



underbelly

AT THE EDINBURGH FRINGE

**PERFORMER
INFORMATION
2024**

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INDEX

- 3 Introduction
- 4 What We Are Looking For
- 5 Hub Map
- 6 Applying
- 8 Our Venues & Spaces
- 12 Our Deal With You
- 16 Other Costs to Consider
- 20 Accessibility
- 21 Application Form
- 21 Untapped Award
- 22 Timeline & Key Dates

Please note that much of the information in this document is based on information from Underbelly at Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2023. We will update this information as we continue the planning process for Fringe 2024, in line with government guidance. If there is any information that is essential for your show, please double check it with the Programming Team on applications@underbelly.co.uk

If you require this information in a different format, email applications@underbelly.co.uk



INTRODUCTION

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe is the largest arts festival in the world, and Underbelly is one of its biggest operators. We have been presenting an eclectic and exciting mix of theatre, comedy, circus, children's shows, cabaret, music and more since 2000 and in 2023, we presented over 150 shows in 20 venues across 4 sites; George Square, Circus Hub, Cowgate and Bristo Square.

We programme across all genres in spaces ranging from Daisy, our 42-seat venue in Bristo Square to the 1000-seat McEwan Hall. The original home of Underbelly, Cowgate, continues to host acclaimed theatre and comedy and our Circus Hub on the Meadows brings together the best circus and cabaret from the UK and around the world. Of course, we also have Udderbelly – the eye-catching purple cow venue in George Square – that has been grazing in Edinburgh since 2006. Our dedication to programming challenging, original work and our brand reputation as a fun, progressive and dynamic venue has kept Underbelly at the forefront of the Fringe for the last 20 years.

'...Underbelly is one of the most exciting, atmospheric spaces on the Fringe and, increasingly, one of the most important'
The Guardian

In 2023, our venues hosted over 300,000 people, gaining almost a thousand 4 & 5-star reviews, awards and nominations. We are looking forward to 2024, when we expect to have a range of fantastic shows and more opportunities for our audiences to see a varied and exhilarating programme at our brilliant venues.

This document is filled with information on how to apply to bring your show to Edinburgh Festival Fringe with us in 2024.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Underbelly is committed to programming the best of new talent and new writing; it is why Underbelly has soared on the Fringe scene.

We are looking for productions that suit our spaces and simultaneously excite and intrigue audiences.

We spend time curating what we feel is the best programme possible from the applications we receive and work closely and collaboratively with performers and producers to ensure they get the most out of their Fringe run.



HUB MAP

These are spread across four sites, all within a short walk of each other:



This distance is an approx. 10 minute walk



APPLYING

We programme on a rolling basis – mainly from December to April– across all genres.

We schedule up to 10 shows per day in each of our spaces, and shows can start from 10am and finish as late as 3am. Many shows will run for the full duration of the Fringe but it is possible to programme shows for shorter runs.

Shows usually run for around 60 minutes. In most of our spaces, we allow 15 minutes for get-in and 15 for get-out, which includes audiences in and out.

Please provide as much relevant information about the show as possible in your application, including links to any video clips, scripts, reviews and images you may have. If you have any questions about the application form or you wish to send us any additional information via email, please email:

applications@underbelly.co.uk

We consider applications from productions at all stages of development and are happy to come and see performances elsewhere or work in progress/scratch performances. If you wish to invite us to a performance of your work, please email:

applications@underbelly.co.uk

If you are at early stages and want us to read your initial ideas and your plan to develop these, that is also completely acceptable, just make sure to be clear about your development plan and timeline within your application.



OUR VENUES & SPACES

Our 2024 venue information is yet to be fully confirmed – the information from 2023 is below...

Please note that venue information can be subject to change from year to year. If you have any specific technical requirements, please ensure that you double-check the space information with the Programming team ahead of being confirmed for a time slot in one of our spaces.

We run venues across 4 different sites in Edinburgh during the Fringe. A list of our spaces and their capacities is below.



Bristo Square



Cowgate



George Square



Circus Hub

Underbelly Cowgate
Our first-ever site at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and the original Fringe home of Phoebe Waller-Bridge's *Fleabag* and the sketch comedy superstars, *Foil Arms and Hog* – Underbelly Cowgate – is unlike any other venue at the Fringe.

Comprising of 6 spaces and multiple bars spread over four floors of disused bank vaults, with entrances on both Cowgate and Victoria Street, Underbelly Cowgate is open from 10am to 5am.

The multiple atmospheric venues are technically equipped to a high standard.

