



A Quick Guide to ADC Publicity

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Congratulations on being selected to design publicity for an upcoming show! The following guide is designed to give a brief overview of the requirements of publicity for a show at the ADC Theatre or Corpus Playroom. For more detailed information, including guidance on the role of a show publicist, and details about how to make a good publicity design, please speak to the Production Manager.

Artificial Intelligence

The ADC Theatre does not permit the use of Artificial Intelligence. This includes posters and flyers, your website image, and images used in production team recruitment. If you have an artistic justification for using AI to produce publicity images (for example, your show is about Artificial Intelligence), please contact the Production Manager in advance to seek approval of this.

We understand that it can be tricky to parse whether a royalty-free image you have found online may have been created with AI, so here are some methods of finding images whilst avoiding AI:

- Searching for images before a certain date can reduce the amount of AI results (e.g. adding “Before 2022” to a search)
- The British Library has an online images collection which can be used commercially as long as appropriate credits are given (<https://www.imagesonline.bl.uk/>)
- Many of NASA’s images are in the public domain and available for commercial use in line with their guidance (<https://www.nasa.gov/nasa-brand-center/images-and-media/>)
- Unsplash has a section for non-copyrighted images, and their policies prohibit images where AI was involved in their generation (<https://unsplash.com/images/stock/non-copyrighted>)

Please note that you will still need to make sure that any images you are using are royalty free!

Programmes

Any programmes (both paper and digital) must be sent to the Production Manager. Both will need to be proofread and approved before they are made available to the public. For digital programmes, it is the Production Manager who makes these accessible to the public, so a PDF version of the finalised programme will need sending across ahead of opening night to set up the digital programme.

There is a required programme blurb for both the ADC Theatre and the Corpus Playroom. The PDF versions can be downloaded from the Production Resources page of the ADC website. **No programme will be allowed to be displayed or put on sale at our venues without this blurb.**

Common feedback on programmes (beyond catching typos) includes:

- Particularly for printed programmes, making sure that the text is not too close to the edge of the page, as this may clip off in printing
 - Amending inconsistencies with layout
 - Ensuring that the programme information required for your venue is in the programme
 - Recommending that college information be removed from people’s biographies (this is ultimately a personal choice, but it’s worth remembering that **stating which college you are at is essentially telling people where you live**; and one cannot know who will be buying a programme).
 - Suggesting that certain colour choices (x colour text on y colour background) be reconsidered for increased legibility – either because the shades are very similar, or because they may appear to be so for someone with colour-blindness.
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Printed publicity

All printed publicity must be sent to the Production Manager for approval before being sent to print.

Funding bodies also usually require that they get to see and approve your poster before it gets sent to print. The earlier the ADC sees the poster, the easier it is for changes to be made where necessary.

Amongst other things, reasons we check your publicity first include:

- Making sure that it meets our standardised formatting rules
- Checking for spelling errors
- Making sure that you've selected the poster banner for the correct show
- Making sure that information required by your rights agreement is on your marketing, in the correct format
- Checking that your funding body logo is on the poster

All posters printed for a production must feature our standardised poster banner. This can be accessed by contacting the Production Manager.

Requirements for the banner:

- The banner must be at the bottom of your poster
- The banner cannot be resized
- You may change the colour of the banner, providing that it is still easily legible on the poster

The banner will place correctly 'as is' if your poster design is already in A1 dimensions (594x841mm) before dragging and dropping the design on.

Poster sizes

Posters you intend to put up around town (e.g. on the railings) **must be A3**, to fit with council regulations. The posters that ADC staff will put up at our venues are in A1 format. This is the best size to send us.

Flyers

A lot of shows have found that producing flyers has been effective at boosting their sales. In order for your flyers to be permitted to be displayed at the ADC Theatre and Corpus Playroom, they must meet the following requirements:

- Flyers must be A6 in size
- Flyers must be a minimum of 250gsm in thickness (we recommend 350gsm)
- Flyers must have been approved by the Production Manager

Printing publicity

The ADC Theatre will print your A1 posters (the ones that go up around the Box Offices and the ADC Bar) in-house. For A3 posters and flyers, you can print through us or externally.

The ADC uses Printerbello for our non-A1 printing – if you order your posters/ flyers etc. through us, they will be printed by Printerbello. For information about the cost of printing with our provider, please email the Production Manager.

