

# POWER PAC

## Venue Survey Results

### Programming practices, processes and venue management structures.

As part of the consultation process for the Power PAC Project, a survey was distributed to all regional, outer metropolitan and suburban performing arts centres to gain an understanding of the current programming practices, processes and management structures as well as identify any constraints for making, producing, co-producing and commissioning work.

In addition to informing the Power PAC project, the results are of value to all venue managers, owners of performing arts centres and theatre makers for future planning and program development.

### Methodology

- An on-line survey link was emailed to 134 regional, outer metropolitan and suburban performing arts centres throughout Australia on 27 July 2011. The final results were collated on 30 August.
- 76 responses were received.

### Summary of the key findings

- The data confirmed that Local Government Authorities (LGA's) are the major owners of performing arts centres in regional, outer metropolitan and suburban Australia (76% of respondents).
- The responses to the management structures indicate that the majority of venues are managed directly by the owner organisation (67% of respondents). In most cases this would suggest that the venue manager is employed by local government reporting directly to a second or third level manager in the corporate structure.
- In response to programming and venue activities, all venues offer community hiring which highlights the importance of PAC's as community gathering spaces.
- Over 80% of the venues surveyed offer a professional theatre season. This would indicate that a majority of the performing arts centres have processes and procedures in place that would assist in the theatre making/producing capacity of the venue.
- There are also a significant number of venues already co-producing (38 venues) and in-house producing (20 venues). The majority of responses indicated that Cyberpaddock is the most often used tool for sourcing product with Long Paddock and State Touring Coordinators as regularly used sources.
- Colleagues/Other Venues are also identified as significant sources of programming which could provide the opportunity for co-producing.
- The program budget was rated as the highest constraint by the majority of venues as a barrier to producing or co-producing. An initial assumption of this project was that the support of owners, communicating the benefits and the processes involved in producing/co-producing would be high constraints but on average these were not seen as the major barriers.

- 50% of venues surveyed do not have a programming policy or audience development strategy. In many cases the programming aims are informal or included in marketing/business plans.

The survey consisted of 12 questions that were developed to gain a snapshot of ownership, management structures, programming processes, constraints encountered in the development of work within venues and specific issues the respondents wished to highlight.

## Definitions

The following definitions were used for the purpose of this survey:

- **Producing** - investing funds and/or in-kind to create and develop a work.
- **Co-producing** - as above, but sharing costs with another party.
- **Co-presenting** - presenting work in association with a company or other venue and sharing risk (outside of established buy-in processes)
- **Commissioning** - approaching a writer and/or creative team to develop specific work.
- **Professional** - fees are paid to creative team, actors and production personnel (can be as contract, employees, box office share or co-operative)

## Respondents

The total number of respondents for the purpose of the survey was 76. The following table provides a breakdown of the respondents by state/territory and area.

<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>State/Territory representation</b>	
- Australian Capital Territory	2
- New South Wales	19
- Northern Territory	1
- Queensland	17
- South Australia	4
- Tasmania	3
- Victoria	24
- Western Australia	6
<b>Area representation</b>	
- Regional	53
- Outer metropolitan	9
- Suburban	14

