



# Adelaide Writers' Week

**DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT PACK**

# Background

Founded in 1960, Adelaide Writers' Week (AWW) is a literary festival of public readings, talks and discussions including writers from around Australia and the world. It is presented annually in early Autumn as part of the Adelaide Festival and is among the world's great literary festivals; it is also one of the longest running.

At Jaipur Literary Festival in 2016 Margaret Atwood remarked that '*the idea of literature festivals had taken root with the Adelaide Writers' Week*'.

Adelaide Writers' Week is constituted of a core, free, six-day program presented across three stages in an historic, shade-filled garden, supplemented by a selection of ticketed events usually in the evenings in other CBD venues. There are approximately 150,000 attendances to AWW each year by a legion of passionate and loyal audience members from Adelaide, around Australia and the world.

AWW is committed to supporting literary culture in Australia but is cosmopolitan in outlook. It embraces the free exchange of ideas grounded in discussion of works of literature. With around 200 authors and presenters in each program, AWW celebrates a diversity of creative and literary voices and encourages audiences to connect with their current favourite author, while finding their next favourite. It is a celebration of the joy of reading and writing and an exploration of the power of language. AWW is for writers, readers, publishers and literary commentators.

Attendance at Adelaide Writers' Week and the profile of the event have never been higher than in recent years, reflecting its enduring relevance and public importance. Adelaide Festival aspires for Adelaide Writers' Week to remain a beacon for literary culture locally, nationally and internationally, sustaining strong audiences while embracing new opportunities for growth. This includes the presentation of high-profile authors, deeper collaborations with like-minded organisations, and innovative ways to profile writers, readers and literature. Central to this ambition is the continued integration of Adelaide Writers' Week as a symbiotic and vital part of Adelaide Festival, with each program strengthening the reach, impact and resonance of the other.

Like any outstanding arts event, the quality of curation is at the heart of AWW's success, and Adelaide Festival is now seeking a new Director to guide AWW for the next 3 – 4 years.





## The current AWW model

The core, free Adelaide Writers' Week program is delivered over six days in the Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden, across three stages, with up to 7 hour-long sessions on each stage per day. Most sessions are followed by a book signing. The program also features a 'Schools Day' for secondary students to come and spend the day meeting with authors.

The format makes for a dynamic, vibrant atmosphere where readers are spoilt for choice among the stages and sessions; and between sessions, or when a break is required, they can enjoy excellent South Australian food and wine and browse in the book tent that is open throughout.

The gardens are located near Adelaide's city centre, adjacent to the Adelaide Festival Centre, which is the principal locus of Adelaide Festival's program. They are easily accessed by public transport or on foot.

AWW is the only literary event in Australia that runs its own bookstore which means all sales revenue from the event are shared between writers, publishers and the festival itself. The AWW Book Tent is, by size of the event, the largest seller of books among Australian literary festivals. Research shows that 90% of attendees plan to buy a book as a result of attending AWW.

AWW attracts large numbers of interstate visitors. Program highlights are included in the printed Adelaide Festival guide, released in about October each year, with a full guide including all session times released by the end of January in advance of the event.

AWW prides itself on the care offered to participating writers and readers. All participants in AWW are paid a fee; all out of town guests are paid a per diem; and AWW also covers flights, accommodation and ground transport in Adelaide. We seek to make all visiting authors feel welcome and at home when visiting Adelaide.

For readers and writers, AWW creates a space that is comfortable and easy to navigate. The location, staging and seating are all carefully designed to ensure comfort and ease of engagement. All sessions run to time, and we provide quality catering as well as free water and sunscreen.

The great strength of AWW is ultimately the quality of the curation, the wide variety of topics discussed and the quality of the speakers. Research shows that 93% of the audience find the content of AWW interesting and less than 1% find it not interesting. 32% of the audience attend between one to five sessions and 14% attend more than twenty.

# Working with Adelaide Festival

Adelaide Writers' Week offers a rare opportunity to lead one of the world's most respected and enduring literary festivals. As part of the Adelaide Festival, you will join a passionate and highly skilled team committed to artistic excellence, public engagement and the power of ideas. The role provides the chance to shape a major cultural event with deep community loyalty, international reach and significant curatorial freedom.

