



Working Group

Reopening Safely Through
Clear Communications



Planning for a Safe Reopening

After an unprecedented period of closure, the arts sector can begin to look towards the future. While the details of what reopening will look like remain uncertain (and for many organisations a question of whether they will open at all), it is essential to get started with planning for reopening in whatever form that may take.

A critical part to re-opening is clear communication with audiences. In order for any health and safety measures to be effective, you will need to educate your customers about changes they can expect. It is important that audiences understand that adhering to a slightly different digital and physical journey will help to reduce risk for staff as well as themselves.

It is vital to communicate that changes in the customer journey are there to protect audiences as well as staff from infection. This means that you will need to ensure messages are shared across a variety of channels and at a regular frequency so that audiences fully understand any changes and also what is expected of them.

As a start, each arts organisation should have an update on their website on how they are adhering to COVID 19 restrictions and any steps they are (or will be) taking to ensure staff and customers are protected.

This whitepaper is just the first of in a series of planning guides and toolkits The Arts Working Group will be releasing. The hope is that by working together as a sector we can form a collective set of procedures that will work for arts organisations planning for reopening.

We hope that you find this document useful.

Sincerely,

The Arts Working Group



Customer Journey

Included in this toolkit you will find plenty of examples, templates that cover the six steps you need to consider as part of your customers' digital journey with your organisation. The six steps to consider are;

1. **Landing site**
2. **Customer booking tickets - suggested set ups**
3. **Confirmation email**
4. **Pre event customer communication**
5. **Access on the day**
6. **Post event questionnaire**



Landing Site

Your landing site for audience members and visitors is the first impression for your organisation, so you want to make sure that it's a good one. Audience members need clear access to the information which is most important to them. Start with a clear date on the page so people know how recent the information is and make sure you update this page frequently so they feel confident you are in line with the latest government guidelines. An example below:

Effective X Date 2020: As part of our commitment to the continued well-being of our visitors, team members, and in an ongoing effort to assist our community in preventing the spread of COVID-19, we have implemented enhanced protocols and procedures you will notice before and during your visit.

Time slots/pre booking: all visitors must book tickets online.

Online booking required/recommended for all guests, to ensure safe and comfortable capacity and limited contact admissions. Please select a date and time slot for all members of your party. Please arrive at the time/date stated.

- Please use contactless card payments, if possible.
- We will endeavour to keep queues as short as possible.
- We are promoting a one-way experience that reinforces social distancing guidelines.
- We are frequently cleaning and disinfecting throughout the building.
- Additional hand sanitiser dispensers are placed at key points throughout site.
- Additional signage to promote hand washing and best hygiene practices has been posted throughout the building.
- Additional training and PPE have been provided for all employees.
- Our staff are here to assist you with a safe journey through the venue.
- Useful to detail how your bar will operate here.



Wash your hands



Cover mouth if coughing or sneezing



Avoid touching your face



Keep surfaces clean



Stop shaking hands and hugging



Keep a safe distance



What can you do to help us promote a healthy environment?

We are doing all we can to promote a healthy environment, and in doing so, we also rely on you to keep recommended self-care in mind for your safety and the safety of others. Throughout your experience, please be mindful of current Government and health services guidelines and public health recommendations:

- If you or a member of your party has a temperature or is feeling unwell, please visit us another time. We will refund your order up to two working days before the event date.
- Wash your hands often, using soap and water, for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Help us promote social distancing by remaining at least two meters away from others who are not part of your party and do not shake hands or hug.
- Please keep your party together, especially if there are children in your group, to help maintain social distancing with other audience members.
- If you must cough or sneeze, please do so into your elbow, not into your hand or into the air.



Suggestion

include a link to the relevant Gov page, plus venue contact details (phone/email)



Online Booking Journey Recommendations

Our recommendation for your organisation at this moment is to consider unallocated seating. As every venue will have to conduct their own individual risk management assessment, social distancing seating selection for audiences will prove challenging for some venues over others. With unallocated seating, you are ensuring that your box office team has full control over the safety and security of all segments of your audience members who attend your venue.

Your ticketing or box office provider should be able to assist you with setting up unallocated seating for your venues.

