

NORPA

Northern Rivers Performing Arts

Executive Director

Job Pack October 2026





Acknowledgement

Traditional ownership of the Northern Rivers rests with the Bundjalung, Yaegl and Gumbaynggirr peoples, who maintain vital custodial links to this land. The Bundjalung nation includes areas from Grafton on the Clarence River of Northern New South Wales, north to the town of Ipswich and Beaudesert in southern Queensland and down around the other side of the Great Dividing Range and back to Grafton.

NORPA pays respect to this region's original storytellers, its elders, past present and emerging and acknowledges we create on unceded land.

Introduction from NORPA's Chair

Following the highly successful tenure of Libby Lincoln, who over the past four years has led NORPA, alongside Artistic Director Julian Louis, through an extraordinary period of post-flood recovery and renewal, we are now seeking to recruit a new Executive Director. This is a natural point in NORPA's evolution for a leadership transition, as we move into our new permanent home, The Joinery.

NORPA is in a period of growth backed by funding to support the development of The Joinery as a hub for the community, NORPA's office and creative base, and a space for developing artists. As Co-CEO, the Executive Director will hold significant responsibility for establishing regional and national partnerships, strategies for earning income, and detailed plans for operating the venue and managing its assets.

The successful candidate will be an experienced leader, someone who understands the role of cultural organisations in the civic life of regional centres, and has the understanding and collaborative skills to partner in the delivery of an ambitious creative program. They will be commercially minded, financially astute, experienced in grant governance, leading projects and people, and enjoy working in a cultural setting with creative people. They will bring vision for shaping NORPA's future as we enter an exciting period of transformation.



We are excited about delivering theatre, place-based creative practice, training and an artistic hub in one of the most culturally distinctive parts of Australia, with a deeply engaged community and audience base. Our vision is to build an organisation that creates art and generates revenue at a scale more akin to a capital-city theatre company - with its own regional expression. Our Board is made up of connected locals, artists, philanthropists and experienced industry leaders. I personally bring the ability to support the public policy dimensions of this work, and I look forward to championing the right person to take NORPA, and our mission, to its next level.

If you are enthused by the possibility of jointly leading an outstanding regional producing company, known for courageous artistic work and a large and loyal audience base, and developing The Joinery as the creative heart of the regional community, I warmly invite you to consider this role.

Damian Kassabgi
Chair

About NORPA

For 33 years NORPA has been a professional theatre maker, a producer, a presenter and a venue manager, proudly based in Lismore, in the beautiful Northern Rivers region of NSW. We have entertained, connected and engaged with our regional audiences, challenging them with the new and the extraordinary, and actively contributing to the national discourse with stories from regional Australia.

Over the years we have evolved and become more sophisticated in our work, business and people. The 2022 Lismore floods, leaving us without a home-base, has strengthened our resolve to make original theatre that speaks of place and to share stories about the Northern Rivers and beyond. We have not just recovered, we have deliberately reimagined what NORPA is, and can become.

The inspiration of that reimagining is The Joinery — NORPA's new home in Lismore, and the foundation of a longer-term ambition to build a creative precinct combining theatre-making, artist development, live music and events, and community and civic activity in one place. We have recently secured establishment grants to further this ambition, and the next chapter will be about converting this momentum into sustainable growth and realising a Creative Hub.

Our vision for the future is bold and vital theatre for everyone, enriching and enhancing the lives of our region's community and its visitors through great theatre.



The Role in Brief

The Executive Director of NORPA partners the Artistic Director as Joint-CEOs of the company, reporting to the Board of Directors.

In addition to sharing responsibility for NORPA's strategic direction, financial performance and delivery of an ambitious creative program across the Northern Rivers, the Executive Director will be an inspiring leader capable of managing capital programs, maintaining and developing new partnerships, new models of working, and growing an effective, high performing organisation.

Over the next years they will have primary responsibility for delivering against new grant funding to develop The Joinery as a major cultural and civic asset for the region, whilst developing new funding and income streams through venue utilisation and new partnerships to strengthen NORPA's longer term financial sustainability.





