

BRWF2021 VOLUNTEER APPLICATION GUIDE



Thank you for your interest in joining the Bellinghen Readers and Writers Festival 2021 (BRWF) volunteer team!

Each year we are delighted to have an amazing team of volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to create a dynamic Festival for our readers and writers. BRWF greet people with a friendly smile, answer questions about the program, keep our queues orderly and the authors on time. For most attendees, our volunteers are the face of the BRWF. The extraordinary work of our volunteer team is a major part of the BRWF success.

However, before we give you further information to assist you in completing the volunteer application form, we need to have a bit of a chat about how we are going to do our very best to ensure that we create the safest possible COVID-19 venue for our guests and for our volunteers. We promise you that we will be doing everything in our power to provide the best possible guidance to our volunteers to create a safe environment for all of us. These are some of the more obvious things we are doing to mitigate risks:

- We have prepared a COVID-19 Safety Plan effective as at 7 January 2021 specific to the Showground Precinct where we intend to hold the entire Festival in 2021;
- The Showground already has its own COVID-19 Safety Plan in place and BRWF will adhere to the Showground plan as well as our own festival specific plan;
- We have registered as a COVID-19 Safe Organisation with the NSW Health Department;
- The 2021 festival will be a ticketed event with allocated seating for every session, thus strictly adhering to the one person per 2 square metre rule in place in regional NSW;
- The festival will be conducted in three venues at the Showground, those being the main Pavilion (Max 75 persons under 2 sqm rule), a 270 sqm marquee (Max 125 persons under 2 sqm rule) and a smaller marquee (Max 70 persons under 2 sqm rule);
- The three venues will be located in a fenced precinct within the showground with an area of approximately 20,000 sqm or 5 acres. With an expected daily attendance of less than 1500 people per day (spread out over 9 hours), that equates to 13 sqm per visitor per day;
- Visitors will be encouraged to bring their own food and drinks, although we will have food vendors and a bar. The food vendors will be carefully selected and must have their own COVID-19 Safety Plan in place before they are admitted into the precinct;
- Social Distancing (1.5 m rule) will be applied and monitored across the precinct;
- Each venue will have one entry and exit point and strict social distancing will be applied in each venue;
- There will be advertising on the BRWF website and at the point of ticket sales advising visitors that strict social distancing rules will be applied within the precinct;
- If it is deemed appropriate closer to the event, we will make it mandatory for visitors to wear face masks at any indoor venues (the Pavilion), although if the weather is good, the sides of the marquees will be left open to ensure good flow through of air;

- There will be 30 minute intervals between sessions (where possible) to ensure that visitors can move safely between sessions and around the precinct;
- All volunteer staff will be appropriately trained and directed before the Festival;
- The entire precinct will be continuously cleaned and the toilet facilities will be cleaned throughout the festival by professional cleaners;
- All volunteers will be provided with appropriate identification clothing and personal protection equipment (gloves and face masks) where required;
- Hand sanitation will be strictly adhered to and sanitiser will be provided throughout the precinct;
- All visitors will be encouraged to have the COVID-19 App downloaded on their mobile devices;
- Entry to the precinct will be monitored by the BRWF QR Code provided by NSW Health;
- BRWF will be monitoring ongoing and changing health guidelines between now and the festival and will make changes to its COVID-19 Safety Plan as appropriate.

Importantly, volunteers should note that this will be an essentially outdoors festival, and given the few cases of COVID-19 in regional NSW and the State's safety record to date, we have no reason to believe we cannot hold a safe and successful festival for the people of the NSW Mid North Coast in 2021.

We sincerely hope that you will help us to achieve this on behalf of our wonderful community.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WILL ASSIST YOU TO FILL OUT THE VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Volunteer rosters are decided according to the times and dates you are available, the type and number of shifts you prefer and the roles you are interested in doing. This document will explain what you can expect from your time as a volunteer, what tasks you might be doing while on shift, and what we are looking for in your application.

SHIFT LOCATIONS

The BRWF is held at the Bellingen Showground in the town of Bellingen on the NSW North Coast on Friday 11, Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 June 2021. Most volunteer shifts are located at the Showground. The following venues will be located within the Showground:

- Main Pavilion
- Marquee 1
- Marquee 2

There will also be some events at the Bellingen Library.



By the start of the Festival, all volunteers should be familiar with the layout of the Festival. You will be provided with a map and information about the venues, a tour of the Festival area, and instructions for your arrival.