Product Prompts

To keep patrons and staff safe, it is best to allow people to pre-book or pre-purchase extras or add ons before arriving at your venue. This minimises queues and exchanging of money. Pre-booked products can be prepared for customers in advance of their arrive also minimising staff contact.

In most cases, a feature such as “Product Prompts” or similar will allow people to pre-order and pre-pay. During the check out process, you can offer options such as pre-paid meals, drinks, merchandise and more. Customers can just simply add these to their basket along with their tickets at checkout.

Ask your ticketing provider to assist you with set up.



Confirmation Email

Your confirmation email is an important asset of your communication suite for customers. Patrons of your organisation can use this email as their one source of truth of information prior to attending your venue. The benefits of updating your confirmation email mean that your box office team will spend less time answering queries from customers who are unsure about current procedures and protocols. You may be able to pull or link customers to the FAQ or Blog section of your website for more in depth information. We've included example templates for confirmation emails within this section.

Confirmation Email Template

Dear XX,

Thank you for your purchase with XXXXX. We look forward to welcoming you and appreciate your support. Please know that we are fully committed to making your visit as safe and enjoyable as possible during these times of social distance.

Refund and Exchange Policy

Please note that if you purchased tickets and cannot attend for reasons related to Covid 19, we will refund your order up to **two working days before the event date**. We would appreciate as much notice as possible as we will likely be able to sell your tickets on to others eager for live entertainment.

Accessibility Seating

If you or someone accompanying you have any accessibility needs, please make sure to contact the Box Office as soon as possible and we can advise on your seating option(s).

Arriving at the venue

When you arrive at the venue the following procedures will be in place:

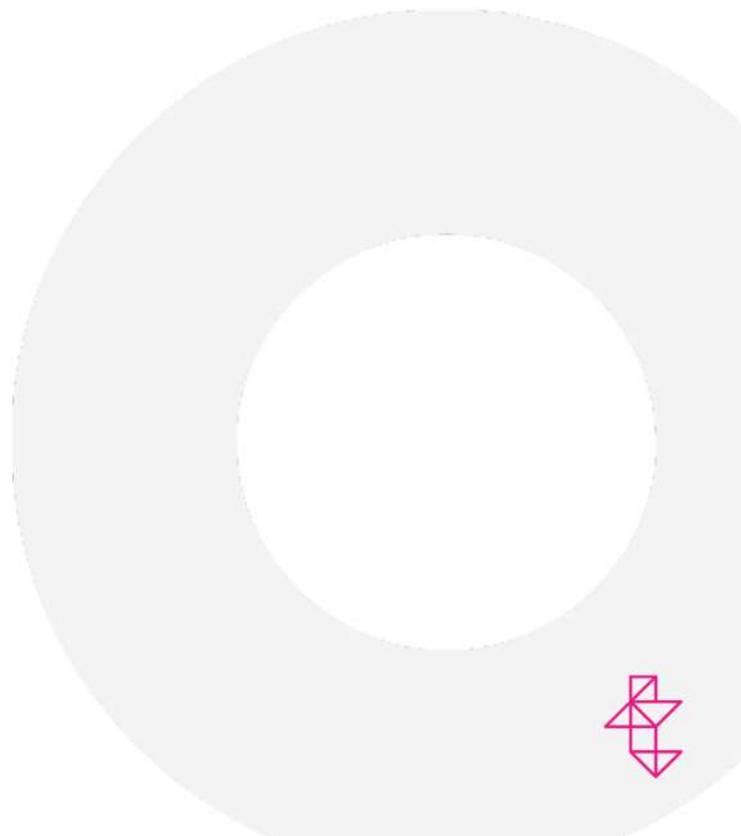
- Clearly marked socially distant queuing to access the venue.
- Written notices and verbal announcements to guide you during your visit.
- Hand sanitisers on entry and throughout the venue.
- You will be required to fill in a form with details of all members of your party to assist with contact tracing should it be required in future (your information will be protected by GDPR protocols at all times).
- Self scanning of tickets for access to auditorium.
- Socially distant queueing to access auditorium.
- Venue staff will assist from distance to help you to your seat(s).
- We will not be operating an interval.



- We will operate a limited bar and table service.
- Exiting the auditorium and building will also require social distancing and staff will be on hand to assist.

Please note: this is just an email confirmation of your booking, please do not reply to this email.

