

FAMDA

One Act Play Festival

Production Guide



Welcome & Purpose

This guide is a condensed reference to the FAMDA One Act Play Festival. It highlights the key requirements for planning and marketing the festival, explains how it operates, and points you to supporting documents stored in Google Drive for further detail.

Festival Planning

Planning for the FAMDA One Act Play Festival begins up to 12 months in advance. Early planning is essential to secure the venue, engage an adjudicator, approach sponsors, and recruit volunteers.

A full 12-Month Production Timeline is maintained as a standalone document in the Festival Google Drive. This timeline sets out all required tasks month by month, from confirming the venue through to post-festival debrief.

It is critical that these dates are followed. Delays in the early stages (such as booking the hall, securing an adjudicator, or opening entries) create last-minute pressure for the entire festival team. The Production Timelines document must be treated as mandatory reference for the Festival Coordinator and FAMDA committee.

See: 01 OAPF 12 Month Production Timelines (Google Drive)

Marketing & Promotion

Effective promotion ensures strong participation from theatre companies and good audience numbers for the festival. Marketing for the Festival should begin early and remain consistent across multiple channels.

A detailed Marketing & Promotion Guide is maintained as a standalone document in the Festival Google Drive. It outlines objectives, target audiences, timelines, and tools for publicity.

See: 04 OAPF – Marketing & Promotion Guide (Google Drive)

Festival Operations

The FAMDA One Act Play Festival follows a clear format to ensure fairness, safety, and efficiency for all participants.

Companies are allocated ten minutes for bump-in and five minutes for bump-out, and are required to submit a final script in digital form as well as two printed copies on the day of performance. All scripts must be original or properly licensed, with proof of rights provided on request.

On arrival, companies are asked to present themselves at the Stage Door at the rear of the hall at least one hour before their scheduled session. A staff member, acting in a liaison role, will greet each company, allocate dressing rooms, and introduce the visiting company's Director/Stage Manager/ Technical support to the FAMDA backstage team.

Performers and crew are expected to maintain a quiet and professional environment, keeping the backstage area clear unless preparing to perform.

Festival operations are overseen by the Stage Manager, supported by the sound and lighting technicians, ensuring timing, safety, and smooth transitions between groups.

All participants are required to follow the directions of the Stage Manager and Festival crew at all times. For safety and accountability, any incidents should be reported immediately to either the Stage Manager or Front of House staff.

Festival Roles – Job Descriptions

Festival Coordinator

- Oversees festival planning and delivery.
- Main contact for companies and committee.
- Ensures policies, timelines, and deadlines are met.
- Supports all festival staff and volunteers in their roles.
- Responsible for safety compliance and incident reporting at FOH.

Master of Ceremonies (MC)

- Introduces each session and company to the audience.
- Keeps the audience informed and engaged between performances.
- Supports timing and festival flow in coordination with FOH and Stage Manager.

Front of House (FOH) Manager

- Manages audience entry, registration, and seating.
- Supports a safe and welcoming environment for guests.
- Coordinates with Stage Manager to ensure smooth running of sessions.
- Supervises ushers and ensures FOH area is staffed appropriately.

Stage Manager

- Runs rehearsals and performances backstage.
- Keeps time for bump-in, bump-out, and show limits.
- Coordinates with technical crew and company Stage Managers.
- First point of contact for technical or backstage issues.
- Responsible for safety compliance and incident reporting backstage.

Technical Operator x2

- Operates lights, sound, and effects during performances.
- Prepares and runs cues as supplied by companies.
- Conducts technical checks with each group prior to performance.
- Maintains safe use of equipment and reports faults immediately.

Backstage Liaison

- Greets newly arrived companies at the Stage Door.
- Allocates dressing rooms and provides orientation backstage.
- Introduces visiting Stage Managers and technical crew to the FAMDA backstage team.
- Supports Stage Manager by maintaining order and communication backstage.

Ushers

- Assist FOH by guiding patrons to their seats.
- Check tickets and provide programs where required.
- Ensure aisles remain clear and patrons comply with venue safety requirements.

- Act as first point of contact for audience queries or concerns during sessions.

Kitchen Supervisor

- Organises the kitchen setup before the festival begins.
- Coordinates kitchen staff and volunteers during the festival.
- Oversees preparation and serving of food and refreshments.
- Ensures hygiene, safety, and cleanliness standards are maintained.

Adjudication & Awards

The festival is adjudicated by an independent theatre professional. Adjudication provides constructive feedback to all companies and recognises excellence through awards.

- Best Production
- Best Director
- Best Actor
- Best Actress
- Best Ensemble
- Best Original Script
- Technical Achievement
- Youth Encouragement Award

The adjudicator's decision is final. To be eligible for awards, companies must meet time limits, submit materials on time, and comply with festival rules.

Lines of Authority

Clear decision-making lines ensure that the festival runs smoothly and that all matters are handled fairly and consistently.

