

Guidelines for Retaining Contractors

Purpose: to provide clear direction to SPAF board, staff, and Selection Committees regarding the equitable selection and retention of contractors for services, productions, and/or to provide specialized skills.

Please consider these guidelines for the following:

- Sound technicians
- Lighting technicians
- Rig installation, operation, and safety
- Stage rentals
- Videography (filmmakers)
- Photography
- Graphic design
- Guest Editors for The Skeleton Press
- Contributors for The Skeleton Press (writers and others)
- Yoga or fitness instructors
- Facilitators (general)
- Musicians (in select circumstances)
- Consultants
- Accessibility services: ASL interpretation, closed captioning, descriptive video, etc.
- Non-English Language interpretation
- Other service, production, or skill-based contracts

These guidelines may apply to the following stages:

1. Identify service, skill, or production need for which to hire a contractor
2. Identify equity-centred partnerships
3. Identify opportunities for mentorships
4. Targeted outreach and transparent asks
5. Contractors are confirmed
6. Contracts are signed, equitable payment is issued
7. Accountability and professional development for contractor/artists

1) Identify service, skill, or production need for which to hire a contractor

- a. SPAF retains contractors for the annual festival, year-round performances and programming, installations, audio/visual productions, consultation, and for The Skeleton Press (see above for list).
- b. At this time of writing the role of The Skeleton Press Editor is filled by the Artistic Director of SPAF. To create and curate the paper, SPAF retains an Art Director, Guest Copy Editors, Assistant Copy Editors, contributing Writers, Photographers, and Illustrators. The Selection Committee for The Skeleton Press is comprised of the Editor/SPAF Artistic Director, Art Director, Guest Copy Editors, and Assistant Copy Editors. All The Skeleton Press roles operate in a contract capacity to which these guidelines would apply.

2) Identify equity-centred partnerships

- a. As a community-based arts organization, SPAF relies heavily on partnerships. SPAF prioritizes partnerships with those who may be part of an equity deserving group¹- with a particular focus on those who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Colour (BIPOC), disabled, and/or People of Colour (BIPOC), disabled, and/or 2SLGBTQIA+.

¹ Equity deserving people are those that experience marginalization and unequal access to resources, opportunities or benefits and thus are deserving of social justice, reparation, or reconciliation. This marginalization results from socio-cultural, institutional, and historic systems that generate inequities based on disability, class, language, gender, ethnicity, nationality, race, sexual orientation, faith, and/or Indigeneity.

- b. SPAF continuously strives to expand partnerships, seeking out underrepresented voices and perspectives – particularly BIPOC individuals, communities, and collectives.
- c. SPAF strives to work with individuals, collectives and organizations that align with the vision, mission, and values of the organization.
- d. The Skeleton Press Selection Committee cultivates partnerships with individuals, collectives, and organizations that can write about topical events and tensions impacting the neighbourhood.
- e. The Skeleton Press solicits ‘contribution and submission opportunities’ via targeted requests as well as via the website and in the paper. The Skeleton Press will strive to make the process of selection more transparent; open invitations help people feel welcome to participate and contribute.

3) Identify opportunities for mentorships

Many of the services for which SPAF hires contractors are related to performance and the arts. Thus, many of the contractors are also artists. Emerging artists and equity deserving (particularly BIPOC, disabled, and 2SLGBTQQA+) artists can benefit greatly from paid mentorship opportunities.

- a. For each contract, those responsible for selection should explore creating opportunities for mentorship.
- b. Mentorship could include SPAF hiring emerging artists, contractors, consultants, or freelancers: a paid contract with SPAF provides a great learning and professional development opportunity.
- c. Mentorship can also be established between more senior and well-established contractor/artists and those who may be new to charging for this service / skill. SPAF prioritizes mentorships for those who are equity deserving - with a particular focus on BIPOC mentees.
- d. SPAF must ensure that there are enough funds to equitably pay both mentor and mentee contractor / artists.
- e. Mentors and mentees should be paid equally (or as close to equal as possible) for equivalent work. A suggested fee structure for a two-week project would be: \$1,000 (\$50 / hour for 10 hours per week for 2 weeks). This shows that the work of both the mentee and mentor is valued, despite difference in experience and opportunity. SPAF may consider increasing these fees by 10% - 20% more than what is suggested above to acknowledge the additional labour of the role. Ultimately, the agreed upon fee should be one that mentees and mentors are most comfortable with. It is up to SPAF to offer something reasonable.
- f. Where possible, fees should be adjusted for annual inflation to keep in line with the annual rise in the cost of living. For example, the average inflation rate in Canada in 2020 was approximately 0.72% compared to the previous year.

4) Targeted outreach and transparent asks

- a. For contractors who provide specialized services, SPAF should solicit equity deserving contractors where possible with a particular priority on BIPOC, disabled, and 2SLGBTQQA+ contractors.
- b. In circumstances where SPAF is soliciting quotes for services from multiple potential contractors, SPAF must disclose to each candidate that they are being considered alongside other candidates.
- c. SPAF must also be transparent about potential mentoring opportunities – giving contractors / artists opportunities to identify their own desired mentors or mentees (while prioritizing those who may be part of an equity deserving group – particularly BIPOC contractors).

5) Contractors are confirmed

a) Contracts between contractors / artists and SPAF specify the following:

- i. Services rendered and deadlines associated with each deliverable.
- ii. Fees to be issued from SPAF to the contractor for services rendered.
- iii. Clear channels of reporting, monitoring and evaluation of the services rendered.
- iv. Clear expectations, roles and responsibilities if there is a mentoring component.
- v. A process for dispute resolution in case of conflict.
- vi. Statement of Intellectual Propriety, where applicable.
- vii. Statement of Confidentiality.

6) Contracts are signed, equitable payment is issued

a) Payment should be issued in a prompt and timely manner. Contracts are signed by the SPAF representative first and then sent to the artist. Contracts must be screen-reader compatible. Fillable PDF format or Word Document are recommended formats.

7) Accountability and professional development for contractor/artists

a) SPAF will continue to strive to be accountable to equity deserving people and communities – particularly those who are Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Colour (BIPOC). This requires providing opportunities for contractors / artists to provide feedback and for SPAF to receive the feedback with deep listening and commitment to action.

*This policy is reviewed and updated by the SPAF Board annually
(please see 'SPAF Board Calendar of Activities').*

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