



UPDATED GUIDELINES JANUARY 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

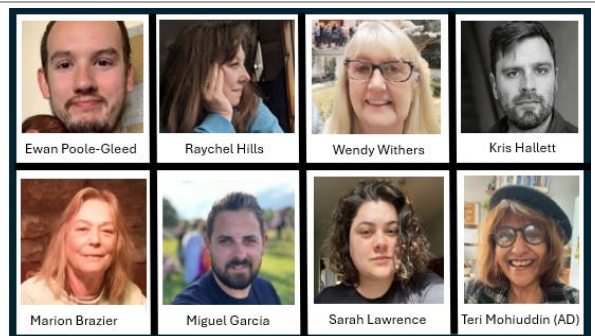
2. Who we are

Our current group looks like this...

There are eight members of the APC at the moment, including the Artistic Director (AD).

Numbers may vary at the discretion of the AD and Management Committee chair.

We're a friendly bunch so if you see us out and about say hi, or drop us a line too our group email: apc@kelvinplayers.co.uk



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

- Key is to have a balanced cross-section of age, gender and knowhow
- We need a mix of experience and insight from any one or more areas of expertise – e.g. acting, backstage, design, directing, production mgt, 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 with a three-year tenure and are ideally in post for at least one year.

Keen to join? 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
- **Steer directors to resolve issues** – address major production-related factors
- **Support members to develop** – for all aspects of theatre, on and off stage; working with the [Development Officer](#) and members of 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 express commitment and support, gather awareness, insight and understanding of members involvement in productions

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

- Identify and organise performance space as required beyond Kelvin Studio
- Produce monthly reports for 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 will continue with five main shows from February to December. We'll also have a regular Bristol One Act Festival (BOAF) entry 'Homecoming' show, and agree a Black Box (stripped-down, minimum set etc.) production as part of reviewing main shows.

We will also explore opportunities during a season for other individual events with members and visiting companies.

At-a-glance view of a typical season

Main show slots	Black Box/other events
• February – in half-term school holiday • April – around Easter school holiday • July – early/mid-month • October – in half-term school holiday • December – early (before Christmas)	• March (early) – BOAF Homecoming show • May (half term) – Black Box • August/September – individual event(s) as agreed

5. What we look for in proposals

We're happy to consider any type of play, always keeping in mind to create a balanced mix of genre, style and period. To help directors in their thinking and us in our programming, here is an example of what a season could include:

- One large cast - over 15
- One small cast – max. of 3-4 actors
- One classical play - from before 2000
- One contemporary play - written within the last five years
- One play in often overlooked genres (e.g. Jacobean tragedy) or a

NOTE: a single play may meet more than one of these criteria, and we may consider at times when it's appropriate to work with themes across a season.

Whatever the play, key criteria below 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 with gripping plot points	• 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 (e.g. disability, ethnicity)

6. Who can submit plays, principles and process

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

First time directors must have directed a Rehearsed Reading, plus played a significant backstage role involving planning with the director. For example, production or stage management, design (set, costumes, lighting, sound), managing props or construction.

We'll do our best to support emerging directors, steering them to experienced production managers and APC mentors. No director is offered two slots in any one season, and if a decision between plays is 'close', priority is given to new/emerging directors.

ALL directors are encouraged to watch other shows in a season, not just be involved in theirs.

Checklist for directors:

1. Complete [the form for new submissions](#) by the **deadline of 31 March**
2. Email soft copy of script for the play submitted to: apc@kelvinplayers.co.uk
3. Be prepared to do a pitch presentation
4. Consider submitting more than one play, but no more than two
5. If shortlisted to pitch make sure rights are available

Useful additional awareness about budget considerations

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

Black Box shows essentially have minimal set, etc, so directors can focus on directing. There is no specific budget assigned, but an amount may be available if critical to the production – as agreed by the committee .

Costumes from the balcony and props in our attic store can be used.



There is no defined budget for the Bristol One Act Festival entry, but an amount may be made available depending on how critical it is to the production.

NB. Our [Production Pack](#) has all you need to run a show...updated version coming soon!

Selection and schedule

Main shows	
Shortlisting	Once we've read everything we'll do an initial written review using our assessment template. Following meetings to share views we'll create our shortlist based on a comparison of merits across all the plays submitted. We'll then invite directors shortlisted to pitch their play. We'll also contact those not selected with 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. Pitch nights are 30 minute slots. Slides/visuals are fine to use if you want but not essential – we mainly want to have a conversation to understand things like... ○ Your vision - what does the world of the piece look like? ○ Safeguarding considerations: e.g. intimacy direction, stage combat ○ Specific challenges to address: how you'll approach & resolve these

Bristol One Act Festival and Black Box shows	
BOAF	We'll ask all our members for entry proposals (i.e. not only the Writers' Group so we can include those who write independently of the group). Selection will be based on reading scripts submitted and applying guidance created specifically for this. While there won't be any formal pitching involved, we may get in touch to clarify a few details.
Black Box	Submissions for Black Box shows will be requested with the same deadline as the main shows . As part of our shortlisting and assessment process we may advise emerging directors to consider doing their play as Black Box rather than as a main show straightaway.

Overview of activity timetable

