

Submission Guidance

StoryFirst

In StoryFirst 2025 over 150 members submitted their work and 6 were performed by NYT members in the NYT Workshop theatre. We are excited to be reopening the submission window for StoryFirst 2026.

This document exists to give you more information and suggestions of what you should be submitting and the process of how we will read and judge those submissions.

We advise you to read this before completing your treatment and pressing submit!

What to submit?

Along with the two scenes you submit, you should upload a treatment using the template that can be found on the website . This treatment is in the form of some questions we would like you to answer about what you have submitted and is your chance to give more information and context about the play the scenes are extracted from.

Some things to keep in mind:

- If your play isn't finished yet, that's okay - please just let us know as much about the idea, concept, or world of your play as possible.
- You do not have to submit the first scene or scenes in chronological order. For example, if you feel your best scenes are scene 5 and 9

submit them and use the treatment to fill us in on what happened at the start.

- Please note the word/time limits for each question on the template.

StoryFirst Criteria

Firstly, **please do not put your name on the scenes you are submitting**. This is because the submissions will be given to our team of readers anonymously. If a name is found on the scenes, your entry may not be valid.

The StoryFirst Reading Panel will read the submissions and will be scoring them on the following criteria: **Style, Content** and **Suitability**.

Within each of those categories they will be considering:

- **Style**

Does this submission feel contemporary?

Is the form or structure interesting?

Does it feel fresh, authentic and interesting?

- **Content**

Is the idea or concept outlined in the treatment and the dialogue engaging?

Do the characters and action in the treatment sound intriguing? Or reflective of the diversity of young people's lived experiences?

Do I want to read more?!

- **Suitability**

Is this piece something that NYT membership could play? (NYT membership ranges from 14 –30).

Is it theatrical, so for the stage and not a short film script?

Will the action of this play be appropriate to ask young people in training to perform?

Will it be suitable to be developed for the National Youth Theatre Workshop Theatre – with no set, very minimal technical elements.

The StoryFirst Reading Panel

The StoryFirst Panel will be made up of NYT Staff, Associate Artists and the StoryFirst Readers; an assembled group of NYT members. The NYT Associates will be announced soon.

Every submission will be read by both an NYT Staff member/Associate Artist, and a StoryFirst Reader.

Each submission will be scored based on the criteria detailed above, and those with the highest scores are the pieces that will make up the Longlist and then the **shortlist**.

Shortlisted submissions will be discussed at a final panel meeting in May, where the final submissions will be selected to be part of the StoryFest Festival in July.

You will only receive individual feedback on your submission if it makes it onto the Shortlist. NYT will share some general feedback on the wider pool of submissions at the end of the process.

Key Dates

Monday 23 February:	Submissions Open
Tuesday 07 April at 11.30am:	Submissions close
w/c: 04 May 2026	Shortlist Confirmed
w/c:18 May 2026:	Selected scripts confirmed

Treatment Questions Tips

Below you can find some tips on how to complete the questions within the Treatment.

Please provide a short summary of what your play is about?

We'd like to know what happens? Who are the main characters in your play? If your piece is more of an idea than a full play, please tell us what your idea is about. Please provide as much detail as you can in no more than 300 words:

For this question, we would like to know what your play is about. Or what your idea for the full play is.

As best you can, please outline what will happen in the play. As we will not have the full play this question will give the panel an understanding of what your idea is and what you are working towards, like the blurb on the back of a book.

We want to know who the characters are. You could tell us the genre it would be. We want to know where this story is happening, in as much detail as you can provide even if you're not completely sure.

Example :

My play ADA follows a modern-day teenager called Ama and her adventure

with the legendary Victorian mathematician Ada Lovelace. Ada is 16 years old and is struggling to deal with her parents' divorce.

- After a terrible row with her mum, she storms off to her local beach to just cool off – this beach is her happy place.
- While there, a terrible storm happens, and an angel falls out of the sky. This angel is actually Ada Lovelace – the famous mathematician. But Ada doesn't really understand what year it is and is confused
- Together her and Ama time travel and meet people in Ada's life like Queen Victoria in her court. We follow them as Ada goes back and relives key moments in her life
- Even though they are wildly different people, Ama and Ada actually have a lot in common, like they both have a difficult relationship with their parents
- By the end of the play Ama has helped Ada accept the fact that she is seriously sick and her life will be cut short before she gets her career off the ground. And Ada will help Ama to accept big changes in life happen but she is still very loved.

(201 words)

What are your two scenes about and at what point in the story/play do they happen? (200 words)

For this question, knowing some information about your scenes will help add context. It is also a good way for the readers to get a feel for the tone of your piece, the dialogue. It sheds light on the character/s and helps to hear your voice.

You may find it useful to give us two scenes that are not in order e.g the beginning and then a scene nearer the end or you may choose scenes in

order. It's up to you. You can let us know here about the action that has/will happen before or after the scenes you share.

Example:

My First Scene is the opening scene in which we see the baby Henry arriving at his new home with his Aunt and Uncle. The scene shows a conversation between Professor Dumblymore (a key player in the story who will return in act 2) and Henry's Aunt. From this scene we learn how the Aunt does not want to accept her nephew but that the Professor isn't taking no for an answer

My Second scene is the moment that Henry finds out the weird things that have been happening to him are because he's actually a Wizard.

(95 words)

What key themes will your piece explore?

This question can simply be answered in a list if you wish:

Example:

- Identity
- Coming of age/ becoming comfortable in your skin
- Family trauma
- The supernatural
- Friendship and comradeship

Submitting your application

When you are ready to send in your submission, please complete **THIS**

FORM. <https://form.typeform.com/to/kbPNIPsN>

On the form you will be asked to provide some basic information including your name and email.

We will also ask you to confirm which NYT intake or alternative course you have participated in. This is an eligibility requirement for this opportunity.

The form also asks you whether **there is any difficult or potentially triggering content within your scenes?**

This question will help us to suggest to our readers any content that they may find distressing before reading, so please let us know anything you think is worth flagging.

Example

- There is a description of death

When thinking about content information it may be useful to break it down into references to, or depictions of.

For example:

‘References to death’ would be relevant for a piece where characters discuss death broadly, or a character dies but it is not shown on stage.

‘Depictions of death’ would be relevant for a piece in which a character dies on stage. If you are not sure whether it would be a reference to or a depiction of you can say ‘includes themes of death’.

Finally, you will be asked to upload your 2 scenes and your treatment (using the template provided).

You will also be asked to complete Equal Opportunities questions.

GOOD LUCK!!