

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position title	Venue Program Manager
Employer	Melbourne International Comedy Festival
Inherent physical requirements	An inherent physical requirements profile for this role is enclosed
Position reports	Program Assistant - TBC
Contract duration	Full time fixed term contract (September 2026 – May 2027)

Melbourne International Comedy Festival

Melbourne International Comedy Festival is one of the world's great comedy festivals and one of Australia's largest and most loved cultural events.

Conceived to promote the comedic arts in Australia, the Melbourne International Comedy Festival has earned its global reputation through creative, eclectic programming. The organisation is active year-round with national and international touring, educational and artistic development programs, and digital content creation, all complementing the presentation of the annual four-week festival.

Melbourne International Comedy Festival staff contribute as a team to the production of the Festival and have the opportunity for input in a variety of areas. An ability to communicate effectively and collaborate in a way that enables efficient and professional delivery of all aspects of the Festival's operations is essential.

Position objectives

The Venue Program Manager is responsible for (in consultation with the CEO/Festival Director & programming team) confirming and managing the program of seasons and events that fill the suite of Festival Managed Venues (FMVs). The role undertakes research and makes recommendations as required, ensuring that the relevant teams are aware of technical requirements that may impact the fit of artists in certain venues. The role works with the senior programming team on venue curation and is responsible for venue contracting and ensuring up to date schedules are regularly disseminated. The role supports as required the registration process for FMV events and coordinates event data for the Festival guide and website.

The position also acts as the primary liaison person between the Festival and the artists and producers presenting events in FMVs. As the primary contact, the role is responsible for facilitating effective communication between artists/producers and the FMV operations team – ensuring the delivery of a smoothly operating FMV program including venue & Front of House management, the technical & production team, ticketing and box office staff, marketing and website staff as well as the broader Festival team.

Successfully delivery of the role includes working closely with the Technical Director, Ticketing Manager and the Venues Manager to deliver an efficiently run program in well serviced venues; managing expectations and supporting operational strategies and codes of conduct, while engendering positive relationships between all stakeholders.

Key relationships

Internal

- CEO/Festival Director & MICF Leadership Team
- Program Managers and Programming Team
- Production Managers and production team
- Venues Manager and Festival venues team
- Ticketing Manager and Festival ticketing team
- Marketing and partnership team
- Finance team

External

- Independent artists, producers, managers, presenters and venues
- FMV venue operators including (but not limited to) Melbourne Town Hall, Trades Hall, Victoria Hotel, Chinese Museum, Max Watt's, Swiss Club, ACMI, The Westin and Arts Centre Melbourne
- Arts industry peers

Key Responsibilities

- Manage the formal EOI process regarding the FMV program.
- Support the CEO/Festival Director in confirming the FMV program.
- Provide information and advice to artists and producers seeking to secure an FMV slot. Ensure venue resource packs are up to date and appropriately informative.
- Ensure applications are distributed to the programming team for review and in consultation with their manager confirm the FMV program.
- Consult with Technical Director and Production Managers where required to ensure shows fit venue technical limitations. Keep informed as to venue technical capacities so that shows are placed appropriately.
- Communicate with unsuccessful applicants in a timely manner to ensure they have sufficient time to source an alternative venue.
- Communicate with promoters and artists in relation to deals and contracts.
- Ensure all personnel operating in FMV's including staff, visiting producing teams and artists have received and agreed to comply with the Festival's Codes of Conduct in regard to workplace safety.
- Produce and distribute FMV schedules, keep updated throughout the Festival and ensure changes are communicated promptly to all relevant departments.
- Create, distribute and ensure the return of signed FMV contacts.
- Ensure payment of venue deposits (where required) and the provision of public liability insurance certificates prior to the commencement of technical rehearsals.
- Attend production meetings and provide information regarding FMV shows as required by ticketing, venues and production departments.
- Assist the Technical Director to facilitate weekly Operations Meetings during the Festival delivery period (February to May).
- Ensure relevant staff are fully informed regarding actions arising from Operations Meetings so that issues are resolved promptly.
- Alert the CEO/Festival Director, Technical Director and programming team promptly regarding any issues or occurrences that may cause, safety or reputational risks to the Festival or any staff, artists, producers or other stakeholders.
- Ensure all FMV show registration details are correct prior to print deadlines and prior to show pages going live on the Festival website.
- In collaboration with the ticketing team, ensure all FMV show ticket builds are correct and tickets are on sale within any timeframes set by the programming team.
- Contribute to development and implementation of risk and crisis management strategies with Technical Director, CEO/Festival Director and Risk Management Consultant.
- Alert the CEO/Festival Director and Technical Director promptly regarding any issues or occurrences that may cause, safety or reputational risks to the Festival or any staff, artists, producers or other stakeholders.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of accessibility strategies with Venues Manager and other relevant staff.
- Ensure correct company and banking information is available to Finance Managers to ensure timely box office settlements post-Festival. Assist with the settlement process including confirming recharges and venue rentals.

General

- Provide a warm and welcoming service to our artists and producers.
- Represent Melbourne Comedy Festival publicly as required and be a strong and articulate advocate for the Festival.

- Attend the office during regular office hours as well as at other times as instructed or required. During the busiest time of the year (January to April) considerable weekend and evening work is unavoidable. The salary takes hours of work into consideration and remunerates for the work necessary to fulfil the duties of the position.
- Submit a written report on completion of the contract summarising achievements, challenges, recommendations, data and statistical information and file paths to key documents relevant to the role.
- Other duties as reasonably required from time to time by management.

Selection criteria for the position

1. Familiarity with Australia's comedy industry and community and understanding and appreciation of the art of comedy.
1. Outstanding communication skills and personal presentation.
2. Advanced experience in planning, project management and implementation, including in festival environments. Ability to review, analyse and suggest system refinement.
3. Demonstrated experience in leading staff.
4. Established skills in relevant IT systems and databases including troubleshooting and coaching users.
5. Ticketing, copywriting and editing ability all an advantage. Attention to detail crucial.

Personal attributes and desired experience

- Excellent personal presentation, and proven high standard of oral and written communication skills.
- Ability to work efficiently and calmly under pressure in a busy environment.
- Ability to deal with variety of stakeholders.
- Willingness to take direction and work as part of a team.
- Willingness to work in a festival cycle that involves work outside standard business hours.
- Patience, energy and a sense of humour.

INHERENT PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Profile
Position: Venue Program Manager
Primary Actions: Administration, office/workstation/venue-based tasks, long hours on feet Secondary Actions: Manual handling – low to medium frequency and volume
Additional notes (varies depending on position): Stakeholder communication and support, screenbased activities, travelling to multiple venues

Action	Never	Occasional	Frequent	Continually
Sitting			X	
Standing		X		
Walking		X		
Steps or stairs (MICF office and venues)		X		
Squatting or kneeling		X		
Bending or twisting		X		
Working with hands above shoulder height, reaching forwards or sideways		X		
Gripping or grabbing		X		
Fine hand coordination (computer typing)		X		
Eye coordination (computer screen)		X		
Lifting floor to waist, waist to height		X		
Lifting above shoulder height		X		
Carrying		X		
Pushing or Pulling		X		
Shift Work/Long hours		X		
Driving (as part of position)		X		

Risk Management	Description
Training	Adequate training for appropriate lifting techniques
Resources	Information on posture, breaks and exercises
Trolley	To transport medium to heavy items
Portable step ladders	To access shelves above shoulder height
Staff support	Recruit team members to assist maneuvering an object
Ergonomic support	Options for ergonomic furniture if appropriate