

Selection Process for Festival Group Organisers and Projects

This document sets out the process which will be used to select group organisers and projects for BFS Festivals. Group organisers and key projects are a key part of making our festival as special as it can be. Here we set out the process for how they will be selected, so it's as clear as possible for everyone involved.

THE SHORT VERSION

Group organisers and project organisers will be selected from those who apply. Selection will be made by the GO selection group, which will consist of members of the Board of Trustees and current Blues.

THE LONG VERSION: EACH COMPONENT IN DETAIL

Call for applications:

The call for applications setting out the details of how to apply is on beltane.org, and is circulated via the BFS announcements mailing list, and posted on BFS social media.

Applications and project proposals should be sent via the communicated method (ie and email inbox or Google form) before the deadline specified on the application form. Board members and Blues are happy to discuss applications and proposals in advance, but any application must be submitted in its final form, before the deadline. Late proposals may or may not be considered - this is at the discretion of the board.

If, following the first round of applications, the selection group feels additional groups or ideas would be helpful, the selection group may decide to hold a second round of applications.

Who can be a GO or lead a project?

Volunteers of all kinds can be group and project organisers. Key criteria we look for in GOs include, but are not limited to:

- Ability to uphold BFS principles of participation
- Ability to lead volunteers
- A friendly and collaborative manner
- Strong communication skills
- Basic IT and numeracy skills
- Commitment to the festival and society
- Skills and experience in relation to specific group activity (such as relevant performance or technical skills)

Please note that group organisers will be required to attend a health and safety induction regardless of experience level. This induction will be tailored to specific risks associated with your group. This is a condition of approval.

The Chair and Festival Secretary may not be group organisers during their term.

No person who has been excluded from membership of BFS or participation in BFS festivals may be a GO. If there is a complaint investigation or disciplinary process underway at the time of selection which calls into question an applicant's ability to GO effectively, the selection group may decide to reject that application; the selection group may also decide to offer the other potential GO(s) on that application time to find a replacement co-GO.

Examples of specific factors which may lead to an application not being approved include not being present or available for a significant period in the run up to the festival, not being able to attend GO meetings, or not having a co-GO in place. If it becomes apparent at any point that a GO or team of GOs cannot meet the criteria, even after they have been informed that their application is successful, the board may decide to withdraw or amend the decision of the selection group.

Who decides which applications are successful?

The selection process is administered by the operations contractor with the support of the Chair where required; decisions are made by the GO selection group.

The GO selection group will be formed from current Blues for the upcoming festival and current board members. All members of the selection group have the same voting powers - no member of the group carries more or less than one vote each, and there is no requirement for any set ratio of board members and blues in the group (for example, should at any point there be more Blues than board members in the selection group, the decisions of the group remain valid).

Blues, the Board Chair, and the Board Festival Secretary may not apply to GO, and as such would usually form part of the selection group.

The Event Coordinator may be invited to input to discussion on applications, by email or in person at the selection meeting, but will not have voting or decision making powers as part of the selection group.

Processing applications:

The communicated method for applications will be monitored by the chair, Event Coordinator, the ops contractor and the festival secretary (processing personnel). Where a google form is used the spreadsheet of responses will be monitored by the same key people.

They will share all primary applications (see 'Process for when more than one application for a group is received' below for details regarding primary and secondary applications and processes) with the GO selection group by email, not less than 24 hours before the GO selection meeting will take place. The application documents will also be saved on the board shared drive, with any secondary applications restricted to the viewing of the processing personnel only.

Before the GO selection meeting the Chair and or the festival secretary will check for any relevant disciplinary or complaint findings relating to GO applicants, as well as relevant debrief notes from recent festivals they were involved in, and the membership database, and will share any relevant information with the Chair, to determine if any such information is relevant to the decision making process.

Secondary applications will be stored securely and not circulated in advance; the festival secretary will bring printed copies to the GO selection meeting, so they can be circulated in the meeting if required (see below for details). For remote meetings the chair will hold PDFs of the secondary applications and will distribute them if required.

What will the format of the selection meeting be?

