

Light The Blue 2025

Call-Out for Proposals – Young Artist Programme

Aberdeen Performing Arts is looking for proposals for Light the Blue 2025, our annual multi-artform festival for and by young people. The next festival will take place from 1st – 15th June 2025 across Aberdeen with a programme of theatre, dance, music, visual arts, film and more.

Light the Blue 2025 will invite artists and audiences to step **into the unknown** – abandoning expectations, exploring fresh ideas and embracing new experiences.

For more information on the Light the Blue, see our 2024 reflection page here:
www.aberdeenperformingarts.com/light-the-blue.

What are we looking for?

We are inviting submissions from individuals and groups of young people aged 5 – 25 who work creatively across Aberdeen, Scotland and beyond to be a part of our Young Artist Programme.

Please read all information below before applying, ensuring your idea is something we might be looking for. Links to apply can be found at the end of the document.

We are inviting proposals for the following three events/strands:

Family Arts Day – Sunday 8th June 2025 *for performers and artists aged 5 – 12*

We're looking for performers and artists aged 5 – 12 who would like to present something at our Family Arts Day taking place at His Majesty's Theatre and Union Terrace Gardens, as well as other indoor and outdoor locations on Sunday 8th June 2025.

Building on the success of 2024's Family Arts Day, the event will return with a programme of mostly free events for primary school aged children and their families. The event will take place across indoor and outdoor locations with pop-up, studio and interactive performances by young and professional artists; art installations and drop-in sessions; taster workshops; backstage tours; co-creation events and more.

You might propose:

- a short pop-up, walkabout and/or interactive theatre, music or dance performance in an indoor or outdoor public space
- a presentation of a short film or piece of visual art in an indoor space
- a longer performance in an indoor studio or stage space
- something else for indoor or outdoor presentation

We are particularly interested in ideas that respond in some way to the theme *into the unknown* – either in the story you’re telling or the way you’re telling it (i.e. a new approach to making your piece or collaborating with a new group).

Programmed groups will be invited to spend the day with us, experiencing the event as both artist and audience, making friends with other participants and celebrating together.

There will also be an opportunity for performers to work on an exciting finale event with other young people from across the country and to connect with professional artists throughout the day.

Takeover – Saturday 14th June 2025
for performers and artists aged 12 – 25

We are looking for performers and artists aged 12 – 25 who would like to join us in taking over the city for a day of live performances, installations, art interventions, screenings and more in multiple indoor and outdoor spaces on Saturday 14th June 2025. The city-wide approach will encourage young people to put their stamp on Aberdeen for a day, amplifying their voices and ideas whilst activating unfamiliar, unconventional and unexpected spaces.

Expanding on the teenage-focused event we have held at the Music Hall for the past two years, 2025’s Takeover invites young people to get creative and be ambitious with their ideas. You’ll tell us what you’d like to do and where, and we’ll work in collaboration with our group of Young Programmers to create a trail across the city for intended and accidental audiences.

As part of your proposal, you’ll tell us:

- what you would like to present – theatre, dance, music, film, installation, etc.
- where you would like to present it – in an empty retail unit, on the beach, in a park, on the streets, in one of our venues, etc.
- how you would like to present it – as a pop-up, as a durational piece, in multiple slots throughout the day, in multiple locations throughout the day, etc.
- who you would like to make it with – would you like to collaborate with another group/artform/artist with our support?

Takeover is all about giving creative freedom to young people rather than conforming to limitations – we want to hear your ideas and find a way to make them a reality.

All ideas should connect in some way to the theme *into the unknown* – this might be through storytelling or through your approach to making the piece (i.e. performing in an unconventional space, having improvised elements, collaborating with other groups/artforms, etc.)

Programmed groups will be invited to spend the day with us, experiencing the event as both artist and audience, connecting with other participants, co-creating material with professional artists and celebrating together.

Standalones – 1st – 15th June 2025 ***for performers and artists aged 5 – 25***

If you or your group has an idea that doesn't feel suitable for presentation at Family Arts Day or Takeover, we may have some capacity to programme standalone events across the wider festival.

