

Fringe Performance Opportunity
July 23-26, 2026
at West Texas A&M University
Canyon, Texas

The Fringe @ NSN is coming once again...
Explore the limits of storytelling at the National Storytelling Conference.

Want to present 55 minutes of your most compelling, riskiest, experimental or work in progress storytelling? How about joining forces with a friend(s) to create an ensemble performance event? Think of all the possibilities: 55 minutes of autobiography, performance art, folktales, stand-up, puppetry, dance or your favorite long form story!

The NSN Fringe follows the standard Fringe Festival model by providing the opportunity for you to experience many aspects of a typical Fringe Festival including the selection process and performance framework.

In keeping with the Fringe principle of an un-juried selection process, Fringe performers for the 2026 National Storytelling Conference will be selected by lottery.

Fringe Lottery Instructions

To enter the lottery, please submit via email:

1. Your name, address, phone, email information for a solo show or ALL of the tellers' names and contact information for an ensemble performance event.
2. Title of your 55-minute program/performance event.
3. Maximum 30 word description of the program/performance event.
4. Fringe Standard Category Identification(s): (select all that apply) adult, family, solo, improvisational, ensemble, dance, etc. [Example: a single storyteller presenting a family program selects both "family" and "solo." Use "family" to identify a program suitable for children.]
5. If appropriate, Fringe Standard Content Warning(s): (select all that apply) language, adult subject matter, violence, partial nudity.

Email submissions to: Barbara Schutzgruber at Fringe@stornet.org

Submission Deadline

Electronic submissions – Midnight of January 15, 2026 PST

The Fine Print:

Submissions

You may submit one application for the 2026 NSN Fringe - either as a solo performer or as part of an ensemble but not both.

Notification of Selection

The lottery will be held on Zoom Sunday January 18, 2026 at 3pm Central time. You will be sent a link for the lottery. The official results will be emailed from the Fringe Committee to you within 24 hours.

Deadline for Acceptance

You must email your acceptance confirmation by February 2, 2026.

Waiting List

More names than available performance slots will be drawn for a waiting list and will be moved from the waiting list should performance slots become available.

Eligibility

Fringe performers do not need to be NSN members, so please share this information with all your storytelling, spoken word, and performance art contacts. We welcome the opportunity to share the NSN Conference with narrative artists who may not identify themselves as storytellers. Any NSN member, including Board and Conference Committee members, is eligible to participate in the lottery and perform.

Performers who appeared at the 2025 Fringe are not eligible for the 2026 lottery.

You must reapply for each NSN Fringe. No applications from previous years will be held over.

Registration & Deadline

All Fringe performers are encouraged to register for the full conference. Each Fringe show will receive \$100 off one full conference registration.

By accepting your Fringe slot, you agree that all NSN Fringe performers, whether in solo or ensemble shows, must register for at least a single day corresponding to the day of performance by the early bird deadline, usually late spring. Any supporting technical personnel will be admitted at no charge to that specific fringe performance.

Performers not confirmed as registered after that early bird registration date will be replaced with performers on the waiting list.

Technical Needs

As is the custom with many Fringe Festivals, **if you want sound, lighting, or any special equipment to support your performance, you are responsible for supplying what you need.** Due to varying site policies, we cannot guarantee access to your performance space outside of your scheduled time, which begins fifteen minutes prior to your performance start time. There will not be a "tech rehearsal."

Performance Schedule

You'll have approximately 15 minutes to set-up; 55 minutes to perform beginning at the published time, and 15 minutes to restore and clear the room. Time limits will be strictly observed as this track is intended to serve as an opportunity for storytellers (performers and audience members alike) to experience a typical Fringe Festival format.

Content

Fringe performances are not pre-screened or censored, but we expect you to indicate difficult or potentially offensive material in the content warnings.

Additional information on Content Warnings: Total nudity and explicit sexual contact is disallowed in NSN Fringe performances; male and female genitals and female breasts must be covered. Content disclaimers (warnings) are to be shown in all advertising, programs, flyers, enrollment forms, and room identification. No minors under the age of

18 or applicable state limitation are to be allowed in performances with adult content warnings.

Sign-offs

As part of confirming your participation, you must agree to the following:

1. Nudity policy. See previous content item in Lottery Instructions but the essence is no full nudity or sexual contact.
2. NSN Disclaimer with the following text: *“The National Storytelling Network (NSN) is not responsible or liable for the form and content of this performance which is the sole responsibility of the individual performer(s). It is also the performer’s responsibility to be in compliance with local health/safety laws and any hotel/conference center restrictions for room use.”*

Audience

NSN Fringe Performances will be open to Conference attendees.

Promotion

The title, performance description and content warnings you provide with your submission will be printed in the NSN Conference program and on the website; however, in keeping with Fringe Festival tradition, **if you want an audience, you need to self-promote your performance.** The Fringe Committee recommends that you NOT rely only on advertising in the Conference Program Book but utilize additional promotion. Many attendees will not have time to review the entire book before your performance especially if you are scheduled the first day. Plan your promotion – you’ll want to grab attendees’ attention and leave them wanting to see your performance.

We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to perform your new, old, in progress, lively, risky, long form, or experimental work during the National Storytelling Conference. Submit your application today!