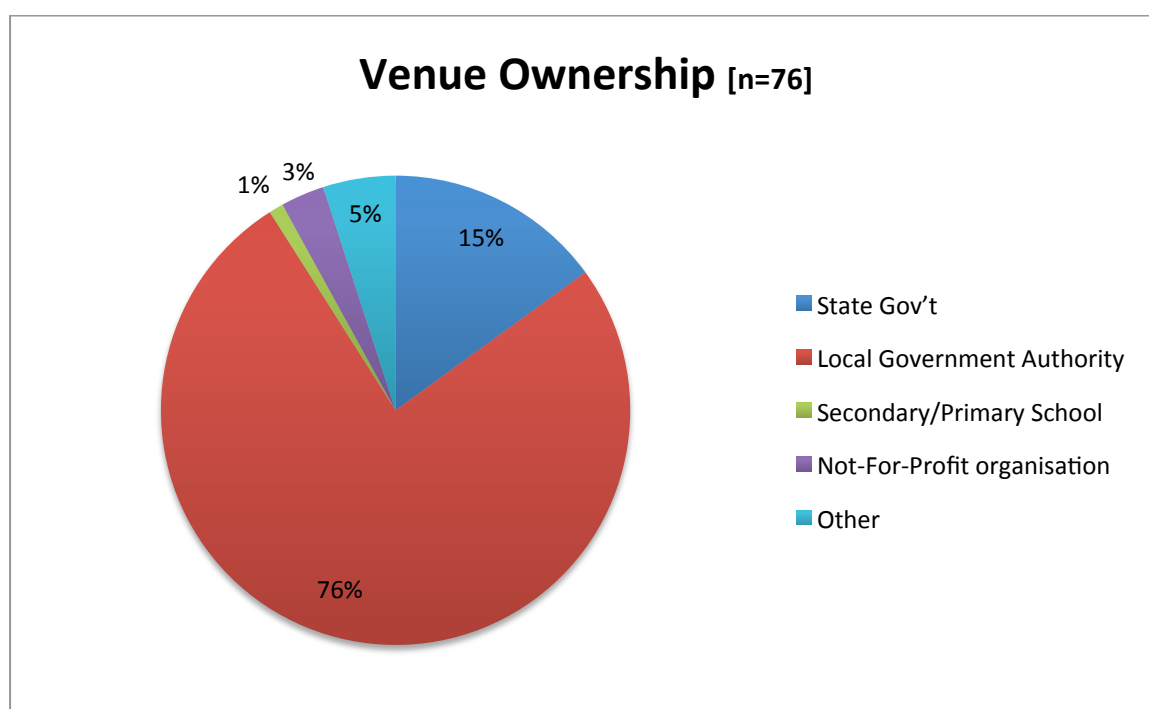
## Venue Ownership

### Who is the venue owner?

The data confirmed that Local Government Authorities (LGA's) are the major owners of regional, outer metropolitan and suburban performing arts centres in Australia.

It should be noted that for the purpose of this project the primary capital city venues were not included.

Venue Ownership		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Federal Gov't	0%	0
State Gov't	15%	11
Local Government Authority	76%	58
University/Tertiary Education	0%	0
Secondary/Primary School	1%	1
Not-For-Profit organisation	3%	2
Other	5%	4
<i>answered question</i>		<b>76</b>
		<b>0</b>



The four responses to 'Other' included two jointly owned Education Department and Local Government facilities and two leased venues.

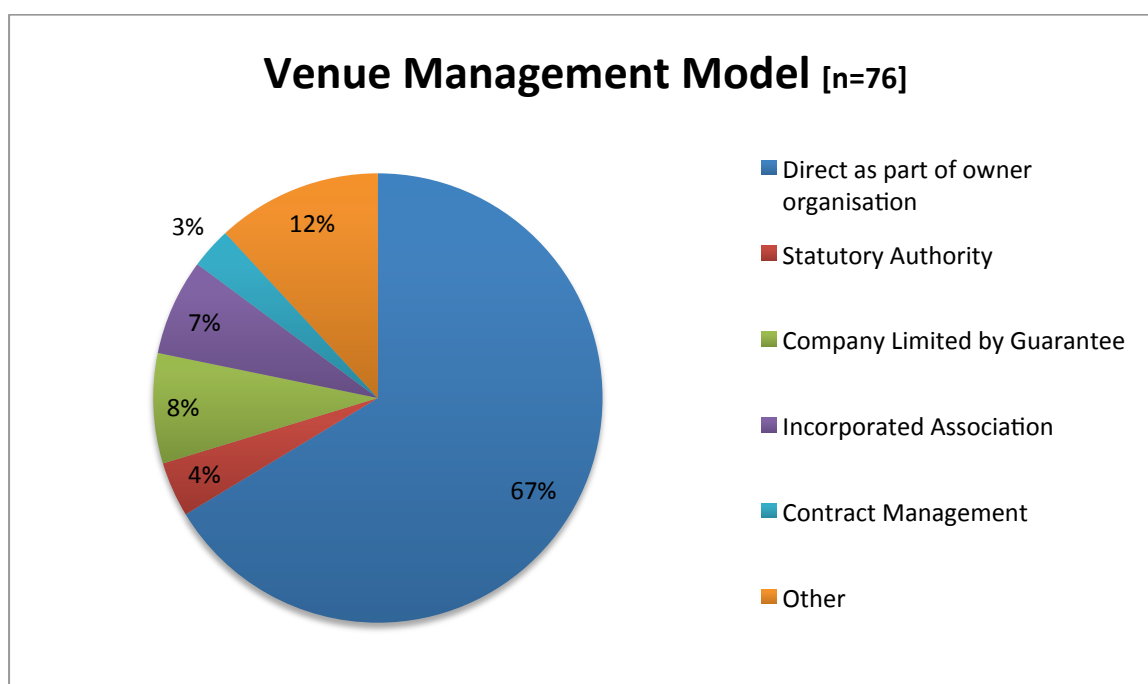
Although there was no response from University owned venues it is known that at least two programmed performing arts centres are owned and managed by Universities.