You will work within a collaborative organisational environment, backed by strong operational teams in marketing, production, ticketing and administration. The renewed Adelaide Festival Board and Executive provide leadership, strategic guidance and support for the Director, ensuring a stable framework within which creativity and innovation can thrive. This allows the Director to focus on curating an ambitious, engaging and forward-looking program.

Adelaide is a vibrant city with a rich arts culture, and Writers' Week holds a special place in its cultural life. For the right candidate, this is an opportunity to lead a much-loved festival into its next chapter, contribute to national and international literary culture, and help connect readers and writers in ways that inspire, challenge and delight.

An organisational chart for Adelaide Festival is provided in this pack.

## Who we are looking for

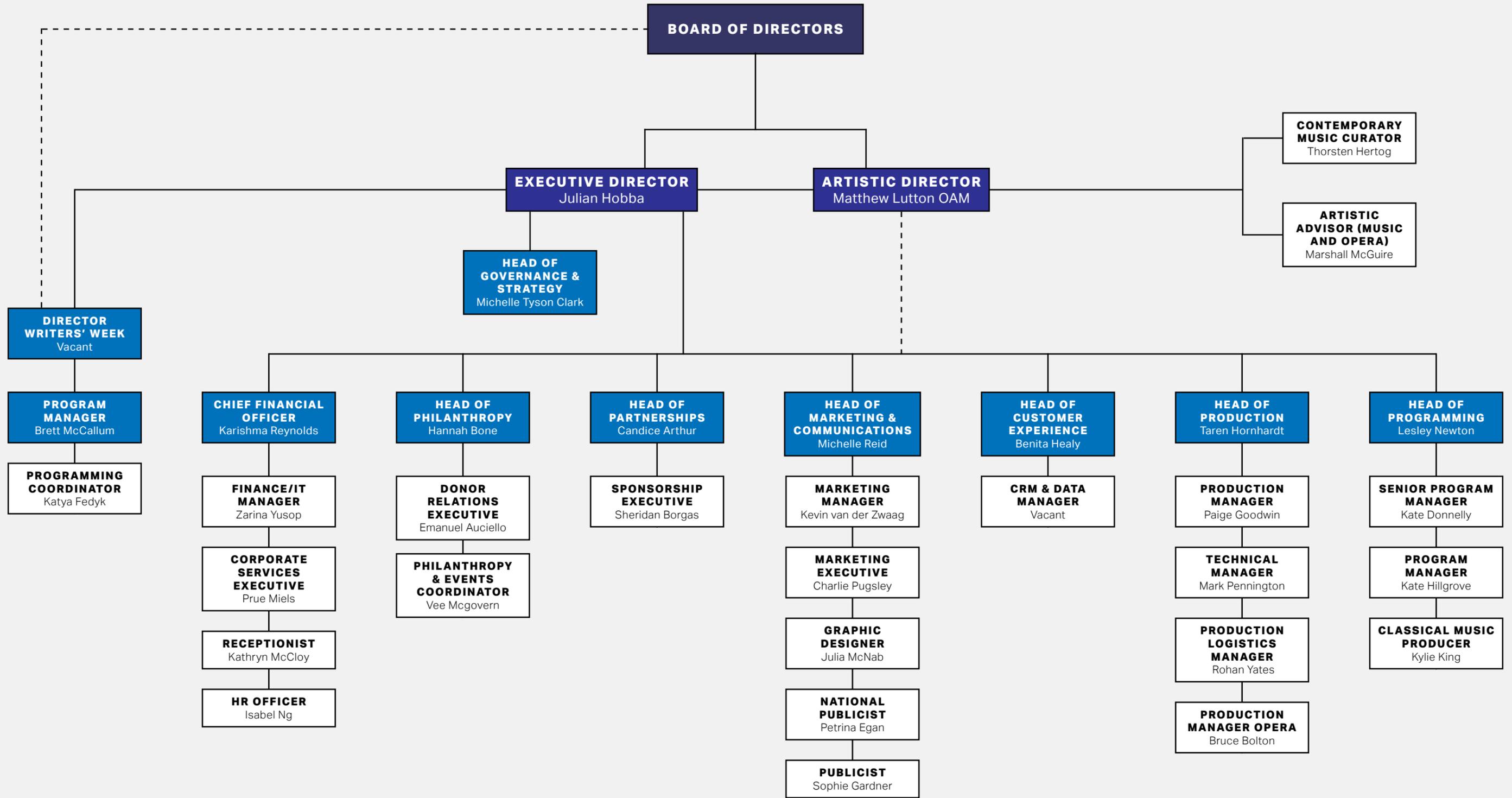
Adelaide Festival seeks a Director of Adelaide Writers' Week who brings both artistic vision and practical leadership, along with a capacity for thoughtful innovation. The role is open to candidates based anywhere in Australia, with the expectation of travel to Adelaide as required. The ideal candidate will have a deep understanding of contemporary literature, strong national and international literary networks, and a recognised ability to curate dynamic, relevant and engaging programs. They will demonstrate sound judgement, sensitivity to diverse perspectives, and the confidence to navigate complex public conversations.

