

Investment Guidelines 2019 - 2020

For use by Investment Sub-Committee



Updated by the F & GP Committee on 27.09.19

The following guidelines should be used by the Investment Sub-Committee when deciding whether to invest in a new production in the West End or in the Regions. At the Committee's discretion they may be varied depending on the individual circumstances of any production (see details below).

Please note: if you are planning to apply for investment, your application must be received at least 4 weeks before your first rehearsal.

The current maximum investment is £20,000 and capped at 10% of the capitalisation.

However, Stage One is able to invest up to £35,000 in; any new play or musical (not a revival*) or in a show in which one of the lead producers is a 'new producer', this is also capped at 10% of the capitalisation.

A 'new producer' is defined as someone who has fewer than 2 West End credits, i.e. if the production is their first or second commercial show (West End or on Tour).

The purpose of this increased investment is to solidify Stage One's aims to support new work and to encourage established producers to work with the next generation.

Stage One will normally give a commitment to invest (or not) within four weeks of the receipt of papers. In the event that an offer to invest is made, the Producer must show that s/he has the balance of the capital in hand, at which point the Stage One cheque can be sent. This should normally be by the first day of rehearsals, but in any event should be no later than one week prior to the first paid public performance (whether this is in the West End or on Tour). No money can be sent beyond this date.

NB* A revival is defined as; a production which has previously played in the West End in a full or affiliate venue recognised by the Society of London Theatre (or on a number one tour) for 21 or more consecutive performances.

Investment Criteria

The decision whether to offer to invest in a production is made by a Sub-Committee of the Council, largely made up of experienced commercial producers. The following criteria are taken into account: -

- a. whether the production has a strong commercial potential
- b. new plays are favoured
- c. whether the producer has acquired the normal subsidiary and other rights, where available; the investors must share in all subsidiary rights owned by the Producer
- d. new producers are encouraged
- e. length of run – Stage One does not normally invest in short limited seasons.
- f. venue - whether the production is in a SOLT, Affiliate, UK Theatre or other venue the producer must always pay the minimum rates set by these organisations In non-affiliated houses (Found Space for example) Equity/BECTU minimum salaries must be paid.
- g. presentation of the figures must be clear and unambiguous (in particular, accurate costings and detailed estimates of how long until recoupment may be reached at varying levels of box office are required)
- h. that charges made by the producer for his/her services are fair and reasonable
- i. that approved accounts have been received for any previous investment Stage One has made with the producer.
- j. The production is within the investment guidelines used by the Investment Sub-Committee.

1. Recoupment

- i) If the production is a play or a limited run musical the production should be able to recoup the estimated production costs plus a 10% contingency at 60%* of Net Box Office Capacity, within 13 weeks from the press night if the production is a play and within 20 weeks if it is a musical, or within the length of the star's contract or other limiting factor (e.g. availability of theatre), whichever is the sooner. Net Box Office Capacity is defined as the total gross receipts if every seat (excluding pp seats) in the house is sold at full price less VAT and then less a further 10% to cover commissions, etc or a percentage that reflects the exact deal with theatre. All figures submitted must clearly show this calculation.

NB*A limited run musical is defined as one which is expected or contracted to run for under 52 weeks. The committee may decide to offer investment to a play or limited run musical which falls outside of the financial guidelines (but only within 10%), if certain criteria applies which forms a strong imperative to invest. The following criteria need to be assessed and be taken into account by the committee when making a decision to invest: 1.) there is a strong commercial imperative and/or 2.) a Stage One alumni is a producer on the show. Therefore for a play the committee could invest if the play is able to recoup 66% of Net Box Office Capacity.

- ii) If the production is an open ended musical, the production should be able to recoup the estimated production costs plus 10% contingency at 75% of Net Box Office Capacity, within 52 weeks from the press night or within the star's contract or other limiting factor, whichever is the sooner.

2. Management fees – period claimed for

- i) If the production is a play, management fees should normally be claimed for not more than six weeks prior to the first paid performance on the Equity Contracts issued by the West End Manager/Producer, and up to two weeks following the close of the production. In the case of **new** plays, fees may be claimed for up to an additional two weeks prior to the first paid performance on the Contracts issued by the West End Manager/Producer (i.e. eight weeks in total), which is intended to reflect some of the extra management time spent on developing the new work.
- ii.) If the production is a musical, management fees should not be claimed for more than 10 weeks prior to the first paid performance on the Equity Contracts issued by the West End Manager/Producer, and up to two weeks following the close of the production. In the case of **new** musicals, fees can be claimed for up to an additional 10 weeks prior to the first paid performance on the Contracts issued by the West End Manager/Producer (i.e. 20 weeks in total), which is intended to reflect some of the extra management time spent on developing the new work.

3. Management fees – amount

- i) Management fees are defined as the total weekly payment of all fees to the producers and general managers of the production, and include all office expenses and charges. They do not include reasonable charges for accountancy, production management fees, or marketing fees, which are expected to be within Industry norms.
- ii) If the production is a play, the total weekly management fee including any other 'Producer Fees' and 'Office Charges' should be no greater than 10%* of the weekly running costs and capped at £5,650* providing no one organisation is benefitting from more than a combined total of £4,650 as a weekly fee amount.

- ii) If the production is a musical, the total weekly management fee including any other 'Producer Fees' and 'Office Charges' should be no greater than 10%* of the weekly running costs and capped at £7,180* providing no one organisation is benefitting from more than a combined total of £6,180 as a weekly fee amount.

NB* the committee may decide to offer investment to certain plays and musicals that fall outside of the financial guidelines (but only within 10%), if certain criteria applies which forms a strong imperative to invest. The following criteria need to be assessed and be taken into account by the committee when making a decision to invest: 1.) there is a strong commercial imperative and/or 2.) a Stage One alumni is a producer on the show.

4. Producer's royalty

- i) The producer's royalty is defined as the London or UK National Tour presenter's royalty, whether the London/UK Tour presenter is one person/company or a number of people/companies. It does not include royalties paid to originating US producers for a production transferring from the US, or the originating theatre for a production transferring from the regions.
- ii) For a play the producer's royalty **should not exceed 2.5%** if royalties are being calculated on Net Weekly Box Office('The Gross'). If any Royalties are being calculated in a Pool the producers royalty should be from the pool and should not equate to more than 5% of weekly operating profit pre-recoupment. Weekly operating profit defined as the profit remaining once weekly running costs of the show have been deducted from the weekly Net Box Office figure.
- iii) For a musical the producer's royalty **should not exceed 3.5%**. if royalties are being calculated on Net Weekly Box Office('The Gross') If any Royalties are being calculated in a Pool the producers royalty should be from the pool and **should not equate to more than 6.5% of weekly operating profit pre-recoupment**. Weekly operating profit defined as the profit remaining once the weekly running costs of the show have been deducted from the weekly Net Box Office figure.

5. Profit Share

Stage One should receive not less than 60% of the profits