

Tips from Past and Current NPRP Playwrights:

- Be conscious and grateful, and bold and visionary.
- Take the time to learn and understand the theatre's internal culture.
- Take the time to learn and understand the theatre's relationship to the communities it serves.
- Share your relationship to the communities you serve.
- Allow your expectations to change
- Allow time to get to know the staff
- It can be hard to do creative work in the office, but there's so much else you can do—research, applications, etc. Work in the office when you can.
- Make sure that you have clear communication with your residency theater as to what expectations are on both sides.
- Make sure that you are able to maintain your creative life within the residency.
- Make sure you have a clear plan for what you'd like to accomplish during your residency but remain flexible enough to change when need be.
- Work closely with your home theatre to establish expectations, goals and timelines.
- You will likely be more visible and potentially impactful day to day at a smaller organization, whereas at larger ones, finding your place might be more challenging. At the same time, in smaller organizations, because of resource and staff limitations, you may be called upon to do things outside of your job description - be clear with yourself, and with the staff, what you are and aren't willing to get involved in.
- The folks at Mellon and HowlRound are a tremendous resource to call upon if your residency enters tricky waters. They are fair, thoughtful, and committed to the success of the program both for the organization and the playwright.
- It's ok to change the plan. Talk about it sooner than later.
- Articulate what are The Most Important Things for you, the writer, and for the theatre company. No one can be everywhere so having the big priorities known and clear is helpful to keep everyone from being disappointed.
- Take/ask for the time you need to write.
- Communicate as much as you can about your artistic dreams with your theater.
- This industry tends to speak a lot about playwrights being at the center of the artistic process yet has writers join into a pre-existing architecture (a reading series, a summer workshop session etc). But between the general operating support from this grant and the microfund, you really are in the driver's seat when it comes to directing the funding around your work, so embrace that and use it to not just dream up new plays but new ways of creating work that fit your own specifications.
- Spend all the money and pay your collaborators!
- Use the micro fund for things you would not be able to do as a playwright ordinarily, and think long term. Oftentimes playwrights use this fund in extremely altruistic ways as well to help other playwrights or initiatives that could not get funded in other ways. This is a chance to dream semi-big.
- The Microfund is an extraordinary resource - make bold plans for using it.