



vrystaat

PACE

Pan-African Creative Exchange



**GUIDANCE
NOTES**

LEARN



Khoekhoegowab: Vrystaati di Di//khasib !Gâilgâisens ge #anlgâs tsi Igôasiba Khoe-San Khoena ra mâ. N khoen ge //in aboxan Ina /gaisa #goms tsi !hû//arede! kho/gara hâ,nâu khoen !hb din /khas khami.

Afrikaans: Die Vrystaat Kunstefees erken en respekteer die Khoe-San van die Vrystaat en die diep geestelike verhoudings wat hulle met hul voorouers, hierdie land en sy mense het.

English: The Vrystaat Arts Festival acknowledges and respects the Khoe-San of the Free State and the deep spiritual attachment to their ancestors and relationships they have to this country and its people.

SeSotho a tsa B: Bonono Freistata o ananela le ho hlomphe morabe wa Khoe-San wa Freistata, le kamano e tebileng ya semoya eo ba nang le yona le badimo ba bona hammoho le dikamano tseo ba nang le tsona le naha baahi ba yona.

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BACKGROUND

The biennial Pan-African Creative Exchange (PACE) takes place in conjunction with the Vrystaat Arts Festival and offers a snapshot of Africa's culturally diverse art scene to an audience of national and international arts professionals.

The first PACE Showcase took place in July 2018. It offers a new platform for artists and companies based in Africa and from the African diaspora to present high-quality work and to network and share platforms with national and international producers, promoters, funders, festival organizers, and artists.

PACE offers a showcase platform to present high-quality work across the performing arts by artists and companies based in Africa and from the African diaspora. Additionally, the showcase provides opportunities for visual art; moving images; arts and crafts; and interdisciplinary and live arts to be presented. This will be separately curated.

The main aim of PACE is to put talented African artists in touch with people who can help them develop, book, and support their work.

PACE ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- First Nations Ceremony.
- Breakfast / lunchtime / evening receptions and networking sessions.
- Showcasing of Tour-Ready work, Work-in-Progress and Pitches.
- Round table discussions and workshops.
- PACE Hub for artists and promoters with a staffed information desk, catering options, display areas, video/presentation facilities.
- The PACE Book: A guide to the artists presenting work, with details of their work and contact details.
- Marketplace with artists' stalls.
- Opportunity to extend your stay to be part of the Vrystaat Arts Festival, Vrystaat Literature Festival, and Vrynge (Fringe Festival).

<http://www.vrystaatkunstefees.co.za/en/home/>

OUR AIMS ARE TO:

1. Assist artists and companies based in Africa, or from its diaspora, to develop their touring potential (both in Africa and internationally) by creating the opportunity for them to show their work to people who can buy or assist in developing their work.
2. Provide networking opportunities with various national and international artists, producers, presenters, funding agencies, and support organisations to empower artists and companies, as well as provide artist-to-artist exchange opportunities.
3. Present a focused programme of high-quality work over multiple days to raise the profile of the African arts sector.

KEY ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

1. Artists whose work responds to contemporary Africa.
2. Work must be either tour-ready, a work-in-progress, or a concept in the early stages of development.
3. Work must be from artists or companies based on the African continent OR, for a limited number of places, part of the African diaspora.
4. PACE recognizes the African diaspora, which includes people of African descent living outside of the African continent, such as in the Americas, Oceania, Asia, and Europe, which is officially recognized by the African Union (AU) as its sixth African region.

If you would like to discuss your suitability for PACE, please contact us at:

info@vrystaatkunstefees.co.za

If you require these Guidelines in an alternative format (e.g., large print/braille) please email our Administrator above.

THE APPLICATION FORM:

All artists and companies wishing to participate in PACE **must** read these guidelines and complete the application form.

The application form is to be signed by the company's lead individual and submitted to PACE, together with:

- Details of 2 referees who have seen your work and are willing to write a short reference.
- A digital link to a video or photos of your work (Please keep in mind that for performance-based applications, we highly recommend submitting video material of the work so that the Selection Committee can better review your work).

The **DEADLINE** for receipt of completed applications is **09 September 2024**.

The outcome of decisions will be sent to all applicants by **January 2025**



PACE INSIGHTS

PACE has 3 performance strands (further details below):

TOUR-READY

The work is up to a 60-minute extract by professional artists and companies (Tour-Ready means that as a company/artist, you have experience of touring and have a product that is artistically and technically ready to share with promoters and which will be prepared to tour).

