

[Why does the IFE retain 40% of box office sales? I am a French taxpayer and you are a public institution funded by my taxes. You should be providing me with public services.](#)

Because we receive public funds, we must be diligent stewards of this money and find ways to make sure that all of our activities, from teaching French classes to putting on plays, are profitable. We are not here to provide you with public service. We are here to provide you with the best conditions to participate in the Fringe that we can offer you on a very small budget. Our approach tries to diminish risk both for you (by giving you free-of-charge use of our performance space) and for us (by not paying a pre-determined fee or *cachet*, but rather operating a box office split).

[Fine. But can we at least negotiate the proportion that the artists take away from the box office split? I think I should be getting at least 80% of the box office takings.](#)

No. We have tried to enter into negotiations of this sort in the past and it has always ended in unnecessary delays to signing contracts and registering shows, making our promotional activities less effective because we start them later in the year. You will receive 60% of the box office takings.

[And, while we're on the point of financing, can the IFE help me apply for funding in France? Or maybe with a public body for Scotland or the United Kingdom?](#)

We have very limited human resources, so we choose not to help artists apply for financing with funding bodies in France (your local DRAC for example or the Institut français in Paris) in an *active* way. This means we will not help you find the proper paperwork to fill out, track down contact details of key people in the local administration with whom you would like to speak, or make calls or write emails on your behalf. We do, however, encourage you to apply for funding. In 2019, one of our participating companies obtained €13,000 in public funds through their region and the Institut français in Paris. Once we extended them an offer to participate, they did all of the footwork to get in touch with these funding bodies. Because we were already committed to this company participating in the Fringe, we were happy to write a letter of support for their application and to confirm with an administrator in Paris that their participation was a key element to our *Vive le Fringe !* programme. If you do the heavy lifting, we're happy to give you a final push.

Regarding local public institutions, you can look into opportunities with Creative Scotland, the British Council, and local Scottish Councils, but unless you are collaborating with a Scottish or British artist, you are unlikely to successfully obtain any funds through these channels.

[Does the IFE have a vast network of journalists who will give my show 5-star reviews? Will you take care of all of my press relations?](#)

We do maintain our database of journalists and we receive the Fringe's database of journalists and industry professionals, but we only share this information with companies once they have been selected to participate in *Vive le Fringe !* (and this, in compliance with GDPR standards). Beyond this, we cannot guarantee good reviews—in fact we cannot even guarantee that critics will come to review your show. We can increase our chances by compiling all promotional materials for the shows early

and getting out the word as soon as we have selected the *Vive le Fringe !* programme. We reiterate that we will not take care of your press relations. Our responsibility is to curate, produce, and promote our overall programme. It is your job to create, produce, and promote your show. A good resource for how to do this can be found on the Fringe Society's website: <https://www.edfringe.com/take-part/putting-on-a-show/marketing-and-promotion>.

[Does the IFE have a vast network of industry professionals who will programme my show at their theatre in New York and their festival in Beijing—and now that I think about it, why not a Hollywood agent and a residency at the Théâtre National de Bretagne? Will you take care of all of my industry relations and nurture my artistic career post-Fringe?](#)

We will provide you with whatever industry professional contacts we have. You must, however, take responsibility for reaching out to industry professionals, looking for agents, producers, and programmers who will help take your career or show to the next level. Once you have completed your participation in the Fringe, the IFE does not have the resources to actively track your success and act as your international producer or show distributor. We have, however, written letters of support for artists who have participated in *Vive le Fringe !* when they apply for funding, residences, or visas. We are happy to do this. A good resource for artist development can be found on the Fringe Society's website: <https://www.edfringe.com/take-part/putting-on-a-show/artist-development>.

[I understand. Can you at least give me an idea of what life has been for some of the artists you have worked with after they participated in *Vive le Fringe !*?](#)

In recent years, the Fringe has not made (or broke) any of our participating artists' careers. Here are some examples that you may find helpful:

- A French artist who dances with Scottish Ballet choreographed a dance piece for *Vive le Fringe !* in 2018 as he tries to make the move from dancer to choreographer. He received both very good reviews and mild success at the box office, but he already had an excellent network of press contacts and industry professionals thanks to his decade-long connection to Scotland's premiere dance ensemble. Post-Fringe, he is still dancing with Scottish Ballet and developing new work.
- In 2018, a Franco-German mime duo based in Berlin received some of their first English-language reviews of their work (including a 5-star review from a small Scottish theatre blog) and had a Berlin-based theatre agent commit to attending their show (unfortunately, the agent reserved a ticket, but did not attend). They went away from the Fringe having lost not too much money, but also having enjoyed the experience and having a better understanding of how the Fringe works. Back in Germany, they continued to hone their craft and develop new material for their show. They continue touring around Germany and recently participated in a production of *Faust* in China. It is important to note that none of this success can probably be attributed to *Vive le Fringe !*
- In 2019, a group of three musicians, supported by two marketing and communications professionals, performed a very successful ciné-concert of short films by Georges Méliès. The company had already been performing this show for many years, so it was quite polished and the company had a great experience touring and promoting the show. After an opening week of playing to a room that was only a quarter to a third full, a string of 4-star reviews came in (their first reviews in English), word of mouth got around and they had two and half weeks of selling out almost every day. However, their investment in coming to the Fringe far exceeded the money they made. Their Fringe was surely bordering on financial ruin, although they considered it to be a strategic loss to help them tour abroad. After the Fringe, the company's director went to the US to promote his show, but he is still awaiting firm offers from theatres and distribution companies in America.

[Why would anyone want to come to the Fringe?](#)

This is the question that you must ask yourself. Most artists and companies that come to the Fringe lose money. If you break even, your show can be considered a financial success. Most companies calculate that their participation in the Fringe will be a strategic financial loss, in that they will use the Fringe as an opportunity to showcase their talent and their work to producers, programmers, and other industry professionals in what is the world's largest marketplace for live performance.

On this count, many companies are disappointed. With over 3000 shows (there were more than 3800 in 2019), many companies do not know how to promote their shows to make sure that they attract journalists from important publications during the opening weekend of the festival. If they do not get good reviews at this early stage, a show may not build up its reputation quickly enough to gain momentum to do well for the rest of the Fringe. But if you are good, lucky, and hard-working, you may get that English-speaking agent you were looking for, catch the eye of a director or festival programmer, or get a slew of English-language reviews that you can then use in press kits as you try to sell your show to the British or North American markets. These cases are best-case scenarios.

Finally, some people come just for the fun of it—these are mostly amateur troops or university drama societies.

[Okay, I guess I'll come. I see that the Fringe begins on Friday, 6 August 2021. When should I arrive in Edinburgh and what will the timeline for tech week be?](#)

You should anticipate arriving on Tuesday the 3rd, when we will do most loading in and building. You will be given a tech rehearsal slot on either Wednesday the 4th or Thursday the 5th.

[Can the Institut français d'Ecosse \(IFE\) help me and my company find accommodation in Edinburgh for August?](#)

No, we unfortunately do not have a network of local residents who are willing or able to lodge artists in August. You are responsible for finding your own accommodation. Local universities rent out their dormitories in August for reasonable rates. The Fringe Society is also trying to improve the stock of rooms by working with local landlords and theatredigsbooker.com. As you will find throughout this FAQ, the Fringe Society is your best resource for planning your participation in the Fringe.

For example, here is their page on accommodation: <https://www.edfringe.com/take-part/accommodation>.

[I heard that the IFE sometimes houses artists coming to other festivals, such as the Edinburgh International Festival or the Edinburgh International Book Festival, at the consular residence? Why can't you do the same for me and my company?](#)

There are many reasons. First and most importantly, since we invite multiple companies to participate in *Vive le Fringe !*, but the amount of studios and rooms available at the consular residence is limited, it would not be fair for us to prioritise one company over another. Second, Fringe artists usually need accommodation for the entire month of August, whereas the International Festival or Book Festival artists need a bed for just a few nights. In terms of welcoming more artists and spreading access to the valuable resource that the consular residence is, it is better for us to remain flexible. Third, it is not just artists that come to Edinburgh in August, but also diplomats and important civil servants, we must remain flexible should we have to welcome high-ranking officials during the festival.

[This is inequalitarian. Artists that are invited to festivals such as the International Festival are already receiving artists fees. Why should they receive further support such as free accommodation, when we, artists at the Fringe, must suffer under profiteering and unscrupulous landlords?](#)

Admittedly, the squeeze on housing stock in Edinburgh in August creates an unfair situation and accommodation remains the largest obstacle for artists who wish to participate in the festival. This is what happens when demand far outweighs supply.

