



Arts Leadership RESIDENCY

ARTS LEADERSHIP RESIDENCY 2025-2026 GUIDELINES

ABOUT THE RESIDENCY

Theatre Bay Area's Arts Leadership Residency is designed to give freelance theatre artists the experience, skills, and connections they need to become the artistic directors and managing directors of the future and assist our member theatres in hiring the best and brightest emerging talent.

The program will place three theatre artists in residencies with professional theatres between August 31, 2025 and December 31, 2026, during which they will be mentored by the Artistic Director or Managing Director and be provided at least one opportunity to direct or produce a significant project.

Each theatre company and its prospective resident must apply together. We cannot accept applications from prospective residents or host companies applying alone.

Over the course of the residency, residents will be required to spend the equivalent of 12–16 full-time weeks (480–640 hours) in residence with a theatre, arranged in whatever units of time work best for both parties.

Artistic Directors and Managing Directors will introduce their respective residents to the myriad tasks that comprise their job, including programming, budget-making, fundraising, marketing, audience development, talent acquisition and retention, project management, and working with a board of directors. By working closely with leadership, residents will also be introduced to artists and leaders throughout the larger theatre community.

In addition to receiving mentoring and engaging with the company's administrative functions, each resident will have the opportunity to direct or produce at least one significant creative project. These could take many different forms; examples include a main stage show in the regular season, a second stage show, or a festival of new works. For

the purposes of this residency, staged readings do not count toward a significant creative project.

Each grant provides \$12,000 in funding, paid to the company to cover the cost of hiring the resident for the 480–640-hour residency under current California law, conforming to wage guidelines in the host theatre's city.

The cohort of residents and their company mentors will convene at least twice during the project period. During the granting period, residents will be expected to participate in TBA events such as the Annual Conference as their schedules allow.

The grant and the administration thereof will be in full compliance with federal non-discrimination law.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

COMPANIES

1. Must be current members of Theatre Bay Area as of the application date and maintain TBA membership through December 31, 2026.
2. Were not awarded the Arts Leadership Residency in the previous cycle.
3. Must confirm that the artist is not currently employed by the company and must agree to hire the artist under current California law.
4. Are committed to providing mentorship to the resident by the artistic director or managing director of the company and introducing the resident to the tasks and concerns that comprise their jobs as arts leaders.
5. Are committed to providing the resident at least one opportunity to direct or produce a significant project between August 31, 2025 and December 31, 2026.
6. Are committed to attending two cohort meetings (scheduled at participants' convenience).

RESIDENTS

1. Are 18+ years of age and legally able to work in the United States.
2. Are not enrolled as students in a college, university, or professional training program.
3. Are not currently serving on TBA's Board or employed as TBA staff.
4. Have not previously been awarded the Arts Leadership Residency.

5. Are available to work the equivalent of 12–16 full-time weeks (480–640 hours) between August 31, 2025 and December 31, 2026.
6. Are not currently employed by the company, and are committed to working for the company during the residency period in administrative areas such as literary management, fundraising and development, audience development, marketing, hiring, and/or other areas which fit the resident's skills and experience.
7. Are committed to directing or producing at least one significant creative project during the residency between August 31, 2025 and December 31, 2026.
8. Are committed to attending two cohort meetings (scheduled at participants' convenience).

Applicants may submit only one proposal in each granting round.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

Priority will be given to the following applicants:

Individuals who:

- Have not yet produced or directed at the LORT level.
- Show exceptional promise in arts leadership.
- Bring a new perspective to the host company, its work, its mission, and/or its audience outreach.
- Clearly outline the benefits of the program to themselves and to the host company.
- Clearly outline administrative and leadership skills, experience, and/or potential they bring to the company.
- Clearly articulate their artistic vision, values, and goals.
- **Due to funding provided through the generosity of the city of San Leandro, one of the three awardee residents must be based in San Leandro.**

Companies that:

- Outline the proposed relationship between the company and the artist, including the methods of support offered by the company.
- Have the resources to provide meaningful mentorship and networking opportunities.
- Detail the expected benefits to the company and the artist.