## Venue Management

### What is the venue management structure?

The response to the management structure/model question indicates that the majority of venues are managed directly by the owner organisation. In most cases this would suggest that the venue manager is employed by local government reporting directly to a second or third level manager in the corporate structure.

Venue Management/Model		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Direct as part of owner organisation	67%	51
Statutory Authority	4%	3
Company Limited by Guarantee	8%	6
Incorporated Association	7%	5
Contract Management	3%	2
Other	12%	9
<i>answered question</i>		<b>76</b>



The nine responses to “Other” include local government managed venues leased from other bodies or state government organisations.

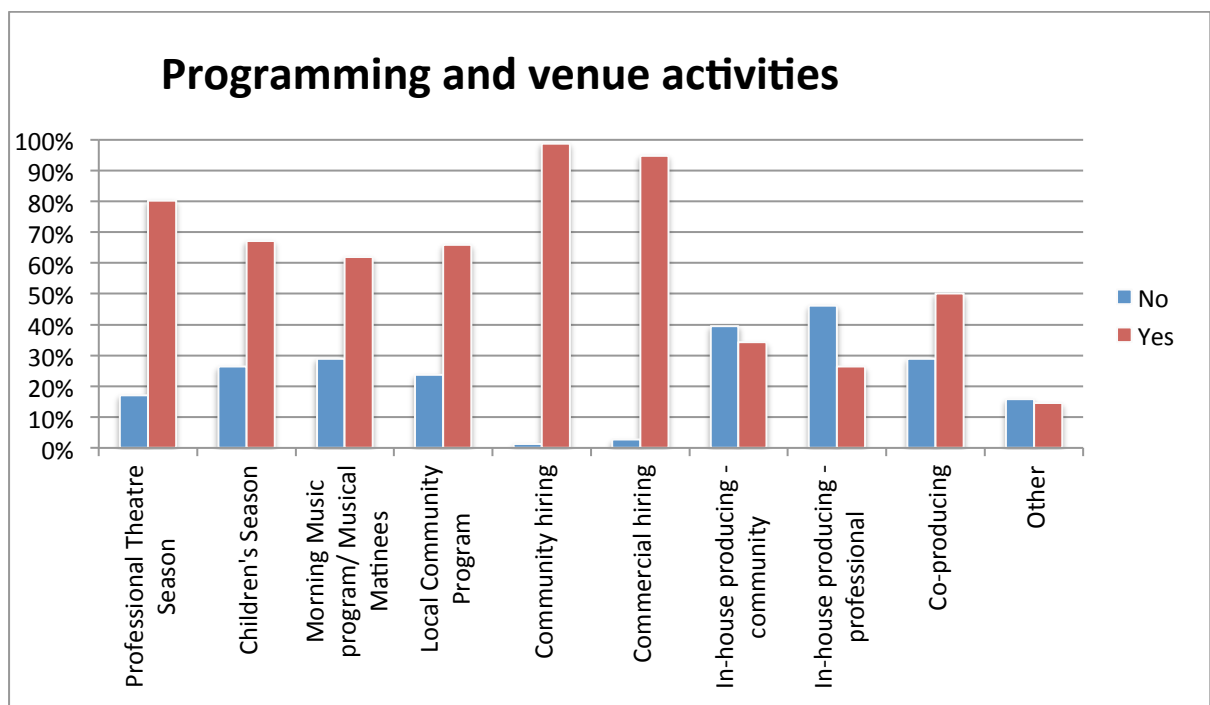
## Programming and Venue Activities

### What programs are offered by the venue?

In response to programming and venue activities, all venues offer community hiring which highlights the importance of PAC's as community gathering spaces (the table below indicates that there was one venue not offering community hiring but this is due to the theatre currently being refurbished).