The Director will be a collaborative leader who works effectively with staff, artists, publishers, partners and audiences. They will combine creativity with organisational strength, including the ability to manage budgets and teams within a large multi-event festival environment. A commitment to inclusivity, accessibility, and the respectful representation of diverse voices, including First Nations writers, is essential.

Above all, we seek someone who shares Adelaide Writers' Week's passion for



# Adelaide Festival Organisational Chart



**EXECUTIVE TEAM**

**SMT MEMBERS**

Showing core employees with tenure >6 months

# Details

## Budget

The total budget for AWW is approximately \$1.8 million which covers direct expenditure on the program as well as the salaries for AWW producing and coordinating staff.

Marketing, production, finance and administration services and office overheads are covered within the Adelaide Festival's overhead budget.

Revenue of approximately \$900,000 is made up of net book sales, grants, box office from ticketed events, sponsorship, donations and catering income. The Adelaide Festival provides approximately \$900,000 in deficit funding to the AWW program.

## Term

A three-year term will be offered with the potential for an extension of one year to make a four-year term.

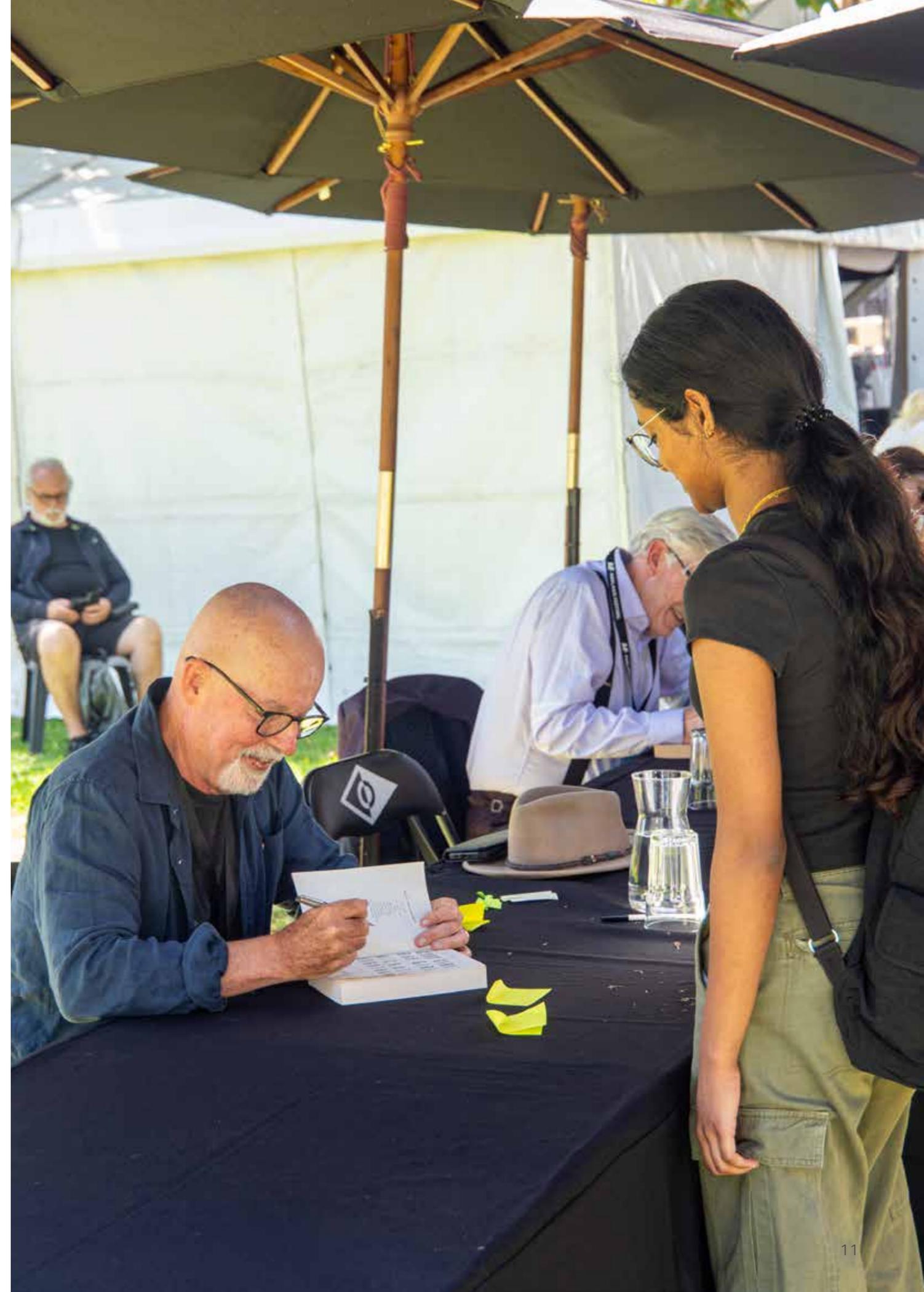
## Remuneration

The role will be offered on a contractor basis, with remuneration negotiated with the successful candidate. Adelaide Festival recognises the national nature of the field and will take interstate travel requirements into account where relevant.

## Applications

Applications should be sent to Executive Director, Julian Hobba via [hello@adelaidefestival.com.au](mailto:hello@adelaidefestival.com.au) by COB March 18th, 2026.

Applications should include a statement addressing the following Position Description and the applicant's vision for AWW. The application should include a CV and biography.





## Position Description

**Title:** Director, Adelaide Writers' Week  
**Reports to:** Executive Director; Adelaide Festival Corporation Board  
**Direct reports:** AWW Program Manager; AWW Program Coordinator; and other contract event staff

### Job Summary and Role Profile

The Director, Adelaide Writers' Week provides the vision and curatorial leadership for the annual Adelaide Writer's Week, presented as part of Adelaide Festival.

The Director will, through their programming, continue to build on the event's local, national and international profile with writers, publishers, audiences and other literary peers and stakeholders.