Volunteers will sign in at the Green Room within the Luncheon Booth Pavilion within the Showground then disperse to a specific location within walking distance.

SHIFT TIMES

BRWF requires volunteers at various times throughout the Festival. If you are particularly interested in performing a particular role, remember that **consistent availability over consecutive days** will be of most help to the position.

There are 3 shifts per day:

MORNING	START: 8am FINISH: 1pm
AFTERNOON	START: 1pm FINISH: 5pm
EVENING	START: 5pm FINISH: 10pm

Shift start and finish times may vary as each venue has different requirements. Most shifts are 4-5 hours. Your roster will specify the exact shift times required of you on the day.

Lunch or dinner will be provided. You will be asked to specify any dietary requirements at the end of the application form.

PREFERRED NUMBER OF SHIFTS

Every volunteer **must do a minimum of 2 shifts** though you may like to do more. You will be asked to specify your ideal number of shifts on the application form.

PRE-FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERING

In the week leading up the Festival, volunteers may be required to help with transportation of authors to and from schools and to their accommodation. There may also be other tasks such as preparation of welcome material, and lanyards for volunteers.

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION DAY

The **compulsory** volunteer orientation day will take place from 9.30am-12.30pm on Saturday 29 May 2021. You will be notified of venue closer to the date.

All volunteers will be given a welcome kit and a lanyard to wear which identifies them to the general public. The lanyard provides entry for the volunteers to all Festival events.

Volunteers are required to wear black clothing and closed-in shoes while on their shifts.

The team will be briefed on general Festival information by BRWF committee members, given a full safety briefing and then, after a short break, a more detailed view of the systems relating to our volunteer team this year.



Experienced volunteers will be offered early departure at 12pm while new volunteers will take a walking tour of the Festival site and the main street of Bellinghen.

Please Note: non-attendance at Orientation Day means you may not be able to volunteer. While it is understandable that an emergency or unexpected event might prevent a prospective volunteer from attending the orientation, if you miss Orientation Day, your participation in the Festival is not guaranteed.

VOLUNTEER ROLES PREFERRED

It is recommended that you remain open to perform multiple roles as this increases your chance of being given a roster. If you are happy to help with whatever is needed then please select all boxes on the application form and consider yourself a star!

If you have particular skills or experience that would suit a certain role, please note this on the application form.

The 2021 BRWF volunteer roles are:

- Author airport transfers
- Transfer of authors between accommodation and between schools (week preceding the festival).
- Transfers of authors between accommodation and the Festival
- Usher at venues
- Ticket sales
- Display set up at venues
- Set up and take down venue
- Meet and greet authors and presenters
- Accompany authors to book signing venue
- Green room assistant
- Conduct visitor surveys
- Floater

Author airport transfers

Many authors will be arriving to the region via air transport into Coffs Harbour Airport. Volunteers will meet authors at the airport baggage collection area. They will carry a BRWF sign on which will be the names of the authors they are collecting. It is a good idea to read up on the authors being picked up so that you can be familiar with what they look like and their particular area of literary interest. Authors are billeted within the community, so volunteers will need to be familiar with where they're staying. When taking authors to departures, collection times will be designed to ensure authors get to the airport at least an hour before their flight departs. Some will need to leave straight after a session and will have their bags with them. Volunteers will need to use their own cars and have comprehensive car insurance.



Transfer of authors between accommodation and between schools (week preceding the Festival).

The BRWF Schools Program will be run in the week leading up to the Festival. The program involves schools in the Coffs Coast Region, not just Bellingen. Volunteers will drive authors involved in the Program to and from their accommodation and the schools they are visiting. Volunteers will need to use their own cars and have comprehensive car insurance

Transfers of authors between accommodation and the Festival

Authors are billeted within the community. Some billet locations are not within walking distance of the Festival site. Volunteers will be required to drive authors to and from their accommodation and the Festival site. Volunteers will need to be familiar with where they're staying. Volunteers will need to use their own cars and have comprehensive car insurance.

Usher at venues

Ushers work in small teams to check event tickets, organise queues and ensure a smooth changeover between events. As queues can become quite long, volunteers will need to work as a team to manage the queues effectively.

Ticket sales

The box office is located in The Secretary's Office at the front of the Showground where Festival goers can collect tickets and programs. Volunteers will assist the ticket sales team but will not handle any financial transactions, cash or otherwise.