Responsibilities

Organisational leadership

- In partnership with the Artistic Director and Board, develop and embed NORPA's strategic plan, and lead the development of annual marketing, fundraising and business plans.
- Provide the planning, resourcing, infrastructure and business acumen that make ambitious artistic work achievable, including delivery frameworks, production budgets and risk management for co-productions, touring and new collaborations.
- Manage financial planning, budgeting, forecasting and reporting, developing the annual budget with the Artistic Director and reporting jointly on financial performance to the Board.
- Oversee administration, legal, risk and compliance, ensuring NORPA meets its legal, regulatory and funding obligations.
- Lead teams of direct and indirect reports to create a positive, inclusive and safe organisational culture and build a capable, efficient organisation.

Business development

- Lead the management and optimisation of NORPA's new facilities and venue operations.
- With the support of a Fundraising Manager, develop and deliver fundraising strategies across government, philanthropy, sponsorship and donations, making a compelling case for support grounded in the artistic program.
- Identify and develop new earned income streams, including venue hire, partnerships, touring and training, to strengthen NORPA's financial sustainability.
- Establish the governance, systems, procurement and project management disciplines to deliver grant-funded projects on time, on budget and to stakeholder expectations, flagging risks and variations proactively.
- Continue to develop a broad audience for NORPA's artistic work from across the Northern Rivers and further afield.

Positioning & Reputation

- Position NORPA and The Joinery as active contributors to regional recovery, civic life and city-building, developing partnerships with government, philanthropic and community partners.
- Represent NORPA in government, policy, funding and cultural sector forums
- Oversee brand development, reputation management and strategic communications.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria

- A minimum 5 years in a senior management role with a track record of successfully leading transformation and organisational growth, including developing new revenue streams and creating new partnerships.
- Substantial experience in managing budgeting, financial reporting and risk frameworks, and an understanding of compliance and governance in a not-for-profit setting.
- Demonstrated ability to secure and manage government funding, corporate and philanthropic support, and to effectively steward funder relationships.
- Marketing, branding and communications experience, with the ability to develop promotional campaigns to drive audience and revenue growth.
- A strong understanding of place-making, regional development or civic/cultural infrastructure initiatives.
- Experience leading positive organisational culture, team performance and staff wellbeing in a values-based environment.

Desireable Criteria

- Previous experience working in a creative, cultural or not-for-profit environment
- A working knowledge of co-leadership models and working with an Artistic Director or other creative leader.
- Training in not-for-profit governance and experience working with a Board.
- Hands on experience as a creative producer or program manager, including an understanding of production budgets, and technical production.
- Experience managing a performance venue and demonstrated ability of maximising usage and improving the venue's commercial sustainability.

Personal Attributes

- A collaborative leader and an exceptional communicator, able to effectively partner in a co-leadership model
- Visionary and strategic thinker, able to lead change and build alignment internally and externally.
- A credible and influential ambassador, able to build strong relationships with stakeholders across community, government, funding bodies and the creative sector, at all levels.
- Commercially astute and entrepreneurial, alert to revenue and partnership opportunities.
- Sound judgement, able to navigate ambiguity and complexity, including managing competing priorities.
- Resilient and energetic, with the stamina to lead an organisation and sustain the confidence of those around them.





Terms of Appointment

Salary:

\$150,000 per annum.

Location:

Our office is based at The Joinery in Lismore. NORPA works across the Northern Rivers region, from Ballina to Bangalow, Mullumbimby to Nimbin.

Hours of Work:

Based on a 38 hour week, hours of work will vary around production and performance requirements. Some evening and weekend work will be required.

Annual leave: 20 days plus public holidays

To Apply

To apply, candidates should provide a CV and a short statement (no more than 3 pages) outlining their experience against the selection criteria, and what they would bring to NORPA.

Applications to include details for 2 referees, who will only be contacted with the applicant's permission.

NORPA is committed to an inclusive and accessible recruitment process. We welcome applications from candidates with diverse backgrounds, perspectives and lived experience, and will make reasonable adjustments to support participation in the process.

For more information or a confidential conversation please contact Fiona Allan, enquiries@fionaallan.com

The closing date for applications is 5pm AEDT, Friday 13 November 2026.

Please submit applications to enquiries@fionaallan.com with subject heading NORPA Executive Director.

norpa

**Website: norpa.org.au
Facebook: [norpa.lismore](https://www.facebook.com/norpa.lismore)
Instagram: [norpalismore](https://www.instagram.com/norpalismore)**

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