



Previous Merri-bek Festivals Development Program recipient Fungal Forest by Sanctum Studio, at Glenroy Festival 2026. Image credit: J Forsyth

Expression of Interest

Merri-bek Festivals Development Program 2026

About the Program

The Merri-bek Festivals Development Program supports artists and producers in the creation of new performance, live art or participatory works.

The program will support up to two projects with a financial contribution of up to \$10,000 for each project. This funding is provided for the development and creation of the work and does not include the presentation fee for the project outcome.

Projects may be considered for presentation across any of our annual programs in 2026 and 2027, with a preference for outcomes presented at Fawkner Festa and Glenroy Festival.

Who can apply?

The Merri-bek Festivals Development Program offers an excellent opportunity for artists and producers interested in creating new, engaging, and family-friendly work for the communities of Merri-bek.

The program considers applications from artists or producers who live or work in Merri-bek, or for projects that can clearly demonstrate a connection to Merri-bek. Applications from diverse communities, including First Nations, migrant and refugee, d/Deaf and Disabled, women, and LGBTQIA+ artists are strongly encouraged.

If you have questions or need support to submit in a different format, please contact us.

How to apply

To apply for the Merri-bek Festivals Development Program, interested applicants should read all the information in this document and apply via the link below. If you have any questions, please contact us by phone or email.

[APPLY HERE.](#)

Applications close Sunday 21 June at 11:59 PM at 11:59 PM.

Key Dates

Applications Close	Sunday 21 June at 11:59 PM
Successful applicants notified	July 2026

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- **Artistic Merit:** Is the work innovative, engaging and of high artistic quality?
- **Capacity to Deliver:** Does the project team have the capacity to deliver the project?
- **Community, participation & accessibility:** Has careful consideration been taken with regards to the way communities can participate, the audience experience and access issues?

Budget

Research and Development Costs

Your project budget should cover research and development costs, artist and creative fees, and expenses for costumes, props, technical equipment, and other materials; and preliminary marketing material.

Presentation Costs

Presentation costs must also be included to assess the viability of your project for a Merri-Bek City Council Festival or Event.

Please use our Budget Template available in the application form.

What we will provide

The Merri-bek Festivals Development Program will support two projects through a financial contribution of up to \$10,000 for each project development. Funding will be paid in instalments, which will be outlined in the agreement.

The program will also help you to produce your work by providing support with development/rehearsal spaces, audience development and marketing support, accessibility support, technical support and advice, and the presentation during a Merri-bek festival.

Support Provided	Details
Funding	Up to \$10,000
Development/Rehearsal Space	Available upon request
Audience Development Support	In kind
Marketing Support	In kind
Accessibility Support	In kind
Technical Support and Advice	In kind

Protocols

If your project involves the use of culturally significant content (for example, from First Nations, Nepalese, or other cultural communities). We may contact you to provide additional documentation demonstrating community consultation, permissions, or cultural authority relating to the use of that material.

About Fawkner Festa and Glenroy Festival

[Fawkner Festa](#) and [Glenroy Festival](#) are annual free outdoor community events that celebrate and showcase their vibrant and diverse local communities. The events include performances, community stallholders, food vendors, children's activities, and workshops.

General Terms

Merri-bek City Council:

- Will not support applications where the recipient promotes and/or benefits directly from electronic gaming machines or from any form of gambling including sports betting and lotteries.
- Reserves the right to publish details of successful applicants and their projects on its website, social media platforms, and other relevant Merri-bek publications.
- Will provide space for development, rehearsal or planning activities associated with the project by mutual agreement.
- Will offer general support and advice on development, presentation and technical requirements for the projects.
- Will assist with obtaining any necessary permits or permissions for the project presentation.
- Will present the premiere of the project at a Merri-bek City Council Presented festival or event.

Successful applicants:

- Will warrant that they are the creator, and the owner of the rights to develop and present, The Project. The Project will not defame any person or entity, infringe on any copyright, or otherwise violate the rights of any third party.
- Will be required to possess Public Liability Insurance to the value of \$20,000,000. If the artist does not have Public Liability Insurance, this may be able to be provided by Merri-bek City Council.
- Will invite Merri-bek Festivals team members to key development activities or work in progress showings.
- Are responsible for supplying and covering the cost of instruments, sets, props, costumes and any other equipment required to stage the creative development and performances, unless otherwise agreed with Merri-bek City Council.
- Agree to acknowledge the support of Merri-bek City Council on any and all publications, publicity and promotional materials of any future outcomes of the work created during the Merri-bek Festivals Development Program.
- Are required to provide two written project reports – one due following development and one following the final delivery of the project.
- Are responsible for all contract and/or employment arrangements for the projects including any tax, superannuation and Workcover requirements.
- Will Obtain all appropriate licenses and permissions including those pertaining to One Music Australia, APRA AMCOS, PPCA and from contributing artists and creative personnel.

Enquiries

Enquiries should be directed to Rosie Hazell, Festivals Officer via email festivals@merri-bek.vic.gov.au or phone +61 3 9240 1228