WORK IN PROGRESS

The presentation is up to a 45-minute original piece at a critical stage in its development (Work in Progress means that you as a company/artist have a product in development that is thought through and artistically is ready to share. Although in the initial stages and may need further development, your work is something you are committed to taking on further).

PITCH SESSIONS

The pitch is where an artist is granted 10 minutes (or 7 minutes in the Speed Networking Pitch Series) to present Tour-Ready or Work-in-Progress projects for which it is not possible for the entire cast/production to travel to South Africa to showcase it live (and so a lead artist pitches the project with video/visual materials)

OR artists can present ideas and concepts in the early days of development. (Pitching means sharing video/visual materials and information about Tour-Ready or Work-in-Progress projects that cannot be showcased live OR sharing original ideas that you as a company/artist wish to develop further, but at this stage, the idea is formed, and you can talk about the artistic idea/influences that will lead to final production).

If chosen to be part of PACE, you/your company will be given ONE slot to present your work in the strand that the Selection Committee feels would be best to present your work in. This might be a different strand than you have indicated in your application.

Please use these guidance notes to help you decide which strand is best suited to your work.



FORMAT OF PACE

We aim to present the work of approximately 30 artists/companies over several consecutive days at various venues on the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa campus. We anticipate most of the shows will be for an audience of delegates invited to PACE and the Vrystaat Arts Festival.

The schedule is packed, so each artist/company chosen to show work must observe a strict timetable for their move in, performance, and strike. (Usually, selected projects have one hour to move into the performance space before the actual showcase. Therefore, it is very important that, once you are selected, the PACE tech team receives as much technical information as possible).

We will provide staff to assist with your get-in / get-out and the presentation of your work, but we ask for your cooperation in helping us accommodate the busy schedule.

SELECTION PROCESS

The panel responsible for selecting artists for PACE is made up of a diverse group of national and international sector professionals and artists.

The Panel wishes to create a balanced program that reflects the artistic and cultural heritage of the African continent and diaspora.

There are a limited number of performance slots available, and we do not anticipate being able to present all the work submitted for consideration.

The selection panel may choose to place your work in the strand that is better suited for your work.

The Panel will make the final decision.

OUR INTENTION IS TO

- Ensure the work is seen at its best for programmers, producers, and industry professionals.
- Attract as many programmers as possible and ensure they see a range of work.
- Facilitate opportunities between promoters and artists through a series of networking events.



COSTS

PACE will cover the costs of the stage and present the successful performance, work in progress, or pitch.

THIS INCLUDES:

1. Venue
2. Technique equipment – including sound and lighting.
3. Artist book.
4. PACE will also provide a free PACE Showcase Artist Pass to all artists that are selected to present work at the Showcase.

You will need to provide information on what the normal cost to present your work is and whether the presentation of your show is dependent on any other funding. This will help the selection panel ascertain if the cost of the show is affordable to tour in a variety of countries.

SELECTED ARTISTS WHO CHOOSE TO PRESENT IN PERSON WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FOLLOWING:

1. Travel costs to Bloemfontein, South Africa for every member of your group that is needed to present your work.
2. Food (various meals during the showcase will be provided by PACE but expect to budget some money for food).
3. PACE will provide discounted accommodation options - for more information see: <https://www.panafricancreativeexchange.co.za/getting-here>
4. Visa costs

PACE can provide official letters of support to those selected artists who might need such a letter for mobility funding applications. PACE will not cover the costs of your visits to Bloemfontein.



MARKETING

The PACE team will be responsible for marketing PACE nationally and internationally. However, we encourage artists to promote PACE and the company/artist's work on their social media platforms.

COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

At the start of the application form you are asked to provide:

1. **Contact details** of yourself as an artist or company, with the name of your production and its principal art form (Please note it is VERY IMPORTANT that we receive your email address and WhatsApp/mobile number!).
2. **The total cost of your show** - this helps us understand if the show can be toured by our network (please note this does not mean the total costs that you had to invest to create the show, but the total costs for someone that wants to program your show).
3. **The total number of people involved** in presenting the production (please note it is costly and difficult to tour work internationally, so please keep that in mind and only list the minimum number of people needed to present your production live. For example: is it possible for someone local to do the tech or other aspects?)





