

UAA Project Discovery & Creative Needs Assessment

A project-intake workbook for understanding what another person, production, or department actually needs.

Amateurs prescribe from assumption. Professionals ask questions, listen, diagnose, and define the work before they execute it.

- Use for Cats and other UAA productions, departments, collaborators, and approved studio projects.
- This is not a sales form. It is a listening and project-definition tool.
- The goal is to leave discovery knowing what success means, what is actually needed, who decides, and what remains unknown.

NAME

DATE

Project Snapshot

Start with the request, then find the real need.

Field	Notes
Project / production	
Department / collaborator	
Primary contact	
Student team / lead	
Date of discovery	
Target deadline / event date	

What are you asking us to help with?

Capture the request in their words before reframing it.

Why does this project matter?

What story, performance, audience, event, learning goal, or larger objective does it serve?

Desired Future & Success

Understand the outcome before discussing the solution.

What do you want to be true when this is finished?

Describe the desired future state.

Who is it for?

Audience, performers, director, students, faculty, families, public release, internal rehearsal, etc.

How will you know it worked?

What would success look, sound, or feel like? What evidence would show the goal was met?

What must remain?

Elements that cannot be lost: story, character, melody, timing, identity, technical requirement, etc.

What is flexible?

Elements open to experimentation, reinterpretation, alternate versions, or student proposals.

Creative & Technical Needs

Separate the need from the first solution that comes to mind.

Area	Questions / requirements
Songwriting / composition	Original song? Rewrite? Additional section? Lyric or melody problem? Character/story requirement?
Production / arrangement	Style, era, instrumentation, density, energy, references, transitions, dance counts, rehearsal needs?
Recording / engineering	Who is performing? What needs to be captured? Room, microphones, session time, monitoring, editing?
Post / mix / delivery	Mix, instrumental, stems, clean version, playback, alternate length, master, loudness/reference requirements?
Visual / media support	Artwork, photography, video, EPK, social assets, projection, titles, metadata?
Interdepartmental dependencies	Theatre, dance, stage tech, film, visual art, business, faculty approvals, other teams?

Reference material

What examples, demos, scripts, rehearsal videos, temp tracks, notes, files, or assets already exist?

Constraints, Rights & Decisions

Professional work becomes clearer when limits are visible.

Question	Answer / owner
What is the real deadline?	
What milestones happen before the deadline?	
Who gives creative notes?	
Who has final approval?	
What resources are available?	
What resources are not available?	
What technical constraints matter?	
What school policies or permissions apply?	
Are copyrighted works, scripts, recordings, artwork, likenesses, or protected IP involved?	
Who will verify any required rights / permissions before public use or release?	

RIGHTS-AWARENESS STANDARD

Students identify the question and escalate it. They are not expected to provide legal conclusions.

Define the Work

Convert discovery into a clear brief.

The underlying need

What problem, gap, or desired result are we actually serving?

Our proposed response

What do we think should be created or tested next? Keep this proportional to what discovery supports.

Deliverable / test	Owner	Due	Approver	Status

In scope	Out of scope / not yet approved

Open questions

What must still be answered before work can move safely?

Production Handoff & Review

Make the next action visible.

Handoff item	What another student/team needs to know
Creative intent	
Tempo / meter / key / structure	
Session / file location	
Version / date / naming	
Required stems / exports	
Credits / contributors	
Known issues / unresolved questions	
Next action / owner / deadline	

What changed after feedback?

Record the note, what changed, and why. Separate a creative revision from a new request that changes scope.

What did we learn about the need?

Did the original request change after discovery or testing? What did we misunderstand at first?

Closeout & Case Study

Finish the work professionally and keep the learning.

Closeout check	Complete / notes
Final deliverables approved	
Files clearly named and stored	
Stems / alternates delivered if required	
Credits and contribution record complete	
Permissions / public-use questions resolved by appropriate adult/authority	
Project partner knows where final files are	
Team knows what remains open	

What did success mean on this project?

What evidence shows whether the work served the objective?

What did I contribute?

Name the work, judgment, communication, or problem solving you personally owned.

What would I do differently next time?

Workflow, communication, creative process, technical approach, scheduling, or collaboration.

CLOSING PRINCIPLE

Serve the project. Protect trust. Credit everyone. Deliver what people can actually use.