

GRANT APPLICATION

Organization Information

Applicant name	Phone	Email
Penobscot Theatre Company	(207) 947-6618	bari@penobscottheatre.org
Organization	Name of project for funding	
Penobscot Theatre Company	Mainstage production of END DAYS	
Mailing address	Physical address (if different)	
115 Main Street, 4 th Floor, Bangor, ME 04401		
Year organization was established:	Number of employees:	
1973	10	
Organization named in 501(c) letter:	Total operating expenses, past fiscal year:	
Penobscot Theatre Company	\$990,722	

Mission Statement:

The mission of Penobscot Theatre Company is to produce high-quality, professional theatre works and programs that inspire the imagination and cultivate a lifelong passion for the art form.

General description of the organization, its purpose, and goals:

Our primary work involves the production of professional, mainstage theatrical shows--innovative, handcrafted stagings of plays and musicals, new and classic. The season extends from early fall to late spring with each production running for three consecutive weeks and employing professional theatre artists and technicians. Beyond the theatre's mainstage season, our diverse educational and outreach programming includes school-based workshops, student matinees, summer and after-school programs, and adult classes. Through our educational programs, we not only teach the craft, but use theatre as a vehicle to develop effective communication and leadership skills; empathy, compassion, and understanding; and appreciation for the performing arts.

Brief description of current programs and activities:

Since 2005, Penobscot Theatre Company has expanded its mainstage audience by nearly 30%, filling more than 27,000 seats last season; and the number of education program attendees has increased 38%. In nearly every area, the theatre is experiencing percentages of growth measured in double and triple digits. Between 2011 and 2014, subscribers increased 20%, education registrations increased 82%, donors increased by 103%, advertisers increased 250%, sponsors increased by 10%, and foundation grants increased by 14%. Financially, PTC has never been healthier. We are currently operating debt-free; and our most recent audit showed no material findings. These developments speak to the strength of the organization, the quality of our offerings, and the palpable need for our work. The City of Bangor has been a crucial partner. Continued support will deepen our impact, serving the citizens of Bangor and strengthening the community at large.

Materials and questions should be addressed to:

Caitlin Brooke, City of Bangor, 73 Harlow Street, Bangor, ME 04401 (207)992-4234
caitlin.brooke@bangormaine.gov

Funding Request Summary

Amount Requested	Date Needed	Organization's Fiscal Year
\$2,000	March 1, 2015	September 1-August 31

Total fundraising goal for this project (in cash and in-kind):	Total funding already raised for this project and description of the source(s):
\$20,941 cash	Corporate sponsorship (cash): \$2,000 (Farrell, Rosenblatt & Russell); \$250 (Acadia Hospital) University of Maine Humanities Council grant: \$1,000

Briefly state the purpose of the request, and time frame of the planned expenditures:

Penobscot Theatre Company respectfully requests a grant of \$2,000 to support the production of Deborah Zoe Laufer's *End Days*, a Maine premiere, running March 12-29, 2015, at the Bangor Opera House. We chose this play to coincide with and enhance the inaugural Maine Science Festival, happening March 20-22. Through the story of a family coping with the stress and uncertainty of life after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Laufer examines, as one critic describes, "the place where science and religion bump uncomfortably close against each other." Compelling, often humorous, and supremely relatable, *End Days* presents and explores ideas that have long challenged and often divided society.

Grant funds would help defray the costs of the dramatic rights; professional wages for the director, five-person cast and four-person design team; and production materials. Funding would also support additional programming that leverages the play as a "jumping-off point" for facilitated discussions and consideration of Laufer's themes. Our goals are to engage an audience broadly representative of the community (aged 12 and up), to deepen understanding of pertinent health and cultural issues in our post-9/11 world, and to promote tolerance and empathy.

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Proposal Narrative

Provide the following information in this order. Do not use more than 5 single-spaced pages, exclusive of attachments. Please staple; do not bind your application.

Describe your project:

1. What community and/or agency needs will this effort address?

Through our production of *End Days*, we seek to address the need in our community for

- Deeper understanding and greater tolerance of diverse ideas
- Recognition of the common ground that exists in a pluralist society
- Constructive ways to cope with tragedy and risks beyond our control

2. Capacity: complete description of program or capital campaign including strategies that will be employed to implement the proposed project:

- goals and objectives
- timetable for accomplishing stated goals and objectives
- program methodology
- staffing and volunteer support

Penobscot Theatre Company is proud to produce *End Days* in collaboration with the inaugural Maine Science Festival (MSF), March 20-22, 2015, in Bangor. The mission of the Maine Science Festival is to stimulate interest in science among the general population, to heighten awareness of the impact of science on everyday life, and to demonstrate the diversity of scientific enterprises in Maine. Modeled on successful science, art, and music festivals across the country, the MSF will offer area residents and visitors of all ages diverse activities to pique their curiosity, delight their senses, and underscore the notion that *science is everywhere*. Distinguishing itself from other state science festivals, the MSF will leverage the arts to engage the public and deepen understanding of science. In this way, it promises to bridge divisions – both real and perceived – between “left- and right-brain thinkers” and their respective realms.

With these goals in mind, the theatre’s Producing Artistic Director Bari Newport selected *End Days* for the slot in the 2014-2015 season coinciding with the festival.

This deeply thought-provoking, contemporary work by acclaimed playwright Deborah Zoe Lauffer examines “the place where science and religion bump uncomfortably close against each other.” Through the story of a family coping with the stress and uncertainty of the modern world, Lauffer asks whether faith and logic are compatible, and how hope (entirely intangible) can survive and sustain. Compelling, often humorous, and supremely relatable, *End Days* presents and explores ideas that have long challenged and often divided society. By addressing these ideas head-on and using them as a jumping-off point for facilitated discussions, we aim to heighten understanding, build empathy, and strengthen our community.

Pre-production is well underway for this Maine premiere, which Newport will direct. Dan Bilodeau, chair of the University of Maine School of Performing Arts, is designing the set and he will be joined by our resident costume and sound designers, Kevin Koski and Brandie Rita respectively. Newport has engaged lighting designer Jonathan Spencer, an experienced, extraordinarily gifted artist from New York City; he will be in Bangor to support the project March 5-15. The cast is composed of some of our strongest local

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talent, both seasoned and emerging: Doug Meswarb, A.J. Mooney, Zachary Robbins, Megan Ward and Charlie Hanscom.

The production run will include 14 performances from March 12 through March 29 and at least one facilitated panel discussion involving scholars, faith leaders, a mental health professional, and others. As a nonprofit, the theatre relies on the generosity of our community to keep ticket prices affordable, and accessibility is of special concern for this production. Through the science festival and by highlighting the production's timely themes, we seek to extend our reach to new theatre-goers and the uninitiated. Tickets to preview performances will be available at especially accessible price points (the first preview is planned as a "pay what you wish" offering); the student rush price will be \$10; and regular ticket prices will range from \$24 to \$37 per person, well below the cost of comparable offerings at for-profit performing arts venues.

In addition to welcoming students from the University of Maine who will be studying *End Days* as part of their coursework next semester, the theatre will conduct targeted outreach to local educators to highlight the relevance of the production and encourage young adult attendance.

3. How does your project address these needs?

At its best, theatre cultivates connections, deepens understanding, and fuels imagination. *End Days* is an opportunity for Bangor to experience contemporary theatre at its best.

4. How will City of Bangor funds leverage additional funds to support this project?

City funding is uniquely powerful in reflecting the values of our locally elected officials and by extension our community, and thereby leveraging additional support. By partnering with Penobscot Theatre Company to produce *End Days* and related programming, the City of Bangor would not only endorse this particularly worthy project, it would underscore its commitment to maintaining a robust and widely accessible professional nonprofit theatre in the heart of the community.

Over its 41-year history, the theatre has earned a national reputation for quality and innovation as its offerings have expanded and audiences have grown. City funding would recognize the theatre's unique place and significant value in fostering a vibrant cultural community and as an employer and economic driver. Indeed, according to a 2013 analysis by economist Todd Gabe of the University of Maine, our annual economic impact on Bangor's downtown is approximately \$2 million. The continued health of the organization and the ripple effect of our success requires community and city-based support.

5. What population does this project serve?

The theatre's patrons come from all 16 counties in Maine and beyond, though the majority live in the Greater Bangor region; and they have diverse economic circumstances, educational levels, and cultural backgrounds. This production is generally suitable for ages 12 and up.

Apart from our audience, this project would support the theatre's role as an employer. We currently employ 10 people on a year-round or ten-month seasonal basis, as well as 100+ local and visiting actors, designers, craftspeople, and educators each year through limited-term contracts.

We rely on a team of volunteers dedicated to maintaining professional theatre in the Bangor community, and this project would engage them as well. Theatre volunteers enjoy interacting with our

professional staff, local and visiting artists, and theatre patrons. Volunteer opportunities related to *End Days* will be available in the areas of administration, costume and set construction, lighting, publicity, and ushering.

6. What results do you expect to have achieved by the end of the funding period?

Through this project, we expect to achieve the following results:

- At least 75% capacity, on average, at mainstage performances
- Increased attendance/participation of first-time theatre-goers
- Positive feedback regarding program quality and impact, as measured by participant surveys
- At least one post-show talk-back session for a general audience

Budget

1. Include a detailed budget supporting this project

End Days Production Expenses

Actor salaries	\$5,850
SDC pension/health	\$891
Designer salaries	\$4,200
Travel and lodging (visiting artist)	\$500
Crew	\$350
Production expenses	\$2,900
Royalties	\$3,000
<i>Subtotal – Production Expenses</i>	<i>\$17,691</i>

End Days Marketing Expenses

Playbills	\$1,300
Postcards (distribution 7,500)	\$350
Posters (distribution 175)	\$200
Billboards	\$200
Postage	\$1,200
<i>Subtotal – Marketing Expenses</i>	<i>\$3,250</i>

Total Expenses **\$20,941**

Evaluation

2. What are your indicators for success with this project? (i.e. increased participation, leverage additional funds via grants or donations, etc)

Please see the description of anticipated results above.

3. How will you measure (in quantifiable terms) the effectiveness of your activities?

The theatre will measure the project’s effectiveness in terms of box office data (e.g., sales, patron demographics, history of attendance), the number of participants at the talk-back session(s), results from formal patron and participant surveys, critical reviews, and informal feedback via patrons’ letters and email.

Collaborations: NOTE for large grants this section is very heavily weighted in the evaluation process.

1. Describe all partners and their roles in the project.

Kate Dickerson, director of the Maine Science Festival, has been an active partner since the project's inception. By inviting the theatre to participate in the festival, she inspired the selection of a thought-provoking play that would engage our audience in exploring issues and ideas in the scientific realm. Festival organizers continue to support the project, and they will play an increasingly active role in promoting *End Days* as the event approaches, likely attracting new patrons to the theatre.

As corporate sponsors of *End Days*, Farrell, Rosenblatt & Russell have invested \$2,000 to help offset the costs of this production. Acadia Hospital has contributed \$250 to support a panel discussion involving David Prescott, Ph.D., director of psychology and clinical research at Acadia. Among Dr. Prescott's areas of focus is the treatment of anxiety and depression, and he will speak specifically to these issues with reference to the play. Discussions are unfolding with other prospective panelists, including Rabbi Darrah Lerner, who is eager to participate and to promote the production among her congregation.

The theatre will receive \$1,000 from the University of Maine Humanities Council Maine to support the cost of a unique research project centered around *End Days*. Designed by Jordan P. LaBouff, Ph.D., assistant professor of psychology and honors, in collaboration with Sarah Harlan-Haughey, Ph.D., assistant professor of English and honors, and Mary Budd, executive director of the theatre, the project will investigate the power of humanities-based, community-focused explorations of the central questions of science and philosophy. Specifically, this work will support panel discussions with the creative team behind the production, local faith leaders, and UMaine science and humanities researchers; a team of UMaine undergraduate researchers who will work to measure changes in attitudes about science and the humanities in both the cast/creative team as well as in community members who attend the performance; and the increasing development of cooperative relationships between UMaine and Penobscot Theatre Company.

2. How do you collaborate with other organizations independent of this proposed project? Describe your formal and informal relationships with other organizations.

As a nonprofit organization, guided by a philosophy of collaboration and civic leadership, the theatre relies on individual donors, foundations, and our partners in the business community for about 40 percent of our revenue, with the remainder derived primarily from ticket sales and program registration fees. Over the past 41 years, we have cultivated a group of loyal supporters who appreciate our work and recognize the value of professional theatre in an economically and culturally vibrant community. The theatre has been proud to supplement its mainstage offerings as opportunities have arisen with panel discussions, lectures, cultural/artistic demonstrations, film screenings, and book discussion sessions relating to source material and key subject matter in our productions; and the proposed programming around *End Days* represents a continuation of this effort. The generous support of various community-based partners has allowed the theatre to offer these programs and events to the public free of charge. These offerings have helped foster community dialog and inspire greater understanding and deeper appreciation for the subjects, themes and style of theatre on our stage. Likewise, by providing a venue for other arts organizations and groups aligned with our mission, through rentals and programmatic partnerships, we offer a place of community gathering and cultural accessibility.

Sustainability

1. How will your project be sustained after the exhaustion of grant funds?

Though focused on the specific purposes outlined herein, grant funds would advance the theatre's long-term sustainability by underlining the city's recognition of the integral role of theatre in community-building. The production of *End Days* and related programs, a limited-term project, will be fully funded through a combination of earned revenue, corporate sponsorships, and grant monies as detailed above.

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