Over 80% of the venues surveyed offer a professional theatre season. This would indicate that a majority of the performing arts centres have processes and procedures in place that would assist in the theatre making/producing capacity of the venue. There is also a significant number of venues already co-producing and in-house producing.

Programming and venue activities - Please select all that apply			
Answer Options	Yes	No	Response Count
Professional Theatre Season	80%	17%	74
Children's Season	67%	26%	71
Morning Music program/ Musical Matinees	62%	29%	69
Local Community Program	66%	24%	68
Community hiring	99%	1%	76
Commercial hiring	95%	3%	74
In-house producing - community	34%	39%	56
In-house producing - professional	26%	46%	55
Co-producing	50%	29%	60
Other	14%	16%	23
<i>answered question</i>			<b>76</b>



The eleven responses in 'Other' included fine music seasons, education programs, creative development programs and cinema.

## Programming Sources

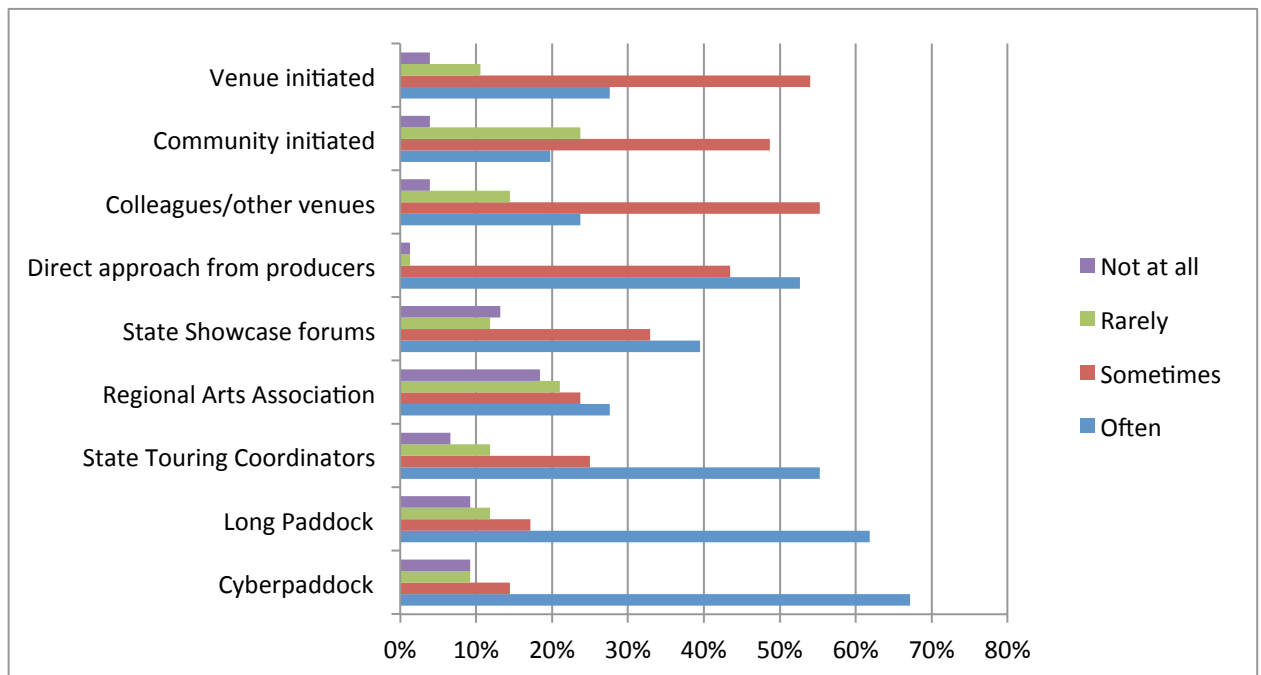
### What programming sources does the venue use?

The majority of responses indicated that Cyberpaddock is the most often used tool for sourcing product with Long Paddock and State Touring Coordinators as regularly used sources.

The other significant response is the use of Colleagues/Other Venues. Although this was not rated high in an 'often' used source, it does rate the highest in 'sometimes' which could provide the opportunity for co-producing.

