



Level 5, 10 Hickson Rd, The Rocks
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia
Phone 61 2 8248 6500
Fax 61 2 8248 6599

sydneyfestival.org.au
ABN 60 070 285 344

Creative Producer – First Nations

Reports to: Festival Director

Working closely with: Head of Programming Operations, Blak Out Curator

Working relationships:

Executive Director
Members of the Programming Team including: Producer – Music, Producer – Dance & Theatre, Producer – Special Events and Associate Producer
Members of the Senior Management team
Team members: Production, Marketing, Customer Service
Philanthropy, Corporate Partnerships, Finance and Administration

Direct Reports: Seasonal staff including the Associate Producer – First Nations

Sectoral relationships: Elders, artists, Land Councils, venues, funders, festivals and other

Contract: Ongoing, full time

Purpose

The home of Sydney Festival is situated on Gadigal land. We pay our deep respect to all the clans of the Sydney basin and the surrounding Nations on which the Festival takes place.

Sydney Festival has been a leader in its commitment to championing and commissioning the work of Australia's First People. The organisation is committed to celebrating and honouring Australia's over 65,000-year history through investing in and prioritising the voices of First Nations artists and community as we embrace truth and tell the stories to build a post-colonial, contemporary future.

The primary purpose of the Creative Producer – First Nations is to curate and produce Festival works that champion and platform the work of First Nations artists across a variety of artistic genres through commissioning and presenting.

For more than 25 years, Sydney Festival has had a dedicated and vital First Nations strand in our program. From **Black Capital** in 2010, (inaugurated by then Festival Director Dr Lindy Hume AM) to the birth of **Blak Out**, developed under Wesley Enoch AM (2017-2021) and led by Creative Artist in Residence Jacob Nash, who curated the program onward through Olivia Ansell's tenure (2022-2025), First Nations stories have been at the heart of the program.

As Sydney Festival celebrates its 50th anniversary, with Kris Nelson as our new Festival Director, we are proud to announce a new designated First Nations role: **Creative Producer, First Nations**. This full-time position is open to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants and reaffirms our deep and ongoing commitment to First Nations programming, while ensuring the succession of a new creative lead.

For the 2026 program, the Creative Producer will collaborate closely with Festival Director Kris Nelson and Blak Out Curator Jacob Nash on program curation and take full responsibility for its delivery. For 2027 onwards the Creative Producer, in collaboration with the Festival Director, will curate and deliver the First Nations program.



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This position is a key creative leadership role in focusing on the planning and delivery of the Festival's First Nations program including works from Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and Indigenous artists from around the world.

Further, this role will work with the Programming Team to deliver key strategic objectives outlined in the **Reconciliation Action Plan** and **Strategic Plan**.

Curious to know more? Have questions about the role, the Festival, salary range or anything else? Please get in touch with us before making an application – contact Kris via execoffice@sydneyfestival.org.au

Duties include:

CREATIVE

- Devise and produce an annual First Nations Series for Sydney Festival.
 - In 2026, you will work closely with Creative Artist Consultant Jacob Nash, Festival Director and Head of Programming Operations (HoPO), to scope and plan the annual First Nations series, called Blak Out for the 2026 Festival.
 - From 2027 onward, devise themes and creative goals for First Nations programming and produce this work across the Festival working with Festival Director Kris Nelson.
- Research and engage with contemporary First Nations artists and organisations for programming and commissioning opportunities.

LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

- Consult, engage and liaise with stakeholders including artists, Elders, cultural practitioners, and internal teams to ensure smooth delivery of the Festival.
- Provide support and advocacy for First Nations artists participating in the Festival, including logistical support, promotion to community and ensuring their cultural needs are met.
- Manage First Nations Associate Producer (seasonal) and other programming staff and interns.
- Work alongside senior management to provide creative and producing support to a First Nations Advisory body.
- Collaborate as a cultural advisor to the Festival's senior management team, providing guidance on matters related to First Nations cultures and ensuring that the Festival's policies and practices are inclusive and respectful.
- Represent Sydney Festival at industry events and gatherings here and abroad and representing the programme in Media.
- Play a leadership role in the organisation as a member of the Senior Management Team.

PRODUCING AND PRODUCTION

- Work closely with the Head of Programming and Operations on planning for, resourcing and delivering the Festival program.
- Negotiate, formulate and manage project budgets in collaboration with Production and Programming Team.
- Act as producer for events commissioned and created specifically for the Festival
- In consultation with the Production Department, ensure that the presentation of Festival events is in accordance with contractual negotiations between artists, companies and co-producers.
- Using your hard producing skills to:



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- Negotiate and deliver agreed program of events.
 - Liaise with Marketing and Communications regarding publicity engagements and scheduling with artists/companies and to ensure accuracy of printed marketing material, including signage and billing.
 - Ensure that event details are maintained accurately in the Festival's scheduling database.
 - Manage Seasonal First Nations programming and producing staff and/or interns as required.
 - Secure music licensing and publishing rights.
- Using your creative producer skills to:
 - Support artists.
 - Identify and assist with funding opportunities and grants to support First Nations artists, programming and initiatives within the Festival.
 - Spot trends and gaps in the performing arts sector, to strategise ways Sydney Festival can have a world-leading First Nations program.
- Using your cultural expertise, collaborate with the Associate Producer – First Nations to:
 - Ensure cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country ceremonies for visiting artists, are arranged. Seek guidance from Elders and/or cultural representative bodies to ensure that the ceremonies and acknowledgements are conducted appropriately.
 - Oversee and arrange public-facing Welcome to Country or Acknowledgements of Country as required including the recording and licensing of any audio or audiovisual content for all Festival events.
 - Help identify and engage First Nations-led and owned suppliers to support Festival activities, ensuring that the Festival promotes and supports First Nations businesses, contributing to the economic empowerment of First Nations communities.
- If required by the Festival Director, to work on or consult on events, productions and projects outside of the First Nations program.

Essential skills and attributes

Applicants must be of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, identify as being an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and accepted in the community.

- Knowledge of the First Nations performance and broader arts programming sector, including relevant artists, companies, genres, trends, arts festivals, venues, arts centres, arts companies and artists, either nationally and/or internationally.
- You've got experience in at least one of the Festival's main presenting genres: theatre, dance, music, visual art, public art or community practice. Experience in devising, organising and producing events with First Nations protocols, artists and communities.
- Experience in event production, management and presentation.
- Relationship management skills working with numerous stakeholder groups both internal and external. Strong team and relationship management skills, including experience of conflict resolution.
- Experience in developing and managing budgets.
- Comfortable hosting artists across a range of hospitality requirements.
- Able to travel, on occasion, to attend showings and performances both nationally and internationally.
- Passion for the performing arts sector and its possibilities.



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HOW TO APPLY:

Send a CV and cover letter with subject line CREATIVE PRODUCER – FIRST NATIONS of no more than two pages addressed to Kris Nelson, Festival Director, c/o peoplandculture@sydneyfestival.org.au

If you'd like to speak to us before making an application, we're open. We're happy to discuss salary range, answer questions about the role, artistic vision and anything else you might want to know before applying. Get in touch with Kris Nelson via execoffice@sydneyfestival.org.au

IMPORTANT DATES:

Deadline for submissions: 17 April 2025

First round interviews: 1 and 2 May 2025

Ideal position start: 17 June 2025