

HATY CASTING PRINCIPLES

Ratified by the HATY Committee 1st January 2024

Purpose

To clearly layout the process of casting through auditions from beginning to end, in order that the candidates and the Audition Panel members have a framework of expectations and responsibilities of which to work to.

Prior to Auditions

- 1.1 The format for auditions will be decided by the Production Management Team in conjunction with the production team for each production depending on requirements e.g. Will there be a dance workshop? Will the company/chorus be open access, auditioned or work-shopped? The format will be clearly communicated in audition information prior to auditions.
- 1.2 Audition material will be made available to all interested parties prior to the auditions including clear instructions of what will be expected on the day.
- 1.3 An expression of interest form (hereinafter EOI) will need to be completed for anyone who wishes to audition / be involved.
- 1.4 Amendments to submitted EOI forms will be accepted and affected at any time up until commencement of decision discussions, but not after.

The Audition Panel

- 2.1 The audition panel will be made up of either 5 or 7 members, including the production team, members of the Production Management Team (hereinafter PMT), one of whom shall be Chair of the panel.
- 2.2 The PMT will always strive to ensure each elected panel member has the appropriate level of experience pertinent to the production in question. This may on occasion as required include an external audition panel member.
- 2.3 Any PMT or external panel member will be co-opted per show and where capacity allows any PMT or external member will not sit for auditions taking place over a consecutive 12 month period to allow for variation on panels
- 2.4 The role of the PMT presence is to protect the best interest of the society and its members.
- 2.5 The audition panel have responsibility for casting the production. The wider PMT will only intervene in exceptional circumstances, but will be kept up to date throughout the process on levels of engagement and any potential areas of concern – such as not enough interest or too much to fit into planned audition day
- 2.6 There will be an impartial communicator throughout the process who will organise all related administration duties (eg. audition times, outcomes, queries, feedback exchange). In all but exceptional circumstances this person will not be a member of the panel, nor be present in any audition. Wherever availability allows this role will be filled by the Society Production Secretary.
- 2.7 All audition panel members will be expected to have a good understanding of the production and requirements of roles before the auditions, and will be briefed on the day of this policy and their associated responsibilities.

Auditions and Decision Making

- 3.1 During auditions the audition panel may offer auditionees the opportunity to read other roles where they see possible appropriate qualities. (In this event the candidate will be asked if they need to make

any amendments to their EOI form in accordance with point 1.4 above, in order to ensure 3.5 can be effected at the candidate's discretion).

- 3.2 Where there is a personal relationship with a partner or immediate family member an audition panel member will be unable to contribute to the discussion and decision making for the associated auditionee only. This person's presence in the audition itself will be at the discretion of the associated auditionee.
- 3.3 All roles will be offered to those deemed on the day to have best met the specifications of the role, including considerations around compatibility with any other associated casting.
- 3.4 No candidate will be considered for any particular role unless clearly selected on their EOI form.
- 3.5 When a clear decision cannot be made between two or more equally capable candidates, loyalty, support, commitment to the society and previous behaviour will be taken into consideration.
- 3.6 Where discussions do not lead to a consensus decision across the audition panel, the decision will go to a vote. The auditionee with the majority vote will be cast in the role; where required the chair holds the casting vote.
- 3.7 Any member of the audition panel can propose that the process should be adjourned and reconvened at a later date should they feel that the discussions are no longer productive (for example due to the late hour). The decision to adjourn should be taken by the chair of the panel.
- 3.8 There will be a period after casting has taken place before any decisions will be communicated, this will be 7pm the day after the day of the decisions being reached. During this period there should be no further discussions between the casting committee and/or potential decisions communicated.
- 3.9 During this reflection period, any member of the audition panel may raise a concern about the process of the auditions in relation to this policy with a pre-appointed **Casting: Concerns and Mediation Lead**, who will have been determined by the Production Management Team.
- 3.10 For the avoidance of doubt, any concerns raised must be relating to a concern affecting the integrity of the process; a serious breach of these principles, and not merely because a vote was unfavourable to any individual's particular preferred candidate.
- 3.11 Raising a Casting Concern is an important and serious matter, which is governed by a separate job description - see Casting: Concern and Mediation Lead JD. It must be recognised by all audition panel members that invoking this process will lead to an immediate delay to the casting and no communications to candidates can proceed until that is resolved.
- 3.12 The audition panel holds the right to leave any role uncast where they do not feel there was an appropriate candidate. Any such role could be allocated by a number of methods including invitation, re-call, further auditions, allocated from ensemble, or otherwise, as authorised by the panel.
- 3.13 Where a role is offered and the auditionee rejects this role, the above methods may be used to recast the rejected role.

Communication of Decisions

- 4.1 Decisions will be communicated from the impartial communicator on behalf of the entire panel. This will be via email, unless specifically requested otherwise.
- 4.2 A basic and impersonal email template will be used to communicate the decisions, this template can be made available to the candidate prior to the process.
- 4.3 All emails will be prepared and then sent in a bulk method in order to reduce opportunities of inappropriate information sharing.
- 4.4 A time frame of 48 hours will be provided for acceptance of roles to be confirmed.
- 4.5 A cast list will be communicated publically once confirmation has been received of initial casting. This will still take place even where there may be further casting to take place.
- 4.6 Feedback can be requested up to 3 days after notification of audition outcomes. This will be a brief overview from the panel of strengths and possible areas for development