APPLICATION FORM

SECTION 1:

1. Are you applying as an individual or as an organisation?

We anticipate that most groups will be applying as an organisation. By organisation, we mean a single group of people working towards a shared or common goal.

This can take many forms, for example, a limited company, a charity or an unincorporated group. If you are applying to PACE as an organisation, you should have a bank account in the organisation's name. Otherwise, one of the individuals in your group will need to take the lead and apply.

2. Will you be attending in person or remotely (online)?

Please state whether you will attend and present your work at the PACE event in Bloemfontein, as a video in our Online Program, or as a possible Zoom pitch.

If you select the online option for your presentation, it is required to provide high-quality visual/video materials.

3. Contact details

Please supply your full contact details, which will be entered into our database, including telephone numbers with area codes (please provide us your WhatsApp/Mobile number the way people would need to contact you from outside your country!). We may need to contact you to discuss your application.

SECTION 2:

2.1 Which main region in Africa are you based?

PACE is interested in work from all the Main regions of Africa. Please tick which part you/your company is from.

- Northern Africa
- Eastern Africa
- Central Africa
- Western Africa
- Southern Africa
- African diaspora (please include your country of residence)

Artistic responses to contemporary African issues which country are you based?

SECTION 3:

About your work.

We'd like to ask for more details about your piece of work - the title, the category which best describes your work and which strand of the 3 PACE strands you wish your work to be presented in.

3.1 TOUR READY WORK

This strand assists artists and companies in developing their touring potential in Africa and beyond by performing an extract of finished work of high artistic quality to national and international promoters. Work in this strand must be professionally produced and available for touring. We expect to present extracts of at most 60 minutes. Tour-ready work is available to tour from August 2025.

The criteria by which tour-ready work will be selected are:

- Quality of work in relation to the aims of PACE.
- Work that can be booked and is available to tour from August 2025 and beyond.
- Ability and capacity of the artist/company to professionally manage and deliver a tour, i.e., what previous touring experience do you have.
- The financial and practical viability of the piece of work to tour i.e., size and cost.

3.2 WORK IN PROGRESS

This is a performance strand designed for artists wishing to present work still in development. It is designed for new or developing work that requires showcasing to obtain critical feedback, creative intervention and investment from promoters, producers, and peers. Artists/companies will be encouraged to talk to delegates about their work to gain feedback that may influence and assist its development and future touring potential. The presentation must include a live performance element. If you have work that you plan to travel but has yet to be presented in front of an audience, this may be a more appropriate strand than the tour-ready strand. The Work-in-Progress strand will benefit from the same technical and production support level as the tour-ready strand.

A 45-minute presentation slot will be available. This can include up to 30 minutes of performance, followed by an option to have up to 10 minutes of facilitated questions and answers from delegates.

The criteria by which work in progress will be selected are:

- Quality of work in relation to the aims of PACE.
- Work that has gone through a research and development phase.
- The ability to share a live extract of the work to provide PACE delegates with a clear vision of the final production.
- The ability to facilitate questions and provide answers.
- Experience and track record of previous productions and touring ability.
- The potential of the work to tour as a finished piece of work.
- The practical and financial viability of presenting the work.

3.3 PITCHING

This strand is for artists who wish to pitch new ideas and concepts for work in the early development stage. We are particularly interested in presenting ambitious ideas that may need investment and partnership. There are limited pitching slots, and presenters must be able to talk clearly, confidently, and concisely about their ideas for up to 10 minutes (or 7 minutes in the Speed Networking Pitching Series), with approximately five minutes for questions and answers. Visual aids may support pitching, and presenters may wish to produce supporting material to be shared with PACE delegates.

Alternatively, the Pitching strand is also available for those artists/companies with Tour-Ready or Work-in-Progress projects that might not be able to send the full production to be presented live but can attend with lead artist(s) presenting video/visual materials and information.

The criteria for selection will be:

- The strength of the idea.
- The experience and track record of the artist/company in producing high-quality work, from initial concept through to production, that has the potential to tour.
- The ability to pitch work effectively with questions and answers in 15 minutes to PACE delegates.

For the pitching strand, we will provide support, training and guidance for participating artists and companies on pitching and getting the most from the question-and-answer session.

