



Senior Program Manager (Independent Arts)

Position Description

Position	Senior Program Manager (Independent Arts)
Reporting to	Head of Programming / Deputy Creative Director
Position type	Full Time
Salary	\$76,000 per annum + superannuation
Direct Reports	4
Financial Delegation	\$3,000
Location	Carlton (with some remote work / work from home as negotiated)
Date of Preparation	14 March 2025

Position Purpose

To lead Melbourne Fringe's deep engagement with the independent arts sector by managing the suite of front-facing programs that underline Melbourne Fringe's commitment to cultural democracy.

Role Summary

The Senior Program Manager (Independent Arts) is a key management role that leads a team of arts managers, programmers and coordinators to deliver the Open Access Program, our artist engagement activities, and a range of accompanying projects designed to provide support and resources for independent artists and venues participating in Melbourne Fringe activities.

You will have a deep connection to the independent arts sector, and your broad knowledge of local presenting artists, arts organisations, and performance venues will assist you in managing all aspects of the Open Access Program and accompanying activities.

You will thrive in this artist-facing role, particularly when it comes to the essential support structures we strive to provide for Melbourne Fringe participants. You'll utilise your unique blend of experience across producing, programming and creative practice in order to support thousands of artists who present work in the Festival each year. You and your team will do this by managing every artist enquiry with care, precision, and expertise, as well as by developing new resources, creative workshops, and running professional development panels to deepen our participants' skills and knowledge.

You'll find unexpected joy in managing the complex artist and venue registration process and online resource platforms, because you'll be able to demonstrate your savvy technical skills. You'll also have a great opportunity to demonstrate your outstanding project management skills on a daily basis by leading the day-to-day management of the Fringe Fund, Marketplace, Awards, and Industry engagement programs.

About Melbourne Fringe

Melbourne Fringe democratises the arts. Our vision is cultural democracy – empowering anyone to realise their right to creative expression. We support the development and presentation of artworks by, with and for Melbourne's people, running the annual Melbourne Fringe Festival, the year-round venue Fringe Common Rooms at Trades Hall, and a range of arts sector leadership programs. We believe that access to the arts and creative expression are fundamental rights of our citizenship and vital to a creative, healthy, cohesive society.

Our Work Culture

Melbourne Fringe is a forward-thinking, creative and inclusive organisation. Our dreaming is out of the box, our work ethic is strong, and we don't let our limited resources stop us from making seemingly impossible things happen. We believe that great work is made by people who enjoy what they do. We are proud to have a diverse workplace that celebrates difference and encourages people to bring their whole selves to work with pride.

Fringe is a values-driven workplace characterised by big-picture thinking, optimism and playfulness. We have a reputation as a hard-working, caring, energetic, fast-paced workplace that values our people and their health and which brings them together socially for lunch, events and fun times.

You're the right fit for Melbourne Fringe if you are:

- Passionate about creativity and cultural equity
- Willing to support anyone to participate in the arts, regardless of their experience, age, gender, ability, sexuality, cultural background or artistic practice
- Excited by the challenge of making ambitious things happen on limited budgets
- Ready for personal and professional learning and continual improvement
- Into a collaborative and social work culture

Benefits of Working at Melbourne Fringe

Melbourne Fringe employees enjoy:

- A flexible work environment including regular work-from-home options (every Thursday, every second Tuesday, and at other times by negotiation)
- A glorious "no meetings" day every week
- Four Weeks' Accrued Annual Leave
- Best practice special leave entitlements including parental leave of up to 12 weeks' paid leave, and generous personal leave policies that cover physical and mental health, gender affirmation leave, cultural leave, menstrual and menopause leave and disability leave.
- An Employee Assistance Program counselling service
- A commitment to continuous learning, including sector-leading staff training and a personalised professional development plan which includes options for coaching, mentoring, networking, skills development and training. Staff also have the opportunity to participate in organisation-wide training and development sessions throughout the year.

