

Midsumma Festival 2026

Hero Image EOI Brief

Midsumma invites artists to submit proposals for concept campaign artwork for the 2026 Midsumma Festival.

Proposals: Completed proposals must be submitted by **12pm Friday 4 July 2025.**

Details on how to submit work can be found below.

Budget: A commission fee of \$3,000 is available to the successful submission (inclusive of production costs and artist fee).

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1. What is Midsumma Festival?

Midsumma Festival is Australia's premier queer arts and cultural festival held annually in Melbourne/Naarm, Victoria — run by and for communities who live with shared experiences around diverse gender and sexuality (DGS or LGBTQIA+). We are a champion of queer culture, conversations and events.

Midsumma produces the three-week Midsumma Festival each year during January and February, consisting of 200 events across 100 venues. During the festival, Midsumma also produce three signature events that take over public spaces: Midsumma Carnival, Midsumma Pride March and Victoria's Pride Street Party.

Alongside these, we also invest in a curated program called Midsumma Presents, which platforms performance, visual arts and a talks program. The events in this lineup have a focus on ensuring the diverse creative voices across our communities are being centred. Midsumma also works year-round to provide artists, social-changers and culture-makers with support and tools to create, present and promote their work.

Artists, producers and culture-makers register their events for inclusion in the Midsumma Festival program guide, website, promotions and artists support services. Events focus on arts experiences such as theatre, music, comedy, dance, visual arts, digital arts, films and forums — alongside cultural experiences, sporting, family and social events.

2. The Hero Image Brief

Midsumma is seeking initial concepts or mock-ups for the 2026 Festival campaign artwork. Proposed designs should have the versatility to represent the full breadth of Midsumma Festival's program—spanning multiple artforms, celebrating diverse communities, and appealing to all age groups. The selected artwork will form the central



branding for the 2026 Festival and must be adaptable for use across a wide range of mediums and formats, including print, digital, and merchandise.

What do we need initially?

- Mood board, sketches or examples of proposed work / artistic direction that speak to the brief and vision of Midsumma Festival 2026 (this can include work already created)
- Interest in producing the artwork for the 2026 Festival campaign within the proposed budget
- A (short) written explanation of how you will address the brief and theme for Midsumma Festival 2026

Selected artwork will be used as the campaign hero image of the 2026 Festival marketing campaign. The artwork will be used to promote the 2026 Festival in all marketing, and could be used in the following ways:

- Midsumma Festival printed program guide front cover
- Printed and online collateral (not limited to our Launch & program videos, Festival posters, staff t-shirts, billboards, banners, tickets, digital screens, email communication)
- Social media and created content
- By partners and sponsors who are promoting Midsumma Festival
- **Yarra Trams 'Inclusivity tram' full tram wrap** - see your art traveling the streets of Melbourne on one of Melbourne's iconic trams for 12 months.



3. Key Themes


Midsumma is a festival that intrinsically creates safer and inclusive places for communities, with diversity at its very core. **The campaign artwork for Midsumma Festival 2026 should be able to appeal to or be appreciated by all of our diverse audiences as well as highlight key themes for the 2026 Festival.**

Midsumma Festival 2026 will focus on these key themes:

- 🕒🌐 **Midsumma Festival's theme for 2026 is 'Time & Place'**
Time & Place invites artists to explore the unique time and place we find ourselves in today, in history, this socio-political time, and what it means for LGBTQIA+ communities the world over. Connected to this is how significant place is within this time 2025-2026. What is the significance of place, of our geographic location in the world, our community and rights based on place and time, and significant events impacting LGBTQIA+ people now.
- 🎨 **Arts and Culture** – Midsumma has positioned itself as a globally relevant cultural influencer with artistic and thought leadership, with learning and diversity at its heart. We have experienced rapid growth in audiences, breadth and scope of artists, community engagement and depth of artistic partnerships with new work developed.
- 🏳️ **Diversity and LGBTQIA+ representation** – Midsumma attracts broad attendance across age ranges and demographics, truly representing inclusion and diversity in all its forms. For this reason, we include many diverse queer communities in Victoria and Australia.
- 🇦🇺 **First Nations engagement** – Midsumma continues a strong and meaningful engagement with LGBTQIA+ First Nations artists & communities for the 2026



Festival. Over the past three years, there has been a significant increase in First Nations involvement in our open access & 'Midsumma Presents' programs, Midsumma Carnival, Midsumma Pride March and Victoria's Pride Street Party.

-  **Pathways for artists and audiences with disabilities** Midsumma has seen a significant increase in D/deaf, disabled, blind/low vision, and chronically ill artists and audiences. Our Midsumma Pathways Program has developed new work by artists with disabilities, which has been platformed during Midsumma Festival.

Information on **Midsumma's audiences**, who we need to appeal to and who we need to concurrently reflect, can be found in our [2025 audience survey results summary](#).

4. The Vibe

Midsumma Festival is held in summer, and the festival conjures bright imagery when we pop into the minds of our artists, culture makers and audiences. It is important for Midsumma to have a guide cover that reflects our contemporary nature and vibrant imagery and tone (**without always needing to use confirmatory rainbow colours**).

