



RISER PROJECT

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: RISER PROJECT 2020!

DEADLINE FRIDAY JUNE 14, 5:00 PM EST



What is RISER Project?

RISER Project is a **collaborative producing model** for theatre artists and companies to create and present new work. It was developed by Why Not Theatre in order to address some of the challenges of producing independent theatre in Toronto, including: the high cost of production, difficulty building audiences, and inefficient use of resources and infrastructure. For the 2020 round of RISER, we are seeking applications for the Theatre Centre BMO Incubator Space (approx. 55 seats) to be presented from **March 30 to May 10, 2020**.

The model also brings together a community of **Senior Partners**: theatre companies that have larger capacity, operating funding, and established producing track records. The Senior Partners contribute resources and support to the model, as well as offering mentorship and beginning long-term connections with RISER artists, which Why Not helps to facilitate. For more details about previous productions and the history of the model, visit the RISER Project website at **riserproject.org**.



How will it work?

As part of the RISER model, we bring together a group of artists/collectives/companies that are each creating a production. We then create a **repertory performance** schedule, which allows all the companies to share a single space, taking turns to perform their shows. The model covers the shared umbrella costs of **venue, technical production** and **basic publicity**, and the individual companies are responsible for their own **artist fees** and other costs, such as **additional marketing** and **set builds**. As a result of sharing resources, past RISER productions have been able to **produce their shows for as much as 33% less** than if they were producing on their own. The Senior Partners on RISER also make investments to the model, which further supports the production of work. As companies involved in supporting these artists at the early stage, Senior Partners are then encouraged to build relationships for future collaboration, such as presenting a remount of a RISER production in their own season, or providing creative feedback and input through the process.

Who is RISER for?

RISER Project is designed for individual artists or collectives who work on a **project basis**, and don't have an administrative infrastructure. The Artists must have prior producing experience in Toronto (eg. Artists who have previously produced shows at festivals like SummerWorks, or independently produced their work with little to no money, and have demonstrated a commitment to creating work). There is no specific age range, but we're looking for artists who have some professional producing and creation experience, and also don't have consistent access to production at established venues. In the spirit of the shared resource model, the participants in RISER must be **generous, flexible, collaborative**, and **curious**, as well as **willing to share** and **work in new ways**.

What do you get as part of RISER?

- 3 weeks of rehearsal space (spaces will be assigned on the basis of needs and availability)
- A shared Lighting Designer (selected and paid for by RISER)
- A RISER Production Manager/Technical Director (selected and paid for by RISER).

Note: You will still need your own PM and TD for managing your show's specific technical and building needs; the RISER PM/TD focuses on coordination and management of the RISER model itself. A venue technician will execute all technical elements once they are in the space, including running the show, alongside your stage manager.



- A shared Publicist (selected and paid for by RISER)
- 2-3 full days of tech time in the performance space (actual schedule and hours TBC)
- Technicians and crew for load-in, load-out and run of shows (selected by RISER)
- 6 to 10 public performances in a repertory schedule at The Theatre Centre BMO Incubator
- The Theatre Centre Box Office ticketing system and Front-of-House staff (ticket prices and policies will be set by RISER, in consultation with the each RISER company)
- 100% of Net Box Office Revenues
- Ongoing coaching, assistance, and consultation with Why Not Theatre staff in all areas of producing and management at individual & group meetings.

What don't you get as part of RISER?

Since this is a **shared producing model**, not a festival, the primary responsibility for the audience outreach and ticket sales is on the individual companies in the show. Each company is expected to **create their own marketing and outreach strategies**, and work towards achieving their box office goals. That said, one of the strongest rewards of this model has been the support that can come from other participant companies in sharing audiences. RISER will be able to provide bundle deals and cross-promotional opportunities, that have helped past productions cross-pollinate audiences for greater success. RISER is designed to offer resources to support full productions, with full technical elements for each show. You are expected to provide your **individual show's production support staff** to manage this.

Sounds great, what do I need to get in?

For the next round, we are looking for RISER participants who are:

- Looking to produce a full production of a show that is already under development, or has plans for development over the next year (2019-2020).
- Don't receive operating funding, and whose work is project-based.
- Completely available for tech and performances in the period between **March 30 to May 10, 2020**. The complete schedule will be announced in the fall of 2019. Due to the shared nature of the model, we cannot accommodate any availability conflicts.
- Willing to work in a generous and collaborative way.
- Can commit to 4-5 All-RISER meetings between August 2019 and May 2020, exact times TBD.



How do I apply?

To apply to RISER 2020, we ask participants to put together a letter (no more than 2 pages long) indicating the following:

- **Who** you are as an **artist**.
- What have you done **prior** to this - please provide artistic and producing experience, including scale of budgets, past audience attendance and producing context (festival, independent, presented).
- A **brief overview** of what your production is, who is involved (confirmed and expected), where it is in the development process, what you anticipate the budget will be, what your current funding plans are.
- **Why** you and your project should be a part of **RISER**.

You may include a one-page resume of the lead artist/producer (optional). **Do not** include scripts, multimedia samples of the show, or any other supplementary materials.

Upload your application [HERE](#) by the deadline of **Friday June 14, 2019 at 5:00pm EST**.
Selected 2020 RISER Project artists will be notified by **Monday July 1, 2019** via email.

How are RISER applications evaluated?

Participants in RISER are selected by a jury comprised of former participants, overseen by Why Not Theatre, who collectively evaluate all applications we receive. **RISER is intended to provide more opportunity for artists to take on risks in producing their work, therefore we are not focusing on the artistic merit of the production itself.** We are focused on the artist themselves, who they are and why they need a chance to show their work.

The evaluation criteria are **Need** (whether RISER is essential for your show's trajectory), **Diversity** (of culture, language, form, content, etc), **Feasibility** (financial, logistical, and technical), and **Experience** (what you have done before this).

Questions?

If you have questions about applying for RISER, please contact:

Tom Arthur Davis, Associate Producer - tom@theatrewynot.org