FESTIVAL MANAGED VENUES INFO PACK

August 2026

FESTIVAL MANAGED VENUES

Melbourne International Comedy Festival hires, fits out and staffs a suite of customised venues within the Melbourne CBD for the Festival season, referred to as Festival Managed Venues. These account for roughly 20% of participating performances spaces across a season. Available venues can change from year to year, but have included Melbourne Town Hall, Max Watt's, Trades Hall, The Victoria Hotel, The Westin Melbourne, Chinese Museum, Swiss Club, The Capitol, Arts Centre Melbourne and ACMI.

If you apply for and secure a Festival Managed Venue (FMV), your venue rental will cover sound, lighting, staging and seating as well as the necessary technical stage management/operators. Venues are fully staffed with front of house attendants and many venues also have dedicated box office staff (where there is no dedicated box office, front of house staff will sell tickets to any walk-up patrons).

You will be responsible for all creative aspects of your show as well as all marketing and publicity. Posters and digital signage opportunities at and within FMVs are only available to shows in the FMV program.

This info pack provides information on the suite of venues and performance spaces for the 2027 Festival Managed Venues program. Please use the links below to find detailed information about each venue, including technical information and plans. To view detailed information for all venues at a glance click here.

If you have any questions regarding the Festival's FMV program, please email registration@comedyfestival.com.au.

ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE

Arts Centre Melbourne is Australia's largest performing arts complex, housing a multitude of performance spaces; Hamer Hall, State Theatre, Playhouse and Fairfax Studio to name a few.

There are three performances spaces at Arts Centre Melbourne managed by the Festival:

- ***The Fairfax Studio – 376 Cap***
- ***The Show Room – 150 Cap***
- ***Member's Lounge – 105 Cap***

Click here for Arts Centre Melbourne venue specs

The Fairfax Studio is ticketed through the Arts Centre's in-house ticketing system (Tessitura). The Show Room and Member's Lounge are ticketed through the Festival's ticketing service (Red61).

Front of House and Box Office staff are included in venue rental, as well as the minimum number of technical staff required by the venue. One three-hour technical rehearsal is included in your venue hire. Arts Centre Melbourne also provide additional marketing opportunities (social, EDM, website promotions, plus paid signage opportunities) through their channels to shows programmed in their venues. The Arts Centre also houses a number of hospitality offerings for audiences.

If you are interested in using Hamer Hall, State Theatre or the Playhouse please contact the Arts Centre directly or visit: artscentremelbourne.com.au/hire-our-spaces/plan-your-show.

Arts Centre Melbourne
100 St Kilda Road
Southbank

ACMI

ACMI is Australia's national museum of screen culture, located in Fed Square, Melbourne. ACMI hosts year-round exhibitions and cinema screenings, along with industry and education programs.

There are two performance spaces at ACMI:

- ***Gandel Lab – 87 Cap***
- ***Swinburne Studio – 130 Cap***

Click here for ACMI venue specs

ACMI is ticketed through the Festival's ticketing system (Red61). Front of House and Box Office staff are included in venue rental, as well as the minimum number of technical staff required by the venue. One three-hour technical rehearsal is included in your venue hire.

Spaces are programmed with kids and family friendly shows during the day across the two-week school holidays, and an evening program across the Festival dates.

In the evenings, ACMI also provides a pop-up bar for audiences.

ACMI
Fed Square
Melbourne

THE CHINESE MUSEUM

The Chinese Museum (or Museum of Chinese Australian History), is in a historic building in the heart of Melbourne's Chinatown, and has been a central offering as part of the Festival's FMV program since 2017. The Museum offers exhibitions, events and public programs year round to enrich the understanding of Chinese Australians' history, heritage and culture.

There are three performances spaces at the Chinese Museum:

- ***Silk Room – 102 Cap***
- ***Jade Room – 52 Cap***
- ***Tea Room – 39 Cap***

Click here for The Chinese Museum venue specs

The Chinese Museum is ticketed through the Festival's ticketing system (Red61). Front of House are included in venue rental, as well as the minimum number of technical staff required by the venue. Whilst there is not a dedicated box office at the venue, Front of House staff are able to sell tickets on the door to walk-up patrons. One three-hour technical rehearsal is included in your venue hire.

