc.)
- Any other technical requirements

## Appendices

- Proof of rights **\*VERY IMPORTANT\***
- Set Ground Plans
- Costume sketches and breakdown by character
- Mood boards, further publicity mock ups etc.
- Budget (example layouts can be given upon request)
  - You must produce a breakdown of all incomings and outgoings (including Arts Centre venue hire fee and production rights) always using real figures and sources where possible.
  - You must remember to put in at least a 10% contingency in your budget's expenditure as an emergency fund. The budget should air on the side of being a generous reflection of expected costs before the contingency is added.
  - You should produce a table showing an after sales profit/loss for 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90% and 100% audience turnout.



- OpWa's ticket sales are typically 75% concessions and 25% full price ticket sales. Please reflect this in your ticket sales calculations.
- Breakeven levels above 50% are strongly discouraged, but please get this as low as possible! Please show the % turnout required to breakeven.
- You discouraged to spend more than £5000 for Theatre and £2000 for Studio
- Make sure to think of ALL possible costs you could incur (down to printing for rehearsals, hair clips, makeup wipes, postage, WAC credit card charges etc.)
- Consider sustainability when sourcing

REMEMBER TO PROOFREAD YOUR SUBMISSION AND MAKE SURE IT IS CLEAR AND APPEALING TO READ!

## **Panel**

The submissions Panel meeting should be held ideally 10 weeks before the first performance of a slot but no less than 8 weeks before. The deadline for packs shall be at least 5 days before. These must be circulated to panellists and the society via email at least 3 days before.

There should be a minimum of 5 voting panellists present.

An individual CANNOT vote if they:

- are involved in a submission team
- intend to audition for a principal role in the show
- are the Chair of the meeting

A Tech Crew Representative (agreed upon with Tech Crew exec) and a representative from the Arts Centre Technical Department (normally the Technical Director) should be present. The Tech Crew rep should be a voting member whereas the Arts Centre rep should not, though they should voice their opinion to the panel before voting as should the Tech Crew rep.

All members of the society are welcome to attend the Panel meeting and ask questions, regardless of if they are eligible to vote. It is important that we keep this process fair and transparent, and also share valuable knowledge so that future production teams and execs may learn.

## **How Panel Will Be Run**

In the absence of a Productions Manager, the panel this year will be chaired by the President who will act as an unbiased individual without a vote. They will ensure all teams are treated fairly and that the panel keeps to time as best as possible.

The Panel will consist of the following sections:

- Briefing - The panel process should begin with the PM welcoming panellists, briefing them on the day and reminding them of the 'Panellist Guidelines'.
- Welcome and Presentation – The submission team will then be welcomed in. The PM will remind the team of how the panel will run and get the team to introduce themselves. The team will then have a maximum 15 minutes to do a short presentation for their submission.
  - If key members are missing from a submission team at panel, this may reflect negatively on your submission as the panel will not be able to ask them any questions.
- Questions - The panel will then ask any questions they have. The PM will lead this. This section should take no longer than 45 minutes, meaning submission teams are kept for no more than an hour.

- Other Submissions – We then repeat for each submission.
- Post Submissions Discussion – When all the submissions have been seen the PM will lead a discussion amongst the Panel on each Submission in turn, considering its strengths and where it could be improved. Constructive feedback will be noted down by the PM to feedback to submission teams. This should last no longer than 30 minutes per submission.
- Conditions – In light of the Post Submissions Discussion the panel must consider if they wish to apply any conditions to a submission if it were to be awarded the slot, to help make the production successful. The power of the Submissions Panel to make conditions is limitless, but should be reasonable. The PM will be responsible for deciding whether a condition is reasonable and will be responsible for the enforcement of the condition.
- Voting – The panellists will then vote by secret ballot using the Single Transferrable Vote system in which they list the submissions in order of preference. It must be noted that RON (Re-Open Nominations) is an option in every submissions panel.
- Results and Feedback - The Producer of each Submission Team should be called by the PM immediately after the Panellists have made their decision. The PM will make arrangements to give the Submissions Teams feedback as soon as possible after the Submissions Panel.

### **Guidance for Panellists**

Panellists should consider each submission fairly, taking into account the following:

- Panel is about getting the best out of panellists, not tearing them down.
- Personal preference should not influence your vote.
- The submission should be suitable for the composition and capabilities of OpWa members.
- The submission should be appropriate for the performance space.
- The submission should be practical within the available time, budget and resources.
- The Submissions Team should demonstrate appropriate ability, capacity, commitment to and enthusiasm for their submission.
- Previous unsuccessful Submission of a show should have no bearing on its re-submission.
- What is said in the room stays in the room, it is not discussed outside of Panel.

## **RON Panel**

RON = Re-Open Nominations

A RON panel is a positive thing. It means that the submissions were not quite ready to be awarded the slot, so rather than rushing the process and affecting the final production, time can be given to provide feedback. Then, the submission has the chance to become the best it can be. The modified pack will then have to be submitted again.

If a RON panel has occurred, then the pack and panel timings alter slightly and no longer strictly adhere to the timings laid out earlier in this document. Adjustments will need to be made to give the submission team enough time to act on feedback, or for new packs to arise. Plans for the show will also need to be shifted to provide enough time to rehearse for the successful production.

An email must be sent by the President announcing the re-opening of submissions.

One week must be given for teams to submit or resubmit packs.

For the Panel, two new voting members who were not on the previous panel should be found.

## **Extenuating Circumstances**

Though this document must be followed under every reasonable circumstance, if there are justifiable extenuating circumstances the PM and Exec reserve the right to make certain allowances to a submissions process as long as all submission teams are treated fairly and the actions are in the best interest of the submissions process and the society.

## **A Final Note**

Well done on navigating such a wordy document! Please don't get bogged down by all the jargon and wordiness, the Exec will be there to support you along the way and help you to be the best you can be, so go for it! The sky's the limit!

This Document was written by OpWa Acting Productions Manager Term 3 2020: Jacob Buckley.  
Adjustments for the 2022/23 year were written by President 2022-23: Megan Livermore.