



*INN CROWD is supporting the art of storytelling, and I feel very lucky that Inn Crowd supports what I do. The performers benefit, the community benefits and the pub benefits – I like being part of that triangle.*

**John Osbourne, Performer**

INN CROWD is looking for ready-to-go shows to offer to rural pubs from January 2022!

If you have a readymade show that can be performed in small or unusual spaces, requires little or no tech to run, and you're able to be flexible about working in pub environments, we'd love to see an application from you.

### **About INN CROWD Touring**

Started in 2016 INN CROWD is a unique arts project, devised by partners Applause Rural Touring, Creative Arts East and National Centre for Writing with support from Pub is the Hub. Funded by Arts Council England.

INN CROWD supports rural pubs throughout England to host exciting and inspiring spoken word, poetry, and storytelling performances in their pubs, reaching and engaging with a wide range of audiences. INN CROWD tours spoken word and

live literature across the country through partnerships with a network of rural touring schemes, bringing people together and giving direct access to high quality performances in rural communities.

We are looking for exceptional, exciting, Live Literature shows that are adaptable to the needs of small, rural pubs who are often inexperienced at holding performances. The emphasis is on quality and fun because the promoters and venues work hard to make these performances happen, so they deserve it, as do their audiences.

### **Being included on our INN CROWD touring menu**

We respond to the needs and booking capacity of our pub venues so we offer INN CROWD bookings as island dates on an ad-hoc basis.

We are looking for artists to join us for our January-July 2022 touring period.

It is important to note that inclusion on our menu of available shows does not guarantee bookings. Each booking depends on the personal preference of pubs and their clientele in deciding what they choose to book.

### **Publicity**

Any artists included in our programme will need to provide publicity materials in the form of show copy and at least 1 high-quality leading image that we can create a poster, flyer and social media content from it.

You will not be responsible for providing printed materials to INN CROWD.

## **Fees**

We offer a standard fee of £400 per performance (to include all VAT, travel costs, equipment hire, accommodation and other expenses). There is a £50 supplementary fee offered to any performance that takes place more than 150 miles from the performers residence. Although 50% of shows are likely to be in the south and east of England, you should expect to be asked to perform anywhere in England). We will not accept distance as an acceptable reason to turn down the offer of a booking so please think about what this may mean for your travel arrangements should your application be successful.

## **Inclusivity and Diversity**

INN CROWD seeks to offer pubs and audiences a diverse range of live literature experiences made by artists from a wide range of backgrounds and identities. Selection of shows is made based on quality and the diversity of the portfolio of shows on offer.

If you're interested in rural pub touring and can meet our requirements, we'd love to hear from you.

If you have any questions please contact our Project Manager – [inncrowd@applause.org.uk](mailto:inncrowd@applause.org.uk)

## **Criteria we look for in a show are:**

### **Suitability for rural pub spaces – tech and performance considerations**

- Rural pubs are often old buildings, full of nooks and crannies but without open performance spaces. Sight-lines can be obstructed by load-bearing pillars or the layout may mean some audience are able to hear but can't directly see a performer. Lack of a raised stage or tiered seating means audiences can rarely see a performer if they are not standing up. For these reasons we do not accept shows which include significant physical theatre, clowning, or any projection. The voice and the words spoken must be the core of any INN CROWD show we programme.
- Performance space can sometimes be little more than the corner of a bar. For this reason, shows have to be performable in as little as 1.5m x 1.5m, though often there will be more space than that.
- Our pubs like to make an evening of attending a show. They may like an interval for drinks or food. Shows should thus be flexible enough to add an interval should the venue request one.

### **Suitability for rural pub audiences – content considerations**

- Rural pubs are open community spaces. Audiences may have booked a ticket for shows, but there can be people walking in without any knowledge of a show taking place.

For this reason we do not accept shows which contain significant swearing, vulgarity, or adult content.

- Background noise and distractions are inevitable in rural pub spaces. It can be difficult for audiences to immerse themselves in a quiet, attention-demanding show. We find that the shows that work best are up-beat and easy to engage with.
- Audiences come to pubs for a good night out. While we welcome proposals featuring any content, we encourage performers to break up serious subjects with humour. The general ambiance that works best is one of light-hearted and engaging storytelling.
- Rural pubs tend to attract an older clientele, often less willing to engage with audience involvement/participation than younger, urban audiences. Shows that include audience participation can work, but we tend to find that audiences will respond better to group engagement (collective singing of a song, for instance) than being put on the spot and asked to do something individually.
- Audiences in rural pubs generally tend to be more socially conservative than audiences in urban areas. For this reason, we are unlikely to commission salacious cabaret or overtly political work. No subject is off-limits and we actively welcome socially diverse applications, but artists should be aware that their show will be more effective if the message is delivered lightly.

## **Suitability of Performer – artist considerations**

- Rural pubs can be lively venues, with food and drink service taking place, as well as talk from people who aren't engaging with the show. Artists need to be comfortable projecting their voice or speaking at a volume that can stand up to a live pub setting.
- Although rare, heckling or other unwanted interruptions are possible in pub spaces. Artists need to be robust and confident enough to cope with this atmosphere.

## **Suitability as Live Literature – artform considerations**

INN CROWD is a project supporting live literature. This can include elements of theatre, poetry, spoken word, storytelling, or literary adaptation. The starting point for performances considered for INN CROWD must be a written or composed text. While there is cross-over between live literature and stand-up comedy, shows will only be considered if they fulfil at least two of the following criteria for live literature.

- Do you define the show as live literature, spoken word, performed poetry, or storytelling?
- Does the show feature new writing?
- Does your show respond to an existing (non-play) text in a way that increases engagement with or places focus on that original text?

## **In summary, we look for shows that:**

- Tell a compelling narrative that is engaging and easy to follow;
- Are well written and literature focused;
- Treats its subject lightly and with humour.

If all of this excites you and you think you have a show that can WOW rural pub audiences then please get in touch today!

