



LATEST APC GUIDE APRIL 2025: An overview of why we're here, who we are, what we do, how and when...

1. Why we're here

The Artistic Programme Committee (APC) plays a critical part in making significant decisions for our theatre. **Our purpose in a nutshell is to shape a dynamic artistic programme for members and audiences** – this is driven by the following key aims :

- **Provide a rich environment of artistic activity** – with opportunities to excite and develop members and present a high-quality, varied season for our audiences
- **Believe in the power of theatre** to move audiences emotionally, to explore change and new thinking, to connect people across our culturally and socially mixed region
- **Bring our brand values to life** with inspirational, vibrant and creative shows, welcoming diversity in our members and championing this for our audiences

2. Who we are

Our group looks like this...

There are seven members of the APC including the Artistic Director (AD).

This number is what we'd like to maintain, but it may vary at the discretion of the AD and the Management Committee chair.

If you see us out and about do say hello, or just drop us a line:

apc@kelvinplayers.co.uk



What we need the APC to be and members to do...

- Most important is to have a balanced cross-section of age, gender and know-how
- We need a mix of experience and insight from a wide range of expertise – from acting and backstage to design, directing, production management, marketing, technical, etc.
- Main aspects of the role are to - read submissions and scripts, attend meetings, give feedback, share views and make sure artistic activity is kept up-to-date and relevant.

The selection process is straightforward and simple...

The AD is an elected role, proposed annually at the AGM. Members are appointed as vacancies arise usually with a three-year tenure and ideally in post for at least one year.

Interested in joining? We keep a running list of people who express interest - to be added, please email: artisticdirector@kelvinplayers.co.uk

3. What we do

The APC is accountable to the Management Committee. Decisions we make are endorsed by the committee and we jointly act as the season 'producer'. Key responsibilities shared between all members of the APC are to:

- **Curate and confirm the annual season** – with a balance of genre, period and style
- **Support directors to resolve issues** – address major production-related factors
- **Enable members to develop** – for all aspects of theatre, on and off stage, working with the [membership development officer](#) and the management team.
- **Play committee liaison role** – alongside Membership Directors and other committee members, attend play launches/initial rehearsals to let cast and crew know to contact us for any concerns during a show not able to be addressed by the director or PM
- **See shows (incl. rehearsed readings)** – to reflect commitment and support, gather awareness, insight and understanding of members involvement in productions

The Artistic Director chairs the APC and has the following additional obligations:

- Identify and organise performance space as required beyond Kelvin Studio
- Produce monthly reports for the Management Committee to be aware of developments
- Support depts reporting into AD and share key updates with committee: costume, lighting, props, rehearsed readings, sound, stage management and writers' group

4. How we shape a season

We have five main shows from February to December. We'll also have a regular Bristol One Act Drama Festival (BOADF) entry 'Homecoming' show, and at least one Black Box production – that is a stripped-down, minimum set, props, costume, lighting and sound. We will also explore opportunities for other individual events with members and visiting companies.

At-a-glance view of a typical season

Main show slots	Black Box and other events
• February – in half-term school holiday • April – around Easter school holiday • June/July – late June/early July • October – in half-term school holiday • December – early (before Christmas)	• March (early) – BOADF Homecoming show • Summer (July/August)– Black Box • Sept-Nov - individual event(s) as agreed

5. What we look for in proposals

We're happy to consider any type of play and aim to create a balanced mix of genre, style and period. The following is an example of what could work as a well- rounded season:

- One large cast – 12 and more
- One small cast – from 3-5 actors
- One classic play – e.g. ancient Greek/Roman to early 20th Century
- One contemporary play – written in late 20th or start of the 21st Century
- One play in often overlooked genre (e.g. Jacobean tragedy), or has unusual aspects

Of course, a single play may meet more than one of these criteria. Key thing is to choose a play you love, are excited by...if you're not motivated, it's unlikely other people will be!

And don't be afraid to be ambitious, but keep in mind our ability and capacity to do it justice.

Also, we may consider at times when it's appropriate to work with themes across a season.

The following key criteria will always apply in our assessment:

Content	Approach and staging
• A quality script with a good story • Originality/freshness and topicality • Compelling dialogue and defined, convincing characterisation • Well-structured narrative which translates well to being on a stage	• Clear, exciting vision from the director • Enables opportunities for creativity – set, costume, lighting, sound • Reflects our diversity aims - all ages, gender-blind and non-binary casting; includes under-represented groups

6. Who can submit plays, principles and process

We encourage entries from a mix of both new and seasoned directors every year.

To qualify to direct, you must have...

- a) directed a Rehearsed Reading, and
- b) played a significant backstage role. For example, production or stage management, design (set, costumes, lighting, sound), managing props or construction.

We'll do our utmost to support emerging directors, steering them to experienced production managers and APC mentors. No director is offered two slots in any one season. ALL directors are encouraged to support other shows in a season by coming along to see them.

Checklist for directors:

1. **Complete [the digital submissions form](#)** by the deadline (31 March) and attach your script. The form is a great basis for everything. Designed to help frame your proposal, it encourages you to think through core aspects of your production and shows you are prepared. No need for it to be War and Peace, just major points – e.g. from what grabs you about the play to cast, costume, set, technical requirements, plus a view of cost.
2. **Consider submitting more than one play** and for that to be in different style
3. **Be prepared to pitch** if shortlisted to explain your vision in detail
4. **Make sure the rights for the play are available** too if you're chosen to pitch
5. **Research your play** – for example, is it being or about to be performed elsewhere?

Useful additional awareness about budget considerations

Main shows have a budget allocated for costume, lighting, set, sound, etc. to be submitted by the director/production manager and approved by the Management Committee.

Black Box shows essentially have minimal set and other design aspects so directors can focus on directing. Costumes from the balcony and props in our attic store can be used.

There is no specific budget assigned, but an amount may be available if critical to the production – as presented and approved by the committee.



There is also no defined budget for the Bristol One Act Drama Festival entry, but again an amount may be provided if thought to be necessary for the show to succeed. This again would need to be requested and approved by the Management Committee.

Selection and schedule

Main shows	
Shortlisting	Reading all submissions and scripts we'll use a review guide to assess and record comments, plus a scoring process. Then over a series of zoom calls we'll share our views with each other and create a shortlist. We'll invite directors shortlisted to pitch their play to all the APC. We'll also contact those not selected and provide feedback as required.
Pitching	Pitching is your big chance to sell your submission – why you think your play is engaging, what makes it worth doing, how it will excite audiences. The sessions are 30 minute slots and slides/visuals may be used if you'd like, the main aim is to have a conversation - to understand things like... - o Your vision - what does the world of the piece look like? - o Safeguarding considerations: e.g. intimacy direction, stage combat - o Specific challenges to address: how you'll approach & resolve these After pitches we'll make final decisions and process will include blind voting.

Bristol One Act Drama Festival (BOADF) and Black Box shows	
BOADF	An entry for the festival can be published plays or original writing and we'll ask all our members for proposals. Selection will be based on reading scripts submitted and applying guidance created specifically for this. There won't be any formal pitching, but we may be in touch to clarify details. Once entry is confirmed, the person submitting the play will need to confirm if they will direct or find a director – there is guidance to support this.
Black Box	Submissions for Black Box shows will be requested with the same deadline as the main shows. And there may be more than one in a season. As part of our assessment we may advise emerging directors to think about presenting their play as Black Box rather than as a main show straightaway.

Overview of activity timetable

