



Dear AACT Community,

AACTFest is where we gather to attend workshops, network, see compelling theatre from across the nation, and it is the biggest theatre family reunion in the United States. AACTFest 2021 is still scheduled for June 14-19, 2021 in Louisville, Kentucky. As a response to the Covid-19 Pandemic and the uncertainty it held for the AACTFest 2021 cycle, the AACT Board of Directors voted on Friday, May 9, 2020 to adopt an Invitational style model to ensure the festival would continue and remain open to theatres across the country.



With the uncertainty of when and if state festivals will run, it became clear that the invitational model will not allow for both processes to work at the same time. Many states have already had to make the difficult decision to cancel or delay indefinitely, which stretches the uncertainty even longer, and there are many theatres who will struggle to meet the financial commitment to present festival shows.

The AACTFest 2021 National Companies will be chosen by application, evaluation, and adjudication, not by the usual state and regional festival process. This model alleviates any financial burden or obligation of the state or regional festival during such unprecedented times, while still giving every theatre across the nation a fair opportunity and access to the festival process.

We are excited to present excellent and entertaining shows in a new and exciting format never done before. It does preclude the traditional system of advancement through the state and regional system, but keep in mind any member theatre is eligible for the invitational.

The purpose of the shift is to make the process easier, equitable, and more financially feasible for theaters to participate, and ensure a national festival in Louisville. With that, we ask for your understanding and support as we work through the details of this new provisional model.

This was a complex decision during which many AACT leaders advised and debated. We thank them and you for your support and consideration in keeping the national festival strong and viable during these unprecedented times. Applications will open July 2020 through October 2020. You will be notified when details are in place and applications are being accepted.

AACT is committed to helping theaters thrive and is proactively adjusting and adding onto our educational, festival, and membership services to meet the needs of community theatres today. Together we are stronger!