



Ontario Contact Request for Proposals

Ontario Contact is looking for host communities for Ontario Contact in 2014 and 2015. As part of the event's commitment to support networking opportunities for its delegates – both presenters and artists, Ontario Contact is committed to being hosted in different areas of the province in the belief that through this strategy we will increase interest in the event as well as in the artistic offerings available to our communities.

Background

Touring of the performing arts in Ontario is facilitated by an annual fall conference, Ontario Contact. Bringing together artists, presenters and artist management to meet, see samples of performances and talk about industry concerns, this conference has been the leading edge of the performing arts sector for 35 plus years. Activities include artist showcases, workshops, keynote speakers, receptions, networking opportunities and trade show. Attendees include artists, artist managers, agents, professional and amateur presenters ranging in experience from novice to mature. Generally there are 250 to 300 delegates and artists attending the conference. Although primarily attracting Ontario based delegates, there is interest in attending from across Canada. In Ontario, it is the key tool for volunteer presenters who represent a significant number of performing arts opportunities in the province.

Founded and operated by the Ontario Arts Council, Ontario Contact became a function of CCI – Ontario's Presenting Network in 2001, in part as a result of the demise of the OAC's Touring Office. CCI recognized the need to continue the event as a means to not only support presenters and artists but as an opportunity to further develop the field. In its essence, Ontario Contact has remained much as presented by the OAC although the 2012 event will undertake several initiatives to improve communication and growth within the touring performing arts sector. Opportunities will include increased interaction of artists within the host community.

Benefits to the community and/or host venue include:

- Direct economic benefits to the community particularly in the hospitality field but not exclusively
- Major conference with some 600+ participating
- Puts the local venue on the provincial presenting arts map
- Tourism exposure for your community
- Gives the local community an understanding of a broader process involving performing arts activities
- Allows host venue to showcase a huge spectrum of Canadian artists, opportunity to provide bonus to subscribers
- Volunteer opportunities
- Commercial tie-ins with music stores, bookstores, souvenir shops

- Direct economic benefits to the venue through rent, box office surcharges and concessions.

Requirements:

- Venue with at least 250 seats available for four consecutive days November 5th to 8th 2014 and November 4th to 7th 2015.
- Venue fully equipped technically (sound and lights) with rehearsal space, storage space, warm-up room, Grand Piano, rehearsal piano and knowledgeable tech staff. We provide a professional production manager. Venue required for at least 4 days from 6:30am to 11pm with suitable breaks provided. Must be able to accommodate multiple artists backstage as well as FOH services appropriate to handle 250+ delegates.
- Community large enough to provide accommodations for 250 to 300 delegates that is also price sensitive.
- Secure exhibit/display space of about 4000 sq. ft with 75 – 6-foot tables, 75 chairs, power connections and table drapery, good lighting and ability to provide bar services.
- Ability to provide workshop spaces able to accommodate 75 people – multiple rooms in use at a time.
- Parking and ease of accessibility to hotel, theatre, workshops etc.
- Ability to book space two to three years in advance.
- Willingness to assist with transportation issues – is it accessible by road, rail and air? If not, is the community willing to provide ground transportation to and from the nearest major airport?
- Indications of community support i.e. municipality, Chamber of Commerce, other arts organizations, business associations through sponsorships and ad sales.
- Host has attended/participated in recent Ontario Contact or similar event demonstrating a deep knowledge/understanding of the needs of this event.
- Ability to provide volunteers.
- In operation for a minimum of one full year.

Additional Assets:

- Experience in running/hosting similar festivals or events.
- Technical team with performing arts experience in place.
- Box office able to assist with registrations.
- Marketing strategy to cover local public relations.
- Wireless access.
- CCI member participating as part of the bid team.
- Ability to house delegates in a single hotel.
- Opportunity for breakfast for about 80 people.
- Opportunity for lunch for 300 seated.
- Meeting room to accommodate 12 – 20 people.

Expectations:

- The host community will provide an individual to serve on the Ontario Contact Steering Committee from the time of acceptance of the bid to the year following the hosting of the actual event. This could be a four-year commitment.
- The host community will provide financial assistance to Ontario Contact through either a cash grant or in-kind support or a combination of both. In-kind support must be for items or services for which the event would normally have to pay.

If interested in exploring the possibility of being an Ontario Contact host community please forward a proposal addressing the requirements as stated below to:

Ontario Contact

c/o CCI - Ontario Presenting Network

215 Spadina Ave., Suite 125 Toronto ON M5T 2C7

Attention: Cheryl Ewing, Event Manager

519.579.8564

Deadline for RFP is Friday, February 1, 2013.