Senior Program Manager (Independent Arts)

Here's a list of things you'll be responsible for:

Participant Services

- Maintain high level support for all artists, venues and other participants taking part in the Open Access Program
- Be the key point of contact for all participants, artists, staff, stakeholder and general public enquiries related to participation in the Open Access Program
- Coordinate the artist and venue registrations process, including contributing to the development of the registration system (Eventotron)
- Manage the event proofing process
- Maintain and build relationships with current and potential Festival venues to build positive two-way relationships and maximise opportunities for participants
- Coordinate Festival outreach activities, including the development of registration information sessions and other outreach and engagement projects

- Ensure the Festival's access initiatives are maximised, including supporting artists who are Deaf, Disabled or Neurodivergent, and ensure the accuracy of access information for venues and events across the Festival
- Ensure the administrative aspects of registrations and Festival participation are completed, such as public liability insurance, artist passes, and the collection and collation of marketing collateral
- Develop communication plans and disseminate correspondence to participants and venues through regular updates via email and social media groups

Artist Development

- Manage the open access callout process for the Fringe Fund commissions program
- Manage the Melbourne Fringe Artist Resource Hub and develop new artist resources which respond to the changing needs of Festival participants
- Manage professional and creative development activities for the independent arts sector, including roundtables, panel discussions and workshops
- Develop an information service to communicate artist opportunities, including researching, compiling and promoting external resources and development opportunities for artists
- Manage the Melbourne Fringe Tour Ready and Marketplace delegate programs
- Manage the Melbourne Fringe Awards program, maintain relationships with current awards partners and develop new partner relationships
- Collaborate on the development of a regional engagement program

Programming & Producing

- Maintain a high level of engagement with the Melbourne independent arts sector throughout the year, by attending shows and events to make connections with artists and build stronger relationships with the sector
- Contribute to the administration and programming of Fringe Programmed Venues and key showcase events across the Festival (such as Club Fringe, Fringe Flavours and Fringe Unplugged)
- Contribute to selection panels and decision-making processes for open call programming and commission considerations
- Collaborate with senior staff to attend interstate or international partner festivals to select Melbourne Fringe touring award winners
- Provide higher level producing advice and assistance with finding and negotiating venues for artists in the Open Access program from time to time, where appropriate
- Support the planning, design and delivery of Fringe Programmed Venues
- Assist with the producing of in-house events from time to time, such as the Program Launch and the Closing Night Party

Project Management and Leadership

- Manage a team of staff who will support the delivery of your focus areas
- Be the primary manager for key projects that support the independent sector (including Registrations, Participant Services, Industry & Awards, and Sector Engagement)
- Be a supervising manager for projects led by staff who report through to you (including Venue Programming, Club Fringe, Special Events, and Access Fringe)
- Manage the workflow of your team, ensuring they are meeting key project milestones while working within their capacity
- Contribute to statistics reporting and the broader strategic program evaluation processes
- Represent Melbourne Fringe at events, panels, and guest lectures, from time to time and where appropriate

General

- Actively contribute to upholding best practice cultural safety for all Melbourne Fringe staff, artists, volunteers, audiences and other stakeholders.

- Engage fully in the Melbourne Fringe Festival, which by the nature of the Festival may mean extended hours and expanded duties during the Festival period (followed by some well-earned days off in lieu).
- Attend where required festivals, events, shows, exhibitions, industry gatherings and philanthropic activities and events throughout the year.
- Undertake a personalised professional development program
- Other duties as agreed with the Head of Programming & Deputy Creative Director, acknowledging that jobs evolve to meet the changing needs of the arts environment, and this document is an overview and not intended to represent the role performed in perpetuity.
- The successful applicant will be required to undergo a Working with Children Check as a condition of employment with Melbourne Fringe. We will cover the cost of this check.

Here are the skills and attributes you need to bring*:

- Passion for the work of Melbourne Fringe
- Resilience and ability to work effectively under pressure
- A thorough understanding of the needs of independent producers and self-presenting artists
- Well-developed project management, administrative and problem-solving skills in an arts management context
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, and a meticulous attention to detail
- A sense of humour

** If you don't yet have all of the experience, know that Melbourne Fringe is a workplace that values ongoing skills development, mentoring and training.*

Our commitment to cultural equity

Melbourne Fringe has a deep commitment to cultural equity, and we strongly encourage applications from people who identify as First Nations, Deaf, disabled, people of colour, queer, transgender and gender-diverse people, as well as people with caring responsibilities. We celebrate people's differences.

We know sometimes people – especially those from more marginalised groups – might feel under-qualified for a job or like you might not belong. If that's you, we especially welcome you – Fringe is a place that supports and up-skills people as they're learning on the job.

If this application format isn't accessible for you, please get in touch and let us know what alternative format would suit you best. Upon engagement, we can work with disabled staff to consider reasonable workplace adjustments to ensure access needs are met. If you have any questions about accessibility, please contact Carly Findlay, Access Advisor, on (03) 9660 9600 or carly@melbournefringe.com.au.

Please advise us of any pre-existing injuries or conditions that may arise that might inhibit you in the physical requirements of the position, or any other access needs that you might have.