

How to Use This Template

Local Players Audition Form

1 (For a large print version of this form, please go to <http://localplayers.org/largeprintauditionform>)

2 Local Players is located on the land of the (tribal name) people, whose permission we have received for this acknowledgement. We acknowledge the history of genocide on these lands, and our responsibility to consider the many Indigenous people who still live and work here in the choices we make. We strive to be an inclusive and anti-racist organization. We welcome and encourage performers and team members of all colors, genders/gender non-conformity, body types and abilities to join us. We do not pre-cast or pre-choreograph our shows, and we strive to cast our shows from the individuals who come to the audition. As such, we strive to be as flexible and conscious with our casting as possible. In the spirit of preserving opportunities for actors who have traditionally been underserved by the entertainment community and allowing them to tell their own stories, we will never cast a white/Caucasian actor in a role specifically written for a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) actor, nor a cisgender actor in a role specifically written for a transgender or non-binary/gender non-conforming actor. For any role written for a character with a specific disability or neurodivergence, we will prioritize, to the best of our abilities, actors who are living that experience. Sexual, physical or verbal harassment/abuse of any kind will not be tolerated within our organization. Above all, we value work ethic, fostering talent, and any opportunities to expand our creativity as an artistic team.

Name: _____ Pronouns: **6** _____

7 Email: _____ Are you willing/able to receive texts at this number? _____

Vocal type/range: _____ **8**

Role(s) you would primarily like to be considered for: _____

How do you identify with this character, what special characteristics do you see in them, and/or what do you believe you can bring to this role that would make you the right choice for our production? **9**

Other roles you may accept if offered (you will not be considered for any role you have not specified): **10**

Please use the following lines to list your prior theater experience or attach your resume to the back of this form. We welcome new performers of all levels of experience! **11**

If you will require any specific accommodations for this audition, rehearsals or performances, please reach out to one of the following individuals for assistance. We are eager to help you be able to get to us and to show us your best work!

For hearing, vision, physical disability or neurodivergence assistance: *Jane Doe, Committee for Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination, janedoe@localplayers.org* **12**
For Choreography assistance: *CJ Dancer, Choreographer, cjdancer@localplayers.org*
For Music/vocal assistance: *Priya Singh, Music Director, privasingh@localplayers.org*
For travel assistance/concerns: *Robbi Roe, Outreach Team, robbiroe@localplayers.org*
All other questions/assistance: *Jarell Doesitali, Producer, jdoesitali@localplayers.org*

REHEARSALS will be Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. The final rehearsal schedule will be available to cast members. **13**
PERFORMANCES: Will be April 4th, 5th and 6th, 2022, at 8 pm.
PLEASE NOTE ANY CONFLICTS ON THE BOTTOM OF THIS FORM.

If not cast, would you like to work on crew or behind the scenes Yes: ___ No: ___ Maybe: ___ **14**
If yes or maybe, please specify all positions in which you might interested and/or qualified:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acting Coach | <input type="checkbox"/> Dramaturg/historical research assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Play Reading/Selection Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Artistic Director/Board of Directors | <input type="checkbox"/> Fight & weaponry choreography/safety training | <input type="checkbox"/> Production Team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Backstage Crew/Runner | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Props/Set Dressing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Box Office/Ticket Sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Program design/layout |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choreography/Dance coach | <input type="checkbox"/> Hair/Wig design | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity/Marketing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Costume Design/Crew | <input type="checkbox"/> House Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> Set Construction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Costume and Props storage/curation | <input type="checkbox"/> HR Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> Set Design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Committee for Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination | <input type="checkbox"/> Intimacy coach | <input type="checkbox"/> Sound design/assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data Entry/Database Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting design/assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events Coordination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dialect/speech coach | <input type="checkbox"/> Make-up Design/assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Stage Manager/Assistant SM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Directing/Assistant directing | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Team | <input type="checkbox"/> Treasury team/Bookkeeper |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Music Director | <input type="checkbox"/> Ushering/Refreshments |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Nominating Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocal coach |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach Team/PR | <input type="checkbox"/> Website design/management |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Painting Sets | |

Name of your hometown newspaper (If you do not wish your name to appear in print for any reason, please specify here): _____ **15**

16 Please be prepared to submit a brief (one paragraph) biography to our program designer if cast (programdesigner@localplayers.org). Bios MUST be submitted after casting up to one month prior to opening night, or they may not appear in the program.