This role is responsible for envisioning, curating and overseeing the delivery of the Adelaide Writers' Week. They will be an advocate for Adelaide Writers' Week in the literary culture and community and be the public spokesperson for their program at public and private events, in the media and as required.

The Director will lead the relationship between Adelaide Writers' Week and key stakeholders in the literary industry including writers, publishers, funding bodies both public and private, book sellers, libraries and other relevant parties.

While the core of Adelaide Writers' Week is, and will remain, the free program delivered in the Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden, the Director also programs ticketed events as part of the program which brings essential income to the overall Adelaide Writers' Week project. Acumen for this strand of programming is important, as is the ability to forge partnerships with other organisations that add value to the program, an interest in engaging with the South Australian literary sector and a commitment to a diversity of voices among the writers engaged.

The Director should be innovative in considering new programming opportunities, venues and formats that will enable the continued growth, profile and financial sustainability of Adelaide Writers' Week.

### Key Working Relationships

The Director, Adelaide Writers' Week reports directly to the Executive Director of the Adelaide Festival Corporation and indirectly to the Board through an agreed programming framework. The Director has a close working relationship with the Adelaide Festival Artistic Director.

The Director leads the Writers' Week team who are responsible for the implementation of the Director's vision for the event and program of authors.

As a member of the Senior Management Team, this role will work with Heads of Departments and staff across business development, philanthropy, marketing, production, customer experience, programming and corporate services.

## Key Accountabilities and Functions

Adelaide Writers' Week is a major project of the Adelaide Festival Corporation and the key function of this role is to oversee the vision, curation and planning of the project, within the context of the broader Adelaide Festival.

The role of Director is not envisioned as a full-time role year-round, but rather requiring a consistent part-time workload that expands to full time at key moments in the programming cycle. Therefore, there is an emphasis in the role on the curation of the program and the clear and thorough leadership of and guidance to program management staff who take greater responsibility for the developing the program logistics and delivering the event.

