

1. PREAMBLE

The purpose of this document is to create an HTG Inc Audition Policy that provides a point of reference and relevance to all involved in the Process, and to ensure fairness and transparency of The Highlands Theatre Group's Audition and Casting Policy. The Committee, in accordance with HTG values, wishes to ensure that the enjoyment of its Members is at the forefront of all Productions, with an emphasis on inclusion. As a Group we strive to achieve a standard commensurate with professional theatre at an amateur level, serving both our patrons and the performers who choose to be a part of The Highlands Theatre Group. HTG does not pre-cast or hand pick cast for shows, with all Roles available for Audition. In the interests of fairness and to ensure the best possible Cast is selected, HTG does not allow a Director to solely cast a show instead requiring a Panel. The Group believes that this is the best way to prevent favouritism, nepotism, or pre-casting.

A copy of this Policy document is to be available at Auditions for both Auditionees and Panel Members.

2. DEFINITIONS

Auditionee means the individual that has presented themselves for consideration for a Role within the Production being cast

Audition Panel means the group selected by the HTG to cast the Production

Cast means the Ensemble (including all Main and Minor Characters) selected by Audition for the Production

Creative Vision means the way in which the Director intends to present the Production

Director means the person upholding creative control of the Production

Production Manager means the person assigned by the HTG Committee to represent and communicate with them

HTG means The Highlands Theatre Group Incorporated

HTG Committee means the Committee as determined by the AGM in December of each year, charged with the responsibility for the direction and financial management of the Group

Role means a part within the Production eligible for Audition

Main Characters (Principals) are those identified by the Writer and/or Director as individual Roles crucial to the storyline

Minor Characters (Ensemble) are those identified by the Writer and/or Director to be supporting of Main Characters but not crucial to the storyline (e.g., the Chorus in a Musical)

Production means the Musical or Play intended to be performed

Script means the text document provided as the dialogue and stage directions of the intended Production

3. INFORMATION NIGHT

- 3.1. Once a Production has been chosen by the HTG Committee and publicly announced, the Committee shall advise a date for an Information Night.
- 3.2. The Information Night will be attended by the Director and serve as an opportunity to outline their intended Vision for the Production along with any casting requirements, especially any that may differ from or not be restricted by the Script (i.e., where a Script does not require a specific age or sex, but the Director by way of Creative Vision, has elected to restrict the requirements of a Role).
- 3.3. The Director will advise and provide specific Role Audition requirements (dances, movements, songs, etc.). Script excerpts/songs (as applicable) to be presented at the Audition will be either advised or made available to Auditionees at the Information Night. Official notice of the Audition and Production dates, times and location will be provided at the Information Night, if not beforehand.
- 3.4. Auditionees will be provided with or directed to an Online Application Form which must be completed in full to be considered for a Role. If a hard copy form is provided, it must be presented to the Panel on the Audition Day.

4. AUDITIONEE CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

Auditionees will be asked prior to Auditions to acknowledge and accept the following.

- 4.1. Decisions made by the Audition Panel are final and no further discussions will be entered into. No critiques are offered to Auditionees and should not be requested.
- 4.2. Whilst every attempt will be made to cast the Production on Audition Day, a call back day has been set aside for further Auditions. You will be contacted should your attendance be required.
- 4.3. All Auditionees will be contacted, and the Cast announced within 3 days of call backs. If this is not possible Auditionees will be advised of any delay.
- 4.4. To participate in this Production, you must become a Financial Member of The Highlands Theatre Group Inc, (Annual Fee to contribute to insurance) and pay a one-off Production Fee to help cover costs specific to this show (e.g., administrative, scripts, refreshments).
- 4.5. If cast, you agree to attend all events as detailed in the Production Schedule and arrive on time. You must advise on your Audition Form of any dates where you are unable to attend due to earlier commitments, holidays, etc, that may affect the Panel's decisions in considering Roles. Failure to do so may result in being replaced in the Production.
- 4.6. You give permission for photos, video and audio containing yourself to be used without remuneration or compensation in publications and presentations conducted by HTG inc. These may be used for advertising material on the HTG Website, social media and print media and remain the property of HTG Inc.

- 4.7. Resharing of official HTG posts aside, you must not share any Production details on social media without the approval of the Production Manager.