How often do you use the following programming sources?					
Answer Options	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Not at all	Response Count
Cyberpaddock	67%	14%	9%	9%	76
Long Paddock	62%	17%	12%	9%	76
State Touring Coordinators	55%	25%	12%	7%	75
Regional Arts Association	28%	24%	21%	18%	69
State Showcase forums	39%	33%	12%	13%	74
Direct approach from producers	53%	43%	1%	1%	75
Colleagues/other venues	24%	55%	14%	4%	74
Community initiated	20%	49%	24%	4%	73
Venue initiated	28%	54%	11%	4%	73

**answered question 76**



## Constraints

### What are the constraints in making, commissioning, co-producing or co-presenting?

This key question of the survey was to identify what constraints venue managers encounter as barriers in making, co-producing or producing work for their venue.

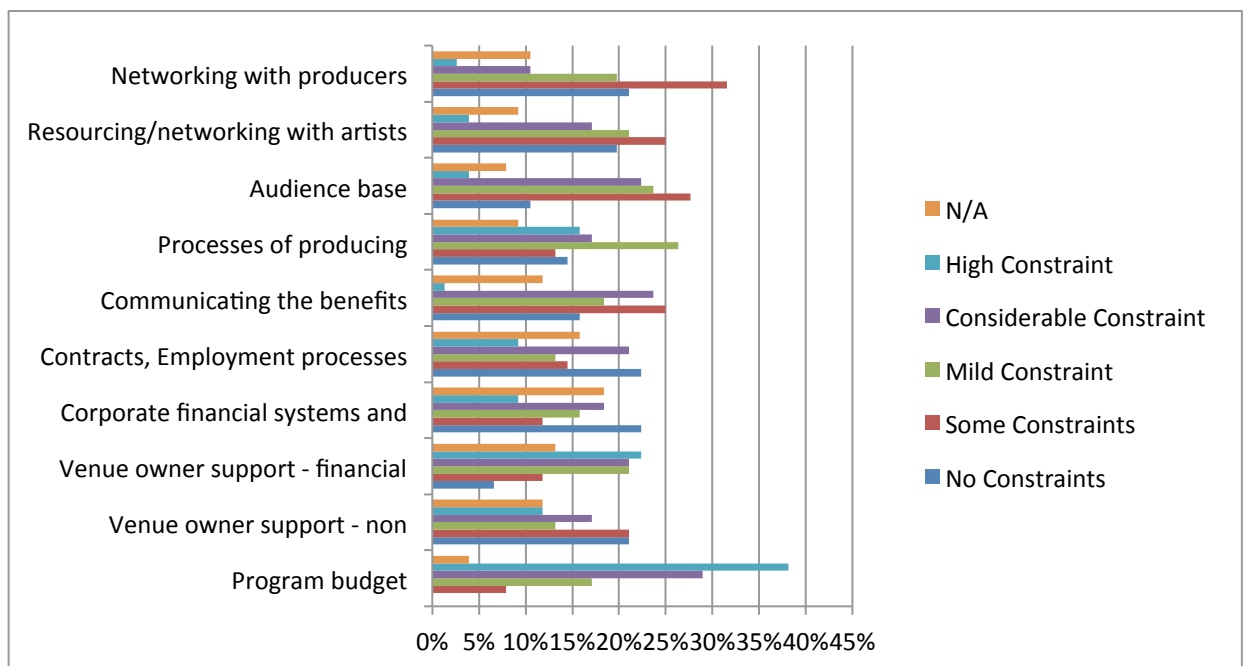
The program budget was rated as the highest constraint by the majority of venues but most of the criteria listed were seen as considerable or mild constraints. An initial assumption of the project was that the support of owners, communicating the benefits and the processes involved would be high constraints but on average these were not seen as the major barriers.

**What constraints do you have in making, commissioning, co-producing or co-presenting work for your venue? Please rank in order of constraint from None to High**

Answer Options	No Constraint	Some Constraint	Mild Constraint	Considerable Constraint	High Constraint	N/A	Total
Program budget	0%	8%	17%	29%	38%	4%	73
Venue owner support - non financial	21%	21%	13%	17%	12%	12%	73
Venue owner support - financial	7%	12%	21%	21%	22%	13%	73
Corporate financial systems/processes	22%	12%	16%	18%	9%	18%	73
Contracts, Employment processes	22%	14%	13%	21%	9%	16%	73
Communicating the benefits	16%	25%	18%	24%	1%	12%	73
Processes of producing	14%	13%	26%	17%	16%	9%	73
Audience base	11%	28%	24%	22%	4%	8%	73
Resourcing/networking with artists/ makers	20%	25%	21%	17%	4%	9%	73
Networking with producers	21%	32%	20%	11%	3%	11%	73

**answered question 73**

**skipped question 3**



The comments listed in 'Other' included insurance, policy basis, fees for commissioning and having the funds to take the risk.