We realise that some companies may wish to be considered for an opportunity to pitch their project only if their application to the tour-ready or work-in-progress strand is unsuccessful. You can indicate if this is the case, and you don't need to submit a separate application to pitch the same project.

3.4 Is your show text based?

We ask this question to know whether the show will be understood by international promoters or others who don't speak English. If your show is not text based e.g., dance, music, or visual theatre or only uses minimal text, select No.

Please state the main languages used in your performance or presentation, e.g., Sotha, Wolof, English, French, Afrikaans, Yoruba, and Arabic. We ask this question to know whether your show can be understood by people who need to be fluent in the primary language of your performance.

SECTION 4:

YOUR PROPOSAL

In this section you can write about you, your company and the performance or pitch you would like to bring to PACE and send us photo and video links. We ask you to provide a complete description of the piece you want to present in 300 words at maximum.

Please ensure you complete each question, as this helps the selection panel understand the work you are proposing to present and assist the board.

- Tell us about the work you want to share with PACE.
- General information, history, and track record of the company/artist
- Key members of your company
- Information on any tour your company has previously undertaken.
- Brief description of any research undertaken; details of artists you have collaborated with; was the show commissioned by another organisation; did you work with a producer?
- Did you receive funding to develop your show?
- Names and roles of each person involved in presenting work at PACE (Please note: This might differ from all the names/roles that are included in your original production. Only list names and roles of the minimum number of people needed to present the work at the PACE Showcase in Bloemfontein.

(keeping in mind that you are responsible for travel to, and accommodation in, Bloemfontein for all members of your group).

If your work is for the work in progress or pitching strand, please provide information in the 'you and your work' section on where it is in its development stages, what has been done so far, and what you see as the next stage in the development of the work. Please also state your reasons for applying to present a work in progress or pitch.

SECTION 5:

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

We ask you to provide details of the length of your show/extract, details of your technical manager and staging requirements.

If you are selected to take part in PACE, we will contact your technical manager to discuss technical details. We will provide a technical specification of the venue you will present your work in. The technical manager will have to supply full sound, lighting, and technical details of the production you will be presenting.

If you already have technical specifications for your production, please provide them alongside your application.

PACE will provide technical staff for the get in/get out and running of the work.

SECTION 6:

TOURING BACKGROUND AND PLANS

The information in this section is designed to help us understand how PACE fits into your wider touring plans.

We need to know about your work and future plans to assess your application. If your work has been performed or presented before July 2025, we will pass this information on to our selection panel, who will try to see or experience your work first-hand. We also want to know if you have plans to tour your work after July 2025.



SECTION 7:

COSTS

If you are applying to make a Pitch you do not have to complete this section.

PACE will not support the creation, development, or rehearsal costs of any projects.

PACE will cover the cost of the venue and technical support (including technical team, and - equipment) for the get in/get out and presentation of your work.

Please tell us about your usual fee for the show you propose to present. **Consider a reasonable price, as we will only submit work that is affordable to our delegates.**

Think about whether your proposal is in any way dependent on raising funds from other sources like government, arts development or arts council, private sector, sponsorship, family/friends. These factors must be considered when you start planning your trip and the viability of coming to South Africa to showcase the work.

SECTION 8:

REFERENCES

Please provide details of people who know your work, such as a promoter, director, local authority or arts festival officer. Please speak to your referees before submitting your application to confirm they are willing to comment on you/your company/your work by completing and returning a reference form that will be sent to them. You can give up to two names.

We may contact the referees whose names and contact details you provide after the application deadline.



SECTION 9:

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

To assess your application, we need to know about your work and its future potential. There are a number of ways we can find this out, including:

- Using the information you give us in your application.
- Taking up references (which you have provided above).
- Seeing or experiencing your work at the time you produce it. (However, we hope you understand that it is not always possible for us to see or experience your work first-hand).
- Therefore, we are asking you to include some supporting evidence with your application. e.g.
 - links to other sources of information about your work such as a website.
 - a small sample of images of your previous work or of work in progress.
 - other proof of your past work such as short video clips or sound recordings (Please note that applications that include video links of the proposed work (or of prior productions) usually tend to be more successful, so we highly encourage you to provide video links such as YouTube or Vimeo).
 - Please provide a list of what you want us to look at with a digital link to each one with timecode.

SECTION 10:

DECLARATION

Here, we ask you to read through the declaration and make sure the information you have provided is complete and that you are in agreement with the Protection of Personal Information and Promotion of Access to Information.