Initial decisions on applications will be made at a meeting of the selection group in an appropriate, private space. In order to ensure sufficient time to consider applications fully, a contingency plan should be made in case not all decisions can be made during the first meeting - such as an allocated time the following day to meet to discuss and decide on any remaining applications.

The meeting will be chaired by the BFS Chair (or if they are not available, another board member). It is a meeting of the festival GO selection group, not a board meeting. The Board Secretary or nominated other (who should not be applying for a group or have a relevant conflict of interest) will take minutes, (which should include recording declared conflicts of interest, conditions and requirements set for any approved applications, any key points which are to be discussed at interview and other instructions for interview panels, vote counts, and other pertinent information).

The agenda will be circulated to the members of the festival GO selection group by the Festival Secretary who will provide the Chair with a list of the groups which have applied, minus secondary applications which are only to be considered if primary ones are unsuccessful. The Festival Secretary may note if there is a considerable number of such applications, to allow for reasonable time expectations to be set for the selection process.

At the beginning of the meeting, the chair will outline the voting process, and this document will have been circulated to selection group members in advance, so any questions about it can be raised.

How will conflicts of interest be managed?

At the beginning of the meeting, the Chair will invite all members of the selection group to declare any potential conflicts of interest in relation to any of the individual applications being considered. Conflicts of interest will include connections which may (or may be perceived to) unduly influence the decision, such as: being an applicant or partner/spouse of an applicant for a group, for a directly competing application, or one that would directly benefit from the approval/rejection of the application being considered; or otherwise being in a position to directly benefit from the outcome of an application.

Members of the selection group should self-declare any potential interests, and if any member of the selection group feels there is a potential interest that has not been declared, this should be brought to the attention of the Chair. If there is doubt regarding any matter on this process, including whether a declared interest represents a conflict, decisions will be made by and at the discretion of the Chair (or the Festival Secretary where any potential interests relate to the Chair), whose decisions will be final.

Any selection group member who has an agreed conflict of interest will be asked to step out for the duration of discussion and voting on the relevant applications. In the case of remote meetings this will mean leaving the online meeting until invited back in via an external method of instant communication (Text/messenger etc)

How applications will be considered in the meeting

Each primary application will be considered in the meeting alphabetical order by group name. Any selection group member who has an agreed conflict of interest will be asked to step out for the duration of discussion and voting on the relevant applications. Where there is more than one application for the

same or similar groups (see below), the festival secretary and chair will arrange discussions so that competing applications are discussed first.

There will be a period of discussion about each application, in which the chair will invite selection group members to share their views. When considering applications, the selection group may refer to the debrief documents from previous festivals (and where an applicant has been a GO recently, their individual group debrief document).

How decisions will be made about applications

If members of the selection group feel that the application could be approved if specific conditions were met or additional information gathered via a panel of the selection group meeting with the applicants, the specifics of these conditions or additional information should be discussed and agreed. Following the discussion regarding the application and any potential conditions or additional information required, the chair will call a vote on whether to approve the application, subject to any agreed conditions or additional information required, as set out in the discussion. The vote options will be yes/no (panel members may also choose to abstain). Decisions will be made by majority vote, and in the event of a tie, the chair (or the festival secretary, in the event of the absence of the chair) carries the deciding vote.

Process for when more than one application is received for the same group:

Decisions on group applications will be final, so if a single application isn't accepted, there will not be an opportunity to submit an additional application after the deadline, or create a group further on in the process. With this in mind, potential GOs may submit two applications for two different groups at the outset, in case their primary application is not selected by the selection group.

If two applications for the same, or very similar, groups are received, the Festival Secretary will inform both sets of applicants, in order to give them a chance to submit a second proposal, should they wish to. Two groups with the same name do not automatically trigger this process, if their concepts are sufficiently different to warrant separate consideration. Details of who has put in a second application, and for which group, will not be disclosed to the full selection group until decisions have been made on the first 'round' of applications, so that the possible presence of a second application cannot influence decision making. Those submitting a second application should make it clear which is their first choice ('primary' application) as this will be the one circulated for consideration during the first 'round'.

