

Wee Ones Winter Commissions

Call out for Scottish theatremakers

Aberdeen Performing Arts, Capital Theatres and Eden Court Highlands are thrilled to invite proposals from Scotland-based artists, producers and companies to create and produce three new festive productions for young audiences.

Staged at Lemon Tree in Aberdeen, The Studio in Edinburgh and Eden Court in Inverness, this exciting collaboration will bring joy to families and school groups. The chosen productions will debut in December 2025 with a run of up to three weeks, and will be restaged in 2026 and 2027, giving each show a run at all three venues.

The initial round of commissions ran in 2021, resulting in *The Enormous Christmas Turnip* by Ivor MacAskill, Rosana Cade and Scottish Theatre Producers, *Unicorn Christmas Party* by Sarah Rose Graber, Ruxy Cantir and Raw Material Arts, and Barrowland Ballet's *The Gift*, which won the CATS Award for Best Production for Children and Families in 2023.



What are we looking for?

Productions that are creative, fun and accessible for our youngest audiences, and that meet the following guidelines:

- Aimed at children under seven, suitable for families and school groups
- Reflective of the festive spirit of the season, incorporating Christmas, winter or other seasonal themes
- Lasting 45 - 60 minutes
- Designed with all three studio spaces in mind, with seating for at least 70 people
- The production should have access as a core consideration and be adaptable to children with additional support needs

What are we offering?

- A budget of £45,000 per production in 2025 to cover all preproduction, production and running costs
- A fee of £25,000 to remount and present the show in subsequent years
- The venues will also provide in-kind rehearsal space where possible, technical support across the tech week and run, a full marketing campaign and front of house support





The Gift

Eligibility criteria

Applicants must:

- Be based in Scotland - we are particularly interested in applicants based in the Highlands, Aberdeenshire, Edinburgh and Lothian
- Have prior experience of delivering at least one professional production
- Be able to commit to the creation and tour of the production from 2025 - 2027

Proposed productions should not have been presented in full at any other location before. We are also committed to fostering diversity and inclusion in our industry, and we warmly encourage applications from individuals and teams from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds.

Got any questions?

To find out more and ask the commissioning team questions, join our Zoom chat on Tue 15 Apr (2pm - 3pm).

You can also email us on engage@capitaltheatres.com.

How to apply

Please complete this [expression of interest form](#) by Mon 5 May 2025. As part of the application process, we'll ask for the following information:

- Your artistic idea, including the narrative, themes and production style
- Details about the team involved, including lead artists, the creative team and number of performers
- How you plan to make your production accessible for children with additional support needs

You are also welcome to submit a video application via the above form, or complete and send our [dyslexia-friendly form](#) to engage@capitaltheatres.com.

We also ask that you complete this [Equal Opportunities form](#).

The Enormous Christmas Turnip



Next steps

The commissioning team will review all applications and select a number of projects to progress to the second stage by Thu 15 May 2025.

If your project is shortlisted, we'll ask you to submit a more detailed proposal. This will include:

- Additional information about the production
- CVs for the key team members
- An indicative budget outlining how you'll deliver the project within the £45,000 available

To support you in this, we'll offer a £250 contribution towards the time spent developing the proposal.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to discuss their proposals in a Zoom interview on Thu 29 May 2025, and we'll announce the selected projects in early Jun 2025.

We look forward to learning more about your exciting ideas!



Aberdeen Performing Arts is a charitable trust founded in 2004. We are the cultural cornerstone of North-east Scotland contributing to the arts, community and civic life in the region. Our vision is centred on placing creativity and culture at the core of inclusive transformational change. Aberdeen Performing Arts manages three city centre venues, His Majesty's Theatre, Music Hall and Lemon Tree. We present, produce, commission and curate across art forms and across scales, to provide North-east audiences with a distinctive performing arts offering and support artists from the region.

The Lemon Tree Studio

The Lemon Tree Studio is the home for contemporary theatre, dance and family arts in Aberdeen. An intimate black-box theatre space ideal for small-scale performing arts performances. The fully seated capacity of the theatre is 160. We have been commissioning and co-producing festive productions for young audiences since 2012 and this show has become an annual highlight in the venue's programme. We create a magical winter performance space for wee ones by retracting the seating bank and using cushions and benches. The stage is 11m (w) x 7m (d) with a height of 4.5m to the lighting rig. We are unable to accommodate live flying.



Capital Theatres' mission is to build a sense of belonging across its three theatres in Edinburgh, enriching lives through the strength of its creative programmes and partnerships, sharing extraordinary experiences with everyone, again and again. The charity manages the Festival Theatre (1915 seats), King's Theatre (1122 seats) and The Studio (155 seats). Capital Theatres is a receiving house which works with producers across the UK to programme their work. The organisation also commissions and co-produces a select number of productions of its own each year and runs an extensive Creative Engagement programme. The charity won the UK Theatre 2023 Award for Excellence in Inclusivity for its work with people living with dementia.

The Studio

The Studio is Capital Theatres' smallest venue (155 seats). This theatre presents a year round programme of small scale work including family work, new musicals, drama, dance and experimental theatre. It is also home to Open@TheStudio, an extensive artist support programme for Scottish theatre makers. The space is a flexible black box studio with removable raked seating, its own bar/gallery space, and a 10m x 10m playing space that can be adapted to a wide range of shows.



Eden Court is proud to be Scotland's largest combined arts organisation. We present and make work with, by and for the people of the Highlands and Islands and those who visit us. At our home in Inverness we have two theatres, two cinemas, plus three gallery spaces, two multi-purpose studios, a digital education suite and a café bar. We also regularly invest in activity outside our building to reach people across our vast region and since 2021 have worked to increase our producing ambitions and support for artists living and working in the Highlands. In November 2024, Eden Court was crowned Venue of the Year at the MG ALBA Scots Trad Music Awards.

OneTouch Theatre

Eden Court's OneTouch Theatre is a flexible black box theatre space with a maximum seated capacity of 262. It has a retractable seating bank enabling us to present theatre and music events as fully seated, fully standing or with a combination of seating styles. For a show aimed at young children we would normally combine floor seating for wee ones and a partial seating bank. Our stage dimensions are 11m (w) x 9m (d) with a distance of 5m to the lighting rig. We are unable to accommodate live flying.