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ADELAIDE FESTIVAL

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STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 – 2027



About the Festival

Inclusivity, creativity, sustainability, trust and celebration drive our passion for delivering Adelaide Festival and Adelaide Writers' Week.

Adelaide Festival is internationally recognised as Australia's pre-eminent arts festival. Alongside sister-festivals in Edinburgh and Avignon, our Festival is cited as one of the top festivals in the world, providing audiences with the chance to see the most original and acclaimed artists working in the world today. Our curated program includes Australia's largest free literary festival – Adelaide Writers' Week alongside a cross-section of theatre, opera, music, dance and visual art from artists of all backgrounds and cultures.

Since 1960, Adelaide Festival has also stood at the helm of artistic innovation, commissioning and championing groundbreaking new works and presenting them alongside the greatest established companies and artists.

Vision

To be THE premier International Festival in the Southern Hemisphere and counted among the top 10 festival experiences in the world.

Our Purpose

To create and present the AF (including AWW) as a contemporary, world-leading, international, multi-arts festival with strong and productive networks locally, nationally, and internationally, and an exceptional level of community engagement.

Aims

Overarching aims under this strategy:

- To maintain the competitive advantage of Adelaide Festival as THE international festival in the southern hemisphere.
- To build on the incredible success of the opera centrepiece as a significant driver of interstate and international tourism, adding a free event, equally travel-inducing, but more accessible.
- To build on our record for artistic innovation and excellence and elevate education, skills development and broader community engagement.
- To ensure representation at every level from First Nations and other under-represented groups within the Festival organisation and in its program.
- To create a great organisational culture and to become an employer of choice

Values

Our values drive the organisational culture of AF. That organisational culture is a key driver for lifting overall organisational performance.

VALUE	TEAM STATEMENTS
Bravery / Courage	We strive for excellence and are unafraid of taking risks
Responsibility	We are accountable for our actions and a sustainable future
Inclusivity	We are open, supportive and embrace diversity
Creativity	We value artistic innovation, curiosity and virtuosity
Trust	We trust, respect and collaborate with each other, and all stakeholders
Celebration	We celebrate our successes, and the richness of our Festival experiences

Success Factors

Artists (program)

Audiences (communities)

Excellence (World class)

Relevance, identity and brand

Diversity at all levels

Collaboration & partnerships (artists, venues, external stakeholders)

Strong leadership and innovative culture (team)

Financial viability through ticket sales and expanded private and corporate support

Sustainable business model (Governance, data, finance, risk management)

System and process, planning

Artistic Program

Over the next 4 years, while delivering a core program of extraordinary international work of excellence in a diversity of venues, we will also deliver a series of new initiatives that will transform and underpin the Festival’s cultural impact.

Aims

- First Nations artists as integral to the Festival program
- Present great European work (of scale)
- Support, highlight and collaborate with home companies / artists / institutions
- Collaborate with our regional neighbours (e.g. Asia)
- Create a world class model of the dynamism and power of all Adelaide’s creative sector working together

OBJECTIVES

ACTIONS

Co-commission new ambitious work by established and emerging First Nations artists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present a min of 1-2 works of excellence by First Nations artists each Festival
Commit to major international centrepiece events and works of scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-3 significant centrepiece works in every Festival • Large scale free or low-cost event in every Festival • Unique and exciting locations used for presentations (e.g. quarry)
Collaborate with home companies and annual partnerships / co-commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased collaboration with WOMAdelaide, AGSA, ASO, SOSA, Adelaide Chamber Singers, Country Arts SA & other Adelaide based arts organisations
Increase diversity of artists in co-commissions and international partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Min 2-3 works of excellence from Asia Pacific over the course of the Plan
Establish the Annual Talent Lab and International Adelaide Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent Lab business model developed in partnership with SA cultural and funding partners • Adelaide Academy initiated with Adelaide and international partners
Strengthen cultural democracy and artistic expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include at least 2-3 pieces which fosters community participation over the course of the Plan
Develop new leadership and artistic talent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include at least 2-3 next generation artists over the course of the Plan





Adelaide Writers' Week

By 2027 AWW will be recognised as one of the top three destination literary festivals in the world providing readers and writers with a forum for engaged and inspiring conversations. As a celebration of contemporary literary culture, the quality, scale and reach will be without parallel in Australia.

Aims

- To position Adelaide Writers' Week as integral to the Festival program
- To curate content of the highest quality and grow audiences
- To be Australia's premier literary festival that is focussed on showcasing international writers and local writers
- To be a festival of international stature that reflects Australia's position in the Asia Pacific region
- AWW's profile reflects the AF commitment to diversity and inclusivity
- AWW is financially sustainable

OBJECTIVES

ACTIONS

AWW and AF regularly collaborate

- International artists/guests are showcased in both the Festival and Writers' Week each year

The content and milieu preserves the current demographic and engages future generations of readers

- Annual survey of audience includes Boomers, Millennials, Gen X, Gen Z and Gen Alpha

Collaborate and partner with premier organisations

- Min 2 collaborations with Asia-Pacific literary organisations each Festival
- Create formal partnerships with international literary festivals (e.g. Jaipur and Hong Kong) over the course of the Plan
- Min 2 partnerships with like cultural orgs (e.g. think tanks/ ABC/SBS) over the course of the Plan

Increase diversity of writers and events

- Program actively platforms original, new and diverse voices each Festival
- Present at least 2 events which reflect Australia's cultural diversity and the literary interests of a broad audience each Festival

