Partnerships and Development Manager
Location: Newcastle, NSW
Position Type: Fixed-term contract 12 Jan 2026 to 12 Dec 2026 with possibility of extension
Reports to: Festival Director and Fundraising Sub-Committee
Remuneration: 0.4 FTE (16 hours a week) $75,000 pro rata

About Newcastle Writers Festival

Newcastle Writers Festival is one of Australia's leading literary events, presenting an inspiring annual program that connects writers and readers through vibrant, inclusive public conversations. The 2026 festival will be held from 27 to 29 March.

The festival is committed to showcasing diverse voices, supporting Australian literature, and contributing to the cultural life of the Hunter region. Beyond the annual weekend festival, the organisation contributes significantly to addressing pressing needs in our region and in the sector. This includes programs to support literacy among primary school students and the development of emerging writers, as well as national and international advocacy for literature.

About the Role

The Partnerships and Development Manager will play a crucial role in growing, broadening and sustaining sponsorship revenue and partnerships to support the strategic ambitions of Newcastle Writers Festival. Reporting to the Festival Director and Fundraising Sub-Committee, the role is responsible for securing financial and in-kind support for the festival by cultivating strong relationships with corporate sponsors, trusts, foundations, governmental funding bodies and individual donors, as well as providing support over the coordination of creative, cultural, industry and media partnerships.

The role will work closely with the Festival Director and Fundraising Sub-Committee to develop and maintain strong partnerships, diversify revenue streams and build financial sustainability for the organisation, along with all associated planning, reporting and evaluation. The ideal candidate will be a confident, high-level communicator with excellent networking and relationship management skills and have strong experience in developing and delivering significant corporate partnerships, managing relationships with public funding bodies and engaging with individual donors.

The ideal candidate will be a strategic thinker with a minimum of five years' experience in project and budget management in the arts and/or not-for-profit sector. Previous experience managing sponsor, donor, partner, and/or funder relationships is essential. Excellent written and verbal communications skills and demonstrated grant writing experience will be highly regarded.

This is a Newcastle-based role as community relationships are essential.

Key Responsibilities

Sponsorship Development

● Initiate and coordinate tailored approaches to potential sponsors and/or their agents, including detailed research on suitable sponsors, establishing contact, preparing and presenting appropriate proposals and supporting documentation, and maintenance of communication.

● Work with the Festival Director and Fundraising Sub-Committee to create compelling, innovative and well researched sponsorship proposals and presentations for prospective corporate sponsors, trusts and foundations and philanthropic donors.

● Ensure that any sponsorship proposals align with the festival's brand, values, aims and objectives.

● Work with the Festival Director and Fundraising Sub-Committee to ensure all sponsor benefits are agreed and managed in line with organisational strategy and aims, including branding, media exposure, hospitality and activation opportunities in advance of and during the festival.

● Negotiate and finalise sponsorship agreements, ensuring the exchange of approved contracts in a timely and efficient manner in line with internal policies.

● Build and maintain long-term relationships with sponsors and stakeholders, ensuring a positive and mutually beneficial partnership experience.

● Ensure all sponsors and stakeholders are kept up to date on all events across the year and during the festival period.

● Work with the Festival Director, Fundraising Sub-committee, and Artist Logistics Manager to arrange sponsor and stakeholder events.

● Manage sponsors and stakeholders on the ground during the festival, ensuring all parties are looked after and can make the most of their time.

Fundraising Development

● Research, write and submit grant applications to secure funding from government funding bodies, philanthropic foundations, and cultural agencies.

● Manage the contracting process with all funding bodies.

● Ensure all funder acknowledgements and credits are delivered in line with expectations and requirements.

● Manage and coordinate all funder reporting requirements, collating information as required to meet all deadlines.

● Be fully aware and up to date on all relevant grants and schemes as they arise throughout the year, keeping the Festival Director informed of opportunities and parameters.

● Develop and implement key strategies to grow individual donor contributions, including major gifts and annual giving campaigns.

Partnership Development

● Work with the Festival Director to establish mutually beneficial partnerships with local, national and international organisations to support the delivery of the festival, e.g. hotels, venues, hospitality, travel partners etc, negotiating partnership agreements and in-kind support.

● Liaise with the Festival Director and Festival Producer to coordinate and manage benefits and agreements for creative, cultural, industry and media partners in support of program development.

Donor Relations and Stewardship

● Support the growth and stewardship of the Newcastle Writers Festival Patrons Program including donor acquisition, upgrades, and relationship management.

● Coordinate Patron engagement activities, including events, exclusive experiences, and festival-related opportunities.

● Manage Patron acknowledgement processes to ensure consistent recognition across all platforms.

● Support Patron acquisition through research, outreach and diligent data management.

Fundraising Administration

● Coordinate the planning, delivery and reporting of fundraising campaigns, appeals, and donor renewal cycles.

● Maintain accurate donor records using the organisation's CRM system, ensuring data integrity and confidentiality.

● Prepare reports, surveys, donor insights, and briefing materials for internal and external stakeholders.

Grants and Proposal Support

● Maintain the grants register and projects portfolio and monitor deadlines and reporting requirements for grant-funded projects, ensuring timely and accurate submissions and acquittals across the organisation.

● With the Festival Director, coordinate compelling grant applications, funding proposals, reports, and acquittals for philanthropic partners, foundations, and major donors.

Events and Campaigns

● Coordinate logistics for Patron and fundraising events during the Newcastle Writers Festival season and throughout the year.

● Manage RSVPs, guest liaison, and post-event follow-ups.

● Collaborate with the Festival Director, Fundraising Sub-Committe and Digital Manager to develop engaging, innovative fundraising appeals throughout the year.

Communications and Marketing

● Work closely with the Festival Director to develop donor communications, such as EDMs, impact stories, and campaign collateral.

● Contribute to storytelling efforts that highlight the impact of donor support, especially through community and artist-focused narratives.

General Support

● Act as the first point of contact for sponsorship and donor enquiries.

● Uphold Newcastle Writers Festival's Code of Conduct in all interactions.

Selection Criteria

Essential

● Minimum of 5 years' experience in sponsorship development, fundraising and/or corporate partnerships, preferably in the arts, entertainment or non-profit sector.

● Proven track record in securing significant sponsorships and donations.

● Understanding of funding for arts/culture and charitable organisations.

● Experience in writing grant applications and proposals and managing reporting requirements.

● Strong writing and presentation skills, with excellent attention to detail and the ability to craft compelling tailored sponsorship proposals.

● Experience with databases and CRM software.

● Excellent communication, negotiation and relationship-management skills.

● A team player with strong collaborative skills, a positive attitude and flexibility.

Additional Requirements

● Willingness to work occasional evenings and weekends during the festival and other events.

To apply

Any questions can be emailed to Festival Director Rosemarie Milsom manager@newcastlewritersfestival.org.au

Please submit **one document** consisting of a two-page resume and cover letter of no more than two pages outlining your experience in relation to the role's selection criteria to manager@newcastlewritersfestival.org.au

Include **'**Partnerships and Development Manager application' in the subject field.

Application deadline: 5.00pm AEST 24 November 2025. Interviews will be conducted in Newcastle on 2 December. The successful applicant will be notified by mid-December and begin the role on 12 January 2026.