If cast, there is a participation/membership fee of \$15. Once this fee has been received, each actor will be eligible for one complimentary ticket to any ONE performance. To waive this fee in case of financial hardship, please check here (this may render you ineligible for a complimentary ticket). This information will not be shared outside of the production team. **17**

Thank you for auditioning! Please feel free to reach out to any team member with questions or concerns.

CONFLICTS (please list any and all dates you will be unavailable during the rehearsal process):

This template is fully customizable to your company's needs. It is an example of what an inclusive audition form should look like, but is by no means definitive or fully comprehensive. We may update this form as new information and ideas on more inclusive language and formatting becomes available to the EMACT D&I team. The numbered sections in the picture on the preceding page correspond to the explanations below.

1. Having a large print version of any form you use available on your website is an invaluable resource for people of all ages with vision issues. This is a practice we at EMACT strongly encourage.
2. An acknowledgement of the tribal land your theater sits on is a sign of respect to that tribe. It is imperative, however, if including this statement, that you first obtain approval of this statement from leaders of the specific tribe(s) to whom you are referring (and make needed edits as requested), and that you are actively reaching out to and welcoming members of these communities into your organization. If you cannot yet accomplish this, leave this statement off your form.
3. To become a truly inclusive theater company, it is imperative to get away from certain outdated practices that prioritize "director's vision and preference" over community theater's broader goal of providing artistic experiences and opportunities for as many people in the community as possible. A truly inclusive company should move away from practices that pigeonhole performers based on their skin color, body shape, and physical abilities. This includes practices such as pre-choreographing shows before it is cast, which limits casting to performers with very specific physical and neurological abilities. Likewise, making a commitment to cast a show, as much as possible, from the performers present at auditions allows for more creativity in casting, and helps to eliminate harmful practices like repeatedly casting male actors who weren't at the audition (which sends the message to all performers that men are more valuable than the women or non-binary performers who are present and who might actually be willing to fill a male role). If a script specifies that only male actors may fill all of the male roles or that the cast should necessarily be all white, consider doing a different show that allows for more opportunities for all community members. If there is anything in this section that your company cannot yet achieve, leave it out. However, we strongly insist that our member companies should actively be working toward these practices.
4. It may feel hypocritical to say you will be inclusive and flexible with casting but then state that you will neither cast a white person in a role meant for a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) actor, nor a cisgender person in a role meant for a transgender or non-binary actor. However, these are communities that have repeatedly been underrepresented in theater and the entertainment community in general. Would it shock you to learn that the vast majority of roles in produced theatrical works have been, and still are, written for cisgender white men? Probably not. Only about 30% of actors are cisgender white men, and yet they still garner up to 70% of roles in shows produced every year across the country. This is a glaring statistical discrepancy, and it means that while most cisgender white male actors are likely to be cast

in something at least once per season, regardless of their individual talents or work ethic (and they also have a much higher number of lead roles available to them), the rest of the theater community can do their absolute best work at every audition and still not be cast every season.

Allowing cisgender white actors to ALSO fill roles meant for BIPOC and transgender or non-binary/gender-nonconforming actors means we are likely not doing enough to reach out to and include actors from those specific communities. Likewise, though it can seem difficult to find talented actors with disabilities to fill specific roles, they most definitely exist within our community, and are frequently unaccommodated or outright excluded when they do audition. These actors should have priority in telling the stories of their own communities whenever possible. (NOTE: This does NOT imply an obligation to cast an inexperienced and unskilled actor with a specific disability in a lead role simply because they were the only actor with that disability to show up to the audition. That would be unfair to the entire creative team, especially to that actor. It simply means making a concerted effort to reach out to actors from these communities in all of our advertising and marketing, making sure talented and skilled actors from those communities take preference in telling those stories, and doing our best to accommodate their needs.)

