

2024 VOLUNTEER GUIDE

**Thank you for your interest in joining the
Auckland Writers Festival | Waituhi o Tāmaki Volunteer Team.**

Volunteers help us to deliver over 200 events across six days. We could not do it without you!

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Please report to the Information Desk at least 15 minutes prior to the commencement of your shift. Those working offsite venues should go directly to the offsite venue and report to the Festival staff member on duty.
- Please ensure you are wearing your lanyard and Festival T-shirt on every shift for which you are rostered. Please do not wear your T-shirt when you are not rostered.
- Please monitor your own breaks. Ensure your station/task is adequately covered and inform a fellow volunteer you are taking a break and the length of that break. There is a Volunteers' Room (Green Room) on the bottom level backstage at the Aotea Centre. Tea, coffee, water and light snacks or a light lunch are available, depending on your shift/schedule.
- If you are not able to complete a shift due to illness or an unexpected event, please let Volunteer Coordinator know as soon as you can. Text or phone to ensure that the message gets through.
- In the event of an emergency, follow the instructions of Auckland Live staff.
- Should you have any concerns regarding audience safety or behaviour please advise Auckland Live staff.
- Have a copy of the Festival Programme with you and familiarise yourself with the events you are working on. Any late changes to the programme will be marked on the AO timetable posters beside the Information Desk.
- If you are not on duty, please do not visit the backstage area, we need to keep congestion down. Please only wear your T-shirt when you are on duty.

ADVICE

- Should any audience members ask you questions about the Programme which you

do not know the answer to or do not feel confident to answer, please direct them to the Information Desk on level two.

- Leave your personal belongings in the Volunteers' Green Room. Please refrain from bringing anything of value.
- Please ensure that your mobile phone is on silent whilst you are working.
- Noise is a challenge at the festival. If you are aware of anyone outside the auditoriums making noise that can be heard from inside, please politely ask them to be quiet or move away from the room.

ENTITLEMENTS

- A 2024 Festival T-shirt. If your 2022 or 2023 t-shirt is in presentable condition and can be worn again, please re-use.
- You will be given a named lanyard that gives you access to general events. You can collect your lanyard at the Volunteer Briefing.
- When you are not working on your shift you have the opportunity to attend Festival general sessions (this does not include Special Events and Workshops). This is subject to the availability of seats at the event. If there is something that is popular and may sell out, we advise buying a ticket. The Festival would be happy to advise in advance about events that we expect to sell out. When you are attending an event, please wait until just before the session commences and then take a seat and note that you will need to give up your seat should an usher or volunteer on duty require it for a paying audience member.
- We provide light meals and snacks in the Volunteers' Green Room. If you work a shift over four hours a light meal will be provided. We do our best to cater for dietary restrictions and offer vegetarian options. Tea and coffee are always available for your breaks.

VOLUNTEER BRIEFING

A Volunteer Briefing will be held one or two weeks prior to the Festival at the Aotea Centre (date to be advised when rosters are released). Volunteers will be briefed on general Festival information by the AWF team and health & safety guidelines by Auckland Live staff. The briefing will conclude with a tour of the Aotea Centre's backstage area. Attending the briefing is a requirement. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator if you are unable to attend.

VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

Programme Launch Event: The Festival hosts 200 writers, media, sponsors, and partners to publicly launch the line-up of Festival events. We require a small group of volunteers to

help set up, welcome guests, assist with handing out name tags etc.

Festival Office Assistant, Pack-in and Pack-out: In the two weeks leading up to the Festival we need volunteers to help with tasks that go into preparing for a Festival event of scale. These include:

- Preparing lanyards for writers, guests, volunteers, and staff
- Compiling writer and Patron information packs
- Preparing materials for Rā Whānau / Family Day activity tables
- Assisting with distribution of Festival Information

The day before the Festival begins, we pack-in and you will be assisting the AWF production team with preparing the Aotea Centre. You will be placing the book giveaways for schools in the relevant theatres, setting up the display boards and banners, unloading equipment from the production van and generally moving things around. On the final day of the Festival, you will be packing things up and load things into the production van.

Floater: Floaters are especially important – they are often asked to assist multiple teams throughout a shift, helping when there is an unexpected surge in crowds, or replacing another volunteer when they get called away, or when a crucial task for AWF staff needs doing very quickly. Floaters offer assistance anywhere, to anyone, and so will provide much needed support at challenging times. Note: this is not a ‘spare’ position, but rather, one that is quite crucial to the smooth operation of our team!