Underbelly Cowgate houses the following spaces:

- Big Belly** (capacity: 60)
- Delhi Belly** (capacity: 60)
- Iron Belly** (capacity: 60)
- Belly Dancer** (capacity: 70 / 120)
- Belly Laugh** (capacity: 90)
- Belly Button** (capacity: 123)

Underbelly Bristo Square
Underbelly Bristo Square is at the heart of the Fringe. It has a beautiful outdoor bar at the centre with the awe-inspiring McEwan Hall creating an impressive backdrop for visitors who venture to our wide range of venues in this area.

Previous performers in our largest venue, McEwan Hall, include *Five Guys Named Moe*, *Nina Conti*, *Monét X Change*, *Gravity and Other Myths* and *Cirk La Putyka*.

Underbelly Bristo Square houses the following spaces:

- Daisy** (capacity: 42)
- Clover** (capacity: 60)
- Dexter** (capacity: 60)
- Buttercup** (capacity: 76)
- Jersey** (capacity: 90)
- Friesian** (capacity: 115)
- Dairy Room** (capacity: 118)
- Ermintrude** (capacity: 196)
- Cowbarn** (capacity: 276)
- McEwan Hall** (capacity: approx. 1000)

Underbelly George Square
A bustling garden in the centre of Edinburgh's Old Town with a gorgeous pasture area featuring outdoor bars, food concessions and two venues, Underbelly George Square is open early 'til late.

It is home to our iconic upside-down purple cow venue which has hosted *SiX The Musical*, *Rob Madge: My Son's A Queer*, *Rachel Parris*, and *The Gruffalo with Julia Donaldson*.

Underbelly George Square houses the following spaces:

- Wee Coo** (capacity: 60)
- Udderbelly** (capacity: 410)

We may add some new spaces to our programme for 2024 and we have worked with a number of site-specific shows in the past. If your show doesn't fit in one of the spaces listed above, it's worth sending us as much information as possible about the show and the type of space you are looking for.

Underbelly's Circus Hub on the Meadows
Underbelly's Circus Hub on the Meadows launched in 2015 and consists of 2 venues specifically designed to house the best in international circus and cabaret at the Fringe and meet the requirements of more technically advanced productions.

On a sunny day in Edinburgh there really is no better place to be than sitting at our outdoor bar on the Meadows, surrounded by talented acrobats and performers.

Circus Hub has been a Fringe home for *La Clique*, *Circus Abyssinia*, *Circa*, *Briefs*, *Camille O'Sullivan* and *Courtney Act*.

Underbelly's Circus Hub houses the following spaces:

- The Beauty** (capacity: 500)
- The Lafayette** (capacity: 550)

OUR DEAL WITH YOU

What Underbelly provide:

- 👤 Support from the Underbelly team, with many years of Fringe experience
- 👤 A strong, recognisable venue identity for visitors and audiences
- 👤 An overall festival marketing campaign to promote our sites and shows to audiences
- 👤 Performance space with a house technical rig, including lighting and sound equipment
- 👤 Front of House, Box Office and Security Staff
- 👤 Technical support staff
- 👤 Dressing room space before and after your show time
- 👤 Show listing on Underbelly Website
- 👤 Inclusion in the Underbelly Mini Guide
- 👤 Computerised box office linked to the Fringe Society and cross-selling with other major Fringe venues: online, by phone and in person
- 👤 Up to 4-hours of Technical Rehearsal prior to your first performance
- 👤 Entry into other shows in Underbelly venues, subject to availability
- 👤 Discounts at our bars and a limited number of passes for Abattoir, our private members' bar

What you provide:

- 👤 First and foremost, a great show!
- 👤 Fringe programme entry information
- 👤 Marketing plan and Press strategy, including a press release
- 👤 Publicity Materials (including flyers and posters – subject to venue approval)
- 👤 Prompt payment of all deposits, Fringe registration and marketing contra fee by the deadlines given prior to the Festival
- 👤 Technicians to operate your show – or we can provide operators for £25 + VAT each per show
- 👤 Completed technical questionnaires, risk assessments by given deadlines
- 👤 Public liability insurance policy – we take out a full public liability policy for the venue but we need companies to have a policy of £5million to cover the dates you are rehearsing and performing within our venues

Venue rental charges:

We charge a facility fee for the rental of the venue and our services. This is whichever is higher of:

- 👤 A split of your box office takings (usually 40%)
- 👤 A minimum guarantee (usually based on what Underbelly's split would be in the case of expected minimum attendance, usually calculated at an average of 40% capacity across the festival)

Our split is calculated as a percentage of your gross box office if you are not VAT registered, or of your net box office if you are VAT registered. We ask for a deposit against the guarantee ahead of the Fringe and deduct the rest of the venue rental fee owing to us from your gross box office proceeds at the end of the festival.



Example deal:

This is an example minimum guarantee for a 60-seat venue for a non-VAT registered company.

