

THE NATIONALS
MUSICFEST CANADA
FINALES NATIONALES

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RE: HOUSING BUREAU FOR MUSICFEST

Some music directors have questioned the need for contracting a housing bureau (i.e. Ellison Travel & Tours). “What do they get for us except high hotel rates?”

Costs to run MusicFest continue to grow. MusicFest is a non-profit organization and it depends on three key areas for revenue in order to ensure success.

First of all, revenue from participant fees are key. If adequate hotel space is not available for participants close to the site there will be reduced revenue if music groups can't attend.

Secondly, costs for performance venues have **increased substantially** over the years. MusicFest now tries to use hotel meeting space for performances where possible. Hotels will reduce or eliminate performance venue costs if enough rooms are used at the hotels. Failure to sell the required rooms could result in up to \$150,000+ additional costs for performing venues. Without a housing bureau to fill these rooms MusicFest fees could increase \$15 to \$20 per student.

Finally, sponsors like Yamaha Canada Music Ltd. and Ellison Travel & Tours provide up to \$200,000 in additional revenue for MusicFest. Without this revenue fees again would climb \$10 to \$15.

MusicFest is possibly the best deal considering what is offered for \$69. With commercial festivals charging \$100 to \$120 U.S. to compete, MusicFest is by far the best deal out there today.

The housing bureau ensures hotel space is available for all participants. Hotels will not contract and hold space for MusicFest unless they have some guarantee it will be sold. Rates will not be the lowest because generally the arrival of 8,000 to 10,000 students means limited space in the location of MusicFest. Lower rates are available when there is excess space.

Ellison Travel & Tours also provides additional services to MusicFest groups and MusicFest staff. The Ellison team has an excellent understanding of how MusicFest operates and can provide a complete tour package for groups. They also handle individual travel needs for MusicFest staff and parents attending the festival.

During MusicFest, Ellison Travel & Tours has their team on site to assist MusicFest groups with itinerary changes, hotel or coach issues, tickets for attractions, restaurant information, etc.

The relationship with Ellison Travel & Tours and MusicFest has been a very positive experience. Using Ellison Travel & Tours for accommodation is a necessary requirement MusicFest has had to take in order to ensure financial stability and to keep fees from escalating.

Your support is necessary and much appreciated.
Sincerely,

Jim Howard
Executive Director