



CENTRE STAGE LONDON

2026 SEASON

PITCH PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

Our membership, and its diversity, makes our shows successful and reflects the vibrant community that we serve. It is our differences - be it age, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability - that make us what we are, and they are the foundations of Centre Stage London.

We are Centre Stage, a central London based amateur theatre charity that has been entertaining audiences with musicals and cabarets for over 55 years! We first began life as a light opera company in 1966. Today, we put on at least two major musical theatre productions a year at The Bridewell Theatre, just off Fleet Street. We also produce several smaller cabarets and throw fun-filled socials open to everyone!

Our charity is run by a dedicated Board of Trustees, supported by excellent volunteers both front and backstage and has a very loyal and talented membership, with new people joining every day. Our Artistic Director is here to help you on all matters regarding the pitch process and putting on a show should we proceed with your suggestions. Please feel free to email them via artisticdirector@centrestage.london and use their knowledge and experience if you are stuck or looking for ideas or guidance.

We have secured dates at the Bridewell Theatre (a 135-seat venue) for 2026 in April and December that are available for pitches. We also have potential for our April slot to be held at the Oratory School theatre (a 300-seat venue). Each show will have a 11-12 week rehearsal period that does not overlap with the other shows. To help you visualize, the table below gives an idea of potential production timelines.

SHOW	AUDITIONS	REHEARSALS	SHOW WEEK
Spring Show (Bridewell Show)	First Rounds: W/C 8 th December 2025 Recalls: W/C 15 th December 2025	First Rehearsal: 10 th January Last Rehearsal: 4 th April	Get In: 5 th April Dress: 6 th April Shows: 7 – 11 th April
Spring Show (Oratory Show)	TBC - Dependant on Show Week	TBC – Dependant on Show Week	Show Week: Anywhere between 28 th March – 11 th April
Summer Show (Come From Away)	First Rounds: W/C 13 th April Recalls: W/C 20 th April	First Rehearsal: 2 nd May Last Rehearsal: 18 th July	Get In: 19 th July Dress: 20 th July Shows: 21-25 th July
Winter Show	First Rounds: W/C 10 th August Recalls: W/C 17 th August	First Rehearsal: 5 th September Last Rehearsal: 28 th November	Get In: 29 th November Dress: 30 th November Shows: 1-5 th December

Please note: The committee believes only a select number of shows would be suitable for the Oratory theatre – to make use of all its technical capabilities and have enough ‘pull’ to sell out the 300-seater. Please ensure you let us know why you think your show could work there if you are pitching for it!

THE PITCH PROCESS

The beginning of the pitch process is slightly different this year, to simplify and help potential pitching teams put the best ideas forward.

- 1. If you are pitching as a partial or full creative team for a new show (i.e. that isn't Come From Away), the process will be the below:**

STEP 1: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (OPEN FROM 17th MAY - 7th JUNE)

Teams wishing to pitch a production (*and not Come From Away, see below*) will submit their expression of interest forms using [THIS GOOGLE FORM](#). Once we receive your expression of interest, we will review it and either green light you to be able to pitch, or we will let you know why it might not be the right time for your production and invite you to try again.

STEP 2: SUBMIT PITCH DOCUMENTS (DEADLINE: 7th JULY)

Green-lit teams will then have a month to complete their pitch forms, and budgets (document downloads below) before submitting to committee prior to pitch meetings. *Please note any unsolicited pitch forms that have not been greenlit, will be discarded.*

STEP 3: PITCH MEETINGS (FROM: 21st JULY)

The final step will be meeting and presenting your pitch to the committee - who will ask questions on the artistic direction, cast opportunities, set & tech, and the budget - to ensure the show will at the very least, break even. Successful teams will then be notified.

- 2. And if you are pitching to be on the production team for Come From Away, or as an individual creative to be on any other production team, then you will:**

STEP 1: SUBMIT PITCH DOCUMENTS (DEADLINE: 7th JULY)

Prospective creative teams or individuals will need to download the Pitch form and Pitch Budget documents – and fill out the relevant fields – and submit to centrestagetheatrelondon@gmail.com before 7th July 2025.

STEP 2: PITCH MEETINGS (FROM: 21st JULY)

Come From Away teams will then be invited to pitch meetings starting from the 21st of July to discuss their versions of the show.

Individual creatives will be asked if they want to join any teams that require them and be put in touch by the committee before officially joining the team.

After the pitch meetings are concluded, the committee will make all teams aware of where they stand – and attempt to secure rights for the first choice season. This is not always possible and subsequently other teams may then become first choice.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

We aim to put on great, high-quality shows that get as many of our members involved across the year as possible in a variety of contrasting productions. We have three slots at The Bridewell this year and are happy to consider musicals, cabarets and plays. We know that show selection is hard! A major item to consider in show selection is the expense of putting on a fully staged show including fixed costs (theatre hire, lighting etc), flexible costs (set, props etc) and rehearsal space. While as an amateur organisation we do not pay actors or the creative team, we do pay musicians for show week. Shows that have very significant costs for specific sets etc, are quite hard to make work financially.

