

Submitting to the 2019 Flyover Comedy Festival

Thanks for considering submitting to the 2019 Flyover Comedy Festival in St. Louis, Missouri. Due to the overwhelming response from the past two years, there are some guidelines we need everyone to follow to ensure a smooth selection process.

Submission Dates: March 27-June 15. Note that we will not accept ANY submissions after the close of the process. Don't wait until the last minute to submit. The sooner, the better.

Cost: We will offer an early-bird submission rate of **\$15** until between **March 27-April 15**. The rate increases to **\$25** for until **June 15**.

Video: Please send us a video of **no more than 5-7 minutes** of your best stand-up. Improv and sketch submissions should be **no longer than 25 minutes**.

Any video that is longer than our guidelines request will be **immediately disqualified**. These are industry standards. If your best material is contained in a video of a longer set, please send us only the portion of the video in which you want to be judged.

Any video taken prior to **November 2018** will not be considered. This is so we can be assured that you aren't sending us the same performance you've been doing since the Reagan Administration.

Other Materials: In addition to your submission video, we will also require a headshot, a personal bio and links to all social media accounts relevant to your stand-up. Any social media accounts submitted that are not public will be rejected. All of these materials are subject for use in festival advertising and any relevant marketing material related to Flyover Comedy both prior to and after the festival. Please make sure you have copyright clearance for anything you submit.

Notification: We will notify all applicants of acceptance or rejection by August 1, 2019.

Acceptance: Stand-up comics chosen for the festival will perform several shows. If you're accepted and have a conflict on any of the days of the festival (Nov. 7-9), please let us know as soon as possible as we might be able to schedule around your availability.

Sketch/variety shows and improv teams who are selected to perform at the festival will be offered one performance slot.

Additionally, Flyover performers will receive an artist badge giving them full access to all shows and special events. You will also receive some food throughout the fest and travel vouchers. You will not receive payment for performing unless arrangements are made prior to the festival.

If you are chosen to perform at the festival and need help finding inexpensive lodging, please email info@flyovercomedyfest.com. Performers are responsible for their own transportation and accommodations unless otherwise specified.

Transparency: The festival panel includes members of the Flyover Comedy Festival board and several non-comedians and people outside of the industry who bring a fresh perspective to the judging process. Each submission is graded on quality of performance. The judges' scores are averaged, and there is a long process of whittling down the list.

Submission Pointers:

If this is your first time applying to a festival, or you need a few pointers on what we consider "overall quality" when judging festival submissions, we figured we would offer some suggestions that might help your submission stand out.

Make it your best: Sure, your bio has a lot of credits, you've opened for some great performers at local comedy clubs and you might even run some big shows. Then why send a video that doesn't reflect your best comedy? This process is judged ONLY on the quality of the video you send us. Even if we've seen you crush first-hand, in order to make this process fair, we can only judge you on what you send us. Make sure this video reflects you at your best.

No intros: So many tapes start with an emcee giving an intro. The first thing our judges should see is you, not another comic. Start with your jokes.

Speaking of credits: They help, but they are not a guarantee. What helps is if your video shows us that you can make a room full of strangers laugh.

Ditch the notes: Five minutes of stand-up shouldn't require several references to your notepad or your phone. Unless you're Janeane Garofalo circa 1992 (or you have a bit that includes reading a letter), ditch the notebook.

Don't pester us: We know you want to give the appearance that you're a real go-getter but sending a slew of emails asking if you've been selected isn't going to help your chances of getting into the festival. If anything, it can hurt. We have set a firm date for when we'll notify everyone.

Dress up?: How you're dressed doesn't matter, so feel free to forego the tuxedo rental (unless that's part of your usual stage getup). We're WAY more concerned with the quality of your jokes and the quality of your submission tape. If you can kill in a toga, then kill in that toga.

Timeliness of video: You might have noticed that we require a new(ish) video. Everyone can have a good set, but if that last good set was 15 years ago, and you haven't written solid

material since then, we want to know that. We're looking for comics who push themselves to write and stay relevant.

Make it professional: If you applied to a job, would you send a shabby, handwritten resume? If you're serious about stand-up and you've reached the point of submitting to festivals, you should put some serious thought into having someone do a professional shoot of one (or several) of your sets. If you must rely on a cellphone video, make sure you have a tripod and it's filmed close enough where we can see your face and movement.

Sound quality: Make sure we can hear you. Don't have your friend hold the camera for you and talk over parts of your set. Make sure your recording device is somewhere where you aren't going to hear table talk. Several submissions got poor scores last year because we could barely understand the jokes. If your best video has poor sound quality, it might be time to get some new video. Also, avoid recording your set at a show that is a big empty room. That no-audience echo is unmistakable. It's also easy to spot "back-of-the-room comics" who only get laughs from the comics in the back of the room. We want to see if you can make an audience laugh. Not just your friends.

Be creative: When you judge hundreds of videos in a short period of time, it's easy to pick up on overplayed tropes. Every comic leans on some from time to time, but the most common one we've seen is having an opening bit that centers around your appearance. It usually goes like this: "I know what you're thinking, this (guy/gal) looks like (he/she) can (insert self-deprecating quip)." Whatever foot you decide to lead with is the most important. Why lead with being down on yourself? Confidence is always much more enjoyable to watch. Obviously, there are exceptions, but be creative.

Headshot: While headshots are not a make-or-break thing for submissions, it doesn't hurt to take this part of the process serious as well. Having a good-quality set of headshots is going to help you in ways that extend beyond just our festival. There are great photographers in every corner of the world who are willing to help you with this (and a nice perk of getting in to the Flyover Comedy Festival is that we do offer some complimentary headshots for performers).

Nobody's out to get you: If you didn't get in, don't take it personal. It's not some great conspiracy. We get hundreds of submissions from all over the globe. We have to make a lot of difficult decisions, and some great comics don't make the cut. The illuminati (or the local comedy scene) isn't trying to keep you down.