

Volunteer FAQ

Byron Writers Festival 2021

I'd like to volunteer at the 2021 Festival. What's the process?

Monday, May 3

- Our volunteer applications open and may be completed online at <http://byronwritersfestival.com/get-involved/volunteer/>

Friday, May 28

- The application process closes.

Mid-June

- The Volunteer Coordinator will be in contact via email to advise if your application has been successful. Please also check your junk mail and add volunteer@byronwritersfestival.com to your contacts.
- Please note that due to the 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 to best meet Festival requirements.

Early July

- Roles and rosters will be confirmed and sent to successful applicants.

Saturday, 31 July

- Compulsory Volunteer Orientation and Safety Meeting on site for all volunteers.
- Volunteer agreements signed and returned.

What are the key dates for Festival Volunteer requirements?

- The Festival Weekend runs from Friday 6 August - Sunday 8 August.
- Our Workshop Program runs from Monday 2 August - Thursday 5 August.
- Our Secondary School Program runs on Thursday 5 August.
- Our Primary School Program runs from Monday 9 August - Wednesday 11 August. (Please note that this year, the Primary School Program is after the Festival.)
- Satellite Events run from Friday 6 August - Sunday 8 August.

When will I know if my application is successful?

The Volunteer Coordinator will email you to confirm if you have been successful by mid-June. If you are not successful in the first round of offers you may remain on the contact list as a stand-by in case positions become available.

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 Writers Festival?

- A love of books, ideas, reading, writing and festivals is a great start.
- Our volunteers are friendly, reliable, punctual, flexible and are team players.
- As a minimum, we require our volunteers to commit to 2 x 5 hour shifts.
- 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 be available to attend the Volunteer Safety and Orientation Briefing on Saturday 31 July, even if you have been a volunteer for the Byron Writers Festival in the past.

Is the Volunteer Orientation briefing compulsory?

Yes. This briefing covers essential Workplace 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 Team Leader, and you will receive your volunteer t-shirt.

Do I require any qualifications to be a festival volunteer?

Our volunteers come from many walks of life and have varied qualifications and skills; the common factor is that you are all keen to be involved, and work towards the goal of bringing a successful Festival to Byron Bay. However, there are some specialised roles that require specific skills and experience.

What sort of roles are available as a volunteer?

The application form will ask about your skills and experience and give the option to select your top three role preferences. While we make every effort to match volunteers with their choices, there are no guarantees as rosters are determined by availability, experience and festival requirements.

Here is a sample of the roles on offer:

- Office Administration (pre-festival)
- Site Assistant / Bump-in / Bump-out (involves some heavy lifting)
- Partnership & Sponsorship assistants
- Hospitality
- Schools Days & Kids Big Day Out
- Workshop Assistants
- Satellite Events Assistants
- Ticketing and Gates
- Green Team - Recycling
- Venue Supervisors
- Ushers
- Stage Managers
- Author Liaisons

- Accessibility Assistants
- Covid-Safety Team
- Parking and Traffic Management
- Volunteer Registration
- Information Booth
- Greenroom

If you have particular talents or work experience that suit a certain role, please note this on the application form. 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. You must hold a Working with Children's Check for these roles. <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check>
- If you wish to work a coffee machine you must have professional barista training.
- To serve alcohol, a current NSW RSA is required. Hospitality service staff for the Opening Night Event need be confident with tray service, fast and able workers, and be physically mobile.
- For Venue Supervisors and Team Leaders who will be managing volunteer staff, leadership and previous Byron Writers Festival experience is required. These roles are vital in managing the smooth operation and wellbeing of the teams. They are open to experienced Festival volunteers (Byron Writers Festival or other events) and are subject to the approval of the Volunteer Coordinator.
- To assist with Bump-in and site assistance, you need to be mobile, physically fit and able to do heavy lifting.
- The Greenroom is the preparation and relaxation area for Festival guests and presenters. Roles in the Greenroom are for experienced Festival volunteers who are familiar with the event operations, are professional, reliable and calm.

What if my availability changes after I have submitted my application but BEFORE applications close on 28 May?

