

Auditions Policy

Policy: Auditions
Organisation: New Plymouth Operatic Society
Last Update: September 2025
Review Date: September 2027

Background

New Plymouth Operatic Society's (NPOS) core activity is staging shows. Every show has auditions. These guidelines have been developed to set out how these auditions are to be operated. NPOS's goal is that anyone who wishes to audition is welcome and encouraged to do so, and will be treated with respect, fairness and equality by NPOS.

Application

This policy applies to all NPOS members, Board of Management (BoM), Heads of Department, independent contractors, and participating volunteers involved in our productions and Society operations.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide guidance to members and volunteers with respect to the auditions process for NPOS.
- set out the accountability and responsibilities of NPOS members, volunteers, and contractors in relation to the NPOS's auditions process.

Guiding audition principals

- All auditionees are treated equally and with respect.
- All auditionees audition on a voluntary basis.
- All production teams for all NPOS shows are required to follow this policy without exception or omission.
- Open auditions are to be called for all NPOS shows, and no roles in any show may be pre-cast or not auditioned for.
- Auditions are open to both financial members of NPOS and members of the general public.
- Except as specifically required by the author for certain roles, NPOS has a non-discrimination casting policy, open to members of all races, sexes, creeds, orientations, and abilities. We encourage members of diverse backgrounds and abilities to audition for our productions.
- Unless a role(s) is specifically written for a youth cast member, auditionees for all NPOS shows are required to be a minimum of 16-years old as at the opening night performance date for the production in which auditions are being held, or at the discretion of the BoM.

BoM and BoM reporting

- It is acknowledged that the BoM is the sole Producer of the show.
- The BoM will appoint a Director, Musical Director, Choreographer ("Creative Team") and Production Manager.
- The Creative Team will conduct auditions within the guidelines set by the BoM.
- Final casting decisions are the decision of the BoM, on recommendation from the Creative Team.
- Once the Creative Team has selected a proposed cast, the Production Manager should email the proposed cast list to the General Manager who will then forward to the BoM and for consideration and final approval.

Auditions

- Open auditions are required to be held for all NPOS productions.
- Audition dates are to be set by the Creative Team but approved by the BoM prior to announcement.
- Auditions for an upcoming production will endeavour to not be held until the previous production has opened.
- Notice of upcoming auditions is to be given to members no later than approximately 4 weeks prior to auditions.
- The audition pack and any audition material is to be made available for potential auditionees via the NPOS website.
- The audition preparation material is at the discretion of the Director. The BoM's intention is that preparation should not be an impediment to people auditioning.

Pre-Audition Information

- A pre-audition information session may or may not be held. It is at the discretion of the Production Team if one is to be held.
- If a pre-audition information session is held, there is no requirement that auditionees must attend the session in order to audition. No additional information is to be made available at the session that is not readily available as part of the audition pack.
- Pre-audition information will endeavour to outline any potential inclusion of either swing or understudy roles within the production.
 - These roles may learn specific principal or ensemble roles / requirements, however, do not have guaranteed performances.

Audition Bookings/Registration

- Audition bookings are to be made via the NPOS website or via the General Manager.
- Auditionees are required to complete and return the NPOS Audition registration form (updated on a show-by-show basis), alongside any other requirements outlined as audition requirements.
- The size of the cast is at the discretion of the Production Team, but they must work within budget constraints and policies set by NPOS BoM.
- Once the Creative Team have selected a proposed cast, a cast list will be provided to the General Manager and then to the BoM.
- The audition team are not permitted to view or receive a list of those auditioning until the audition weekend, to ensure objectivity in the audition process. It is not the role of the Director, Musical Director or Choreographer to contact people ahead of auditions seeking them to audition.

Audition format

- The format of an audition will be at the discretion of the Director in consultation with the Audition Panel and may include individual and/or group auditions.
- The Audition Panel will include the Director, Musical Director and Choreographer, and may also include a representative of the BoM and/or Production Manager.
- Before auditions commence all potential auditionees should be advised of the audition format as part of the audition pack informed by the Audition Policy.
- The format of the auditions must be consistent for each individual auditioning for a part.
- All auditions are closed; friends, family and supporters are not permitted to observe auditions.
- Vocal auditions may be conducted acapella, with an audition pianist or by using backing tracks.

- A group dance/movement workshop may be held as part of the auditions process. Should a group dance/movement workshop be held, all content shall be taught in the workshop, and no pre-learning of audition dance/movement routines is required.
- Those auditioning for multiple roles are not required to audition multiple times.
- Auditions may be videoed for reference during the casting process. After the auditions these will be destroyed.
- If, after open auditions, the Audition Panel believes that a particular role or roles cannot be cast, additional actors may be contacted and further auditions may be held as required. Being invited to audition, either directly or indirectly, does not guarantee a role.
- Casting decisions are determined by the Audition Panel but are subject to final approval by the BoM.

Recalls/Call backs

- Recalls/Call backs may be held, if required, at the discretion of the Audition Panel.
- Not all candidates for a role are required to be called back.
- Receiving a call back is not to be taken as an indication of an individual's likely casting, or preference for a role over other auditionees.
- The Audition Panel are not required to hold callbacks in order to cast a role.

Audition Notifications

- It is NPOS's desire that all auditionees receive a notification regarding their audition outcome within a timely manner.
- The General Manager will prepare and send "Yes" and "No" letters to all auditionees on NPOS letterhead and will be sent via email. It is endeavoured that all audition notifications are issued on the same day.
- "Yes" letters should be accompanied by:
 - an NPOS Acceptance Form, for successful cast to complete and return to accept their roles.
 - the current year NPOS Membership Form and current policy documents.
- A cast list will not be provided with the letters.
- NPOS does not provide individual feedback on auditions, nor do we provide individual explanations for why people were cast, or not cast, or were cast in certain roles.

Audition Acceptances

- All successful cast must complete and return to the Acceptance Form to formally accept their roles before they are confirmed and announced.
- All successful cast must be financial members of NPOS for the calendar year in which the production is to be staged.
- It is the responsibility of the Production Manager or Company Manager to co-ordinate, follow up and ensure all audition acceptance forms are returned and memberships paid.
- NPOS reserves the right to recast a part if a performer behaves inappropriately and against the Code of Conduct policy.

Cast announcement

- The cast announcements will not be announced until all acceptance forms are returned.
- Cast lists may be announced with certain roles 'TBC', at the discretion of the Production Team. There is no requirement that all roles be cast before a cast announcement be made.
- The cast announcement may be published by NPOS via various channels including, but are not limited to:
 - NPOS social media accounts;

- Print media (e.g. newspaper);
- NPOS newsletters; and
- formal email announcements.
- Successful cast members are not to announce their role/s within a production until after a formal announcement has been made by NPOS through the channels outlined above.

Complaints

- All complaints about any aspects of auditions or the casting process should, in the first instance, be addressed formally to NPOS in writing to the General Manager at office@npos.co.nz, and not to any individual of the audition team or BoM.
- NPOS undertakes to treat all complaints confidentially and with respect.
- An acknowledgement of receipt will be made to the complainant immediately on receipt of the complaint by the General Manager.
- NPOS endeavours to investigate any complaints objectively and in a timely manner and reply formally in writing and confidentially to the complainant within 30 days of the complaint being received.

Who should read this policy?

The following persons or groups must read and understand this policy in order to effectively discharge their duties to NPOS:

- BoM and all NPOS members,
- all volunteers associated with the NPOS and its productions,
- General Manager,
- Directors, Musical Directors, Choreographers and Production Managers for any NPOS production, and
- all auditionees and intending auditionees.