5. AUDITION PANEL

- 5.1. The HTG Committee will for each Production appoint appropriate members of the Audition Panel.
- 5.2. The Audition Panel will be comprised of a minimum three (3) persons, including the Director and at least one (1) currently serving Committee Member who possesses the necessary skills required of a Panel Member. The Director may be the Committee Member if they are currently serving.
- 5.3. If the Production is a Musical, the Panel will also include the Musical Director and Choreographer.
- 5.4. A minimum of one Audition Panel Member must be an external, independent person (i.e., not auditioning, or a member of the HTG Committee) and of an experience level appropriate to the intended Production.
- 5.5. All Panel Members will ensure they are familiar with the Production and the Director's Creative Vision. The Production Manager will provide a copy of the Script/Score prior to Audition Day.
- 5.6. The HTG President or nominated HTG Committee Member (both must be non-Auditionees) will sit in and monitor Panel deliberations. Their role is to oversee and ensure all is done fairly and consistently in line with this document. Though they will not interject or comment unless asked to, they have the right to raise a question if they feel a matter requires addressing.
- 5.7. From time to time, HTG Committee Members may observe proceedings, however they will locate themselves away from the Panel and Auditionees. HTG Committee Members observing are ensuring compliance with HTG policy and/or educating themselves only and will in no way influence the decisions of the Panel.
- 5.8. Any Panel Member who has a conflict of interest in relation to an Auditionee must declare so and shall remove themselves from discussions when the Auditionee in question is discussed. They may listen but not be involved in the decision-making of that Auditionee.

6. AUDITION PROCESS

- 6.1. The Director, in consultation with the Audition Panel, shall decide whether Auditions are open, closed (everyone seen separately), or a combination of both (small groups). If open (with other Auditionees present in the room) Auditionees when not auditioning will be asked to remain quiet and respectful of fellow Auditionees.
- 6.2. The Director, in co-operation with the Production Manager, shall be the Audition Co-ordinator, being responsible for the order and process of the Auditions. This in no way prevents other Panel Members from asking questions as applicable of Auditionees.
- 6.3. To perform a valid Audition, Auditionees will be required to present to the Audition Panel the following:

For Plays: An excerpt from the Play (selected by the Director and pertinent to the role auditioned for). This may be with either a non-Auditionee or other Auditionee where a Character's interaction is considered crucial to the selection process.

For Musicals: An excerpt as above (if applicable), plus

- A song selected by the Director / Musical Director and pertinent to the Character auditioned for. The Panel may require Auditionees to sing an additional song which may either be of the Panel or Auditionee's own choice, at the discretion of the Panel.
 - Dance / movement skills (as required by the Choreographer) if the Character is a Main Character. Alternatively, a simple general movement workshop may be conducted by the Choreographer to gauge Auditionee's abilities. These will typically be conducted in group sessions during the Audition Day.
- 6.4. Each Auditionee will be provided equal time and opportunity to present their Audition, taking into consideration whether they are auditioning for a Main or Minor Role.
 - 6.5. Upon completion, the Panel may ask questions if deemed necessary to ensure a complete profile is available for consideration.
 - 6.6. The Panel shall seek confirmation from all in attendance that no other person wishes to present an Audition. Once confirmed that no further Auditions are to be presented the Audition Process is considered closed and no further Auditions will be accepted.

7. RECORDED AUDITIONS

- 7.1. Upon completion of all "in person" Auditions, the panel will review any recorded Auditions received.
- 7.2. The Panel (in consultation with the HTG Committee) may accept an Audition via video recording where an Auditionee has indicated an interest in auditioning but due to exceptional circumstances is unable to attend the Audition Day.
- 7.3. The requirements for a recorded Audition remain as detailed in section 5 and the Panel reserves the right to contact the individual with questions if required to make an informed decision.
- 7.4. All recorded Auditions must be received prior to the advertised commencement time of the "in person" Audition day. Any recorded Auditions received after this time will be considered ineligible and not considered for a Role.
- 7.5. All recorded Auditions must be accompanied by a complete Application Form to be considered eligible.
- 7.6. Recorded Auditions will be afforded the same priority and weight as an "in person" Audition. "In person" Auditionees will be advised if the panel has accepted any recorded Auditions.

8. CALL BACKS AND CASTING

- 8.1. Once all Auditions are reviewed, the Panel will be provided with adequate time to deliberate free of external influence and cast the Production.