To calculate the deal for a different space, simply change the capacity in the calculations. If you are VAT registered, deduct VAT from your potential box office income at step 3.

Work out your average ticket price. For a 60-seater, this would likely be around £9.50.

- 1 Calculate the number of performances you'd be doing
 - a. For Underbelly Cowgate venues, this would likely be 24 (the 25 days the venue is open for, with one day off)
 - b. For other Underbelly venues, this would likely be 26 (the 27 days the venues are open for, with one day off)
- 2 Calculate CAPACITY x AVERAGE TICKET PRICE x NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES to give your estimated gross potential box office income, **e.g. $60 \times £9.50 \times 26 = £14,820$**
- 3 Calculate your gross box office income at expected minimum attendance (40%), **e.g. $24 \text{ (which is 40\% of capacity)} \times £9.50 \times 26 = £5,928$**
- 4 The guarantee to Underbelly would be Underbelly's share (usually 40%) of expected minimum attendance, **e.g. $£5,928 \times 0.4 = £2,371.20$**
- 5 The deposit (payable in monthly installations over February, March & April) is usually 50% of the guarantee, **e.g. $£2,371.20 \times 0.5 = £1,185.60$**

Please note that Underbelly Ltd. is a VAT-registered company so we must charge VAT on all fees and charges.

Discussing other deal structures:

The above is our standard deal structure that applies to most companies. If this doesn't work for your show, it is worth getting in touch with us, particularly if you are a company coming to the Fringe for the first time, to explain what you may find challenging about this deal structure and to ask if there are any alternatives we can offer.



MANDATORY COSTS

The following charges are mandatory costs to consider that are applied to all companies who perform with Underbelly during the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Some of these costs are required as upfront payments before the start of the festival, whilst other charges can only be calculated from box office earnings after your season has concluded. These details are still being confirmed for 2024. However, for 2023, the costs were as follows:

Fringe Registration

Underbelly will register your production with the Fringe society once an offer is accepted (you should not register yourself). This means you will be listed in the Fringe brochure and on the edfringe.com website. You can also take advantage of their participant services. As a guide, here were the 2023 fees:

Early bird (early registration deadline): 6+ performances	£295.20 (£246 + VAT)
Full rate: 6+ performances	£393.60 (£328 + VAT)
3 - 5 performances	£204 (£170 + VAT)
1 - 2 performances	£96 (£80 + VAT)

Marketing Contra

This cost covers support from our Marketing and Press teams, including the operation of our press office and the coordination of show signage at our venues. Your show will also be included in the Underbelly Mini Guide, a pocket-sized guide that is widely distributed around our venues and is very popular with our audiences. This cost was £600 (£500 + VAT) in 2023.

Box Office Commission

The Fringe Society charge a box office commission of 4% + VAT of gross box office sales for all tickets sold through their terminals to cover box office administration and credit card charges. Underbelly charges a commission of 3% + VAT of gross box office for all ticket sales through our Box Office channels to cover the same.

Public Liability Insurance

We take out a full public liability policy for venues but companies must take out their own third-party liability insurance to use spaces. Please note that the contractual party details must match the party listed on the insurance documents. We require public liability insurance that has a minimum limit of indemnity of £5 million and it must cover all performance and rehearsal dates.

OTHER COSTS TO CONSIDER

PPL PRS Music Licensing

PRS and PPL are charged based on the amount of copyrighted music used in your show. The PRS charges for 2023 were up to 4% + VAT of your gross box office. There may also be an additional PPL charge on top. All shows must complete a PPL PRS form provided by the Fringe Society by the deadline in August. The form will assess what music you are using and apply a rate based on this. The form must be completed even if no music is used in your show.

You can find more information about music licensing at Fringe here: edfringe.com/take-part/putting-on-a-show/music-licensing

Foreign Entertainers Tax

If any of your company members are not UK residents for tax purposes, you may be liable to pay Foreign Entertainers Tax. This tax obliges Underbelly to withhold a percentage of the gross box office receipts if they exceed a certain amount as determined in writing by the Foreign Entertainers Unit to us. If you do not apply for a reduction letter from HMRC, we are obligated to withhold 20% of gross box office once it passes the minimum threshold.

You can apply for a reduced tax payment by submitting an FEU8 form. Your expected venue rental fee should be included as an expense on this form. It can take some time for this to be processed by HMRC and to confirm any updated withholding tax rate with us so please ensure you submit this as soon as possible ahead of the festival.