We hope you enjoy your visit, but should have any queries please contact our Box Office team on XXXXXXXX or email us at boxoffice@xxxxxx



Pre Event Customer Communication

Pre-Event Email Alerts are automated emails that get sent out before the event to all customers who have purchased tickets for an event (if they have an email address, that is). You will be able to change the template per show or event so that each email is tailored to those customers specifically. You also decide when the emails are sent.

The post Covid world is different. Customer service and clear communication are key to helping your staff and customers feel safe and happy to return. While we generally recommend using the pre-event email to include information like telling customers you are excited to see them, where to park or about a 10% discount when they book their interval drinks before the show etc., we now believe this feature will be a crucial part of your communications to help with reopening. A timely email before the event detailing what to expect when arriving at your venue will go a long way to helping patrons and staff alike experience a safe and smooth visit.

Information should include details on queueing to get into the building, what to expect once inside and other changes they can expect to see or procedures they will need to adhere to. Topics that can be covered include availability of hand sanitiser on the premises, if there are forms to fill in with visitor information to aid with contact tracing, how to self scan print at home or e-tickets, access to the auditorium, visits to the toilet, interval measures and venue exit plans.

Check with your ticketing provider about setting up automated pre-event emails that detail visitor information.



Access on the Day

Safe access upon arrival will be on the minds of plenty of your customers. Listed below are some important areas to implement operationally within your reopening strategy.

Access Control Measures

- Clearly marked socially distant queuing to access the venue.
- Signage (see example on the next page).
- Hand sanitisers on entry and throughout the venue.
- You will be required to fill in a form with details of all members of your party to assist with contact tracing should it be required in future (your information will be protected by GDPR protocols at all times).
- One way systems (if necessary and required).
- Self scanning of tickets for access to auditorium,
- Socially distant queueing to access auditorium.
- Venue staff will assist from distance to help you to your seat(s).
- Interval information and procedures (if you will have an interval).
- Exiting the auditorium and building will also require social distancing and staff will be on hand to assist.
- Bathrooms and protocol around access and a separate queuing system if needed.

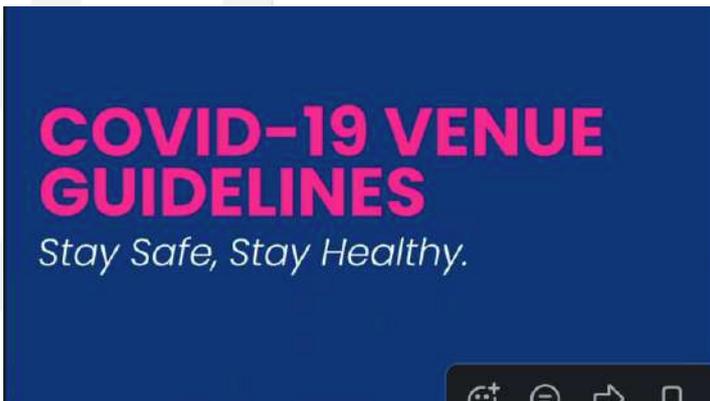


Some Signage Examples

These are just a few examples of signage. They will need to be modified as information and requirements change. However, the examples below offer clear and concise communication to your audience members and visitors.

Signage

Example of what you could use at your venue



Explainer Video 1

Example of an explainer video (masks recommended) that could be use on the website and on social media campaigns. Click [here](#) to watch the video.



Explainer Video 2

Example of an explainer video (masks required) that could be use on the website and on social media campaigns. Click [here](#) to watch the video.



Post Event Questionnaire

The Arts Working Group are working with **Dr. Marta Herrero**, lecturer in **Cultural and Creative Industries at Sheffield University Management School** to develop a post event questionnaire for arts organisations. The questionnaire will provide valuable data and insights into audiences impressions and feelings after visiting venues and can help organisations adjust their approach if necessary.

Dr. Herrero has published widely on the non-profit and for-profit arts sector in the UK and Ireland. She has also attracted funding from the British Academy and the ESRC.

In addition to her role as Programme Director of the MSc in Creative and Cultural Industries Management, Dr. Herrero is Visiting Professor at the University of Paris VIII, Institute for European Studies, and Board Member of the International Sociological Association's Sociology of the Arts Research network.



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