Regarding unequal treatments of artists participating in the Fringe and those participating in the International Festival (and other more "official" festivals), you need to understand that the Fringe is a jungle of hopeful artists—amateurs, emerging talent, and even established artists trying to expand their global reach—and that these artists are self-produced. Shows that participate in the International Festival, on the other hand, are hand-picked, well-financed, subsidised, and produced by establishment players. The IFE does not doubt your talent (in fact we actively seek out the best talent), but you must gauge your expectations and approach the Fringe realistically. You are producing your own show and taking on the bulk of the risk.

[Does the IFE have a piano?](#)

We have an upright piano that could be described as a *piano d'étude*. It is not at all suitable for performances. If you need to perform on a concert piano, you will be responsible for hiring, transporting, and tuning this piano. Furthermore, we foresee issues with shows that require the use of a concert piano as the only way that we can get it in and out of the performance space is by putting it on its side. Unless all shows we select use a piano or can still perform with a piano onstage, you will have to find a way to remove the piano from our performance space after each performance. You will have to bear the cost of such work.

[Can I leave my set on the stage for the entirety of the Fringe?](#)

No, the performance space will be used by multiple companies and since your sets are likely to be different, you must remove the set after each performance. A storage area will be made available to you.

[Will my company and I have my own dressing room to which we will have exclusive access for the entirety of the Fringe?](#)

No. In past years, we have made an artist's lodge adjacent to the main performance space available to artists for 30 minutes before and after their show to be used as a dressing room. In some years, this loge has doubled as a storage room to be used by all visiting companies at the same time. We find that having a green room available to artists for temporary exclusive use before and after their shows gives them the time and space to focus on preparing the performance, while a shared storage space allows for optimal use of our rooms and encourages exchanges between artists. If you have particular security concerns over shared storage space, please let us know and we will try to accommodate you.

[What is the ticketing policy of the IFE?](#)

For technical reasons, we choose to let the Fringe central box office manage all electronic and advance bookings. The IFE is responsible for all ticket sales on the door. We are required to use ticket price formulas that have been pre-approved by the London office. Our most popular formula is £10 full price, £8 concession, and £24 for a family ticket (for 4 people: 2 adults and 2 children OR 1 adult and 3 children). There is also a special opening weekend "preview" rate (usually half-price) and a buy-one-get-one-free scheme on the first Monday and Tuesday of the festival. We set ticket prices in conversation with you, the artist, and make sure that you agree with the pricing structure.

[Can I sell my own tickets to my shows?](#)

No. The IFE and the Fringe central box office are the only ticket sellers for *Vive le Fringe !* events.

[What is the IFE's policy regarding comp tickets?](#)

We are quite open to issuing justified comp tickets. For example, we typically make 4 tickets per show available to journalists registered with the Fringe Society, another 4 tickets per show available to industry professionals who have received Fringe accreditation, and about 6 tickets per show available to young people (and in some cases their teachers or chaperones) from underprivileged neighbourhoods in Scotland. While there are up to 14 comps available per show, these comps are highly regulated by the Fringe Society. Our experience is that most performances have no more than 2 comp tickets used.

We also allow all *Vive le Fringe !* artists to attend the shows of other *Vive le Fringe !* artists for free provided that this does not negatively affect sales. The same policy goes for IFE staff and *Vive le Fringe !* volunteers.

[I want to paper the town with posters and flyers about my show. What are your suggestions so I can do this well?](#)

The city of Edinburgh has given a monopoly on managing poster space across the entire city during August to Out of Hand. Close to 100% of all posters legally posted in outside spaces are managed by this company. If you want to advertise outside, it is the IFE's understanding that you must go through this company. For more information, please visit their website:

<http://outofhandscotland.co.uk/edinburgh-fringe/>.

You may be able to find some cafés and indoor spaces that are willing to hang up your poster for free, but the IFE does not have a database of such places.

The IFE recommends that you print A6 flyers that you can distribute to passers-by in high-traffic areas around the city (the Royal Mile, the Meadows, the Half-Price Hut, St Andrews Square, Princes Street, etc.). However, make sure that you take a green approach: print just what you think you'll need, recycle any paper product you don't use, and maximise a flyer's impact by using them to start a conversation with people and not just distribute them haphazardly.

[I once made a banner promoting my one-woman musical that was the size of the Tapisserie de Bayeux and that wrapped around the entirety of my local theatre. What kind of space can you allocate to me for promoting my show inside and outside the IFE?](#)

We have space for A3 posters in our lobby, lifts, library, and language centre. We have around 10 different points in our building where we can hang posters and have them effectively reach people. We also have flatscreens in our lobby where we can run slideshow adverts for our *Vive le Fringe !* programme.

