



WATERWORKS

2025 Submissions Guidelines

Live Arts is now accepting submissions for the third annual WATERWORKS, to be held May 16 through June 1, 2025, in Charlottesville, Virginia. WATERWORKS is a celebration of new theatrical works and voices at Live Arts and beyond! After two successful and dynamic rounds, we are proud for WATERWORKS to return, continuing Live Arts' long history of showcasing local and emerging playwrights.

Live Arts is a volunteer-powered organization. Selected works will be staffed and staged by non-union volunteers engaged by Live Arts' artistic production team.

Get involved!

Contact waterworks@livearts.org.

General Information

We are committed to cultivating new theater pieces, supporting playwrights in the development of their work, and diversifying the stories told on our stages. As a new endeavor within a predominantly white theater, we seek to construct diverse programming and volunteer teams representative of the abundant talent and craftsmanship across our dynamic community.

- Submissions are free and accepted via [the official form](#) only. *No email submissions will be accepted.*
- The deadline to submit is **December 1, 2024**.
- Playwrights and playwriting teams may submit a single work for consideration in any applicable categories. Please select only one category per submission.
- There is a total submission limit of two (2) works per writer, or writing team.
- Please submit all requested materials at the time of submission.
- Selected works will receive production package details in February/March 2025.

Questions?

Contact submissions@livearts.org.



Reading and Selection Process

We employ an anonymous submission process to eliminate any unintentional bias on the part of our team of qualified readers. All scripts are considered by multiple readers prioritizing artistic distinction to determine finalists.

Final programming is selected and curated by New Works Director Adrienne Oliver, together with a core artistic team at Live Arts, organization staff, and other local artists representing the cultural wealth and expertise of the community.

Interested in reading?

Contact waterworks@livearts.org.

Artistic Distinction

In addition to artistic distinction, detailed below, our readers value re/imagination, discovery, humor, thrill, awareness, and complexity. With an inclusive spirit and ignited thinking, we are reading with empathic celebration for the vulnerability of creation and compassion for the plurality of human experience and stories.

We value:

- Works that explore culture, humanity, and justice-minded themes.
- Works that celebrate theatricality, expression, and connectivity.
- Works prominently centering marginalized voices, narratives, and ideas.
- Age-embracing works, with opportunities for senior and/or junior artists.
- Innovative and thought-provoking material.
- Works exploring language, dialogue, communication, ideas, and energy.
- Works by historically erased artists and writers.

The WATERWORKS programming team is unwaveringly committed to disrupting patterns and practices that perpetuate harm and erasure in our processes. Recognizing intentions and impact are not synonymous, we own failures to effectively protect and champion underrepresented artists in the past. We seek accountability in our cultural competency and remain transparent in our efforts as we earn the community's trust in these new works.



CALL FOR NEW WORKS

Please review all calls to determine the best place for your work.

In each category: We consider works of all genres. We do not accept submissions over 100 pages, excluding front matter, or any musicals. *We encourage one-act submissions.* All works must be original and unpublished. Works submitted may have been produced at a school-based presentation and/or unstaged, non-professional readings, only.

Questions?

Contact submissions@livearts.org.

Emerging Artists: For writers and writing teams 16 to 25 years old.

TO SUBMIT TO “EMERGING ARTISTS”

Please complete [this form](#) by 11:59pm on December 1, 2024. Selected Emerging Artists works will receive notification of status in February 2025.

Debut Artists: For writers and writing teams over 50 years old.

TO SUBMIT TO “DEBUT ARTISTS”

Please complete [this form](#) by 11:59pm on December 1, 2024. Selected Debut Artists works will receive notification of status in February 2025.

Unstaged Works: No age restrictions for writers or writing teams.

TO SUBMIT TO “UNSTAGED WORKS”

Please complete [this form](#) by 11:59pm on December 1, 2024. Selected Unstaged Works will receive notification of status in February 2025.



Administrative Criteria

- Use the [form](#) provided on the Live Arts website to submit all work. **No email submissions will be accepted.**
 - Please submit as a single .doc, .docx, or .pdf format where the file name contains the work's title only.
 - Do not include the playwright's personal details, including names, in the submission title.
- Standard play script format is preferred, but not required.
 - **Please use a standard, 12-point font and clearly marked character names connected to their dialogue.**
 - Please number all pages.
- Please include a cover page for your work and a brief synopsis of the work.
 - The script's cover page should contain the work's title only; please remove any identifying information including names, addresses, or other details from submission.
 - The second page of the script should contain a brief synopsis of the play (less than 250 words) and a complete cast list that includes relevant character information.
 - A play/project description is also required on the form. This brief context is separate from the cover page information.

**The deadline to submit is midnight,
December 1, 2024.**

Because of the high volume of submissions, we are unable to provide feedback on any work submitted, general updates on programming timelines and notifications, or solicited comments on submission status.

Need formatting assistance?

Contact submissions@livearts.org for support.



Agreements & Acknowledgements

By submitting work to a specific call, applicants affirm they are the sole or co-creator and that the work meets the particular criteria.

Selected finalists will receive notification in February/March 2025. All accepted works will receive details regarding rehearsal coordination, programming schedule information, and production package offers following their acceptance. Playwrights will be asked to submit a current and/or updated production history at that time.

By submitting work, participants agree to allow Live Arts a potential production of their play during WATERWORKS, with any/all performances occurring between May 16 and June 1, 2025. This may include workshopping/editing the play as needed with a director and cast, troubleshooting technical and production details with artistic staff, and/or providing additional materials as needed to support dramaturgical considerations.

By submitting work, participants grant permission for Live Arts to create photography/video of the production for marketing, grant submission, and education purposes. While agreeing to those permissions, **all writers retain ownership/copyright of their work to re-stage, publish, or license to others in the future.**

Withdrawals: Work may be withdrawn for any reason by submitting a written request. Please email with the subject line “WITHDRAW [Title]” to submissions@livearts.org by March 1, 2025. Simultaneous submissions are acceptable; please update our programming team in the event of a production that necessitates a withdrawal of the script from consideration.

Note on disqualifications: As a local theater company with community-based volunteers, we work hard to maintain confidentiality for submissions. Further, our guidelines support this volunteer-powered organization to meet production deadlines. For these reasons, please know that we cannot judge, and will remove from consideration, any work with identifying information about the playwright/s or otherwise not observing administrative requirements.



About Live Arts

Live Arts is a welcoming home for all stories and storytellers. Our engagement in local communities runs deep, and we happily attract participants and audiences from across Central Virginia. We're known for exceptionally high-caliber productions that reflect the remarkable talent of our volunteer actors and production teams.

For more than three decades, Live Arts has dedicated itself to the mission of *“forging theater and community”* in Charlottesville, Virginia. We acknowledge that we occupy Monacan and Manahoac nations' ancestral home and live on stolen land. We recognize them as the original stewards of this land and pay our respect to their elders—past, present, and emerging. We further acknowledge that we have benefited from and created systems that have reinforced institutional inequities to the detriment of many Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. We recognize and defer to the scholarship and wisdom of BIPOC artists, educators, and leaders, locally and beyond—past, present, and emerging.

Interested in sponsorships?
Contact waterworks@livearts.org.