The EMACT D&I team is actively finding new ways for theaters to reach out to and include actors and team members from underrepresented communities. If you need ideas to help you along on this path, please reach out to us!

5. Inclusive theater is about creating safe spaces for our community members across all spectrums. It should go without saying that unsafe, harmful, or violent behavior toward any community member must never be tolerated within these spaces, and that any community member causing such harm should be held accountable and prohibited from continuing on in those spaces for the safety of all other performers.
6. Asking for gender specification on an audition form excludes those who do not identify with any gender. It is more appropriate to ask for pronouns, since not only is this practice more inclusive, it also lets the creative team know how each auditioner prefers to be referred to without needing to ask each one verbally. This is especially helpful in the case of auditioners who use neopronouns such as xe, ze, per, ve, sie, co, fae, or ey (the pronoun “they” is not necessarily embraced by all non-binary individuals, and as such a wide range of alternative pronouns may be used by different individuals). You can read more about such pronouns at <https://lgbta.wikia.org/wiki/Neopronouns>.
7. Simply asking for a contact number, rather than a cell or home phone number, allows auditioners more flexibility in letting your team know the best way to reach them. Other superfluous information that is often asked for on audition forms are the auditioner’s mailing address, age, height, weight, hair color and/or eye color. None of these pieces of information are relevant to truly inclusive casting. Specific measurements may become relevant to the costume designer, but should not be relevant to casting itself: tall women can be cast against

shorter men, people of all body shapes, sizes and physical abilities can be cast as ingenues and leading men, hair color can be changed with wigs or hair dye, and it's extremely rare that eye color is ever directly relevant to a script or storyline.

A note regarding age: It can be tempting to want to pigeonhole an actor based on either what age they are or what age we THINK they look. This is a highly problematic practice. People of a certain age don't always "look their age." Grandmothers don't need to have gray hair and glasses, middle-aged people can look like they're in their 20s, 50 year olds can pass for 80 with the right makeup, and many 80 year olds are extremely spry. We must stop asking for actors' ages or age range and nit-picking about their appearance, and allow them to simply audition for whatever roles they believe they can play.

8. Many audition forms ask a familiar old question "Would you accept any role if asked?" Often followed by the statement "Please be honest." This has always been a very tricky question to answer. An actor might be willing to accept certain roles but not others. Also, this question becomes much more complicated for transgender and non-binary actors. A casting team that knows an actor is transgender or non-binary may feel emboldened to offer them a role of a gender they don't identify with, or, conversely, may neglect to consider them for a specific role which they WOULD accept if asked. Therefore, it is a better policy to simply ask which specific roles an actor is auditioning for, and which roles they would accept.
9. Asking an actor how they identify with a role they are auditioning for gives the casting team extra, and sometimes needed information from which to make their decision. Perhaps an actor is actually BIPOC but is aware they may present to others as white. This is the ideal place for them to make this information known, should they so choose. Perhaps a character has autism, ADHD, Bipolar Disorder, Lupus, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome or other "invisible" disability. Having this space allows an actor to share, if they so choose, whether they themselves are living those experiences or have someone in their life who has. Even if the actor is a cisgender, white, able-bodied actor auditioning for the role of a cis, white, able-bodied character, it can still be very useful to ask how they identify with the character and what they believe they can bring to it. Particularly if there are two equally talented actors up for the role and the casting team is having trouble making a decision!
10. See #8.
11. Community theater should be a gateway for those of all levels of experience. If we are only ever casting professional-level actors, even in our musical ensembles, then we may be providing great entertainment for the community, but we are not allowing community members looking to try something new and discover new things about themselves the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive by their interaction in our companies. Which is what it's really all about!

