

Festival Bar Services

Application Guidelines



Merri-bek
City Council

Merri-bek City Council is inviting applications for the provision of bar services for the 2026 Coburg Night Market and the 2027 Brunswick Music Festival. Coburg Night Market 2026 is confirmed. This bar service requirements for BMF are program dependent and therefore contracted as an optional delivery.

The successful applicant will be the sole provider of bars and alcohol sales except for the potential of stallholders selling unopened takeaway drinks.

Our events are diverse, inclusive, accessible, sustainable and committed to quality, and we are looking for a bar partner that shares these values. Merri-bek Council has adopted the following partnering principles to guide the development of a successful contract relationship:

- The purpose of our relationship is to deliver desired outcomes for our community.
- We seek long-term business relationships with our service providers.
- We will be open, accessible, honest, fair, ethical and flexible in our relationship.
- We shall seek to understand and respect each other's cultures, business objectives, expertise and expectations.

Coburg Night Market

Coburg Night Market is three nights filled with delicious and diverse flavours, unique artisan products, and captivating entertainment. This year Coburg's most loved market takes place in the historic Bridges Reserve, just a short walk from the Coburg CBD. Coburg Night Market 2026 will run from Thursday 17 December to Saturday 19 December 2026 with audiences of around 5,000 per day. Depending on the site layout, bar services are required for up to two bars each night.

Brunswick Music Festival

Brunswick Music Festival (BMF) is an inspiring 8 days of live music across Brunswick, celebrating Brunswick's vibrant music scene. In 2027, BMF kicks off with the Sydney Road Street Party on 28 February and ends on 7 March. Last year's BMF took place over 49 events and was enjoyed by 60,000 punters. We will determine what bar services will be required for Merri-bek City Council-produced events as the program is developed.

Application Guidelines

The successful vendor must:

- Make a competitive percentage of gross takings offer, with optional cash sponsorship offer;
- Respond to all sections in the online Festivals Bar Services Application form;
- Demonstrate experience in operating bars in a festival or events environment;
- Provide appropriately qualified staff to plan, execute and monitor the provision of the services;
- Provide an adequate number of qualified staff to manage bar services as per audience sizes;
- Hold adequate Public Liability and Workcover insurance;
- Provide details for 2 references;
- Operate for the duration of the event as per the dates/times agreed;
- Acquire, and adhere to, a temporary liquor licence for each event;

- Ensure all OHS and safety requirements are adhered to at all times;
- Offer beer and wine in reusable cups or opened cans and adhere to the Merri-bek City Council [Plastic-Wise Policy](#).
- Provide the bar/service area, including all stock and equipment.
- Provide a complete sales record within 7 days to enable invoicing.

Merri-bek City Council will provide:

- Marquees/bar areas with power, water, and waste bins as required;
- Security personnel to meet the requirements of the liquor licence;
- Event plans required for licensing applications;
- A detailed briefing including proposed bar locations, and audience expectations.

Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be used in evaluating applications:

- The originality and quality in the range of products;
- The applicant's experience in operating bars in festival and events environments;
- The applicant's capacity to provide the service;
- The nature of the applicant's offer in terms of sales share and/or cash contributions;
- The applicant's health and safety and environmental sustainability plans.

Coburg Night Market and Brunswick Music Festival are projects of the Merri-bek City Council. It is not a criteria for applicants to be based in Merri-bek, but a weighting will be given to organisations who are based in or work in Merri-bek and/or who plan to use Merri-bek-based suppliers.

Applicants must also hold a current Certificate of Currency – Public Liability Insurance of \$20 million minimum and Workcover.

Additional Information

- Applicants should clearly address the selection criteria.
- Any applicant who canvasses a Councillor or a Council staff member will be disqualified.
- Merri-bek City Council is not bound to accept any applicant and may re-advertise or enter into negotiations with a preferred applicant.
- All applicants will be notified in writing if the contract is awarded to any applicant.

Note: The successful applicant may be offered additional bar service contracts as a first preference provider if opportunities arise at other Merri-bek festivals and events.

How to Apply

Fill in all sections of the Festivals Bar Services Application form, linked below, and include all required attachments.

[Click here to Apply now](#)

The successful applicant will be offered an initial one-year contract, with two optional one-year extensions. Optional Brunswick Music Festival to be contracted separately, pending program. Shortlisted applicants may be required to attend an interview.

Applications must be received by 31 July 2026. Late applications will not be considered.

Any application enquiries or questions can be emailed to festivals@merri-bek.vic.gov.au.