



**Tower
Theatre**

**NOTES ON
BUDGETING
and
CLAIMING EXPENSES**

October 2023

Who Are These Notes For?

These notes are intended to help anyone responsible for expenditure on a production.

How Do We Set A Budget?

We all want to put on productions in the best possible way, and this will always involve spending money, but everyone needs to be cost-conscious as the Company is mostly self-funding. The aim is to encourage creative ideas and help everyone involved to put on the show in the way they have visualised.

The Artistic Directors and Financial Director will allocate a notional budget for each show. This will then be refined at the show's Budget Production Meeting. If as a result of that meeting it seems that the allocated budget is insufficient then the Artistic/Financial Directors will take a view on whether or not to agree to vary it. (If you can share the cost of something with another show, it can be split between 2 budgets).

Each production is expected to decide, within reason, what it needs and prepare proposals accordingly. Members of the production team must set their own priorities and in their joint artistic and commercial judgement use money to maximum effect. However, there is a limit to what the Tower can afford, and at times the Artistic and Financial Directors may have to say no.

The Budget Production Meeting

The production budget meeting is the system we use to decide how much money to spend on a particular show.

- It is important that you have a meeting at least six weeks before your get-in.
- It should take place after most of the design process is complete but before it is set in stone.
- The meeting should include the Director, the Stage Manager, the H&S Officer, the Set Designer, Lighting Designer, Costume Designer, Sound Designer, and a representative from the Artistic Team.
- The agenda is to set and jointly agree priorities for the whole production so money is spent wisely and to maximum effect; balancing creativity and reasonable expenditure.
- Estimates from each Designer and Stage Manager will be considered by the Artistic Director attending the meeting and the overall budget agreed. Each designer should have an idea of the costs required for their aspect of the production. Any "extraordinary" items that may be hard to source or expensive should be identified and approved early on in the process, as should any expenditure that puts the show budget above the agreed amount.

The purpose of the meeting is to complete the Production Costs Estimates proforma and agree the specific budget for your show. (A budget form is included in the Stage Managers Notes and in Appendix 1). This should be VAT inclusive. It will then be approved by the Financial Director and you are expected to stick to this budget. A completed copy should be given to the Office.

The meeting is an important part of the process of putting a show on; allow at least 1½ hours.

What to put in the budget

Most shows will need to consider the cost of

- Set materials
- Furniture hire
- Props (including any food and drink)
- Costume materials
- Costume hire
- Lighting consumables (gel, gaffer tape etc)
- Transport costs to and from the Arches

On some shows, you may need to consider the cost of

- Hire of scripts, scores or band parts
- Musicians' expenses
- Special effects (pyrotechnics etc.)
- Lighting/Sound hire
- Extra Publicity and Photographs, above the standard level

For hired items, don't forget the cost of delivery and collection if you are unable to do this yourselves.

Invoices from companies

Some companies may invoice the office directly, e.g. for hires and companies we have accounts with. If so, reference your order with the name of the production so the office can attribute the expenditure to your show. Remember to include this figure in your budget breakdown and inform the office that company X will be submitting an invoice for £?? on such and such a date.

General stock items

There is no general budget for stock items such as paint, screws, wood, gels etc. It is the responsibility of the relevant Designer to check stock levels and purchase as needed, against their production budget. If something is needed for a show, it must be included in their estimate. However, if the cost of materials can be shared with the next/another show because they want the same item(s), then the bill can be split.

Claiming for expenses

As a registered charity and to use our members' money wisely, we need to manage our finances to the highest standard.

So:

- No expenses will be paid without a receipt. Credit or debit card slips are not sufficient - we need a proper receipt. In addition, if you are making claims for anything that is not entirely related to a show, you must get a VAT receipt (which includes a VAT number and a note of how much VAT was charged).
- Each person's expenses for a show should be submitted regularly, so the General Manager can keep track of spending and as needed, send out a reminder of how much has been spent so far as per the original budget. If this causes financial inconvenience, then a separate claim can be made as each expense occurs.
- A claim for expenses must be accompanied by a Tower Theatre claim form (copy attached as Appendix 2) When paper or electronic receipts are submitted, they should be labelled (or numbered) and correspond with the itemised list on the claim form e.g., Receipt (1) = Claim item (1) This is so receipts can be matched with the intended use on the budget form and correctly cross referenced by the General Manager.
- The claim form must be authorized by the Stage Manager, the Director or someone assigned responsibility for the show budget by the Artistic Team.
- If an expense is incurred from a company which invoices the Tower directly, then it must be authorised as above before the order is placed.

Scanned documents are perfectly acceptable (and indeed preferred). If the claim form is submitted by email to the office by the Stage Manager/Director, this will be accepted as being authorized. If you are not able to scan receipts, then attach the originals to a printout of the claim form, get it authorised and then give all the paperwork to the office.

The Tower does not wish members to be out-of-pocket if they spend money on productions, and will always reimburse promptly if the claim is submitted correctly.

All claims for expenses on a production must be submitted within one month of the show ending. Claims after this deadline will only be paid in exceptional circumstances.

So, to summarise :

Get receipts ' Complete a claim form ' Get SM (or other authorised person) to agree it ' send to the office (ideally by email) ' await payment

The following items cannot be claimed for

- Scripts
- Haircuts
- Personal travel expenses (except for petrol for van hire)
- Teas (food, coffee etc) other than where required as a prop - the cast and crew must pay for these themselves.
- Clothing - unless Wardrobe has specifically authorised a member of the cast to purchase an item of clothing, the costs are not recoverable. Cast members are expected to supply their own tights, hairpieces, hairnets, modern accessories, etc.
- If in doubt as to whether an item is recoverable, check first with the Tower office.

The following items are either charged to the overall Tower funds or will have already been taken into account by the Artistic Team

- Play royalties and Performing Right Fees
- Replacement lamps for stage lighting
- Basic publicity and Programmes


Appendix 1

PRODUCTION COSTS ESTIMATE FORM

PRODUCTION:	
PRODUCTION MEETING DATE	
DIRECTOR	
STAGE MANAGER	
ARTISTIC TEAM REP	

	Estimated Cost (including VAT)
Set Construction	
Materials/Paint	
Furniture Hire	
Material Hire	
Transport Hire	
Lighting/Video	
Consumables	
Hire	
Sound	
Consumables	
Hire	
Wardrobe	
Materials	
Hire	
Cleaning	
Music	
Fees	
Hire	
Stage Management	
Props Purchase	
Props Hire	
Other	
Additional publicity	
Rubbish removal	
Approved by:	
Date:	

Appendix 2 : Claim Form

	TAVISTOCK REPERTORY GUARANTORS LTD VAT Reg. No. 894 3396 74 CLAIM FOR REIMBURSEMENT <i>Receipted bills MUST be attached.</i> <i>Separate VAT information is only needed for expenses NOT incurred on productions.</i>
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NAME :

PRODUCTION or DEPARTMENT :

DATE :

	TOTAL COST (inc VAT)		VAT*	
	£	p	£	p
TOTALS				

- If the item was purely for use on a production, then there is no need to itemise VAT separately. For anything that is not entirely related to a show, you must get a VAT receipt (includes a VAT number and a note of how much VAT was charged) and fill in the shaded box here.

Signed :

Approved by :

Payment will normally be by bank transfer. Please give your account details :

NAME :

SORT CODE :

ACCOUNT NUMBER :