Front of House & Book Signing: You are the public face of the Festival. Your main task involves meeting and greeting patrons and directing them to the various venues within the Aotea Centre. Throughout your shift, you will be offering help and advice to patrons, ensuring the foyers are tidy and monitoring noise levels outside each of the venues. You will ensure that the book signing desk is always fully equipped and that the book signing schedule is current and clearly displayed, and you will manage the queues at each signing facilitating an orderly queuing process as Festival patrons line up to get books signed by the writers. Authors will often be with their publishers/publicists but you will also be responsible for making sure they have everything they need. This role will require patience, friendliness and the ability to problem solve.

Information Desk: You are the public face of the Festival and a key operations point for almost all Festival visitors. Your main task involves meeting and greeting patrons and directing them to the various venues within the Aotea Centre. You will offer help and advice to patrons. In addition, you will assist with the distribution of all Festival lanyards as well as directing writers, sponsors and patrons to the appropriate venues. You will anticipate scheduled activities and update the Information Desk whiteboard with any changes.

Offsite Venue Assistant: Our lit crawl street event and our catered events require assistants for any necessary set-up, pack-in and out, ushering and ticket collection as well as any other tasks that will ensure the event runs smoothly.

Patrons Lounge/Green Room Attendant: Festival Patrons (private donors who have made significant financial contributions to the Festival) have access to a Patrons’ Lounge. The Lounge will be used by Patrons and guests as a place to relax and enjoy free refreshments

between sessions. The Lounge requires a supervisor to manage access and to offer assistance to Patrons. Volunteers and artists also have access to Green Rooms which they can use during breaks. The Lounge and Green Rooms need to be kept tidy and restocked over the course of the day.

Photographer: Capturing the day-to-day aspects of the event is always a challenge for the busy AWF team. If you have photography skills we would love to know. Having photos of audiences, book signing tables, writers in sessions, and volunteers going about their duties is very useful to AWF to use in social media posts and when we communicate back to sponsors and supporters about the Festival.

Schools Programme Assistant: This is a very active role and is the key liaison between school groups (teachers especially) and the Festival. Alongside Auckland Live staff and the Information Desk staff, you will assist with the movements of school groups into sessions and with the efficient management of the book signing tables and queues at the conclusion of each session.

Pukapuka Adventures Assistant: The family day features sessions for under-10s. The assistants for these events will help to collect tickets, usher families, set up foyer reading sessions, help with general information requests and assist with the set up and tidying up of the venue at the beginning and end of the day. Volunteers need to be patient, proactive and have boundless energy. (And love children)!

Runner: This is a very active role, and you will play a vital part in the 'behind the scenes' operations of the Festival. You will meet writers in the backstage area, escort them to the Stage Manager's office and then to their appropriate room/venue on time. You will ensure that the whereabouts of writers is known and that they are prepared for their sessions and book signings by being in the right place at the right time.

Stage Manager Assistant: A pivotal role requiring careful focus, good organisational and troubleshooting skills and the ability to think ahead. Working closely with the AWF Stage Manager, you will assist with the smooth delivery of Festival sessions, workshops, performances and any other Festival related presentations taking place at the Festival venues.

Venue Assistant (Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre and smaller venues in Aotea Centre): Working alongside ushers from Auckland Live, you will guide patrons, sponsors, Festival Patrons and other VIPs to their designated seating. To ensure the schedule runs smoothly, you will direct audience members to their seats and assist with their exit from these venues in a timely manner. During busy times, there can often be more people waiting to see events that can safely and legally fit in the venues, which means that volunteers will need to inform patrons as the queue numbers approach capacity. An indication of what the role requires is to be tactful and positive in order to manage the expectations of Festival Patrons.

Workshop Assistant (Waihorotiu Room): The Waihorotiu Room is used for Workshops. This is a key role to ensure that workshops run smoothly and that the writer taking the workshop has everything they need. You will be responsible for laying out any materials

that have been provided and setting up the room if there are any special instructions. You will also gather feedback from participants on survey sheets. Between sessions, you will reset the room if furniture has been moved and ensure the room and adjacent spaces are clean and tidy.

THANK YOU!

We appreciate that you are considering offering your time to the Auckland Writers Festival | Waituhi o Tāmaki.

AWF is a popular literary festival and considered by attendees and writers as one of the most inviting and inspiring festivals to be part of. This is due in part to the commitment and enthusiasm of our wonderful volunteer team. We look forward to another fun-filled Festival season and hope you will enjoy your time as a volunteer in 2024.