- Clearly articulate the company's artistic vision, values, and goals, and the new perspective the artist will bring to the host company.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Each theatre company and its prospective resident must apply together. We cannot accept applications from prospective residents or host companies applying alone. If you are interested in applying but don't have a resident or host company in mind, we strongly recommend attending the free online application workshop. [Click here to learn more.](#)

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED ONLINE by 5pm, August 31, 2025.
Applications will open on July 23, 2025. The link to the application will be available on our website.

Early October 2025: Notification of awardees

October 2025: First payment to companies

April 2026: Second payment to companies

We're unable to accept late applications or extend the application deadline. Please plan on submitting early to allow for troubleshooting any technical issues.

Please note that you cannot edit the form once submitted; if there is an issue, please contact Melissa Hillman at Melissa@TheatreBayArea.org. You also cannot save your progress and return to the application. You can click the application link above to see the required questions without a log-in, and you can keep the window open as long as you like; you will not time out. Plan to prepare everything you need in advance, then fill the application out in one sitting.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Company:

APPLICATION LETTER: You may submit this as either a written letter or as a video.

This letter should address:

- Why do you want to work with this particular theatremaker?
- What administrative work will they be doing for your company?
- How will you support their learning/mentorship?

- What kind of significant project will they be directing or producing for you, and what will be the artistic goals of the project?
- How will this residency benefit your theatre? What fresh perspective does the potential resident bring to your company?

Written Letter: No more than 750 words, 1.15 or 1.5 spaced in a font no smaller than 11 pts. **This must be submitted as a PDF.**

Video: No more than five minutes in length, submitted as a YouTube or Vimeo link. Please note: The video can be unlisted, but not password-protected or set to “private.”

COMPANY HISTORY: If your production history is on your website, you may submit a link. Otherwise, you may upload a document of no more than two pages itemizing key productions, artistic achievements, awards, and/or programs. **If you submit a document, this must be submitted as a PDF.**

MISSION STATEMENT AND VALUES STATEMENT: If your mission statement and values statement are available on your website, you may submit a link. Otherwise, you may submit a .pdf. **If you submit a document, this must be submitted as a PDF.**

KEY PERSONNEL: If your company’s staff and board members are listed on your website, you may submit a link. Otherwise, you may submit a .pdf with the names and bios of three to five of your company’s key personnel. Be sure to include personnel with whom your resident would be directly working.

Resident:

APPLICATION LETTER: You may submit this as either a written letter or a video. This letter should address:

- What are your career goals?
- Why do you want to work with this particular company?
- What administrative skills do you bring to the relationship?
- What kind of significant project will you be directing or producing?
- How will this residency benefit the theatre? What fresh perspective do you bring to the company?

Written Letter: No more than 750 words, 1.15 or 1.5 spaced in a font no smaller than 11 pts. **This must be submitted as a PDF.**

Video: No more than five minutes in length, submitted as a YouTube or Vimeo link. Please note: The video can be unlisted, but not password-protected or set to “private.”

RESUME: Resume should be no longer than two pages and focus on experience, education, achievements, and awards directly related to the work you will be doing with the company. **This must be submitted as a PDF.**

ARTIST STATEMENT: This can be submitted as a written letter or as a video. The Artist Statement should detail your approach, values, goals, and/or vision as a theatremaker.

Written letter: No more than 750 words, 1.15 or 1.5 spaced in a font no smaller than 11 pts. **If you submit a document, this must be submitted as a PDF.**

Video: No more than five minutes in length, submitted as a YouTube or Vimeo link. Please note: The video can be unlisted, but not password-protected or set to “private.”

Questions? Contact Melissa Hillman, Programs Officer at Melissa@TheatreBayArea.org or (415) 430-1140 x1017.

This program is funded in part with the generous support of The National Endowment for the Arts.