

## What to watch out for when working with artists or performers

- Be careful not to make verbal contracts before you have all your information. Your group, and most especially the signator, will be responsible for any fees to which you agree.
- Ask for a copy of the rider(s) before agreeing to anything. Be sure that you can fulfill all elements of a technical and hospitality riders before you commit.
- Think of the hidden costs that might come on top of the fee (such as food, lodging, and equipment rental). All extra costs are also multiplied by the number of band members or performers.

## Some last thoughts

Navigating a contract and negotiation process can be an intimidating experience. Feel free to drop by the SAO to talk about the contract, have us review it with you, or help with any questions you may have. Also, don't forget to always keep a copy of the contract just in case anything comes up during your event.

## This brochure is one in a series on achieving effective campus involvement

- who's who at Reed
- budgeting
- contracting
- event planning
- funding
- passing it on
- publicity
- student activities programs and resources
- conflict resolution
- showing movies on campus

# guide to Contracting

a how-to for managing your  
event's fine print

**For more information**, please stop by the student activities office in Gray Campus Center 104, call us at 503-788-6692, or email [student-activities@reed.edu](mailto:student-activities@reed.edu)

**REED**

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## Contracting for Reed

Student organizations are responsible for negotiating their own contracts with artists and performers. If you plan to contract with someone for more than \$200, you are required to get two signatures; a student body treasurer or the Senate VP and a Reed staff member. Although the student activities staff is not required to have a role in contract negotiations, you are always welcome to stop by for advice on any aspect of the contracting process. If the artist or performer does not provide a contract, we can give you copies of a generic contract to use for your event.

We have two versions: one for bands and performers and one for speakers.

### Why sign a contract?

You might think, "I know the drummer in this band . . . They're good guys . . . There's no reason to go through all the formal red tape. . . ." The reality is that it is always advisable to issue a contract regardless of your relationship with the artist or performer. In signing a contract both you and the artist or performer are clearly outlining expectations for each other. Additionally, a contract serves as a sort of receipt for getting checks cut by Senate or whoever is covering the costs.

## The art of negotiation

- Research the artists before making the first call. What is their reputation? What kind of performances are they known for?
- Know your calendar before you call, and make sure you have a venue reserved. Start talking specifics before jumping into a contract and having to change the date and other things several times.
- Know your budget before calling. Do not commit if you are unsure of your budget.
- Do not reveal your budget if asked. This is your leverage. The best way of asking for prices is to ask the agent for the range of offers that are considered by the artist. You can always negotiate down from there.
- Be prepared to interact with an agent or promoter instead of the artists or performers themselves.
- Make requests regarding changes to the contract, but be reasonable.
- Ask lots of questions. Clarify as much as you need to be fully informed and to prevent miscommunication. Be clear and precise.
- Be honest about issues such as financial and logistical limitations or your group decisions about an artist or performer. Keeping the agent informed helps him or her have an idea of where you stand and how they can help you. Also, be sure to discuss the venue and production openly. Agents should be aware ahead of time where the event is happening and who is taking care of technical needs.
- Strike any alcohol requests from the rider. The Senate will not cover these costs.
- Practice phone courtesy with the other party.
- Return all calls promptly, even if you are letting them know you will not be using their services. You have an effect on Reed's reputation with agents.
- Remember: You are in control of this process! Don't feel like you are being bullied.

## What should I know about contracts?

The face of the contract lists the services (who, when, how long, where), the considerations (how much money is to be paid, how it will be paid, and when it is to be paid), and signatures of both parties.

The contract rider, when signed by both parties, is as legally binding as the original contract. The rider outlines additional terms and details of your agreement. The technical rider details specific technical needs for the performance. Read everything carefully before signing and be sure that you can actually accommodate their needs (such as stage size, lights, and sound). If you need to make substitutions, be sure to clear it with the performer. Remember that both you and the artist or performer can attach riders to the contract. The sponsor rider can detail your needs, such as volume levels and book signings. Do not feel pressure to meet ridiculous rider requests, but do let them know before signing.

Changing a contract is simple, but be sure to follow some basic guidelines. Discuss any proposed changes to the contract or rider with the agent. If both parties agree to the change, cross out each section that is being deleted. Clearly print additions or changes in the margin. Initial and date each change. If you add a sponsor rider, write "School rider attached is made a part of this contract" at the top of the original contract. The other party must also initial and date changes upon receipt of the new changes.