

# people

## your team

Have a list of the jobs to be done and build a strong team that will be able to accomplish the necessary tasks.

If you are a group producing a collaborative effort, identify the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved and match them to the tasks e.g. who is best suited to media liaison, or making approaches to sponsors? Find out what skills your co-workers have and utilise them if you can e.g. design, bookkeeping, technical etc.

Take advantage, where possible, of any opportunities for team members to learn new skills. However, be careful not to give anyone too many responsibilities, or to put people in over their depth, jeopardising the event. It is vital that there is clear task division and everyone knows what everyone else is doing. Ensure that communications are clear and resolve any conflicts as they arise.

Production meetings or regular catch-ups, formal or informal, are not only an effective means for keeping everyone up-to-date, but are also good for problem-solving and information sharing.

## engaging personnel

There are appropriate rates of pay for artists and crew. Even if your event is not paying fees, you should be aware of the value of services provided. You should also consider:

- ⊗ How you acknowledge volunteer workers and artists  
(see *Volunteers* pp. 8-9)
- ⊗ Whether you should meet other costs such as transport, food and refreshments etc.
- ⊗ Fees for rehearsal, setup or preparation
- ⊗ Hourly rates of pay or set fees for paid crew and artists  
(see *Artists* p. 7-8)
- ⊗ What your tax obligations are (see *Money* p. 14)

When you confirm payment for personnel, also confirm when payment will be available and the procedure for obtaining it i.e. following Tuesday upon presentation of an invoice or Statement by a supplier form (see p. 29).

If you do not want to hand out cash on the night then state this clearly beforehand.



Who is in charge  
& 'where does the buck stop'?



A useful resource to refer to is the Queensland Community Arts Network Inc.

QCAN is a service that supports and promotes community cultural development practice.

**t:** 07 3254 4922

**e:** mail@qldcan.org.au

**i:** www.qldcan.org.au

---

## 🎯 roles

### 🎯 Producer

The producer is often the financial backer of the event and/or the entity taking the financial risk. The producer will have a handle on every aspect of the event; they will ensure that all facets of organising the event are under control; and they are the major troubleshooter. The producer is working toward the 'big picture' i.e. the vision for the event. However, if the team is small then the producer will often end up taking on other tasks e.g. production manager or promotion responsibilities.

### 🎯 Production Manager

This position plays a supervisory role and deals primarily with the logistics of the production. The production manager is responsible for coordinating the various sub-elements (scenic, wardrobe, lighting, sound, etc.) of an event, as well as overseeing the stage management team. Keep in mind that this person requires excellent 'people skills' in order to smooth over disagreements that inevitably arise. The job is rather fluid, however, and may include just about anything an enterprising producer or director may dream up.

### 🎯 Front of House Manager

Their primary role is to coordinate and ensure the smooth operation of the front of house [FOH]. This includes opening up and setting up of box office, bar, toilets, foyer; coordinating box office and bar staff/volunteers; liaising with a technician/stage manager regarding any special instructions regarding opening the venue and audience access, latecomers and intervals; having a current guest/complimentary ticket list; reconciling ticket sales and monies; maintaining floats and bar inventory; as well as the overall cleanliness of the venue and facilities, and safety of its occupants.

### 🎯 Stage Manager

In general terms, the stage manager will analyse stage plans and designs for all relevant technical and production information; liaising with appropriate personnel to determine requirements for rehearsal and performance; undertaking administrative functions to determine production resources i.e. time, finance, personnel and physical space; prepare for rehearsals and soundchecks.

For theatre and performance specific events, stage managers obtain all necessary resources e.g. props, costumes, settings; organise the rehearsal space/process; prepare the prompt copy, defining actors' calls and movements, technical cues, stage elements and front of house communications; supervise and direct backstage; give cues for lights, sound, cast entrances, and other performance elements.

For music events the stage manager must ensure artists are ready for their call and assist with stage change overs.



**Front of House:**  
refers to the box  
office, bar, facilities  
(e.g. toilets)

## 🔗 Promotions

This position is responsible for developing and implementing an effective promotional strategy for your event. They will be required to do this within the production budget and timeline leading up to the event. These two factors will determine the type of medium/s used to promote the event e.g. a full-colour poster vs an effective design in black and white (cost); or inserting an ad in a quarterly newsletter vs tapping in to an existing group emailing (time). The ability to write a good press release and successfully liaise with media personnel requires excellent communication skills, a good understanding of the target audience and knowledge of the various mediums which are available to promote the event.

