

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER (PHILANTHROPY)

About Us

Queensland's premier arts festival, Brisbane Festival heralds the promise of play and celebration as it lights up the city each September in a blaze of colour.

We create extraordinary art and take up residence throughout the river city, atop iconic landmarks and deep into the suburbs. We host captivating live performances and installations from home and across the world. Our Festival reflects the diverse communities that give Brisbane its unique voice. We invite audiences to Be Bold with us, to expect art unexpected with open hearts and minds; to be entertained, inspired, and amazed.

Brisbane Festival acknowledges this country's First Nations people and with their leadership and guidance, we celebrate that deep cultural legacy. We create a rich multi-arts program made by and with our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Our artists, people and partners are ambitious and agile dreamers who make the impossible possible through passion, hard work, and care.

Position Summary

The Development Manager (Philanthropy) is a senior member of Brisbane Festival's Development Department, responsible for leading strategic initiatives that grow and sustain philanthropic support through the Festival's Giving Program.

While philanthropy is the primary focus, the role also contributes to the broader Development portfolio, collaborating on partnership activities, stakeholder events, and audience initiatives that deepen engagement across all areas of Brisbane Festival's community.

Key responsibilities include developing and delivering innovative programs to attract and retain donors, cultivating high-value relationships, and building a robust pipeline for annual and major gifts. The position oversees research and insights to inform strategy, ensures best-practice donor engagement, and works closely with colleagues across Marketing, Programming and Technical Production to deliver high-impact campaigns and exceptional experiences.

With a strong focus on planning, leadership, event delivery, and results, this role plays a critical part in shaping the future success of Brisbane Festival's Giving Program, while contributing to the ongoing growth and collaboration of the wider Development team.

About You

You are a strategic thinker with proven experience in leading successful fundraising initiatives and building long-term donor relationships. You bring a mature, professional approach to philanthropy, combining creativity with analytical insight to design programs that deliver sustainable growth. Highly organised and confident, you excel at managing complex priorities, influencing stakeholders, and crafting compelling narratives that inspire generosity.

Your collaborative nature and ability to work across departments make you a trusted partner in achieving ambitious goals. Knowledge of the arts, philanthropy, and partnership development in Australia will be highly regarded.

Key Attributes

- Strategic thinker with proven experience in leading successful fundraising initiatives.
- Highly organised and confident, able to manage complex priorities and projects.
- Exceptional relationship-building and influencing skills to engage donors, partners, and stakeholders.
- Strong analytical capability to translate donor insights into actionable strategies.
- Collaborative, independent, and resourceful in a fast-paced environment.

Reporting

Reports to: Director of Partnerships and Philanthropy

Positions reporting to the role: 1-2

Roles and Responsibilities

As part of the Development Department, the Development Manager (Philanthropy) works collaboratively with colleagues across Marketing, Programming and Technical Production to ensure alignment between the Giving Program, partner activations, and wider audience engagement activities. While philanthropy is the primary focus, the role also supports integrated Development initiatives that strengthen relationships across Brisbane Festival's community of supporters, friends, partners and stakeholders.

Administration and Data Management

- Follow all Brisbane Festival systems and processes effectively.
- Maintain exemplary standards for invoicing, receipting, and acknowledgment of donations.

- Maintain accurate and timely donor and Giving Program records in CRM and database systems.
- Oversee efficient administration of all philanthropy initiatives, ensuring thorough and current files and records.
- Maintain strict confidentiality and discretion in relation to donor information.
- Contribute to philanthropy strategy development, reporting, and analysis as required.
- Liaise with the Administration team to optimise CRM practices and data integrity.

Financial Management

- Forecast, develop, manage and monitor Development budgets within approved constraints and timelines.
- Accurately track expenses, invoices, reimbursements, and purchase orders.

External Communications

- Prepare and distribute donor communications in a timely and professional manner.
- Ensure donors and prospects are appropriately included in Brisbane Festival communications, including e-news and other EDMs.
- Collaborate with Marketing to develop materials and collateral related to the Giving Program, including design briefs, invitations, and donor communications that reflect the Festival's brand and tone.

Donor Research and Relationship Management

- Research and identify new opportunities for philanthropic giving, including individuals, foundations, and trusts.
- Maintain a current register of funding opportunities, eligibility criteria, and grant timelines.
- Prepare high-quality applications for grants and funding opportunities where appropriate.
- Support the cultivation and stewardship of high-value donors and prospects, fostering long-term relationships and engagement.

Donor Events and Engagement

- Lead and assist with the coordination and delivery of Giving Program events throughout the year.
- Ensure events are delivered on time, within budget, and to a high professional standard.
- Attend all relevant events to host and engage donors, artists, and potential supporters.
- Collaborate with Partnerships to integrate donor and partner experiences where appropriate, maximising engagement opportunities.

Systems and Compliance

- Utilise organisation-wide systems in accordance with Brisbane Festival policies and procedures.
- Uphold data integrity, privacy standards, and reporting accuracy.

Workplace Health and Safety (WHS)

- Take an active role in implementing Brisbane Festival's WHS policy.
- Promote and maintain a safe, healthy, and inclusive working environment.

Relevant Experience

Essential

1. Demonstrated success in designing and implementing strategic fundraising programs that deliver sustainable growth and exceed financial targets.
2. Tertiary qualifications in fundraising, marketing, business, arts or a related discipline.
3. Proven ability to cultivate and manage high-value donor relationships with a focus on long-term engagement and impact.
4. Exceptional communication and influencing skills, including the ability to articulate a compelling vision and confidently secure major gifts.
5. Strong strategic thinking and analytical capability to interpret donor insights and translate them into effective fundraising strategies.
6. Experience leading or coordinating complex donor engagement initiatives and high-profile events.
7. Advanced organisational and planning skills with the ability to manage competing priorities and deliver outcomes in a dynamic environment.

Desirable

- Knowledge of the arts and cultural sector and an understanding of the philanthropic landscape in Australia.
- Proficiency in CRM systems and a commitment to data integrity and best-practice processes.
- A collaborative, resourceful, and proactive approach, with the confidence to lead initiatives and work independently when required.

Apply Now

Visit brisbanefestival.com.au/jobs to download the Position Description and submit your application. Applications close at 5pm on Friday 28 November 2025. Applications are strictly confidential.

For a confidential discussion regarding the role, please contact: Fabienne Cooke – Director of Partnerships and Philanthropy fabienne@brisbanefestival.com.au

Your application should include:

- Cover letter addressing the selection criteria and your suitability for the role
- Current curriculum vitae
- Professional referees

Research shows that while men apply to jobs when they meet an average of 60% of the criteria, women and other marginalised folks tend to only apply when they check every box. So, if you think you have what it takes, but don't necessarily meet every single point above, please still get in touch. We would love to have a chat and see if you could be a great fit.

Brisbane Festival is an equal opportunity employer committed to diversity in the workplace. Our vision is to have a team which reflects the breadth and diversity of Brisbane's population. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse applicants and people with a disability are encouraged to apply.