- Stage Manager holds authority over all matters relating to backstage operations, including technical issues, performer management, and adherence to backstage procedures.
- Front of House (FOH) Manager holds authority over all matters relating to the audience, foyer, and hospitality areas, including ticketing, seating, and audience safety.
- Festival Coordinator holds authority over all other matters concerning the festival, except in cases involving:
 - the eligibility of a play or script,
 - contraventions of safety requirements, or
 - breaches of FAMDA policies.

In such cases, the matter must be referred to the President, who holds final authority. If the president is absent then consultation with the available committee members at the festival must occur.

Where necessary, the festival may be paused until the matter is resolved.

Script Management and Handling

FAMDA is committed to the protection of authors, performers, and the integrity of all festival productions. The FAMDA Script Management Policy sets out the standards for how scripts are to be managed, stored, and accessed. This policy applies to all productions, including the One Act Play Festival, and ensures compliance with copyright, licensing, and plagiarism requirements.

During the Festival, this policy is put into practice through the FAMDA Script Handling Process, which provides step-by-step procedures for receiving, checking, and distributing scripts. Key elements include:

- Each presented script must be checked for originality.
- All submitted scripts must be original or properly licensed. Proof of rights may be requested.
- Scripts are submitted in digital form (PDF/DOCX) and two hard copies provided on the day of performance.
- Scripts may be subject to plagiarism checks if required.
- Final approved versions are securely stored in the Festival Google Drive.
- Hard copies are controlled by the Stage Manager and returned at the conclusion of the Festival.

Together, the Policy and the Process ensure that scripts are managed fairly, consistently, and in accordance with both FAMDA's governance standards and the practical requirements of running the Festival.

FAMDA Festival – Email Pack

Listed below are the standard emails that must be sent to companies at each stage of the preparation process. For each email type, the purpose and timing are noted. A template for each email is stored in the Festival Google Drive at the address provided.

1. Invitation Email

Purpose: Announce the Festival and invite entries.

Timing: Send 9–10 months before the Festival (Nov–Dec for August).

2. Entry Confirmation Email

Purpose: Acknowledge receipt of entry and reassure companies they are registered.

Timing: Send as soon as entry is received (rolling basis).

3. Festival Information Pack Email

Purpose: Provide companies & performers with arrival details, backstage rules, and adjudication process.

Timing: Send 2–3 months before the Festival (June for August).

4. Festival Schedule Email

Purpose: Share the final program and confirm play order and tech run allocations.

Timing: Send 2–3 months before the Festival (June–July for August).

5. Final Reminder Email

Purpose: Remind companies of logistics, arrival times, and safety information.

Timing: Send 2–3 weeks before the Festival (early August).

6. Thank You / Wrap-Up Email

Purpose: Thank participants, request feedback, and close the loop after the Festival.

Timing: Send 1–2 weeks after the Festival (early September).

Policies

The following key policies apply during the festival. Full versions are available in the shared Google Drive. This guide provides a short summary with reference to the complete documents.

FAMDA Safety Policy

FAMDA's Safety Policy applies across all activities, including the Festival. Visiting companies will receive safety information in advance, with key reminders displayed at the venue and reinforced by FOH or Stage Managers where necessary. See: FAMDA Safety Policy (Google Drive).

FAMDA Child Safety Policy

All volunteers hold a valid Working With Children Check (WWCC). Youth performers must be supervised at all times. See: FAMDA Child Safety Policy (Google Drive).

FAMDA Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected from all members, volunteers, and participants. For the Festival, this ensures respectful interactions between companies, volunteers, and adjudicators, and provides a framework for dealing with inappropriate behaviour. See: FAMDA Code of Conduct (Google Drive)

FAMDA Complaints and Grievance Policy

This policy outlines how concerns and disputes are raised, managed, and resolved fairly. During the Festival, it applies to any issues such as disputes over scheduling, adjudication feedback, or conduct, ensuring that all matters are addressed transparently and consistently. See: FAMDA Complaints and Grievance Policy (Google Drive)

FAMDA Script Plagiarism Policy & FAMDA Script Plagiarism Check

The FAMDA Script Management Policy sets the rules for submission, storage, and handling of scripts. Alongside this, the Script Plagiarism Check outlines the process used to verify originality. At the Festival, these ensure every script is either licensed or original, checked for authenticity, securely stored, and handled consistently. This protects authors' rights, upholds the integrity of the Festival, and ensures fairness for all participants.

See: FAMDA Script Management Policy & Script Plagiarism Check (Google Drive).

Photography & Consent

FAMDA may photograph or record festival activities. Companies are responsible for obtaining parent/guardian consent for under-18 performers. See: Festival Conditions of Entry & Performer Pack (Google Drive).

Performance Time Limits

Plays must run within published limits. Up to 10% tolerance is allowed. Overruns will be permitted to finish but will not be eligible for awards. See: Festival Conditions of Entry (Google Drive).

Policy Enforcement

These policies are enforced by the Stage Manager, Front of House Manager, and Festival Coordinator, with escalation to the President if required.