Please check your schedule prior to application. If your plans do change, email volunteer@byronwritersfestival.com by 28 May, with 'Availability Change' in the subject heading as soon as possible.

If my availability changes AFTER the applications close on 28 May, what should I do?

Please advise the Volunteer Coordinator ASAP volunteer@byronwritersfestival.com Label your subject heading with your name and 'Availability Change' or 'Cancel Application'.

Please note that any changes made once rosters are created causes a great deal of work and may affect a number of fellow volunteers.

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 you. Please advise us of any restrictions in the online application so that we may cater for your abilities.

I am from interstate, can I apply?

Volunteer positions are open to locals and interstate visitors. All volunteers are responsible for their own transportation and accommodation and are expected to commit to the shifts and roles assigned as per the roster.

What if my plans are affected by COVID-related restrictions?

- If you can no longer carry out your volunteer role due to having flu-like symptoms, please contact the Volunteers Coordinator ASAP. If you do not fulfil your shifts, your Festival pass exchange will be forfeited.
- If you are travelling to the Festival and can't attend due to travel and quarantine restrictions, or border closures, please contact the Volunteers Coordinator ASAP so that your role may be filled. We'll miss you, and hope to see you in 2022!

What does the festival provide to its volunteers?

- The chance to be involved in a vibrant, literary cultural event.
- You will receive a clear role description, shifts and any training required for your volunteer position.
- All volunteers will receive a Workplace Health & Safety and site induction at the Volunteer Orientation Day.
- Light refreshments are provided for volunteers for each shift of the Festival weekend. Pre-festival and offsite roles will need to cater for their own food and beverage needs.
- You'll receive a limited-edition Byron Writers Festival 2021 Volunteer t-shirt to be worn whilst on shift and to take home afterwards.
- An opportunity to attend the festival in exchange for your volunteer work.
- An invitation to the post-festival Volunteer Thank You Party
- A great sense of being part of a fab team, the chance to make new friends and a wonderful, warm volunteer experience.

Will I receive a Festival Pass in exchange for volunteering?

Volunteers receive Byron Writers Festival passes in exchange for work.

You may attend the festival prior to and/or after your rostered shifts. If you work a full day, you will receive another day's pass in exchange.

Workshop assistants may participate in the assigned workshop but do not receive a festival ticket.

Pre-festival, Post-festival, Schools Days and Satellite Event volunteer work accrues hours towards various passes depending on the type and amount of work. The exchange will be clarified with confirmation of your role and roster.

Will my food and travel costs be reimbursed?

No. However, parking is free for our volunteers. The Solar Train and a shuttle bus will be in operation from Byron Bay town centre. Carpooling is a wonderful way to get to the site and meet fellow volunteers. Join the Facebook group for Volunteers to connect and organise <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bbwfvolunteers/>

Light refreshments will be provided for volunteers each day of your rostered shifts. Please ensure you have lunch, adequate snacks and sustenance, a water bottle and are prepared for any specific dietary requirements.

Is there a uniform for volunteering?

Volunteers are provided with a Byron Writers Festival volunteer team t-shirt, which must be worn whilst on duty. If the weather is cold, we suggest wearing a long-sleeved shirt under your volunteer t-shirt.

Do I need to tell you my t-shirt size?

Yes. Please tell us your t-shirt size in your application. T-shirts are distributed at the Volunteer Orientation Day according to the sizing you nominate at time of application. Late applicants or those who do not attend the Orientation Day are not guaranteed their requested fit. Please select size carefully, we cannot swap your selection after ordering.

Can I do more than the minimum of two shifts?

Yes, absolutely. Most roles are assigned three shifts, one per each day of the festival. Volunteers able to do more than the minimum shifts are given priority.

If my application is unsuccessful, can I still attend the festival?

If you are not successful as a volunteer this year, you are welcome to purchase a ticket to attend. We will only be selling 1-Day Passes this year, no 3-Day Passes and no early-bird discounts. Full program announced and all tickets on sale from 23 June.

Have another question?

Please email volunteer@byronwritersfestival.com