- 8.2. Should the Audition Panel feel they require more information, they may request call backs. These will already have been noted in the Production Schedule and occur within a few days of Auditions. The same rules described in Section 6 apply for call backs, with the exception that the Panel may specifically require Auditionees to act / sing / dance with each other so to observe compatible combinations, an important aspect of casting.
- 8.3. In the event of the Panel's inability to reach a consensus, the Director may cast a deciding vote.
- 8.4. The Panel will present the HTG Committee with the intended casting list for distribution to the Publicity Officer and HTG webmaster for publishing at their discretion. This serves as notification to The Producers (HTG Committee) that casting is complete.

9. INABILITY TO COMPLETE CASTING

- 9.1. In the event the Audition Panel is unable to assign a Role due to no Auditionees fitting required criteria or other reasons, the Panel will defer to the Production Manager / HTG Committee for the next steps to be taken.
- 9.2. The HTG committee may authorise readvertising for specific Roles, and / or calling of an individual who has not auditioned, provided the Panel can provide evidence that no Auditionee is suitable for the Role.
- 9.3. Prior to utilising 9.2, the Audition Panel must consider if an Auditionee could be utilised and review if any Auditionees deemed not appropriate for the Role could be reconsidered in the spirit of community amateur theatre.
- 9.4. If the Audition Panel determines the Role to be Minor, the Director in consultation with the Audition Panel may elect to re-allocate the Role to an Auditionee already cast in another Minor Role.
- 9.5. An inability to complete casting should not normally prevent rehearsals from commencing.

10. NOTIFICATION OF SUCCESSFUL CASTING

- 10.1. The Production Manager is responsible for co-ordinating notification to successful Auditionees. This role may be delegated to the Director. Notification may occur via telephone; however official notification is to be in writing (e.g. e-mail).
- 10.2. Should any successful Auditionee immediately decline the Role cast, the Panel should be informed and asked to reconvene. A review of all other remaining unsuccessful Auditionees and re-casting should take place. The HTG Committee shall be kept informed of all developments.
- 10.3. Following notification to successful Auditionees and acceptance of Roles, unsuccessful Auditionees will be advised by the Director (or delegate).
- 10.4. No Main Characters will be announced until the Cast has been finalised.
- 10.5. In the event a Main Character is not cast, 10.4 does not apply.
- 10.6. Unless a legitimate reason exists not to, public notification will normally occur within fourteen (14) days after casting is complete.

- 10.7. To preserve the integrity of the Process, the Panel is unable to discuss unsuccessful Auditions with Auditionees. Should anyone wish to discuss the decision-making of the Panel, they are to be directed to the Production Manager.
- 10.8. Notwithstanding section 10.7, Directors may provide feedback to unsuccessful Auditionees if requested by the Auditionee if considered helpful to the individual and will not be used to criticise HTG.
- 10.9. Should any successful Auditionee, after Auditions, be required to step down from a Role, the Panel should be informed and asked to reconvene. A review of all other remaining unsuccessful Auditionees should take place or a call for further Auditions. The HTG Committee shall be kept informed of all developments.

11. COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT/INTERVENTION

- 11.1. The HTG Committee are The Producers of any HTG Production. As such the Committee, on behalf of HTG, maintain ultimate control of the Production to ensure compliance with HTG values, integrity, and reputation.
- 11.2. HTG Committee involvement in the Audition Process will be via the President, Production Manager, or their representative. Committee Members not part of the Audition Panel will refrain from becoming directly involved in the Process, but rather make any opinions known through the appropriate channels.
- 11.3. In exceptional circumstances, the HTG Committee may override a casting decision of the Audition Panel / Director but must occur via a Committee Meeting and a majority vote. In these circumstances a majority decision is preferred, but should Committee Members not be available, a response from a minimum of three currently serving Committee Members will be deemed to be a "Committee response". To reduce delays Committee Members will advise prior to the Audition Day if they are unavailable for contact for Audition discrepancies.
- 11.4. All HTG Committee Members should endeavour to make themselves available for Information Night and Audition Events recognising that they form the leadership of HTG. Committee members may also be requested by the Audition Panel to assist in administration duties (e.g., handling Audition Forms, listing of Auditionees and intended Roles, etc.).

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