Midsumma's brand colour is red:

RGB 249, 52, 72 / Pantone 1787C / CMYK 0, 87, 61, 0



It's not essential to use this colour, the campaign imagery for Midsumma Festival 2026 will be based on your hero image artwork for the cover



5. Previous Midsumma Campaign Artwork

Since being launched in 1988 Melbourne by the Gay Business Association, Midsumma has grown to become Australia's premier LGBTQIA+ arts and culture festival. Each year a different artist has been commissioned to design the front cover of the printed official Midsumma Festival guide.

- [View the front covers of the printed Midsumma guides, year-by-year \(1989 to 2025\) on our website here](#)



(Left) **Midsumma Festival 2025** hero image.

The guide cover artwork and festival theme were designed by **Melanie Skyers** of Craate Creative. The central focus was a chrome star against a deconstructed Pride Flag, representing unity and intersectionality. It celebrates the LGBTQIA+ experience and encourages harmony amidst differences.

(Right) **Midsumma Festival 2022** hero image. The guide cover artwork and festival theme were by **Gonketa (Jaycob Campbell)**, a Melbourne-based visual artist who was born Deaf. The work aimed to educate and teach audiences Auslan, using key festival and queer community terms.





(Left) **Midsumma Festival 2021** official campaign hero imagery was created by XR artist **Marc-O-Matic**. This ‘world’ of Melbourne represents Midsumma Festival: how we amplify LGBTQIA+ visibility and activate physical spaces to bring them to life. Midsumma commissioned Marc-O-Matic to design this world with representative venues, people, arts landmarks, and queer flag representational colours on the buildings to bring Melbourne back physically and visibly to life again for Midsumma Festival 2021. The “world” can be activated by a specially designed AR filter on the Midsumma Festival Instagram page.



6. The Agreement

Final approval to use any image, commissioned or otherwise, as the hero image for the Midsumma Festival each year remains at the discretion of Midsumma.

Crediting: Midsumma Festival will credit your design, artwork, image, model or illustration where image credits are appropriate. Midsumma will request your name, social media handles and website, plus art title for crediting.

Media and file format: Artwork may be created in any media, including but not limited to painting, printmaking, sculpture, textiles, photography and drawing. Final artwork will need to be presented to Midsumma as an image of the artwork or final art submitted as .png, .ai or PSD file formats. Moving imagery or video can be used in addition but cannot be the main image for the printed cover.

Midsumma Festival requests your artwork be adaptable to portrait and landscape dimensions with your consent. The design should be able to be sized/resized into the following (but not limited to):

- Midsumma guide cover: 210mm x 227 mm
- Website and social Media Imagery: 4:3, 3:4, 16:9 and 1:1 ratio
- Out of home advertising: Large file formats (x6 to be provided)
- Yarra Trams: Full tram wrap, specs to be provided

For the 2026 Midsumma Festival, we will be partnering with Yarra Trams to incorporate an adaptation of the Hero Artwork onto a tram wrap. This will see the winning design scaled to encompass an entire tram adapted to ensure the look and feel is suitable for the whole year. The design will feature Midsumma Festival branding for 12 weeks and then removed and replaced with the artist's and collaborator recognition for the rest of the year, as Yarra Trams 'Inclusivity Tram'.



7. The Timeline

Midsumma Festival 2026 program will launch in November 2026. The following milestones will need to be achieved to ensure the guide can be printed before the launch:

- Respond to this brief by **12pm Friday 4 July 2025**
- Midsumma to notify successful applicants moving to Round 2 with feedback by **4pm Friday 18 July 2025**
- Respond to the offer from Midsumma by **4pm Monday 21 July 2025**
- Round 2 – progress imagery based on feedback due **12pm Tuesday 5 August 2025**
- Midsumma to confirm your image is successful + provide final feedback to finalise artwork by **4pm Wednesday 13 August 2025**
- Final deadline for cover art is **5pm Wednesday 27 Aug 2025**

These dates are somewhat negotiable pending an initial discussion.

6. The Budget

A commission fee of \$3,000 is available to the successful submission (inclusive of production costs and artists fee). Payment for the commission will consist of 25% payment upfront, 25% payment at the centre milestone and 50% final payment upon completion.

An additional \$500 will be offered to successful ideas moving to Round 2, this is paid to assist with your time in progressing the artwork for the final round.



7. How to Submit a Proposal

Proposals: Completed proposals must be submitted by **12pm Friday 4 July 2025**.

Each proposal should contain the following:

- Mood board, sketches or examples of your proposed work that speak to the brief and vision of Midsumma Festival 2026
- A written explanation demonstrating how you plan to produce the artwork within the proposed budget
- A (short) written explanation of how your work addresses the brief and vision of Midsumma Festival 2026

You can submit your proposal:

- Via email to marketing@midsumma.org.au (with support material such as video, images, or pdfs)
- Or via mail addressed to Midsumma Festival, Level 6, 168 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, VIC, 3000
 - (If sending via post, please note that the proposal must be received by the Midsumma Office by the closing date & time to be valid)

Enquiries: Proposal enquiries should be directed to Midsumma Festival via

marketing@midsumma.org.au

For further information please contact our Office on 03 9296 6600

