

Noosa Longweekend Festival looks for a little help from its friends.



An ancient African proverb states that it takes a village to raise a child and a village to stage an arts festival. Well, that last statement about the arts festival might not be entirely true! What is true is that without the assistance and support of a large group of volunteers, festival friends and sponsors, the annual 10 day Noosa Longweekend Festival would simply not exist.

A merry band of sponsors, festival supporters and volunteers will again be working tirelessly behind the scenes donating their money, expertise or time to help stage the 130 event, arts festival to be held from June 18 – 27 in Noosa and Caloundra.

The festival is currently in recruitment mode for volunteers. Applications are invited from interested parties aged between 16 and 75 years of age. Volunteers can nominate which times (either day or night) best suit them.

Volunteer tasks could include pre festival activities including assisting at festival headquarters, conducting pre-festival promotions and delivering programs. During the festival, tasks could include meeting and greeting patrons at events, preparing venues with signage, ushering patrons to seats, helping out in the box office, distributing information at events, driving festival VIP guests to and from venues (with vehicles provided by vehicle sponsor, Lexus) and lots more. A briefing is provided to all volunteers prior to the festival's commencement.

Whilst volunteers do not receive any payment they do receive an official Noosa Longweekend Festival T-shirt and of course, get to be part of the colour and creativity of festival events.

Festival General Manager, Ian Mackellar said that many people did not realise that the festival was a not for profit organisation with only two paid staff (one full time and one part time) and run by a volunteer management committee.

"The festival is run by a registered not-for-profit organisation which relies heavily on sponsorship and on the work of local volunteers. Ticket sales do not cover the cost of the festival.

"Working with limited resources but an unlimited supply of energy and enthusiasm for the arts, the unpaid heroes of the festival all work together to ensure that audiences enjoy the culturally enriching experience that is the Noosa Longweekend Festival," Ian said.

One person who obviously believes in the festival's motto of 'a celebration of theatre, music, literature, dance, film, art and food' is Vicky Williamson. Vicky has been a volunteer at the festival for the past seven of its nine year history.

Vicky is an assistant team leader volunteer meaning that she helps to manage a group of volunteers dedicated to a particular component of the festival. This year she is assistant team leader for the festival's supper club performances and transport logistics.

In addition to her love of the arts, she is also a volunteer with Noosa Library (helping people to improve their English language and literacy skills), is in training for a half marathon and is a night-owl with a fondness for fine food and wine.

"The best thing about being a volunteer for the festival is that you get to see, hear and do things that you don't normally do as part of your everyday life," Vicky said.

"Meeting and greeting festival attendees and festival guests is also part of the thrill with everyone in a happy and excited state looking forward to what is to come," Vicky added.

Vicki said that the events she was most looking forward to this year were the supper club events which combined her love of music with her equal love of food.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer is encouraged to visit the Noosa Longweekend Festival website and fill out an application form www.noosalongweekend.com (or phone 5474 9941 for those without internet access).

How to be a friend of the festival:

- **Volunteer.** A volunteer assists with the logistics of the festival. Volunteers are unpaid but receive an official festival T-shirt as well as the chance to mingle with festival guests and attendees.
- **Festival Friend.** An annual \$50 tax deductible donation. Festival Friends receive invitations to special events and advance program information.
- **Patron's Circle.** Patrons receive priority booking for festival events, acknowledgement in festival publications, invitations to festival functions (including opening night VIP welcome). Patron's donations are tax deductible.
- **Business Friend.** An annual \$500 tax deductible membership which guarantees acknowledgment in festival programs, a listing on the official festival website and invitations to attend special festival events.
- **Friends and Associates.** A number of local organisations such as the Noosa Regional Gallery, Noosa Arts Theatre and the Noosa Federation of the Arts all benefit from having their events included as a part of the Noosa Longweekend Festival.

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For more information, images or interviews with Noosa Longweekend Festival artists or staff contact:

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NB: Whilst all events listed as part of media communication are accurate at the time of release, the Noosa Longweekend Festival program is subject to change without notice due to circumstances outside of the event organizer's control.