As a registered charity, all Centre Stage shows must aim to break even or make a profit. We will not consider pitches with a budget that comes in at a loss. If you need help with your pitch budget, please contact our Artistic Director or Business Team and they can help you explore options to make your show financially viable. It's also important to think about the size of the show you are pitching. Though there are many amazing musicals with smaller casts (2-15) it is not often feasible financially to produce them as our main stage offering. This is because it reduces participation fee income, and most significantly increases the difficulty of selling out our shows. A full-scale musical would typically have a cast between 25 – 30. Over 30 becomes unwieldy both onstage and in the dressing room. However, we are open to ideas of how these smaller shows might be produced and break-even/make profit, so don't discard them as ideas completely!

If you are pitching a show you will need to fill out both the pitch form and the budget form. This is a workbook in Excel which helps you to consider the financial viability of the show. There are fixed costs for you to consider as well as sections for all the flexible costs you will need to think about. We realise that flexible costs can be harder to lock down so far in advance and we are here to assist if you would like extra guidance. We have many budgets from past shows that can help in terms of predicting those unfixed costs. Some shows are set heavy, others costume and props; we appreciate every show will be different! Your budget will also need to include rehearsal space costs, which we will negotiate on your behalf. Don't panic if you've never done a budget before! We are here to help and will ask for clarification on anything we are uncertain about before any decisions are made. Our Pitch Budget Tool will also hopefully help!

Please don't panic about getting things perfect, we really want to hear your thoughts, suggestions and ideas. As trustees we have a wealth of experience, and we are here to help. Look through our website and the pages of our previous shows and you will see the types of shows that are a good fit for us!

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

During the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, we joined with two other major central London amateur theatre societies (SEDOS and Geoids Musical Theatre) to launch London Drama Societies, a working group with the aim of promoting and facilitating a greater degree of diversity and inclusion in all areas of activity of London amateur dramatics societies.

London Drama Societies Mission Statement:

"Collectively, we commit to take constant steps to be more inclusive and attract members and audiences reflecting London's diversity. We will identify and remove barriers to create a safe and inclusive environment. We want everyone to feel empowered to participate, on stage or off. We want stories to be told authentically." Before completing the pitch process forms, please keep this in mind when answering every section. Because at Centre Stage we want to make sure our shows are reflective of the diversity of our members and give everyone the opportunity to participate. For this reason, we encourage pitches for shows with opportunities for cast and creative involvement from a diverse range of backgrounds.

Read more about our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion by visiting:

<https://www.centrestage.london/diversityandinclusion>

Relaxed Performances

We are committed to improving diversity across our community, including accommodating additional needs in our performances. A relaxed performance is a great way to ensure that more people can enjoy our productions, and we would like to encourage creative teams to consider running one during show week. Such performances aim to make a show more accessible to people with diverse needs, including those with autism, learning difficulties, or sensory communication disorders. A performance can be made “relaxed” through several ways, such as:

- Allowing audience members to exit and enter the auditorium freely
- Amending sudden changes in lighting or sound
- Creating a relaxing area in the theatre foyer
- Reducing the number of seats sold to increase space

Some changes can be implemented at no cost, whilst others may have budget implications. Please let us know in your pitch if you are willing to consider running a relaxed performance, and if shortlisted, we will discuss the possibilities with you.

We understand that some shows are more suited to relaxed performances than others and this is something we can discuss with you during the pitch process but will not be a deciding factor in whether your show is selected.

COME FROM AWAY

For any teams pitching for our production of Come From Away – we wanted to highlight specifically the need for a diverse cast, and how important this will be during our pitching process.

Come From Away is at its very core, a story about global communities. The amateur rights do not state that certain characters need to be cast as a certain race, but it is imperative to Centre Stage that to tell the story as authentically as possible: Bob and Hannah must be played by black actors, and Ali be played by a non-white actor. This is the **minimum** we expect – and encourage teams to show their plans for outreach and how they might break down barriers for black and non-white talent to participate. The show also features a large diversity of religions – another part of the show we are advocating for being cast as accurately as possible.

Teams that can demonstrate their commitment and strategy for this will be put in very good stead during the pitching process – this is extremely important to the Centre Stage committee, and any team that doesn't mention it in their pitch will be questioned on it.

For the successful team, outreach will begin from the moment you are confirmed (long before auditions) and we encourage partnering with productions (both in and out of Centre Stage) that have been successful in reaching out to black and non-white communities, to learn from them.

FINAL WORDS

It's important to remember that Centre Stage is not a "production house" — by which we mean, we don't just fund your original show. Throughout the process of putting on a show, the society will work collaboratively with you. We will help with production and technical requirements, planning, communications, and marketing. There are areas we will take off your hands completely and others where we can just advise. We are hands-on but not stifling; we just want to make sure our members and audience are looked after, and our brand is kept in the best possible light. You will receive support right through from announcing your show to the afterparty.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email us:

- **Artistic Director (for creative and pitch process questions):**
artisticdirector@centrestage.london
- **For all other questions:** centrestagetheatrelondon@gmail.com

We're so excited to hear from you!

THE CENTRE STAGE TRUSTEES