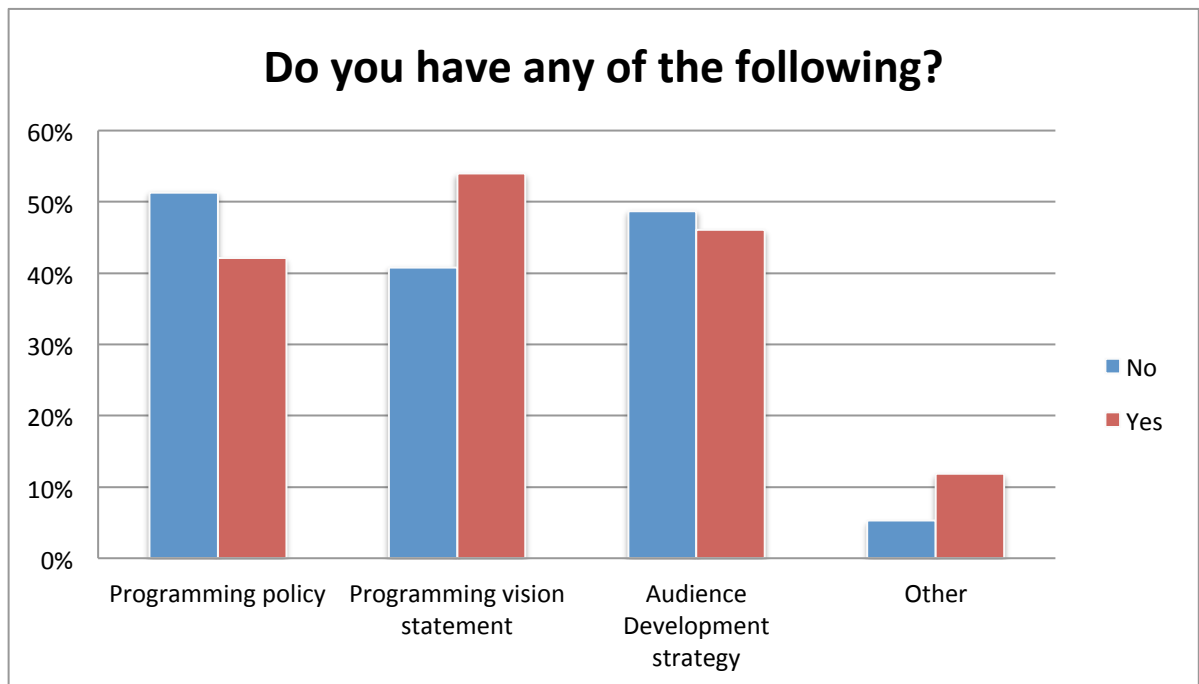
## Programming Policy and Audience Development

### What programming policies and audience development strategies do you have?

The response to the question on programming policy, programming vision and audience development strategies has identified an issue for venues that will require further consideration in the scope of the Power PAC Project.

50% of venues surveyed have a programming policy or audience development strategy. Of venues that do not have formal programming vision in many cases it is informal or included in marketing/business plans.

Do you have any of the following?			
Answer Options	Yes	No	Response Count
Programming policy	42%	51%	71
Programming vision statement	54%	41%	72
Audience Development strategy	46%	49%	72
Other	12%	5%	13
If Other (please specify)			15
<i>answered question</i>			<b>73</b>



The responses to 'Other' included business plans, marketing plans and cultural strategies.

## Interest in opportunities for producing/co-producing or making professional theatre.

**Are you interested in developing opportunities for producing/co-producing or making professional theatre for your venue?**

There is a great deal of support for the initiative of making theatre by the venues and this provides a strong base for the development of the Power PAC guidelines. However, many of the comments identified the concerns in developing theatre for the venue. Staffing levels and budget were often cited as barriers.

Are you interested in developing opportunities for producing/co-producing or making professional theatre for your venue?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	70%	51
No	30%	22
Reason or general comment		38
<b>answered question</b>		<b>73</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>3</b>