You might want to perform or present work at a specific venue or on a specific date, or you might want to do something a little different. We're excited by ambitious ideas so would love to hear from you.

As above, we are keen to hear ideas that respond in some way to the theme *into the unknown* – either in the story you're telling or the way you're telling it (i.e. a new approach to making your piece or collaborating with a new group).

Who are we looking for?

You might be a youth theatre, a dance group, a community group or an independent artist. You might meet regularly or be bringing a group together specially for this project.

We are most interested in hearing from groups who have a youth-led approach, where participants are co-creators and key decision makers.

We are particularly interested in hearing from those who work with young people from diverse and marginalised backgrounds, and those whose work promotes inclusivity.

We actively encourage like-minded organisations to submit proposals as collectives and will also identify opportunities to encourage collaboration between groups based on the proposals we receive.

This year, we are interested in hearing from groups from across Scotland and beyond.

Artforms

We are particularly keen to programme (but are not limited to) the following artforms:

- Theatre
- Live music
- Dance and physical theatre
- Short film
- Installation
- Visual Arts

Original work will be favoured, but we will also consider new interpretations of existing material. We are unlikely to programme a piece that has been presented at a previous Light The Blue.

We are particularly interested in hearing ideas that challenge the conventions of youth arts sharings and we will work collaboratively to support more experimental approaches.

Venues

Light the Blue 2025 will take place in Aberdeen Performing Arts venues – His Majesty’s Theatre, the Lemon Tree and the Music Hall – as well as other indoor and outdoor spaces across the city. If you would like to find out details about specific spaces to inform your proposal, please get in touch via the contact email below.

If you have a space that could be used for festival activity, we’d love to hear from you.

What can we offer?

Artists and groups selected for our Young Artist Programme will receive:

- A free programming slot as part of Light the Blue 2025
- Technical support and access to limited equipment
- Set-up and/or technical rehearsal time with support from our team
- Dressing room or storage space for belongings whilst on-site
- Snacks and refreshments for those involved in day-long events
- Potential photography and videography depending on the event
- Free tickets to selected events across the festival programme
- Marketing & PR support as part of our wider festival campaign
- Producing and marketing support from our experienced team

We are keen to host young people from across Scotland at Light the Blue as artists, participants and audience members and don’t want cost to be a barrier to access. This year we’re able to offer bursaries to individuals or groups who would otherwise be unable to travel to or attend the festival. Bursaries of up to £400 will be offered to a limited number of groups as a contribution towards travel, chaperoning and/or other essential costs. You will be asked in your application if you would require a bursary and we confirm these with successful groups at point of programming.

We will work with all programmed groups to ensure access requirements are provided for on performance days as well as in the lead-up to the festival.

We expect all groups who participate to contribute to the marketing and promotion of the festival through their own channels, and to engage with other events where possible.

How do you apply?

Please submit your proposal by **Sunday 9th February 2025 at 11pm** via the following online form: <https://bit.ly/lbt25youngartists>

The form asks for information about you/your group, the piece you're proposing and its suitability for Light the Blue. A list of questions can be found via <https://bit.ly/lbt25yartqs> if useful for preparing answers before submitting.

For accessibility, we are also happy to receive proposals by video or audio recording of no more than 5 minutes in length. Please answer all questions (<https://bit.ly/lbt25yartqs>) and send by email (with a link to view or download via YouTube, WeTransfer or similar platforms) to lightthebluefestival@aberdeenperformingarts.com.

If you require any additional support in submitting a proposal, such as receiving the call-out information in an alternative format, or you have any questions please contact us via lightthebluefestival@aberdeenperformingarts.com.

What happens after the deadline?

We will accept proposals until Sunday 9th February 2025 at 11pm. Any submissions received after this time will not be considered.

Proposals will be reviewed and discussed by the Aberdeen Performing Arts team with input from young people who will be involved in the co-creation of select events across the programme.

We are unlikely to have the capacity to programme all proposed works – we will select proposals that excite us and our young panel the most, and that support our ambition to create a diverse and relevant festival programme.

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of our selection process by Friday 7th March at the latest.

We look forward to hearing your ideas.