A pop-up bar in the entry museum space is provided.

The Chinese Museum
22 Cohen Place
Melbourne

FORTYFIVEDOWNSTAIRS

fortyfivedownstairs operates year-round as a theatre and gallery space showcasing independent visual art, theatre and music. Located in the south east of the CBD, it's one of the Festival's newest additions to the Festival Managed Venues program, and is in close proximity to the Swiss Club, and a short walk from Melbourne Town Hall.

There is one performance spaces at fourtyfivedownstairs:

- ***fortyfivedownstairs – 164 Cap***

Click here for fortyfivedownstairs venue specs

fortyfivedownstairs is ticketed through the Festival's ticketing system (Red61). Front of House staff are included in venue rental, as well as the minimum number of technical staff required by the venue. Whilst there is not a dedicated box office at the venue, Front of House staff are able to sell tickets on the door to walk-up patrons. One three-hour technical rehearsal is included in your venue hire.

A dedicated pop-up bar is provided for patrons.

fortyfivedownstairs
45 Flinders Lane
Melbourne

MAX WATT'S

Max Watt's is a central Melbourne International Comedy Festival venue, located in a basement bar and gig space in the heart of the CBD, opposite Melbourne Town Hall. Max Watt's presents music programs year-round and has been a Festival Managed Venue for over 20 years.

Max Watt's is also home to the much-loved Festival Club, showcasing artists with different late-night line-ups and themed events across the Festival. Max Watt's mezzanine space is also an industry only bar for Festival participants, open late into the evening.

There is one performance spaces at Max Watt's:

- ***Max Watt's – 382 Cap***

Click here for Max Watt's venue specs

Max Watt's is ticketed through the Festival's ticketing system (Red61). Front of House staff are included in venue rental, as well as the minimum number of technical staff required by the venue. Whilst there is not a dedicated box office at the venue, directly across the road is the Festival's main Box Office, providing easy access for patrons to purchase tickets within an earshot of the venue. One three-hour technical rehearsal is included in your venue hire.

Max Watt's provides two bars, one in the upstairs mezzanine space, and one in the performance space, for patrons.

Max Watt's
125 Swanston Street
Melbourne

MELBOURNE MUSEUM

Located in Carlton Gardens, adjacent to the Royal Exhibition Building and IMAX, the Melbourne Museum is a natural and cultural history museum and one of the State's most popular tourist attractions. The Museum is open every day excluding Christmas and Good Friday with exhibitions and interactive and education programs.

There is one performance space at Melbourne Museum

- ***Melbourne Museum Theatre – 214 Cap***

Click here for Melbourne Museum venue specs

Melbourne Museum is ticketed through the Festival's ticketing system (Red61). Front of House and Box Office staff are included in venue rental, as well as the minimum number of technical staff required by the venue. One three-hour technical rehearsal is included in your venue hire.

Spaces are programmed with kids and family friendly shows during the day across the two-week school holidays only.

Melbourne Museum also houses a number of hospitality offerings for patrons.

Melbourne Museum
Nicholson Street
Carlton

MELBOURNE TOWN HALL

Melbourne Town Hall is an iconic and historic working civic building in the heart of the CBD and the central hub of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival. Melbourne Town Hall was the first venue hub established by the Festival in 1995 and the Festival's largest Festival Managed Venue. The Festival's Main Box Office is located outside Melbourne Town Hall.

There are ten performances spaces across four levels at the Melbourne Town Hall:

- ***Main Hall – 1,434 Cap***
- ***Lower Town Hall – 318 Cap***
- ***Supper Room – 294 Cap***
- ***Powder Room – 127 Cap***
- ***Cloak Room – 114 Cap***
- ***Portrait Room – 161 Cap***
- ***Lunch Room – 48 Cap***
- ***Flag Room – 64 Cap***
- ***Backstage Room – 58 Cap***
- ***Paul's Place – 50 Cap***

Click here for Melbourne Town Hall venue specs

Melbourne Town Hall is ticketed through the Festival's ticketing system (Red61). Front of House and Box Office staff are included in venue rental, as well as the minimum number of technical staff required by the venue. One three-hour technical rehearsal is included in your venue hire.

Spaces are programmed with kids and family friendly shows during the day across the two-week school holidays, and an evening program across the Festival dates.

