



For Immediate Release

PlayPenn Renames Tuition-Free Playwrights Cohort as The Playwright Entrepreneur Program, Announces 2026 Cohort

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PHILADELPHIA, PA — December 17, 2025 — PlayPenn, the national center for new plays and playwrights devoted to nurturing bold new voices in contemporary theatre, is proud to announce its 2025/2026 Cohort and the reimaging of one of its core artistic programs.

Formerly known as The Playwrights Cohort, PlayPenn's Playwright Entrepreneur Program (PEP), is a first-of-its-kind, tuition-free professional development program designed to help playwrights build sustainable, self-directed careers. This initiative addresses a critical gap in traditional artistic training by focusing on the practical business skills playwrights need to thrive.

The Playwright Entrepreneur Program is a year-long program that provides education, training, and individualized mentorship to playwrights at all career levels, covering essential topics such as negotiating contracts, protecting intellectual property rights, securing representation, practicing self-advocacy, and managing finances and taxes. By empowering playwrights as artists, creative arts workers, and entrepreneurs, PlayPenn is redefining how the field supports the long-term success of playwrights.

After receiving over 100 applications, the 2025/2026 Playwright Entrepreneur Program cohort, the third cohort since the program's inception since 2023, will include **Carla Debbie Alleyne, Flo Ankah, Bonnie Antosh, Phillip Gregory Burke, Megan Campisi, Douglas Chang, D-Davis, Sopan Deb, Cori Diaz, Jared Eberlein, Anthony T. Goss, Nay Harris, Jim Hawkins, Lauren Holmes, Darrel Alejandro Holnes, Rebecca Kane, Delaney Kelly, Solomon LeBlanc, Neil Levi, Martin Murray, Greg T. Nanni, Esmé Maria Ng, Serena Norr, Brian Scanlan, chandra thomas, Andrew Aaron Valdez, Mallory Jane Weiss, Lauren Wimmer, Avigayle Young, and Natalie Zutter.**

New program mentor and artist advocate Emmanuel Wilson states, "There is no separation between business and creative. Theatre writers are running small businesses and must treat themselves with the respect of not only an artist but of a business-minded arts worker ready to handle the real-world implications of what it means to be a writer in the 21st-century. Our current

labor laws haven't caught up to the level of innovation happening all over the country spurred by a creative class disavowed from proper labor rights. PlayPenn's Playwright Entrepreneur Program allows writers space to investigate who they are as business leaders in deeply vulnerable and invigorating ways. Playwrights are entrepreneurs, and the spirit of the program fully acknowledges the wonder and complexity of being a writer for the stage."

PlayPenn Artistic Director Che'Rae Adams shares, "Our Playwright Entrepreneur Program, formerly The Playwrights Cohort, has fundamentally changed how PlayPenn serves playwrights. The holistic focus on the playwright and how they navigate the industry has revitalized what new play development really means. By supporting the playwright before and after development, we move the focus towards their humanity. Supporting playwrights in this way can be truly life changing."

PLAYWRIGHTS BIOS: For a full list of bios, [please visit our link](#).

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ABOUT PLAYPENN: PlayPenn is a national center for new plays and playwrights devoted to nurturing bold new voices in contemporary theatre located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. We empower writers to question, explore, and dream, so they can push the boundaries of storytelling in the American theatre.

PlayPenn supports playwrights and new play development through a range of free programs including our New Play Development Conference, The Foundry Playwrights Workshop, The Playwright Entrepreneur Program (formerly known as The Playwrights Cohort), and Independent Workshop Readings as well as paid in-person and online Continuing Education classes with available financial aid and scholarships.

PlayPenn has helped launch or support the careers of many of today's nationally recognized theatre writers including Iraisia Ann Reilly, Stephen Belber, Kara Lee Corthron, Ty Defoe, Steven Dietz, Gabriel Jason Dean, L M Feldman, Dominic Finocchiaro, Jacqueline Goldfinger, Kate Hamill, Jeffrey Hatcher, Jordan Harrison, Michael Hollinger, Willy Holtzman, Samuel D. Hunter, James Ijames, MJ Kaufman, Sarah Mantell, Deb Margolin, Roger Q. Mason, Antoinette Nwandu, Erlina Ortiz, Aaron Posner, J.T. Rogers, Jonathan Spector, Jen Silverman, R. Eric Thomas, Bess Wohl, Stefanie Zadravec, and Lauren Yee.

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