You can find more information for international performers here:
edfringe.com/take-part/putting-on-a-show/international-performers

Technical Operators

We can provide technical operators to operate your show if required, charged at £25 + VAT per person per performance and technical rehearsal. Please note that due to the busy nature of the venues, it will not be the same operator for every show, as our operators work on a rotating schedule. However, we will try to ensure that all operators who work on your show have a good knowledge of the cues and show requirements. If your show has a large number of cues or is complex in terms of how the cues fit with the show structure or script, you may wish to use your own operator.

Technical Equipment

We can assist you with hiring any technical equipment or instruments you may need that aren't already in the venue in advance of the festival. We would hire these from our preferred technical supplier and pass on the cost to you at settlement. We can sometimes split the cost of equipment across multiple shows if there are other companies in the same venue that require the same equipment. Our technical staff can arrange these hires in the weeks before the festival. Please note that any equipment hired through Underbelly will be subject to a 15% + VAT commission fee.

Merchandise

It is possible to sell merchandise at our venues as long as this relates to your show and company. You will have an opportunity to tell us about this ahead of the Fringe so our team can set this up on our payments system and discuss the most suitable location for merchandise sales for your venue. Any merchandise sold at Underbelly venues will be subject to a 15% + VAT commission fee.



ACCESSIBILITY

Most of our spaces have step free access available but, as some are in older existing buildings, unfortunately not all are step-free. We are happy to discuss ways to make your performance accessible and we encourage conversations about arranging extra performances in step-free spaces.

We recommend scheduling one of your performances as a Relaxed Performance; Relaxed performances are shows that are specially designed to be welcoming for people of all ages with learning disabilities, cognitive challenges, autism, sensory impairments, dementia, and anyone else who may prefer a relaxed environment. We would be happy to discuss how you can achieve this.

We would also encourage conversations about including BSL-interpreted performances, captioned performances and audio-described performances within your Fringe run. You can find more information on accessible performances on the EdFringe website.

If you or anyone in your company has specific access requirements, please let us know. We will work to facilitate these requirements in our venues and are happy to support you in trying to make your Fringe experience as smooth as possible.

The FringeCast series breaks down the different elements to consider when putting on a show at Edinburgh Festival Fringe. You can watch this series here:

[youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZsgtvvtBlH7GBEFXZmogUZ-hLqosH2dYU](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZsgtvvtBlH7GBEFXZmogUZ-hLqosH2dYU)

For more information regarding accessibility throughout Edinburgh Festival Fringe, please email:

equalities@edfringe.com

APPLICATION FORM

To apply to perform at Underbelly for Edinburgh Fringe 2024, please head to our website here:

underbellyedinburgh.co.uk/perform-with-us

Please contact the Programming Team with any further questions:

applications@underbelly.co.uk

UNTAPPED AWARD

The Untapped Award has been run in partnership with New Diorama Theatre for four years now. It is a nationwide search to find and support some of the best early or mid-career theatre companies who want to present work at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Each award-winner receives a package of support including an excellent venue deal, cash investment and marketing and press campaigns.

Previous winners include the Fringe First-winning Max Percy and Friends with This Is Not A Show About Hong Kong (2022) and The Stage Edinburgh Festival Award- winning Queens of Sheba by Nouveau Riche (2018).

Applications to be considered for the Untapped Award 2024 will be open from Friday 20th – Friday 15th December 2023. You can find more information on eligibility criteria and how to apply at New Diorama Theatre's website here: <https://newdiorama.com/for-artists/edinburgh-untapped-award>

TIMELINE & KEY DATES

This timeline is intended to provide guidance on what to expect at each part of the registration and pre-production process. The following dates are under review for 2024 and may be subject to change – please email the Programming Team if you have any questions.

January 2024	Monday 8th – Fringe Registrations Open
February 2024	Thursday 22nd - Fringe On-Sale 1
March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wednesday 6th – Early Bird Discount Registration DeadlineEarly Venue Deposit Instalments and Discount Registration Fees Due
April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Thursday 4th – Fringe On-Sale 2Wednesday 10th – Fringe Programme Registration DeadlineFringe Registrations temporarily closeFringe Brochure Proofing and listing sign-offDate TBC - Fringe Brochure Advert Booking and Artwork DeadlinesVenue Deposit Instalments, Fringe Registration and Marketing Contra Fees Due
May 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Thursday 9th - Fringe On-Sale 3Underbelly Mini-Guide entry deadline, proofing and sign-off.Final Venue Deposit Instalment due

June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Monday 3rd – Fringe Registrations re-open for Online-Only ListingsWednesday 12th – Fringe Programme LaunchDate TBC - Technical Information Submission Deadline
July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Pre-Production Planning with Underbelly Technical ManagersDate TBC - PLI Submission DeadlineGet-ins and technical rehearsals for shows
August 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">31st July-26th August - Underbelly venues open for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe

