

EIF giving back to local communities in the capital with Festival Favours

Well what do you need? Would you like a rapper or a string quartet?

Whatever you need, consider it done. You could ask for a gift from the International Festival as they celebrate the return to live events...

Since being sent home from the Edinburgh International Festival (EIF) office at the Hub in March 2020, the Learning and Engagement Team has been finding ways to get back to in-person activities in the safest possible way. Their work is anchored in bringing the communities and people of Edinburgh and beyond together to view, engage with and participate in the performing arts.

During lockdown they launched several successful digital initiatives, but they admit it just wasn't the same.

Next month Edinburgh will return to some live performances in the Festival programme, albeit in an adapted format with reduced capacities. With limitations on large group gatherings still in place, the lovely EIF folk went back to the drawing board with their plans for community engagement.

<https://twitter.com/edintfest/status/1410207991803133954?s=20>
In the past, their Culture Club initiative would have meant that community groups came together for shared meals and trips to performances, while the Global Communities project took artists from the Festival programme out into the city for pop-up performances. This year, things will look a little

different, but all you have to do is ask.

To meet the goal of sharing the joy of the Festival with local people in Edinburgh in spite of any Covid restrictions, there is a programme called Festival Favours.

This is an opportunity for communities in the capital to enjoy a creative slice of the International Festival. Many groups across Edinburgh are slowly coming back together in real life and EIF have created a new programme that supports this. Festival Favours will involve artists and creative individuals being gifted to groups for special activities, workshops or performances.

The opportunity is open to any organised group, club, society, community centre, care home or other activity-based organisation in an EH postcode. Groups will be asked to apply to receive a Festival Favour, and the options are almost endless. The activity could be a workshop or class, it could be a mini performance or recital or it could be something more specific.

Get a **baritone** for your **bridge club**.

Or a **hip hop dancer** for your **ballet class**.

A **rapper** for your **knit and natter**.

Or a **string quartet** for your **wild swim troupe**.

These are just a few suggestions, and groups might already have an idea of what kind of Festival Favour they might want. However, applicants don't need to apply with an idea or plan and their group doesn't need to have a creative or expressive arts focus. All that the lovely people at EIF are looking for are applicants with a passion to bring creativity to their

group, who have an interest in connecting with the International Festival, and have the ability to host them this summer.

Festival Favours will take place in Edinburgh next month and interested groups can find more information on the project and how to apply on the [EIF website](#), where they have also provided a full list of FAQs and some suggestions on what Festival Favours you can request.

A spokesperson said: “All of us at the International Festival are very excited about bringing live performance back to Edinburgh. We hope that Festival Favours brings a little slice of the performing arts to the people of Edinburgh, continuing to embed the International Festival into the heart of our communities and bringing joy and creativity back to the city as restrictions begin to ease.”