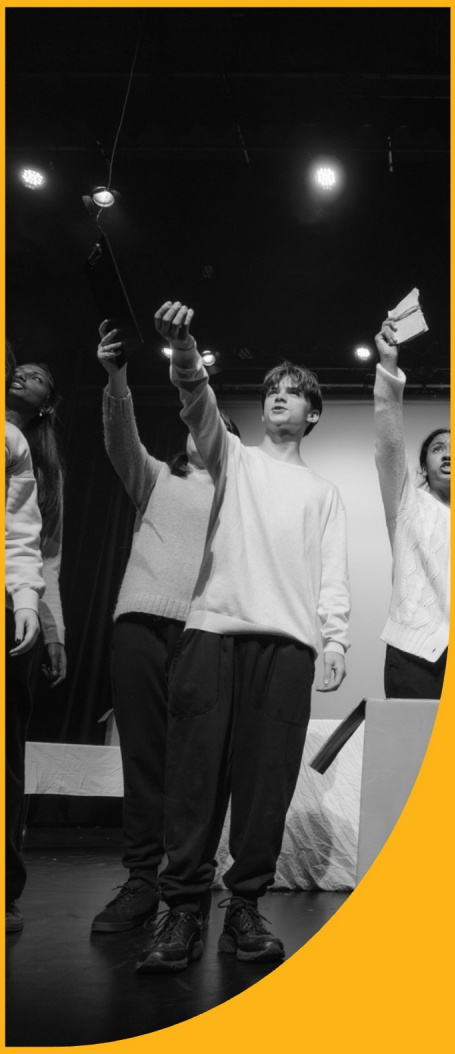




The Riff

2027 Application Info Pack
1 February – 2 July

Q theatre



Images by Eddy Summers

Contents

About The Riff	3
What's new in 2027?	4
Applicant eligibility	5
Key dates	5
Program fees	6
Media consent for schools	6
How to apply	7
Contact us	8

About The Riff

The Riff is an annual theatre-making showcase for secondary school drama ensembles in the Penrith-Nepean region.

For more than 30 years, The Riff has been providing drama students in Years 9–12 with the opportunity to develop and stage an original performance at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre, fondly known as The Joan.

Each participating ensemble is paired with a professional Director, who will guide students through every aspect of the creative process from script development through to live staging. Students are supported to create and perform within diverse theatre genres, expand their creative practice, and learn to collaborate in a professional theatre setting.

The theme for 2027

SIGN OF THE *TIMES*

The 'must-have' object for 2027 will be revealed once participation is confirmed, ensuring that all participants begin their creative process from the same foundation while allowing for unique interpretations and outcomes.

What's new in 2027?

We are delighted to announce that The Riff will be bigger and better in 2027!

- Up to 30 schools will be accepted into **The Riff School Ensemble Segment** in 2027, giving your school a valuable opportunity to be part of this larger scale inter-school project.
- **The Riff Monologue Challenge** is being introduced for the first time! This new segment is a competition that will be judged by industry professionals, with placements awarded and participation certified.
- The Riff 2027 will be supported by Create NSW, allowing this program to continue with a renewed vitality and growth, while passing on the savings to participating schools.







Key dates

The Riff School Ensemble Segment

Mon 1 Feb – Thu 25 Mar 2027
Total of 13 hours in regular sessions with Director, across 7 weeks during school hours
In-school sessions: devising, playmaking & rehearsal

Mon 22 Mar – Tue 30 Mar 2027, 9.00am – 3.30pm
Total of one 6-hour session at The Joan during Production Week
At The Joan sessions: stagecraft, plotting, technical rehearsal & dress rehearsal

Wed 31 Mar – Fri 2 Apr 2027, 9.30am – 1.00pm & 4.00pm – 7.30pm
The Riff Festival matinee & evening performances: each school group performs at a matinee and an evening show, on one day only, in this 3-day festival.

The Riff Monologue Challenge Segment

Thu 1 July – Fri 2 July 2027, 9.00am – 2.30pm
At The Joan sessions: stagecraft, plotting, tech & dress rehearsal

Thu 1 July – Fri 2 July 2027, 4.30pm – 8.00pm
The Riff Monologue Challenge performance & award presentation

Applicant eligibility

- Applications are open to all secondary school drama classes and in-school extracurricular drama ensembles in Western Sydney, and select regional NSW schools.
- Participating students must be in Years 9 through 12 in 2027.
- The maximum ensemble size is 28 students.
- The Riff is an inclusive program and we welcome participation from students with diverse learning needs and/or disability.

Program fees

The program fee for **The Riff 2027 School Ensemble Segment** is **$1,320.00 (including GST) per school ensemble.**

The program fee is a ticketing allocation of 30 *concession tickets, to cover participants, teachers (special price) and student audience members, for The Riff 2027 matinee performance (see Key dates). Additional seats can be reserved at $55.00 full or $44.00 *concession.

The Q Theatre team will liaise with you in early 2027 to verify ticketing requirements for your school group.

The fee for **The Riff 2027 Monologue Challenge** is **$55.00 including GST, per entrant.** Ticket prices as listed above.

*Concession = child/student, teacher & cardholder – for this event only

Media consent for schools

By participating in The Riff 2027, schools agree to provide media consent for all participating students on behalf of Q Theatre. This consent permits Q Theatre to capture and use photographs, video, and other recorded media of The Riff 2027 participants for promotional, archival, and reporting purposes across Q Theatre platforms, including but not limited to websites, social media, and marketing materials. Media consent can be withdrawn by written request to the Q Theatre team.

How to apply

Submit your school's application online via The Riff 2027 Application Form at:

thejoan.com.au/form/the-riff-2027-application

Applications must be submitted by a teacher or authorised school representative on behalf of the class or ensemble. You will receive a confirmation email with a copy of your application within 48 hours of submission.

Application deadline

Monday 7 December 2026, 8.00pm (ADST)

Participant confirmations will be issued by COB Monday 14 December 2026.

Enquiries: Q Theatre Team, qtheatreteam@ppandva.com.au





Contact us

Q Theatre Office, Level 2, The Joan
597 High Street, Penrith NSW 2750
Phone: (02) 4723 7600 (ext. 3)
Email: qtheatreteam@ppandva.com.au
thejoan.com.au/q-theatre

PENRITH
PERFORMING
& VISUAL ARTS

PENRITH
CITY COUNCIL

NSW
GOVERNMENT