



VOLUNTEER APPLICATION GUIDE

BRWF 2025

Thank you for your interest in joining the **Bellinghen Readers & Writers Festival 2025** volunteer team!

Each year, we're delighted to have an amazing team of volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to create a dynamic Festival for our readers and writers. The BRWF volunteers greet people with a friendly smile, answer questions about the program, and 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's success.

In 2025, we will be conducting the Festival at the Bellinghen Memorial Hall, St Andrew's Church and grounds, and across the road in Maam Gaduying (Meeting Place) Park.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WILL ASSIST YOU IN FILLING 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're 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're looking for in your application.

VOLUNTEER CONDITIONS

Volunteers:

- **must be over 18**
- **are expected to be available to work approximately 8–10 hours over the three-day event**
- **will not receive any financial compensation from the BRWF**
- **are responsible for their own transport to and from the BRWF**
- **must attend a Volunteers Orientation Day**
- **will have their photo on their volunteer lanyard**
- **are covered by BRWF's Public Liability Insurance**
- **will be required to sign on and off a daily register each day they volunteer at the Festival.**

SHIFT LOCATIONS

The BRWF is held at the Bellingen Memorial Hall, St Andrew's Church and surrounds, and across the road in Maam Gaduying Park in Bellingen on the NSW Mid North Coast on Friday 6, Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 June 2025.

The following venues will be part of this year's Festival:

- **Main Hall, Bellingen Memorial Hall**
- **Studio, Bellingen Memorial Hall**
- **Book Warehouse Bookshop, St Andrew's Church**
- **The Fringe Marquee, Maam Gaduying Park**
- **Green Room, Uniting Church Hall**

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

Volunteers will sign in at the Green Room within the Uniting Church Hall then disperse to a specific location within walking distance.

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

SHIFT TIMES

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

There are three shifts per day:

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

Shift start and finish times may vary because 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.

A light meal from the Green Room will be available before or after your shifts only. You will be asked to specify any dietary requirements in your application form.

NUMBER OF SHIFTS

Every volunteer must nominate at least three shifts (though you may like to do more) and three types of volunteer roles on their application form.

Every volunteer will be rostered to do a minimum of two shifts.

PRE-FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERING

In the week leading up the Festival, we require volunteers to help with transporting authors to and from schools and their accommodation. Other tasks include preparing welcome material; distributing programs; organising lanyards for volunteers, authors and committee members; and site-management activities.

COMPULSORY VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION DAY

The compulsory Volunteer Orientation Day will take place from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm on Saturday 31 May 2025. You will be notified of the venue closer to the date.

ALL VOLUNTEERS should attend the Orientation Day so they are spatially aware of, and prepared for, their duties during the Festival, even if they have volunteered at previous Festivals.

After being briefed on general Festival information by BRWF committee members, the team will go on a tour of the Festival venues, receive a full safety briefing then, after a short break, hear a more detailed view of the systems relating to our volunteer team this year. Please note: Non-attendance at Orientation Day means you may not be able to volunteer. While it's understandable that an emergency or unexpected event might prevent a prospective volunteer from attending, if you miss Orientation Day, your participation in the Festival is not guaranteed.

VOLUNTEER BENEFITS

All volunteers will receive a welcome kit and a lanyard to wear. The lanyard identifies volunteers to the general public, and provides entry for the volunteers to all non-sellout Festival events.

Volunteers will have access to the Green Room and will be provided with a light meal either before or after their shifts.

VOLUNTEER ROLES

We recommend you remain open to perform multiple roles because this increases your chance of being given a roster. If you're happy to help with whatever is needed, 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 your application form.

The 2025 BRWF volunteer roles are as follows:

- **Production: site management assistant (before, during and after the Festival)**
- **Transfer of authors between accommodation and schools (week preceding the Festival).**
- **Pre-Festival administration**
- **Author airport transfers**
- **Transfer of authors between accommodation and the Festival**
- **Usher at venues**
- **Ticket sales***
- **Green Room catering assistant**
- **Information officer**
- **Conduct visitor surveys**
- **Fringe assistant**
- **Floater**

Production: Site Management Assistant

Please note: This role requires you to be available during the day in the week leading up to the Festival and the day after the Festival. You will need physical strength and stamina. Tasks involve assisting the Site Manager with placing signs around the venues, setting up Festival flags, unpacking chairs, locating and emptying rubbish bins, and assisting the unloading of book boxes for the Book Warehouse Festival pop-up shop.