As to outside publicity, we have glass showcases where we can post 8 A3 posters, promoting up to 8 different shows. In close coordination with the IFE's communication officer, we have been able to make arrangements with visiting companies to hang banners from stone balustrades surrounding our building. Such outside promotional space is not guaranteed if you participate in *Vive le Fringe !*, but we are committed, in principle, to using our outside space effectively to promote your show.

[Why must I sign the agreement between the IFE and my company by 30th October 2020?](#)

This is about timing. The longer we delay the formalities around securing your commitment to perform at the Institute, the less time we have to prepare festival logistics and promote your show. We also always aim to register our shows before the more affordable Earlybird registration deadline, which is usually mid-March.

[What are the registration fees for the Fringe?](#)

For a full Fringe run (6 or more performances), the Earlybird registration is £295.20 (£246.00 exclusive of VAT). The standard rate is £393.60 (£328.00 exclusive of VAT). For all other registration fee information, please see this page:

<https://www.edfringe.com/take-part/putting-on-a-show/registering>.

If you are selected for Vive le Fringe !, the Institut will advance your registration fees but will reimburse itself from the box office takings before proceeding to the box office split with you.

[How does paying for music rights work at the Fringe?](#)

The Fringe Society has a special arrangement with PPL PRS (the joint body that manages the commercialisation of all music licensing in the UK) so that all music licensing requests are aggregated by the Fringe, resulting in lower licensing fees for artists. After registering, but before coming to the Fringe in August, you will be asked to fill out a PPL PRS declaration form online, where you will be asked about the music that will be played (if any) during your show. The form will ask other questions, such as whether or not the music will be recorded or played live, whether the music is original or under license, whether the music is no longer subject to copyright because of its age, etc. You will also be asked whether or not the music is incidental to the performance (i.e., used before and after the play or during scene changes) or if the music takes place during the action of the play. Depending on your answers, the Fringe central box office will automatically retain between 0% and 4% of your box office sales to pay for music licensing. You should be notified shortly after completing this form how much of your sales will be withheld to pay for music rights. For more complete information on this topic, please visit this page: <https://www.edfringe.com/take-part/putting-on-a-show/music-licensing>.

[When will I know how much money I've made?](#)

Once the festival begins, you will have access to daily ticket reports letting you know how many tickets have been sold for your shows for each day of the festival via the Fringe central box office. At regular intervals throughout the festival (usually once a week), the IFE accountant will provide a report combining the Fringe box office sales with our own on-the-door sales. This will let you know what your base ticket sales are.

You will not know exactly how much money you've made until mid- to late-September once the Fringe central box office has deducted their cut and the music licensing fees and transferred us the balance. We will then reimburse ourselves for the cost of registering your show and let you know what your 60% of the net box office takings were.

[Can you remind me of what will get deducted from the box office takings?](#)

The Fringe central box office takes a 4% administrative commission on all tickets it sells. If a ticket to your show costs £10, they will hold onto 40p.

Depending on the details of the music you are using in your shows, the Fringe central box office will deduct anywhere between 0% and 4% of gross ticket sales. The IFE must also report to the Fringe central box office how many tickets we have sold on the door and will further apply music licensing costs to the tickets we have sold.

Finally, upon receipt of the net box office sales generated by each show from the Fringe, the IFE adds this amount to the revenues that our own ticket sales have generated. From this amount, we deduct the cost of registering your show, which in most cases is £295.20. If we had to pay for your late registration, we will reimburse ourselves the higher rate, or £393.60.

After reimbursing ourselves for the registration costs, we will have arrived at our total net ticket revenues. You will receive 60% of this amount.

[When will I get paid?](#)

The Fringe central box office does not transfer us the ticket revenues generated by each show until the third or fourth week of September. Once we receive this, we move very quickly to tell you what your 60% of the box office is. You must then provide us with an invoice for this amount and send us your RIB/IBAN (or a UK bank statement clearly indicating sort code and account number) and we will proceed to payment. You should receive payment in the last week of September or the first week of October at the latest.

[Why have you published the application form and this information sheet in English and not in French?](#)

While we aim to have our *Vive le Fringe !* application materials and related information published both in English and in French, for the sake of expediency and style, we have chosen to publish first in English. This is also a practical choice as speaking and understanding a bit of English revealed to be essential to the realities of performing, marketing, and engaging with audiences at an international festival in a mainly Anglophone country.

[I have more questions? Where can I get more answers?](#)

If we have not answered your questions here, please feel free to write to us at ifecosse.edimbourg-cslt@diplomatie.gouv.fr.