There are multiple full-service bars, last chance bars and pop-up bars throughout the venue, across all levels.

Melbourne Town Hall
100 Swanston Street
Melbourne

SWISS CLUB

The Swiss Club was established over a century ago and has called this historic building in Flinders Lane home for over 50 years. On the first floor of the Club is Edelwyss Bistro & Bar, with the performance space located on the second floor. Short walking distance to Melbourne Town Hall, the Swiss Club has been part of the Festival Managed Venues Program for over 20 years.

There is one performance space at the Swiss Club:

- ***Swiss Club – 154 Cap***

Click here for Swiss Club venue specs

The Swiss Club is ticketed through the Festival's ticketing system (Red61). Front of House staff are included in venue rental, as well as the minimum number of technical staff required by the venue. Whilst there is not a dedicated box office at the venue, Front of House staff are able to sell tickets on the door to walk-up patrons. One three-hour technical rehearsal is included in your venue hire.

Edelwyss Bistro & Bar is open prior to and post-show for patrons.

The venue has constraints for patrons with access requirements and as such is listed as non-accessible. Solutions can be provided to provide managed access on an as needed basis.

Swiss Club
89 Flinders Lane
Melbourne

TRADES HALL

The northern hub of the Festival Managed Venues Program is Trades Hall, located just on the outskirt of the CBD. Headquarters of the Victorian Trades Hall Council, it's the world's oldest trade union hall, and the Festival's second biggest Festival Managed Venue hub.

There are eight performances spaces across Trades Hall:

- ***ETU Ballroom – 201 Cap***
- ***Solidarity Hall – 181 Cap***
- ***Common Room Bar – 120 Cap***
- ***Meeting Room – 80 Cap***
- ***Archive Room – 51 Cap***
- ***Quilt Room – 89 Cap***
- ***Music Room – 79 Cap***
- ***Gabhada Balit – 43 Cap***

Click here for Trades Hall venue specs

Trades Hall is ticketed through the Festival's ticketing system (Red61). Front of House and Box Office staff are included in venue rental, as well as the minimum number of technical staff required by the venue. One three-hour technical rehearsal is included in your venue hire.

The covered "loading dock" space of the building is converted into a full service bar space for patrons pre- and post-show.

Trades Hall
Corner Lygon & Victoria Streets
Carlton

THE VICTORIA HOTEL

The Victoria Hotel is a heritage hotel in the heart of Melbourne's CBD, situated next door to Melbourne Town Hall, the Festival's main hub, and accessed via Little Collins Street.
The Victoria Hotel has been a Festival venue since 2000.

There are three performances spaces at The Victoria Hotel:

- ***Banquet Room – 219 Cap***
- ***Acacia Room – 69 Cap***
- ***Boardroom – 66 Cap***

Click here for The Victoria Hotel venue specs

The Victoria Hotel is ticketed through the Festival's ticketing system (Red61). Front of House and Box Office staff are included in venue rental, as well as the minimum number of technical staff required by the venue. One three-hour technical rehearsal is included in your venue hire.

The Victoria Hotel also houses a number of hospitality offerings for audiences, plus a pop-up bar for Festival patrons in the lobby.

The Victoria Hotel
215 Little Collins Street
Melbourne

THE WESTIN MELBOURNE

The Westin Melbourne is located in the heart of the CBD, on the footstep of Swanston Street, adjacent to City Square, the newly build Town Hall Station and across the road from the Festival's central Melbourne Town Hall hub. The Westin offers 5-staff accommodation and hospitality offerings for visitors to Melbourne (and locals alike).

There are four performances spaces at The Westin Melbourne:

- ***Westin One – 139 Cap***
- ***Westin Two – 84 Cap***
- ***Westin Three – 102 Cap***
- ***Westin Four – 44 Cap***

Click here for The Westin Melborne venue specs

The Westin Melbourne is ticketed through the Festival's ticketing system (Red61). Front of House and Box Office staff are included in venue rental, as well as the minimum number of technical staff required by the venue. One three-hour technical rehearsal is included in your venue hire.

The Westin Melbourne also houses a number of hospitality offerings for audiences, plus a pop-up bar for Festival patrons outside performances spaces.

The Westin Melbourne
205 Collins Street
Melbourne