

A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING YOUR INTERNATIONAL PLAN

Updated June 2021

The purpose of this document is to assist artists, practitioners, and organisations to (re)develop a relevant and realistic international plan that will help focus activity and investment.

Introduction

We encourage artists, practitioners and organisations to continue to undertake a variety of international activity. This is a unique opportunity to proactively connect with international peers, contribute to the global discussions about alternative modes of engagement and presentation which will have implications on your longer-term international goals.

In the short to medium-term, given the ongoing impacts of COVID 19, we anticipate that the majority of activity involving an artist or practitioner's participation will continue to occur virtually. If your project requires international travel, we strongly advise you to follow official travel advice and carefully consider the additional risk.

This includes discussing any risks with your international collaborators, in particular presenting partners, to understand their COVID 19 plans and your contractual obligations. This also includes carefully considering any additional expense which could be incurred by changes to border controls in New Zealand or lockdowns in the country you are traveling to. We recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance and factoring this possibility into your planning and budget, including considering the implications on your work and family commitments if you are locked down in another country for an extended period of time.

Before you develop or update your international plan, you should have:

- work that demonstrates quality and viability in an international context
- an openness to adapt your work and/or practice as international models and ways of working evolve
- the infrastructure and skills to work internationally, and to support international engagement - developing enduring relationships is more critical than ever before
- strong financial planning and support from international partners
- a proven track record of delivering successful work, including presenting work nationally and internationally
- evidence of international demand for your work or a strong global network
- the ability and resources to adapt and respond to changing environments.

In order to succeed internationally, artists, practitioners and organisations need to develop and commit to a long-term plan and dedicate resources to this activity. A plan will inform your decisions around which markets/audiences/platforms/collaborations to focus on and which invitations and activities should be prioritised.

For larger organisations, your international plan should align with your strategic plan. We encourage you to consult with peers and experts, locally and internationally.

An international plan should include:

- international goals for you/your company
- your identified target markets or platforms
- a realistic timeframe and budget
- risks and mitigation
- resources required to deliver the plan



INTERNATIONAL GOALS FOR YOU/YOUR COMPANY

Clearly (re)define your aims and goals and ask yourself what international success looks like for you.

It's important that you spend time considering your international goals to ensure that they're relevant and realistic. Are you interested in income generation, creative/professional development, critical attention, developing peer networks, onward touring and exhibition invitations? These goals will come into play when you are making decisions about specific opportunities and prioritising resources. This is a long game – don't curb your ambitions but give yourself sufficient time to learn and thrive.

Your plan will evolve as your international profile and knowledge of the opportunities develop, but it's important to set achievable short to medium-term targets and measures for success. Be selective and focused in your efforts and ensure that you are able to adapt depending on the context. This is especially important as new ways of working and new audiences/markets emerge due to the global impacts of COVID-19.

You should regularly reflect on your progress against your targets and key learnings and review your goals as required. Use every experience to inform your next steps and be flexible to respond to changes in the international markets, research/new knowledge and networks established.

Actively seek out others in your sector who have knowledge and skills to share with you.



YOUR IDENTIFIED TARGET MARKETS OR PLATFORMS

Identify your target markets or platforms, and know your audience and international peer network

Invest time in developing your knowledge and networks in different markets. It's important to understand how international peers are responding to the impacts of the pandemic as this varies greatly across the globe. Undertake research, participate in markets and other platforms as a delegate, and engage in virtual dialogues. Seek advice from experts and peers 'in-country' and other artists and organisations that have first-hand experience.

Keep across trends in presenting or collaborating. You may need to adapt to stay relevant – there has been a rapid shift to hybrid and digital, not only in creating or presenting work but also in how we work with collaborators.

Think strategically about your target audiences, as well as the ability of the work to translate successfully within your financial and organisational means. Different work will have different appeal or market suitability – particularly important for a performing arts company looking to create an international touring repertoire.

Consider the unique cultural, geographical, economic and legal regulations of your target regions as this may have an impact on your decisions and the work you present.

Be realistic about priority regions and platforms; how many you can get to, what is affordable, where your work will flourish and how this activity will contribute towards your long-term goals. Think about what your unique offer is (artistically or professionally) and how to best articulate this to people from those target markets or specific venues, festivals, galleries, or publishers.

Focus on one or two of the most promising opportunities, be prepared to play the long game and remain flexible as organisations globally continue to adapt to the evolving situation.



A REALISTIC TIMEFRAME AND BUDGET

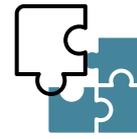
What are the financial and human resources (capability and capacity) required to deliver to your goals?

Who in your team will take responsibility for developing your networks, negotiating on contracts, managing the budgets, logistics, freighting and marketing (if relevant)?

Do you have a realistic timeframe and budget? Can you achieve this activity and deliver on your other commitments? It is critical to allocate sufficient resources for both the planning and the delivery stages, while maintaining your business back home.

As with all major undertakings it's important to prepare a realistic budget and viable project plan. View your annual programme and budget thoroughly and recognise the impact of international touring on the organisation, its people and its bottom line.

Consider the partners who could support your activity, financially or with advice.



RISKS AND MITIGATION

What are the possible risks (logistical, financial and human) – do you have mitigations in place?

Operating internationally presents a number of challenges and variables – for example, fluctuations in exchange rates, overseas tax rules, variation in levels of on-ground technical support, expectations of the presenter, cancellations, natural disasters, etc.

A risk assessment for each engagement is critical and should inform the other aspects of your international plan, including the budget and human resourcing. This [Risk Management Toolkit](#) may be helpful.

If you've undertaken international activity before, reflect on what hasn't worked for you in the past or what the critical obstacles for your progress were and then develop a step-by-step approach to overcome these obstacles.

If relevant, major risks and the mitigation plan should be identified to the Board in terms of accountability.



KEEP CONNECTED WITH INTERNATIONAL CONVERSATIONS

Keep connected with international conversations

The global arts community has been incredibly active sharing ideas and resources online throughout the pandemic. Many platforms encourage spaces to share ideas and resources freely, such as:

- **Producer Hub**: a connective space for independent producers, artists, producing/presenting organizations and other arts workers creating live performance.
- **92Y**: curated conversations with the world's foremost thought leaders on changes for audiences and art practitioners.
- **APAM - Australian Performing Arts Market**: serves as an Australian-based hub of market intelligence for the performing arts.
- **Digital Boost**: Free online courses to build your digital skills
- **Digital Assessment**: Free digital assessment and action plan tool
- **Risk Management Toolkit** – tools to help identify and manage risk in your organisation.
- **Auroranova**: Webinar series looking at different models of sustainable touring.
- Dance Film platforms: **Dance Film Association** - International festivals that programme dance films. You can also refer to NZ Film Commission's list of platforms and agents to identify those who promote dance or experimental film: **NZFC Short Film Festival Marketing Guide, NZ Local Distributors List**

If you know of other international networks or platforms sharing resources and connecting the global community, please share these with us by emailing:

international@creativenz.govt.nz