WHAT IS NEXT?



PACE FAQ's

How do I attend PACE?

You can attend PACE either as a selected showcase artist (they will receive free registration) or by registering as a delegate (registration link to PACE 2025 will open in 4-5 months prior to the showcase).

Who will I meet at PACE?

A range of national and international producers, presenters, funding agencies, and artists/companies based in Africa and from the African diaspora.

What can performers expect to get out of PACE?

The opportunity for them to showcase their work to people who can buy or assist in developing it, as well as networking opportunities with a range of national and international producers, presenters, artists, funding agencies, and support organisations to empower artists and companies, and provide opportunities for artist-to-artist exchange.

What can delegates expect to get out of PACE?

Opportunities to network internationally and grow networks across the African continent.

Will there be other events that I can get involved with during PACE?

Extend your stay to be part of the Vrystaat Arts Festival, Vrystaat Literature Festival, and Vrynge (Fringe Festival) that will take place right after the PACE Showcase in July on the campus of the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa.

How do I register for PACE 2025?

All artists and companies wishing to participate in PACE 2025 must complete this application form. The deadline to receive your completed Application Form is Monday, 8 July 2025, at 5 pm (GMT). Applications received after this date will not be accepted.

I don't know how to answer a question on the application form, what to do?

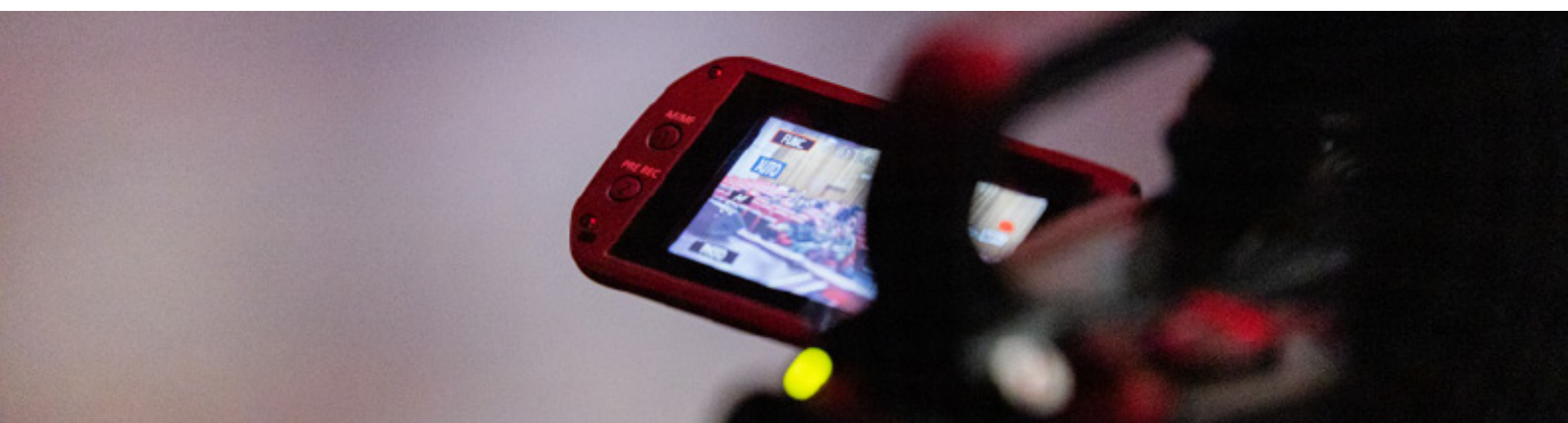
If you require any assistance, please email the Vrystaat Arts festival team at info@vrystaatkunstefees.co.za

How do I book my accommodation?

Bookings.com or with your local travel agent. PACE will provide discounted accommodation options - for more information see: <https://www.panafricancreativeexchange.co.za/getting-here>

What is the difference between a festival and a showcase?

A festival is an organised series of concerts, plays, or films, typically one held annually in the same place, whereas a showcase is to only show the best qualities or parts of a project with the objective of getting more support. A showcase typically is not for the general audience but has professionals from the field attending to see work, network and connect. In a festival people might choose to see several performances, whereas in a showcase all attendees tend to see everything.





Festival Team

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Een fees, baie stories. One festival, many stories.
Moketato le mong, lipale xse ngata.