



Production and Operations Manager

Role Description

Employment Type	Contractor
Employment Term	April – August 2026
Salary/Payment	\$30,000 + GST
Hours	Project-based hours as required
Location	Byron Writers Festival office / work from home
Reports To	General Manager
Direct Reports	Production Crew, Festival Precinct Staff and Volunteers

Overview

As Australia’s largest regional writers festival, Byron Writers Festival attracts thousands of audiences annually to experience the best in literature and shared moments of human connection.

Byron Writers Festival is central to the literary, cultural and intellectual life of the Northern Rivers region and contributes to a vibrant arts sector nationally. We strive for a pioneering attitude to creativity, being a leader in the Australian arts community, accessible and inclusive programs, meaningful and enduring partnerships, and a responsible approach to the environment.

Through our vibrant year-round program, we celebrate writing and storytelling, engage audiences with new ideas, and enhance access to literature. We have four flagship areas of operation – the annual Byron Writers Festival, Academy workshops, mentorships and pathways for writers, StoryBoard creative writing programs for children, and year-round events, tours and Festival Friends membership program.

Role Purpose

The Production and Operations Manager is responsible for the end-to-end planning, delivery and oversight of all festival precincts, operations and production functions for the annual Byron Writers Festival.

Reporting to the General Manager, the role ensures the creation of high-quality, safe and inclusive festival environments that support world-class literary programming and exceptional audience, artist and stakeholder experiences.

The position requires strong operational leadership, meticulous attention to detail, and the ability to manage complex logistics within tight timeline

Key Responsibilities

- Lead all aspects of Festival precinct planning, infrastructure delivery and operational logistics in line with the approved festival budget and schedule.
- Oversee precinct site design, layout and theming, ensuring optimal accessibility and audience experience.
- Manage build, pack-down and daily event operations, ensuring timely, safe and efficient delivery.
- Coordinate temporary infrastructure including marquees, staging, technical production, power and network services, waste management and signage.
- Work with the General Manager to manage relationships with venues and relevant regulators.
- Coordinate all approvals, compliance documentation and risk management requirements including WHS, traffic management, fire safety, emergency plans and environmental compliance.
- Liaise with venue managers including the Cavanbah Centre, Haven, The Beach Hotel, Byron Surf Club, Byron Theatre and other partner locations.
- Work closely with the Development and Programming teams to ensure sponsor deliverables, programming requirements and artist logistics are met.
- Ensure production planning aligns with festival programming timelines, venue needs, exhibitor requirements and partner obligations.
- Facilitate clear communication across internal teams to support efficient festival operations.
- Recruit, roster, train and supervise production crew, technical crew, Festival precinct staff and volunteer teams.
- Provide onsite leadership during bump-in, festival delivery and bump-out, fostering a safe, positive and inclusive workplace culture.
- Ensure role clarity, workflow efficiency and effective delegation within the operations team.
- Develop and implement environmental sustainability measures and waste-reduction initiatives.
- Maintain strong focus on accessibility, universal design, audience comfort and weather contingency planning.
- Oversee creation and implementation of risk registers, incident procedures and safety briefings.
- Manage all onsite suppliers including, security, first aid, traffic management providers, car parking attendants and technical providers.
- Oversee and coordinate with marketplace provider, bump-in and out, partner stalls and installations, information booth, security and the festival bookseller.
- Ensure supplier contracts are delivered as agreed, resolving issues promptly and escalating as required.
- Maintain production schedules, operational timelines, run sheets and budget tracking documentation.
- Lead production meetings in the lead-up to the festival and provide clear communication to all stakeholders.
- Prepare a comprehensive post-event report including data, insights, issues, feedback and future recommendations.
- Participate in post-festival evaluation meetings.

Key Selection Criteria

Essential

- Outstanding written and verbal communication skills.
- Demonstrated leadership ability with experience managing teams in dynamic, time-pressured environments.
- Proven experience in event production, festival operations, venue or site management, preferably in a cultural or multi-site festival context.
- Strong organisational skills with the ability to plan, prioritise and manage competing deadlines.
- Experience with budgeting, supplier management and contract delivery.
- Sound knowledge of WHS and risk management processes for public events.
- High level of problem-solving skills and the ability to remain calm and solution-focused under pressure.
- Strong interpersonal and stakeholder management skills.

Desirable

- Experience working with local government, compliance bodies and community venues.
- Knowledge of environmental sustainability practices in events.
- Familiarity with the Northern Rivers arts community and local suppliers.
- Current driver's licence and willingness to perform physical tasks onsite when required.

Working Conditions: Some weekend, early morning and evening work required during festival period; onsite physical coordination is an essential component of the role.

Byron Writers Festival is committed to building an inclusive workplace environment. We encourage applications from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and people from underrepresented backgrounds. We know that many talented people only apply for jobs when there is an exact match. If you don't fit all the criteria but believe this role is for you, we would very much like to hear from you.