

Position Description

Position title:	Artistic Director
Reports to:	The Board
Direct reports:	Program Manager, Production Manager
Indirect reports:	Greenroom Assistant, Program Interns
External reports:	PR agency
Commencement date:	October 2017
Work type:	Full-time 3-year contract
Salary:	Base salary \$100,000 approx. (with eligibility for annual performance bonus)
Location:	Melbourne CBD

Melbourne Writers Festival is an internationally acclaimed, annual festival that celebrates literature and the work of writers.

After a period of strong growth and consolidation under the leadership of Lisa Dempster, who will deliver her fifth and final Festival in 2017, the Melbourne Writers Festival is seeking its next Artistic Director.

The Artistic Director will design and deliver festivals that inspire, challenge and delight existing and new audiences in 2018 and beyond. To do this, the Artistic Director will work in close partnership with the Festival CEO, who holds overall responsibility for the Festival business. Both roles report directly to the Festival Board.

Who we are

Melbourne Writers Festival (MWF) is Victoria's annual celebration for readers, writers and thinkers.

As one of Australia's leading cultural events, MWF attracts the world's best writers and thinkers to create stimulating, meaningful moments that inspire conversation, connection and lasting passion for reading and ideas.

Each year in August, from our hub at Federation Square in the Melbourne CBD, MWF celebrates the art, talent and ideas of hundreds of writers from Australia and around the world. Through a vibrant program of storytelling, conversation and intellectual debate, educational programs, live performance, music and art, MWF helps shape the national agenda for the discussion of writing and ideas.

MWF includes many free and family events for people of all ages. Through its Schools' Program, Australia's biggest literary festival for students, MWF is proud to be growing the next generation of readers. MWF aims to be socially and culturally inclusive, and to encourage all Victorians to read and engage.

Our mission

Melbourne Writers Festival attracts the world's best writers and thinkers to create stimulating, meaningful moments that inspire a lasting passion for reading and ideas.

MWF's strategic goals are:

- *Excellence in Programming*: MWF delivers a world-class writers festival with exciting, dynamic events that inspire and challenge audiences and artists alike.
- *Integrating Inclusivity*: MWF ensures that all Victorians feel welcome to participate fully in the Festival by being socially and culturally inclusive.
- *Maximising Impact*: MWF sets the national agenda for the discussion of writing and ideas, encouraging all Victorians to read and engage culturally.
- *Earning Our Way*: MWF is financially sustainable, maintaining a balanced portfolio of income streams.

About the role

The Artistic Director provides the organisation's artistic vision and curatorial leadership and is responsible for initiating, developing and delivering the artistic program.

The Artistic Director is deeply committed to literature, writing and ideas; and to creating extraordinary audience experiences. The successful candidate will demonstrate global thinking, and the capacity to develop the Festival's reach and impact as a cornerstone event in Australia's literary and cultural calendar.

The Artistic Director works collaboratively and innovatively, reflecting the organisation's values of excellence, inclusion and impact. Through their programming and leadership, the Artistic Director maintains and builds the Festival's relationships with audiences, writers, publishers and other literary sector peers, funders and donors, and other stakeholders.

The Artistic Director works in close partnership with the CEO to sustain and cultivate the Festival's strong financial position, and to ensure MWF remains a great place to work for permanent and seasonal staff, and the many volunteers who enable the Festival each year. The Artistic Director is directly responsible for staff working in Program and Production roles.

Primary responsibilities and accountabilities of the role

Strategic leadership

- Work with the CEO and Board to develop strategic and business plans; and be a leader in communicating, enacting and implementing them within the organisation
- Execute responsibility for the artistic program in a manner that is consistent with the Festival's organisational needs, working in partnership with the CEO
- Be the spokesperson for and face of the Festival; represent the Festival nationally and internationally
- Enable and build (with the CEO) a cohesive, rewarding and high-performance MWF workplace culture; manage and mentor direct reports in the Production and Program teams.
- Attend and report to Board meetings and other meetings as required.

Artistic vision and programming

- Develop and present the most influential and exciting work in writing and ideas, including bestselling books and authors, cutting edge and current conversations, emergent and change-making ideas and artistic forms

- Secure participation by the world’s highest-profile and highest-calibre authors and thinkers
- Design a program that recognises the interests and motivations of loyal, emerging and potential new audiences for the Festival
- Curate and deliver a Festival program that is consistent with MWF’s strategic goals, revenue targets and budget
- Manage and ensure the effective operation of the MWF Programming Subcommittee; and drive productive discussion of program content with staff, Board and other stakeholders
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with publishers, authors and agents, and manage negotiations.

Program execution and delivery

- Develop and present annual programming strategies, including schools’ program strategies, that guide and inform programming and program delivery
- Broker touring opportunities for visiting international authors with other festivals and partners, achieving budgeted economies
- Manage venue negotiations, bookings, scheduling and contracting
- Collaborate with Development to deliver partnered programming opportunities within the festival
- Oversee programming systems and process that include: Invitations, contracts and commitment; program build and database operational processes; artist liaison processes including travel, accommodation and greenroom
- Project-manage production projects as required, particularly in times outside the Production Manager contract period
- Manage and support Production Management to execute and deliver the artistic program
- Deliver the Festival on time and within budget
- Manage annual Festival program analysis and reporting against KPIs, in concert with the CEO.

Communication, business development and stakeholder management

- Significantly contribute to the Festival’s brand positioning, through collaboration with the CEO and Marketing
- Significantly contribute to the development and maintenance of relationships with stakeholders including philanthropic and private benefactors, literary and education institutions and the media
- Identify, nurture and manage program partnerships that extend the Festival’s reach and impact
- Manage all program partners and associated financial negotiations, with the support of the CEO
- Work with the Marketing team to deliver successful audience engagement strategies
- Work with the Marketing team to ensure effective acquittal of all MWF publicity initiatives
- Serve on relevant committees and Boards to further the profile and standing of the Festival in Melbourne’s cultural calendar.

Key Selection Criteria

- Artistic vision
- Proven ability to develop and deliver a creative program which inspires public interest and satisfies stakeholders
- Proven ability to interpret and execute strategic organisational priorities
- Proven ability to collaborate effectively with peers, and to lead and motivate individuals and teams
- Ability to promote the public profile of the Festival, and represent and advocate for the Festival in the media, in the industry, and with stakeholders
- Ability to collaborate with and influence the artistic, literary and publishing sectors
- Deep artistic and cultural ties in Australia and overseas.

More information

The MWF office is located in The Wheeler Centre in the State Library of Victoria. The Festival board oversees the governance and strategic direction of the Festival. Currently there are six core positions at MWF, supported by a team of seasonal and contract positions.

The Festival is a not-for-profit organisation funded by box office and other earned income; state, local, federal and international government funding; sponsorship, donations and fundraising.

Please contact us for additional materials about MWF. Please email recruitment@mwf.com.au

Application process

Closing date: 9am AEST, Tuesday 13 June 2017

Applications and inquiries: recruitment@mwf.com.au

Please note, inquiries made via the MWF office, website or any other means will be directed to recruitment@mwf.com.au. Thank you for your understanding.

Applications must be submitted to recruitment@mwf.com by 9am AEST, Tuesday 13 June 2017. Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed in Melbourne, or via web link. Interviews are expected to take place in the week of 26 June 2017.

Applications should comprise the following three items as a single document:

- Cover letter
- Response to each of the key selection criteria
- Resume, including three referees

Referees will not be contacted without your prior agreement.

Melbourne Writers Festival is an equal opportunity employer.