Display set up at venues

Across the various Festival venues there will be displays. Volunteers will assist in setting up and taking down displays.

Venue set up and take down

Volunteers help with behind-the-scenes set up and pack down of Festival venues. Tasks may include arranging chairs, carrying equipment between venues, clearing away rubbish, running errands, checking for lost items, and refilling water jugs for the stage. Glasses will be swapped for clean ones in the Green Room. This role suits physically active volunteers who enjoy being behind-the-scenes with the production team.

Meet and greet authors and presenters

Volunteers will escort authors and presenters to stage, provide them with Festival information and event times, and give them directions and general local information.

Accompany authors to book signing venue

During the Festival there will be a book signing area in the pop-up bookshop. Volunteers will accompany authors after their event to the book signing area. They will ensure Festival goers know which queues are for buying books and which are for book signings, they will ensure



signing tables have name markers and glasses of water for the authors, and they will make sure the queues are managed effectively within the space. Before each event finishes, volunteers will rearrange chairs and name markers to accommodate the next round of authors signing.

Green room assistant

The Green Room (Luncheon Booth Pavilion) is the headquarters for all volunteer shifts at the Festival. Catering for authors, presenters and volunteers is located in the Green Room. All volunteers will check in here each day. The Green Room assistants will greet and register volunteers, give directions to new volunteers, track late volunteers and cancellations, collect feedback and manage the check out process as volunteers finish shifts.

Conduct visitor surveys

Volunteers will spread out among the Festival goers to ask them to take a short survey. This work allows BRWF to apply for funding, program events relevant to Festival goers, and improve our customer experience across the Festival. Survey shifts are shorter than other shifts.

Floater

Floater are very important: they are often asked to assist multiple teams throughout a shift, helping when there is an unexpected surge in crowds, or replacing another volunteer when they get called away, or when a crucial task for BRWF staff needs doing very quickly. Floaters can offer assistance anywhere, to anyone, and so will provide much needed support at challenging times. Note: this is not a 'spare' position, but rather, one that is quite crucial to the smooth operation of our team!

**YOU NOW HAVE ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO COMPLETE THE
VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM.**



AFTER APPLICATIONS CLOSE

Your roster will be built after applications close at midnight on **Friday 30 April 2021**. As the rosters are determined by availability, we cannot guarantee that all applicants will receive a roster, though you will stand a better chance of success if you are open to a broad range of roles, shifts and dates. Ultimately, your availability determines your eligibility for a volunteer position.



Getting your roster

We will begin the roll out of the rosters on or by Friday 7 May 2021 and all volunteer applicants will have heard from the BRWF whether successful or unsuccessful in their application by this date.

Please ensure you reply to all emails from elkssue@gmail.com, the Volunteer Coordinator, and confirm your roster as soon as you receive it. If at any time you are no longer available for one or all of the shifts allocated to you, please let the Volunteer Coordinator know as soon as possible so that we can change your roster.

Volunteer Satisfaction

BRWF believe there is a strong link between volunteers' satisfaction and the success of the Festival. We know that providing clear information about your role as a volunteer will help you enjoy your time with us. In order to better prepare you for your role as a volunteer, we will:

- Introduce the different volunteer roles to you in this document
- Email you information about your shifts once rosters are complete
- Provide further information and relevant training at the Orientation Day
- Have the Volunteer Coordination to guide you while on shift

Our promise

In return for your commitment to volunteer throughout the Festival, we commit to taking all practical steps to ensure we deliver a volunteer program that is both engaging and rewarding for you to participate in. We promise to:

- Be reliable in our dealings with you
- Build rosters that are balanced
- Provide useful information and training in your role
- Give you clear instructions in a friendly and respectful way
- Recognise the value of your efforts
- Provide you with a safe working environment
- Respect your feedback
- Help you to enjoy your time at the Festival with us
- Provide you with entry to Festival events

THANK YOU!

We appreciate that you are considering offering your time to the Bellingen Readers and Writers Festival.

BRWF is one of the largest regional literary festivals in Australia. It remains one of the most inviting and friendly festivals to attend, for both audiences and authors alike. This is, in part, due to the commitment and friendliness of our wonderful volunteer team.

We look forward to another eventful Festival and hope you will choose to join us as a BRWF volunteer in 2021.