Diversify income streams

- Grow donor support that is specific to AWW by at least 20% over the course of the Plan
- Maximise and professionalise book sales to increase revenues by 20% over the course of the Plan

Audience Development

It is vitally important to the success of the Festival that we ensure maximum accessibility for our audiences and artists, recognising our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Aims

- Grow new and diverse audiences by more than 50% (free and ticketed)
- Grow interstate and international audiences from 36% to 45%
- Interaction with schools in SA (excursion / incursion / digital)
- Leads on digital innovation through artists commissions, participative creative learning, national and international distribution

OBJECTIVES

ACTIONS

Develop and implement an Audience Development and Engagement Strategy

- New and diverse audiences increased by 50% with regards to ticket sales and attendances

Work with SATC and other agencies for national/international promotion of Festival program

- Interstate and international audiences account for a least 45% of ticket sales and attendances

Develop a large scale year-long education creative project for young people to develop their creative skills

- Create 4 Adelaide delivered connecting with up to 5,000 school aged children in 23/24
- Deliver an annual forum to determine year's topic
- Deliver an annual exhibition within the program
- Increased attendances by schools at Festival youth/ children's performances/events by 20%
- Program funded for 3 years

Increase out of season engagement

- Deliver a minimum of 4 artistic interventions

Deliver a Live and Online program to ensure accessibility

- At least one digital commission with national / international partner
- Online program reflects excellence of Festival program and connects with/increases online audiences by 20%





Brand & Profile

The Adelaide Festival is Australia's leading arts festival and is regarded as one of the great multi-arts festivals of the world. We must continue to improve and grow our profile and reputation within Adelaide, and Australia.

Aims

- Grow and improve AF local, national and international brand recognition and positioning
- Strong media coverage locally and nationally
- AF leaders recognised as cultural and Industry leaders
- Festival is seen as exceptional delivery partner for cultural, economic, and social impact to the State

OBJECTIVES

ACTIONS

Conduct a Brand Review

- Brand review completed in 2024

Develop and implement a Premium Brand and PR Strategy

- Refreshed Brand and PR strategy implemented from 2024
- Min 20% increase in national media coverage
- Min 20% increase in international media coverage

Year round profiling/promotion of key executives to all major conferences, media etc.

- AF leaders participate in 4 local, national and international exchanges, conferences and media commentary per year.

Develop and implement a Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

- State and Federal Government are engaged, value and attend the Festival
- Sponsor and Donors value and advocate for the Festival and its program, introducing new sponsors and donors each year

Develop and adopt a 3 year National Tourism Strategy

- Work with SATC, MEAC and other agencies to secure additional national programming and marketing funds and support

Economic Impact

Adelaide Festival has seen significant growth in audiences and impact, flowing through to box office, corporate and philanthropic revenues. Our priority is to ensure financial viability through philanthropic and commercial growth, maintaining robust connections within political and business communities.

Aims

- Increase interstate and international visitation and ticket sales
- Grow our private fundraising and corporate sponsorship
- Retain donor and corporate support year on year
- Strong and productive relationships with a range of stakeholders

OBJECTIVES

ACTIONS

Strategically announce centerpiece opera and significant major events in program to drive visitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased ticket sales by 10% annually • Deliver an economic impact study annually • Increase economic impact by 10% annually
Develop and implement a Corporate Business Development strategy tied to AF brand and value proposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase corporate support by min 10% per year • Retain 90% corporate support year to year
Develop and implement a Philanthropy Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase philanthropic support by min 10% per year • Retain 90% donor support year to year
Review internal processes and implement systems which improve efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise resources in donor engagement and lower costs of servicing by 20% • Develop strategies for donor engagement, retention and transformational gifts
Develop and implement a Strategic Partnership Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 new in-kind collaborative partnerships with SA institutions and premier Australian Brands to leverage program spend each year • Centerpiece Operas developed with cultural partnerships





Sustainable Organisation

AF aspires, and requires, to be a sustainable organisation in the widest definition of the word – equity, diversity, efficiency, economic and climate change.

Aims

- Create a great culture where employees feel valued and empowered
- Be an employer of choice
- Sound governance and strong leadership
- To demonstrate our commitment to social, environmental, economic and cultural sustainability.
- Ensure the organisation is inclusive and diverse and reflects Adelaide’s multiculturalism.
- Systems, processes and planning are robust and best practice

OBJECTIVES

ACTIONS

Create a culture that exemplifies our values

- Open two way communication
- Annual staff survey and action plan to address any issues

Review and invest in the capacity and capability of the Festival team

- Annual Board review
- Succession planning and advocating for a skills based board
- All staff have performance and development programs and yearly assessments based on the business plan KPIs
- Offer training and development opportunities for all staff

Develop and implement robust and best practice organisational and HR frameworks

- Reconciliation Action Plan endorsed by Reconciliation Australia
- Adopt an Environmental Sustainability Action Plan
- Adopt an Access Inclusion Plan
- Adopt longer term financial plans focusing on the financial sustainability of the organisation

Demonstrate Operational Leadership and best practice at all levels of operations

- Work towards being a net zero festival (by 2050)
- Apply technology to enhance flexibility and foster innovation
- Undertake organisation wide systems review to inform a 24 month continuous improvement plan.

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1 - 17 Mar 2024 | 28 Feb - 16 Mar 2025 | 27 Feb - 15 Mar 2026

adelaidefestival.com.au