## 🎨 artists

Who will participate in your event and how much should you pay them? You can talk to organisations and festivals about appropriate artists. They will sometimes have a database you can access; have suggestions about complimentary artists for a program or line-up and often have good advice about who is around and may be interesting to work with.

Artists and crew with 'runs on the board' will often have higher expectations regarding fees, especially for commercial bookings. Sometimes headlining acts may want to negotiate a percentage of the door [or be willing to consider this]. This may be instead of, or as well as, a fee. Before you agree to any arrangement, be very sure about what your break-even point is i.e. how many people do you need through the door to cover costs?

Each artform has a professional organisation and a recommended rate of pay, if not an award. Under this approach community musicians would be paid under the Musicians Union rates, visual artists under NAVA [National Association of Visual Arts] rates, and actors as per the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance rates. This is appropriate when the artists are almost exclusively contributing artform expertise to the project.

Following are contact details for these organisations:

- 🔗 Media Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA)  
the 'union for people who inform and entertain Australia'  
t: 1300 656 513 e: members@alliance.org.au i: www.alliance.org.au
- 🔗 Musicians Union of Australia (MUA)  
supports all musicians and offers advice on all aspects of the music industry t: 03 9388 8992 e: federal.secretary@musicians.asn.au  
i: www.musicians.asn.au
- 🔗 National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA)  
peak body representing the visual arts and craft sector through advocacy, representation and service provision  
t: 02 9368 1900 e: nava@visualarts.net.au i: www.visualarts.net.au

Many artists are responsive to the notions of benefits and community events and that these activities offer reduced or nil fees. If you are producing a benefit or fundraiser and asking bands to waive their usual fee consider covering some other expenses, for instance transport. Provide details about expectations and responsibilities in writing including:

- ⊗ performance time and expected time of arrival
- ⊗ rehearsal schedule or sound check
- ⊗ payment details [when available, upon presentation of invoice or Statement by Supplier]
- ⊗ riders, food, backstage passes
- ⊗ being available for media interviews or photo shoots
- ⊗ all important dates [event date, launch date, rehearsal etc.]
- ⊗ person to contact before the event and upon arrival at the event
- ⊗ any other expectations which are specific to your event.

## volunteers

Volunteers are the mainstays of many arts and entertainment events and need to be looked after.

When you ask people to help out, ask nicely. Be clear with requests, directions and expectations. Acknowledge the support of volunteers a lot; give them respect, cool drinks, rest breaks, t-shirts, your thanks...

If feasible, provide orientation for people working on the event; this provides an opportunity to get to know each other, get familiar with the event details, expectations, who's who...

Have a volunteer pack or at least a one-pager ready including things like:

- ⊗ details of the event - what's on, admission prices, running times, location of first aid kit; any information to help their familiarity and enable them to better answer questions from the general public;
- ⊗ your expectations of them at the event including what time to arrive, hours of work, tasks, behaviour, dress code etc;
- ⊗ details of who to report to, who they are responsible to;
- ⊗ information about drink vouchers, t-shirts, food, taking rest or cigarette breaks, transport etc;
- ⊗ bar and id checks; and,
- ⊗ their responsibilities to you.

Think about:

- ⊗ How you can assist people getting home if your event finishes late e.g. car pooling, providing taxi fares etc.
- ⊗ Feeding people or at least providing soft drinks and water.
- ⊗ Minimising the risks associated with tiredness and long days [often events require long days of 12 hours or more] i.e. rest breaks, refreshments, checking how people are going, bringing in a second stage crew who will be fresher.



**Riders:** food and refreshments provided for artists backstage, drink vouchers, guest list etc.

Can artists put guests on the door list?

How can you look after your artists?



People looking after money, booze and equipment must be trustworthy. The nasty truth is that too often event organisers find friends of friends are suddenly behind the bar giving away beer and pocketing the odd \$20.

- ⊗ Having a back-up plan, in the event that a volunteer is unable to attend and informs you at the last minute. Sometimes, it is better to have 1 or 2 extra volunteers 'on deck', in the case of this or any other unforeseen events happening, which may require an 'extra set of hands'.

Think creatively about sourcing volunteers e.g. hospitality students for bar; music students for music events; drama students for theatre shows.

For more comprehensive information on all volunteer matters go to Volunteering Australia's website: [www.volunteeringaustralia.org](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org)



Your girlfriend/  
boyfriend/best-  
friend doesn't  
necessarily want  
to be stuck on the  
door all night at  
your gig!

