



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position title:	General Manager
Reports to:	Festival Director
Direct reports:	Bookkeeper
Salary:	\$130,000, plus superannuation.
Commencement date:	By November 2024 (preferred).
Employment Basis:	Full time (38 hours plus reasonable extra hours), 2-year contract. Flexible work arrangements can be discussed. Time off in lieu applies for weekend Festival work.
Employment Conditions:	A six-month probation period applies.
Employment Benefits:	20 days annual leave is provided.
Location:	The position is located in The Wheeler Centre for Books, Writing and Ideas at 176 Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000.

Background

Established in 1986, Melbourne Writers Festival designs and delivers an annual festival (in recent times in May) featuring literary award winners, pop culture icons, trusted journalists and exhilarating new voices.

Its objective is to bring readers and writers together to be inspired, challenged and thrilled by an intelligent, rousing and diverse program of books and ideas. We provide the inspiration and framework for vital, timely conversations that expand the worldviews and reading lists of our audiences, while launching and transforming the careers of writers. MWF is a singular moment in time, where this City of Literature's thoughtful citizens can gather to celebrate their favourite past-time: reading.

Featuring internationally renowned and leading Australian writers and anchored by our First Nations curators, the Melbourne Writers Festival has a focus on contemporary literary fiction, along with non-fiction writers, thinkers, and commentators.

In addition to our reader-focused events, the festival also delivers a program of professional and creative development workshops for writers. There is also a MWF Schools Program that occurs in May.

The Board oversees the governance and strategic direction of MWF. MWF is a not-for-profit incorporated organisation funded by box office and other earned income; state, local, federal and international government funding; sponsorship, donations and fundraising.

Our people

Our Festival Director Veronica Sullivan commenced with MWF in August 2024 and reports to the Board. A full-time Head of Marketing and Partnerships is currently being recruited. Other contract staff supplement MWF's staff in the months leading up to the festival, at which time a large group of committed volunteer staff also support the Festival's delivery.

Role Summary

The General Manager plays a key role in the small, highly effective MWF team. The role supports the Festival Director by taking responsibility for a range of functions including finance, HR, regulatory compliance, and risk management. They support best practice financial management and oversee key organisational systems and processes, aligning the Festival's overarching strategy with its day-to-day practical operations. They will contribute to an organisational culture that is efficient, collaborative, strategic, inclusive and ambitious.

Core Duties

Finance

- Work with the Festival Director to develop financial forecasts and budgets and submit these to the Finance Committee and Board for approval.
- Support the Festival Director to manage MWF within Strategic Plan and annual budget settings, and manage the organisation's long-term financial planning, record keeping, analysis, reporting and financial risk management.
- Manage organisational budgets, oversee payroll and finance, lead monthly profit and loss, balance sheet and cashflow reporting.
- Ensure sound financial management and control systems, including co-authorisation of expenditure against approved budgets and financial delegation authorities.
- Oversee bookkeeper, including their preparation of financial statements and reports for the Board Finance Committee.
- Coordinate annual financial audit of MWF's accounts and prepare required internal documents in consultation with bookkeeper and independent auditor.

Human Resources

- Assist the Festival Director with timely and equitable recruitment, onboarding and contracting of new staff, performance review cycle and issues resolution.
- Maintain appropriate staff records including leave, employment agreements and correspondence.
- Review and manage human resource needs, including human resources manuals, tools, policies and procedures, and occupational health and safety requirements.

Governance and Compliance

- Develop and execute all business, operational, financial planning and organisational risk management.
- Support the Board Secretary with Board meetings and regulatory compliance.

- Support Board Committees, particularly Finance Committee and Fundraising Committee as required.
- Attend to regulatory reporting, in particular to ACNC.
- Regularly review and refresh MWF policies and procedures.
- Ensure events are compliant with the Victorian Government Public events framework.
- Manage renewal of insurance policies.
- Contribute to detailed evaluation processes to evaluate all Festival activities and ensure continual improvement.

Funding and Stakeholder Management

- Play a key role in applications, reporting and acquittals for funding opportunities.
- Maintain and build productive relationships with key stakeholders at all levels of government, as well as funding bodies.
- Assist the Festival Director with partnership and supplier agreements.
- Undertake data analysis and prepare reports for government funders and trusts & foundations.
- Maintain a strong knowledge of the arts funding landscape, including identifying prospective funding avenues relevant to MWF.

General

- Actively contribute to upholding best practice cultural safety for all MWF staff, artists, volunteers, audiences and other stakeholders.
- Maintain central database systems and lead system development in response to business needs.
- Oversee office management, such as liaising with IT and facilities providers.
- Engage fully in the Festival, which may include extended hours and expanded duties during the Festival period.
- In the lead up to the Festival, assist with organisational tasks as required by the Festival Director.
- Manage annual Festival wrap-up, reporting and acquittal processes.
- Other responsibilities as required by the Festival Director.

Key Selection Criteria

1. Demonstrated operational management experience in a dynamic and competitive environment, particularly in a micro or small-to-medium arts organisation.
2. Strong financial acumen and experience in financial management, including disciplined management of budgets, timelines and resources.
3. Experience in preparing and acquitting grants and developing and managing stakeholder relationships, including government funders, particularly in an arts environment.
4. Confidence, drive, capability and problem-solving skills to juggle and meet the demands of the role with minimal direction.
5. Proven ability to work openly and collaboratively with other staff and Board to support good governance and management.
6. Excellent attention to detail, expertise in managing systems and processes, problem-solving capabilities, and strong record-keeping skills.
7. A deep understanding of and passion for the Australian arts and literature landscape, and for the work of Melbourne Writers Festival.

Application Process

Confidential enquiries about the role can be made to Veronica Sullivan, Festival Director, at veronica@mwf.com.au.

Interviews will take place in the week commencing 30 September.

Closing date: 12pm AEST, Monday 23 September 2024.

Applications:

Must include the following 3 documents as a single PDF:

- A cover letter outlining your interest in the role.
- Responses to each of the key selection criteria that demonstrate your experience, with examples.
- A current resume, including three referees.

PLEASE NOTE: Referees will not be contacted without prior agreement.

Application Format:

- Please combine your application into a single PDF document, with the filename 'Last Name First Name – General Manager'.
- Applications should not exceed 6 pages in length.
- Applications should be submitted by email only to recruitment@mwf.com.au
- Late applications will not be accepted