### Key accountabilities and functions are to:

- Deliver a large scale and high-profile program of authors and events annually that is representative of the local, national and international strategic imperatives of Adelaide Festival.
- Negotiate contractual arrangements with writers, their publishers and agents for participation in the program.
- Provide clear and thorough leadership to the AWW producing and coordination staff to successfully implement the programming of AWW, including arrangements for the site or venues, author engagements and any aspects of the program delivered in partnership with other organisations or curators.
- Ensure the event is delivered within the Board-approved budget each year and according to agreed timelines for programming, marketing and event delivery.
- Seek opportunities to enhance the program through collaborative programming, for example with interstate or overseas literary institutions.
- Act as spokesperson for the program, in public at the event, at launch events, in the media and at private events for industry, philanthropic supporters and sponsors, educators or other stakeholders.
- Establish and maintain a close working relationship with the Adelaide Festival's Artistic Director to ensure shared understanding of artistic curatorial direction and develop opportunities to the benefit of the Adelaide Festival program holistically.
- Work closely with senior managers across the Adelaide Festival to find ways to identify and maximise cohesive opportunities for Adelaide Writers' Week and Adelaide Festival as a whole; especially in the area of partnership and sponsorship opportunities and philanthropic initiatives.
- Work closely with the Head of Marketing and Communication to develop and deliver the Adelaide Writers' Week marketing campaign. Develop and coordinate relevant material to be included in Adelaide Writers' Week media kits and marketing assets.
- Identify and apply for funding and grant opportunities for AWW in collaboration with the Executive Director and other staff.
- With the Executive Director, Artistic Director and Board, represent AWW and Adelaide Festival to key stakeholders.
- Provide Board, Audit and Risk Committee and other reporting for program approval and evaluation processes. Otherwise contribute to organisational reporting, evaluation and acquittal processes relating to AWW.
- Lead the qualitative and quantitative program evaluation process at the conclusion of the event each year.
- Stay current with industry trends at both a national and international level, and ensure and seek to enhance Adelaide Writers' Week's standing and relevance locally, nationally and internationally.
- Maintain close, collaborative relationships with national and Asia-Pacific literary events and festivals to develop opportunities to construct tours for visiting authors and other initiatives.
- Develop and maintain relationships with the South Australian literary sector to maximise their engagement in Adelaide Writers' Week and the profiling of South Australian literature.
- Deliver inclusive programs representative of the diversity of the literary and broader community and reflecting the broader Adelaide Festival commitment to First Nations arts and culture.
- Manage Adelaide Writers' Week revenue and expenditure budgets and targets and ensure that all financial and administrative elements are managed within agreed Adelaide Festival policies and procedures, in particular Adelaide Festival's delegations and purchasing policies.

- Identify ways to maximise revenue through Adelaide Writers' Week including funding from Government, books tent (or online) sales, and catering revenue.
- Consult with the production department to advise in the development and delivery of the production and technical requirements for the event.
- Be familiar with and adhere to all Adelaide Festival policies and procedures including WHS requirements.
- As an active member of the Adelaide Festival Senior Management Team, contribute to collaborative leadership of the Adelaide Festival Corporation
- Participate in and ensure a detailed process of evaluation, assessment and learning to ensure continual improvement processes are in place that supports Adelaide Festival Corporation's culture as a learning organisation.

## Key Competencies

- Demonstrable knowledge of, and experience and networks in, literature and publishing markets in Australia and overseas, knowledge of online and electronic publishing and other literary mediums.
- Excellent organisational skills and demonstrated experience in delivering and managing literary programs and/or events and a proven ability to manage a team of staff.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills, exceptional communicator, negotiator and listener.
- A collaborative and flexible approach to problem solving and information sharing. Proven track record of developing excellent, productive relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders.
- A successful track record of establishing and managing accurate and informative project plans and budgets for complex projects.
- A collaborative and flexible working style and commitment to broad organisational values and objectives.

## Organisational Values

In providing a direct leadership contribution to the integrated activities of the Adelaide Festival Corporation, all Department Heads are a part of the Senior Management Team, with responsibility towards organisational outcomes and priorities as outlined in the Adelaide Festival Strategic Plan, alongside departmental objectives, as well as cultivating a positive and proactive workplace culture.

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[adelaidefestival.com.au](http://adelaidefestival.com.au)