Other avenues

It is also absolutely fine to print your posters / flyers with other providers. Many productions use online printing companies, like VistaPrint or Instant Print, to supply their paper publicity. The University Reprographics Centre is also an option for members of the University of Cambridge.





Rights agreements

Most shows have rights, unless they are new writing or public domain. All shows with rights will have publicity stipulations. You must adhere to these publicity stipulations. These stipulations will be in the rights agreement, which you can get from your Director, Producer or the Production Manager. Most rights agreements contain:

- Stipulations about where the author's name must appear
- Stipulations about the size of the author's name (this tends to have to be at least a minimum of 50% the size of the title)
- A sentence expressing which company has granted the permission for you to stage the performance, and what size this needs to be (the exact sentence that must be used will be in the agreement)
- If anyone other than the author's name is going to appear on the publicity, stipulations about where this can occur and the sizing of this name

Unless your show has been provided with logos etc. by the licensing body, do not assume that you will be able to use any iconic fonts/ logos etc. associated with the show in your marketing materials.

Social Media and the ADC

You do not need to show the Production Manager social media content that you put out, but please treat it sensibly and in line with the rest of your approved publicity. Most social media content will be on your show's own accounts, but you may also wish to have some material about the show shared on the main ADC Instagram account.

The ADC social media is run by the Operations Manager and is used to advertise all upcoming shows. We will usually share the poster for every show. You are welcome to tag the ADC account on whatever you would like, and we will repost to stories where applicable. We may also 'collaborate' on grid posts, but we cannot accept all requests. When requesting collaboration, try to make your post resemble the rest of our grid.

We recommend formatting the caption of grid posts like the ADC account does for continuity:

- <ticket emoji> www.adctheatre.com/littlewomen
- <calendar emoji> 03 - 07 March 2026, 7.45PM & 07 March, 2.30PM
- <map pin emoji> ADC Theatre
- <camera emoji> @paul_the_ashley

Alternatively, you can send content directly to the ADC to be posted. Rehearsal photos or interviews are best; we will not share cast/crew reveals or mood boards. Please contact the Operations Manager for this.

Website Images

Every show submits a holding image for the website when they apply. Shows are encouraged to update the images on the ADC website as soon as they have created their show graphics (e.g., their poster). Website images should be square, not overly detailed, and **must not have text on them**.





Publicity Best Practices

What makes an effective poster?

The best poster is often an original one. Following artistic vision and researching the background of the show will inspire unique, eye-catching imagery. If you're not sure where to start, here are some practical tips for making a poster which will print well and stand out from its surroundings:

- Keep it simple. Emphasize key details; from a distance, cluttered designs become illegible.
- Use photos or drawings of the performers in the show, as the human eye responds to faces.
- Utilise the rule of threes in your layout.
- Avoid low-contrast or overly dark designs as these will 'wash out' under poor lighting.
- Use large, bold text, especially for your title.
- Avoid large borders or QR codes as these clash with the poster banner.
- Don't copy a more popular (eg West End) version.

Certain things are customary, if not totally mandatory, with flyers and posters at the ADC:

- A piece of new writing should include the phrase 'a new play/musical', or similar.
- A sketch show should include the phrase 'a new sketch show'
- A variety show should include the phrase 'a cabaret'

It is customary for posters to *not* credit the directors, producers or actors of shows.

Flyers

Flyers have a front and a back. The front should be the poster; the back is usually the blurb of the show, alongside the 'short link' (eg adctheatre.com/littlewomen). For the short link, ask the Production Manager.

When writing a blurb, a simple synopsis is often best. Keep it concise and punchy; quote reviews if you can.

Postering

Wherever you poster, always follow local law and the instructions of law enforcement.

We have customers from all over Cambridgeshire. The city centre is the most congested for posters and also the area in which people are most likely to get word-of-mouth awareness. Don't poster too much here!

Posters will be taken down; this is inevitable. Poster in batches to prevent losing your whole stock. Feel free to replace ADC/Playroom posters from **previous** weeks, if you see them when you poster.

Flying

We actively encourage exit flying at the ADC and the Playroom. At the ADC, flyer in the foyer; at the Playroom, flyer just inside the front doors. If asked nicely, some shops may display flyers or posters.

You may wish to flyer in town or do other publicity stunts. Bear in mind that anything apart from flying or postering tends to have minimal impact on sales, unless directly connected to the distribution of flyers.

Busking is not illegal in Cambridge, but we recommend you do not take money.