During the selection meeting itself, applications for the same (or very similar groups) will be considered in the following way:

1. The Chair will remind the selection group of the following steps
2. Each competing application will be discussed separately in turn
3. The selection group will then vote on each competing application in turn, in the order they were discussed. The vote options for each application will be yes/no/abstain. Decisions will be by majority vote, and in the event of a tie in the vote for any individual application, the chair carries the deciding vote.
4. If all competing applications receive an overall 'no' as a result of the vote at this point, all the competing applications are rejected and the process is complete. If only one application receives an overall 'yes' as a result of the vote at this point, that application is approved and the other competing applications are rejected, and the process is complete. If more than one application receives an overall 'yes' as a result of the vote at this point, the process continues to step 5.

5. A discussion of the merits of the competing applications who received overall 'yes' votes as a result of stage 3 may take place in relation to one another if this is felt necessary.
6. The selection group will then vote to select which of the remaining competing applications will be selected. The vote options will be each of the remaining applications, and each member of the selection group has one vote, and should vote for the one application they wish to be approved (ie: 'Which of the remaining competing group applications should be approved? Choose one of: Application A, Application B, Application C).
7. The application with the most votes will be approved, and the other applications will be rejected. In the event of a tie, the chair carries the deciding vote.
8. At this point the Festival Secretary will then bring forward any 'secondary' applications from those who were unsuccessful in their initial application, and this will be considered by the selection group in the same way as other applications. Where secondary applications potentially compete with other application, the festival secretary will arrange order of consideration to allow fair and full consideration as much as possible. However, where a series of such possibilities occur and the order of applications becomes unmanageable, priority will be given to primary applications.

Meetings with potential GOs

People who apply to GO may be called to a meeting with members of the selection group to discuss their application further, before a final decision is made. Some applicants will be invited in for a chat to talk about their application to help us reach a decision. This does not imply any negative bias, or that there is a problem with the application: these discussions are a chance for the Board and Blues to ask for clarification, or even inform prospective GOs of other submitted applications, for groups that they may want to consider working with, and gauge feelings. The dates for these meetings will be listed on the application form and applicants will be given as much notice as possible if a meeting is needed.

If a meeting is required, all potential GOs must attend this interview: if it will not be possible, this should be made clear in the application so alternative arrangements can be made. Applicants will be notified that a meeting is requested by phone or email, and as turnaround times are tight, it is the responsibility of applicants to ensure they are available by either.

About the meeting panel:

These meetings will be held by a panel of two to four people, usually from the selection group. The full selection group will have agreed set points they wish this panel to discuss with each set of applicants, and the panel will ensure these points or questions are covered. The full group will also make clear any conditions or requirements which the panel must ensure are met for the application to be approved following an interview/meeting.

After the meetings:

Immediately following the meeting, the panel will then discuss the outcomes of that meeting, and confirm a decision on that application. The panel members have the authority to make a final decision, delegated to them by the full GO selection group (unless otherwise specified at the main GO selection decision-making meeting of the full group). The panel members will then inform the festival secretary of their decision, the outcomes of or agreements made regarding any of the set points covered in the interview. This information will be passed to the festival secretary in writing as soon as possible, and not more than 24 hours after the interview.

The Festival Secretary will then record these agreements in a file on the BFS board Drive (visible only to festival secretary, Blues, chair, treasurer and any other board members not applying to GO), and where appropriate, pass them (or assign responsibility for ensuring they are delivered on where this is appropriate) to the Event Coordinator, all Blues and/or relevant members of the Board. The Festival Secretary may also add any conditions or specific agreements to the GO agreement that the applicants sign, where appropriate. Failure by GOs to comply with agreed conditions may result in disciplinary action and will be recorded for consideration regarding future applications.

Notifying applicants:

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application by email, ideally all on the same day, as soon as possible after all decisions about GO selection have been made. Any queries about notification and outcomes of the process should be sent to the relevant inbox (confirmed after roles are distributed by the board)

Successful applicants will be provided with a list of other successful groups/GOs (in strict confidence) as soon as everyone has been informed, to allow for collaboration as soon as possible.

Second rounds of applications

Where necessary, additional calls for applications may be made following the initial round of applications. The second round will follow the first in format, and any further rounds or decisions regarding groups will be at the discretion of the board as required.