12. Inclusive theater is accommodating theater. If an actor requires an interpreter, specific visual aids, wants to know if there is wheelchair access to the theater and stage, has a cognitive disability that may require special assistance/accommodation for a dance or vocal audition, or wants to audition but doesn't drive or knows they cannot afford the extra gas money back and forth from the theater, it is extremely helpful for them to know right off the bat to whom they can direct their questions and concerns. We should try not to tell an actor "Gee, I don't think we're equipped for that, sorry we can't be more helpful." Even if our company is strapped for funds and can't afford to immediately become fully ADA compliant, it is at the very least helpful to be able to tell them "This is the person to speak to, they will listen and do their best to address your concerns. Perhaps they can help find a creative solution."

For this reason, we strongly encourage every theater company to assemble some form of D&I team, Outreach team and/or HR team. We also encourage companies to choose directors, music directors, choreographers and dance coaches who are willing and eager to work with people all across the wide spectrums of physical ability and neurodiversity.

13. Do not wait until after casting to let actors know when rehearsals and performances will be. Figure this out beforehand and put it on not only the audition form, but all audition notices. Many actors, especially those who live far from our theaters, have multiple or demanding jobs, or do not have easy and reliable transportation will not bother to audition if they don't know this information in advance. In order to be truly inclusive and respectful, we must be clear and decisive about the expectations we have for our actors' participation on all of our audition materials.
14. This section is found on many audition forms already, and is a great way to welcome people to participate in our community offstage as well as on. Scroll through the options listed here. Do you have these options? Are there any that you don't have, but perhaps you should? In particular, having some form of D&I team, Outreach team, HR team, Fighting/weaponry choreographers, Intimacy coaches and Dramaturgs are all positions which we strongly encourage you to consider incorporating into your structure. D&I, Outreach and HR teams can help shape policy regarding underserved communities, reach out to those communities and provide somewhere to turn if a team member feels unsafe, unaccommodated or discriminated against. Fight choreographers and intimacy coaches help keep your actors safe while performing scenes which are potentially dangerous to their physical or psychological well-being. Dramaturgs are not only extremely useful when working on a period piece, but when producing a play that includes any members of a traditionally underrepresented community it is an invaluable resource to have a dramaturg from that particular community on your artistic team, in order to help guide the team in making choices that ring true for members of that community.
15. Many audition forms ask for the name of an actor's local newspaper for publicity purposes in case they are cast, but neglect to ask if that actor is comfortable having their name or image appear so publicly. We tend to assume that if someone is an actor they automatically must

be comfortable with publicity – and in the age of social media we might just start to assume that everybody is comfortable having their names out there for all the world to see - however there are many reasons why a new budding actor might not want their name or image shared on quite such a public forum. It can be helpful to let actors know that if they prefer a greater level of privacy for any reason, we will respect and honor that, and find other creative ways to promote our production.

16. New actors may be totally unaware of the practice of asking for bios. It is helpful to not only the actors but the creative team to put this reminder – and the deadline – right in the audition materials, to minimize hassle down the line.
17. Many community theater companies in Eastern Massachusetts have membership or participation fees. You might be surprised to learn that this isn't standard practice in some other communities, where participation in community theater is often free, and funding comes solely from ticket prices, donations and fundraising events. A participation fee, even a small one, can be prohibitive, or at the very least a turn off, for financially struggling actors (particularly for those who have already invested a lot of time and money into learning their craft).

If we choose to keep our membership/participation fees, then in order to become more inclusive we should keep those fees small and affordable, and give our actors something more than mere participation in return. After all, the hard work and participation of EVERY team member is what helps make the show a success. Most actors are already required to participate in set builds and strikes/theater cleanings, and in some theaters they're asked to provide their own costumes or props as well. If we want them to also give us money, we should give them something in return (a complimentary ticket is an easy option), and make them aware of this perk upfront. If an actor cannot, for whatever reason, pay for participation, we strongly encourage you to allow them to opt out. A small, inconspicuous box to check on the second page of the audition form helps to make this option simple and offers an actor a sense of dignity, as opposed to making them track down the producer to explain why they can't afford to pay the fee.

Thank you for taking the time to review this template. If you have any questions or need any assistance in creating a more inclusive environment at your community theater, please reach out to the EACT D&I team. We are eager to assist you!