



BYRON WRITERS FESTIVAL

VOLUNTEER EVENT TEAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I'd like to volunteer at the Byron Writers Festival in 2017 – what's the process?

Key Dates

MAY 1

Our Volunteer application process opens and may be completed online at: www.byronwritersfestival.com/volunteer

MAY 26

The application process closes.

If you do not receive a confirmation of application within two weeks of the cut off date, please check your junk mail. If still no luck, email the Volunteer Coordinator (volunteer@byronwritersfestival.com) to confirm your application was received.

MID JUNE

The Volunteer Coordinator will be in contact via email to advise you as to whether or not your application has been successful and whether you would like to go on the wait list should a position arise.

Due to the extremely high volume of applications, we are unable to provide individual feedback on your application results.

Rosters are determined by volunteer availability, experience and skill set and the best fit with Festival requirements.

LATE JUNE - EARLY JULY

Draft Rosters will be created and disseminated to successful applicants for confirmation. Volunteer agreements signed and returned.

JULY 29

Compulsory Orientation and Safety Meeting on site for all volunteers.

What are the key dates for Festival Volunteer Team Requirements?

| WHAT | 31 July | 1 Aug | 2 Aug | 3 Aug | 4 Aug | 5 Aug | 6 Aug |
|----------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| School Days | | Schools Day Murwillumbah & Lismore | Schools Day Byron Bay | Schools Day Ballina | | | |
| Workshops | workshops | workshops | workshops | workshops | | | |
| Secondary School Day | | | | Secondary Schools Day | | | |
| Evening Events | | | | Evening Event | Feature Event | Feature Event | |
| Festival Weekend | | | | | FESTIVAL | FESTIVAL | FESTIVAL |

The Festival Weekend runs from Friday 4 August until Sunday 6 August.

Our Workshop Program runs from Monday 31 July until Thursday 3 August.

Our Primary School Program runs from Tuesday 1 August until Thursday 3 August.

Our Secondary School Program is on Thursday 3 August.

Evening events are generally Thursday to Saturday of the Festival Week 3-5 August.

How old do volunteers need to be?

Volunteers are required to be a minimum of 18 years old.

Are there any selection criteria to be a Volunteer at Byron WF?

A love of books, ideas, reading, writing and festivals is a great start.

Our volunteer event team is friendly, reliable, punctual, flexible and are team players.

AS A MINIMUM, we require our volunteers to commit to two FIVE HOUR shifts across two days.

Priority of allocations is given to returning volunteers and to those able to volunteer for more than the minimum two shifts.

Rosters are determined by volunteer availability, experience and festival requirements.

You must also be available to attend the Volunteer Safety and Orientation Briefing on Saturday 29 July, even if you have been a volunteer for the BW Festival in the past.

Is the Volunteer Safety and Orientation briefing compulsory?

Yes. This briefing supplies the critical Work Health & Safety information, allows you to become familiar with the Festival site, gives you the opportunity to meet your team and be briefed by your shift supervisor, as well as providing you with your volunteer T-shirt.

Do I require any qualifications to be a festival volunteer?

Our volunteers have a variety of qualifications and skills; the common factor is that they are keen to be involved with the Festival and work towards the goal of assisting to bring a successful Festival to Byron Bay. However, there are some specialised roles that require certain skills and experience.

What sort of roles are available as a volunteer?

The application form will ask you to tell us your skills in the following areas and will also ask you to select your top three role preferences. There are no guarantees that you will get your preferences as rosters will be determined by availability, experience and festival requirements.

- Office Administration
- Front of House & Ushers
- Ticketing and Gate Control
- Box Office
- Conducting Surveys
- Workshop Assistant
- Volunteer Assistant Coordinator
- Venue Manager
- Master of Ceremonies (MC)
- Hospitality
- Site Assistant/Bump In/Bump Out - some heavy lifting
- Parking and traffic management
- Kids Big Day Out Volunteer

If you have particular talents or work experience that suit a certain role, please note this on the application form when we ask about your 'previous experience' and 'related skills'. If there is something you can offer that is not on the list, please let us know! Think about how your skills may transfer into a festival setting.