Transfer of Authors Between Accommodation and Schools

Please note: This role requires you to be available during the day in the week leading up to the Festival. The BRWF Schools Program involves schools in the Coffs Coast region, not just Bellingen. You will drive authors involved in the Schools 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.

Pre-Festival Administration

This role is primarily undertaken in the months and weeks leading up to the Festival. It can include distributing brochures to locations in Coffs Harbour, Sawtell, Urunga, Dorrigo, Valla, Nambucca and Macksville; creating lanyards for volunteers, authors and committee members; and preparing author welcome packs and distributing them to authors' accommodation.

Author Airport Transfers

Many authors will be arriving to the region via Coffs Harbour Airport. Volunteers will meet authors at the airport baggage collection area. You will carry a BRWF sign. It's a good idea to read up on the authors you are picking up, so you can be familiar with what they look like and their particular area of literary interest. Many authors are billeted within the community, so you will need to be familiar with where they're staying.

When taking authors to airport departures, collection times will be designed to ensure authors arrive at 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 the Festival

Some authors are billeted within the community. Most billet locations are within walking distance of the Festival site. Volunteers will drive authors to and from their accommodation and the Festival site. You 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. Because queues can become quite long, you will need to work as a team to manage the queues effectively. You will also ensure fresh drinking water and clean glasses are on the stage for authors, rearrange chairs on the stage if required, check for lost items and clean up any rubbish left in the venues after a session.

Ticket Sales

The Box Office is located at the front of the Bellingham Memorial Hall, where Festival goers can collect tickets and programs. Volunteers will assist the ticket sales team but won't handle any financial transactions, cash or otherwise. You will need to be IT savvy.

*You will need to be available in the week leading up to the Festival for specific ticketing training. If you wish to take up this role, please indicate on your application that you're available in the week leading up to the Festival.

Green Room Catering Assistant

The Green Room is the headquarters for all volunteer shifts at the Festival. All volunteers will check in here each day. The Green Room catering assistants will assist in the kitchen, which caters to all authors, presenters and volunteers. You will need to be willing to prepare and serve food.

Conduct Visitor Surveys

Volunteers will spread out among Festival goers to ask them to download a short survey. This survey allows the BRWF to apply for funding, program events relevant to Festival goers and improve our customer experience across the Festival.

Information Officer

You will provide a friendly welcome to Festival goers and help them with their general enquiries. You may be the first personal contact an attendee has with the Festival, so you will need to offer a smiling face and a warm welcome.

Fringe Assistant

You will provide assistance to the Fringe Festival Coordinator in Maam Gaduying Park. This may include removing rubbish, and setting up and taking down chairs and tables.

Floater

Floaters are often asked to assist multiple teams throughout a shift, helping when there is an unexpected surge in crowds, replacing another volunteer when they get called away or doing a crucial task for BRWF staff quickly. Floaters can offer assistance anywhere to anyone, so you will provide much needed support at challenging times. Note: This is not a 'spare' position – it's vital 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 Monday 31 March 2025. Because 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're 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 rolling out the rosters on or by Friday 9 May 2025. 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 volunteers@bellingenwritersfestival.com.au (the Volunteer Coordinator) and confirm your roster as soon as you receive it.

If at any time you're no longer available for one or all of the shifts allocated to you, please let the Volunteer Coordinator know as soon as possible so we can change your roster.

Volunteer Satisfaction

The BRWF believe there is a strong link between volunteers' satisfaction and the success of the Festival. Providing clear information about your role as a volunteer will help you enjoy your time with us. To better prepare you for your role as a volunteer, we will:

- introduce the different volunteer roles to you
- email you information about your shifts once rosters are complete
- provide further information and relevant training at the Orientation Day
- have the Volunteer Coordinator 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 balanced rosters
- 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 free entry to Festival events.

THANK YOU!

We appreciate that you are considering offering your time to the BRWF.

The BRWF is one of the largest regional literary festivals in Australia. It remains one of the most inviting and friendly festivals to attend, for 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'll choose to join us as a BRWF volunteer in 2025.