What are the specialised roles that require certain skills and experience?

- Primary school days involve presentations by some of Australia's best-loved children's authors at various venues around the Northern Rivers. Preference for Schools Days is given to those applicants with previous experience and who hold a Working with Children's Check Certificate. <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check>
- If you wish to work a coffee machine you need to have barista training.
- To serve alcohol, an RSA is required. Hospitality Service Staff for the Opening Night Event (3 August) need to be confident with tray service, fast and able workers, and be physically mobile.
- For marquee supervisors/venue coordinators who will be managing volunteer staff, leadership and previous Byron WF experience is required. These roles are open to experienced Festival Volunteers (ByronWF or other festivals) and/or require approval from the Volunteer Coordinator.
- To assist with bump in and site assistance, you need to be mobile, physically fit and able to do heavy lifting. eg. Parking/Signage/Marquee/Decor/Sponsor or Markets setup.
- The survey team conduct customer research with Festival patrons. A brief training session for the survey team will be held beforehand (date to be advised). Volunteers for this role must be confident, friendly and self motivated.
- To be a Master of Ceremonies, you need to be a quick thinker, a confident public speaker, an excellent time keeper. Some knowledge and experience of stage management would be preferred.
- The Writers' Green Room is HQ for the guest authors. This role is suitable for experienced Festival Volunteers who are familiar with how the festival works.
- Volunteer HQ: The Volunteer Assistant Coordinator will greet and register volunteers at shift start, pass on briefings at shift change, and inform the Volunteer Coordinator of any gaps in the roster. Volunteers for this role must have excellent communications skills, emotional intelligence, ability to work under pressure, problem-solving skills.

What if my availability changes after I have submitted my application but it is BEFORE the cut off date?

When considering your availability on the application form, please check and double-check your calendar. Try to be realistic about how much time commitment you can manage.

If your plans change in the meantime, please break our hearts quickly rather than slowly.

A change of availability form will be available at www.byronwritersfestival.com/volunteer and you can update your availability there.

Once the cut off date has arrived, the rosters will be created. As you can imagine it takes a lot of time and careful consideration to match over 200 volunteers across the Festival.

If my availability changes AFTER the cut off date, what do I do?

Please advise the Volunteer Coordinator ASAP so your shift can be re-allocated.

Emails should read CANCEL MY SHIFT OR SHIFT CHANGE in subject heading with your name.

I have some health or mobility restrictions. Will I be able to volunteer?

Yes, absolutely. We aim to be as inclusive as possible. We will endeavour to find a role that will suit your restrictions. Please advise us of your restrictions in the online application so that we may cater for your abilities.

What if I am from Interstate?

There are only very limited positions available for those travelling from interstate. Byron WF does not cover travel or accommodation costs. If you are flying home on the Sunday afternoon, please choose shifts that allow you time to get to the airport etc.

What does the festival provide to its volunteers?

The chance to be involved in a vibrant, literary cultural event.

As a volunteer you will receive a position description outlining your duties, orientation, insurance for your rostered shift, and less experienced volunteers will be allocated a supervisor.

You are provided free parking and lunch for the day that you are rostered. We also have a wonderful volunteer Facebook Group which can assist in carpooling.

Volunteers are provided with a T-Shirt as well as an opportunity to attend the Festival on the day of their shift, either before or after their shift. These Passes are not transferable and are not redeemable for cash.

A thank you party will be held for volunteers at our Centre after the Festival.

Is there a uniform for volunteering?

Volunteers are provided with a volunteer team T-shirt, which must be worn while on duty. If the weather is cold we suggest wearing the T-Shirt over a long sleeved shirt so as not to cover up the Festival T-shirt which identifies you as a volunteer.

Once you have received confirmation of your acceptance as a Byron WF Volunteer you will be asked to complete an online T-Shirt order form.

You haven't answered my question specifically, what can I do?

Please email volunteer@byronwritersfestival.com