

Midsumma Festival 2021 Event Registration Info Session

Host: Patrick Hayes, Midsumma Program Manager

Opening Slide

Hello there, and welcome to the Midsumma Festival 2021 Info Session about registering an event. My name is Patrick and I am the Program Manager at Midsumma. This is a new format of information session as we can't host one physically and we wanted to make sure we could put out something that was the highest quality that we could. I will be speaking through the slides and as you can see there are captions, if you require a transcript of this presentation or a copy of these slides you can access them on our website.

I will also be doing image descriptions, this slide has Midsumma branding on it with our signature passive red and white, the slide is half red and half white with a wave line. There is also an image of me, a brunette haired man with a beard, glasses, wearing a bowtie smiling, the background is my bedroom/office.

Now that I have stepped through the format and introduced myself.

Slide 2

I would like to begin by acknowledging that ownership of these lands was never ceded and pays respect to all first peoples of Australia, especially the Kulin Nation on which the audience and artists of Midsumma gather and celebrate our communities. I would also like to extend on that and hope that anyone reading/watching, or listening can also take a moment to acknowledge and consider the First peoples of the land you are on.

The slide is similar with a Red bar at the top with white text saying Acknowledgement of Country and the rest of the slide has text on it slightly paraphrase from what I just said and there is an image of Adam Astro an indigenous artist in a dynamic stance one arm raised, dressed in costume of blues and blacks, the costume covers the face as they stand before a microphone.

The Photographer credit is Tanya McCulloch and the Artist as said is Adam Astro @ Lunar New Year Disco

Slide 3



The next slide is just a Title slide that has the same background as Slide one, a Red and white screen with a wave slide to separate them. And the Text Midsumma Festival 2021 and the Midsumma Logo.

So, 2020 has been a big year and it is only about halfway done, we at Midsumma are starting to cast our minds into 2021 and thinking about what could be. We are pretty excited about what it could be, and we hope you are too. Let's start talking through the basics, probably focusing on the key date is a great way to start.

Slide 4

The Midsumma Festival Dates are 17 January – 7 February 2021 our traditional 22 day festival. Event Registrations Open: 16 June 2020 so that means we are currently in our registration period. The event Registrations Close: 24 August 2020 at midnight. Your event contract is due in September, there is a little leniency there. Your Venue Hire Agreement which we will talk about later is due 14th of September 2020

Split Ticketing Agreement is due if your venue has a ticketing agreement with Midsumma on the 28th of September. Guide Advertising also closes on the 28th of September. Your Event Media Release is due by 2nd of November in order to be ready for the Program Launch, which is at the end of November. Festival Pass information is also due on the 2nd of November. Access Service Provider Information, if you have any access aspects of your show is on the 1st of November. And requests for Midsumma Carnival Roving Rights are due 14th of December. Public Liability Insurance is due 10th of January 2021

You can find all of these on our website as well, which has some amazing information to help to put together an event. If you have put an event on in Midsumma festival in the past, this might seem familiar and we are trying to keep things on track to not change too much year to year, but we do have to address the proverbial elephant in the room.

This slide has no images, just the list of dates that I spoke through.

Slide 5

Another Red/White Title screen with COVID-19 Impacts as the text.

Yes, even though we are not for another 6 months it is still important to think about how COVID-19 might impact your event.

Slide 6

COVID-19 has made a lot of things unpredictable; I think we can all agree that rules seem to be changing week by week. Most recently Melbourne is back in lockdown. We aren't psychic so we at Midsumma also can't say what the restrictions will be in January. I know it is exciting to think



about throwing parties, hosting events, performing, seeing art and feeling connected to our communities again, but we can't rush this. It is important to consider how this crisis may impact your work or event. Really think about the risks involved, physical, emotional, and financial strain of putting on an event.

Midsumma wants to bring the community together, and I personally want to see everything that people have created and been inspired to do isolation, but only if we can do this safely. We are planning to be as flexible as possible and want to work with you, our awesome communities, to make the Midsumma Festival in 2021 the best it can be. I will be adding notes about COVID throughout the presentation, just flagging some things to think about. So, starting I guess from the beginning, step one.

The image on this slide is an animated image of two people social distancing with a line between them demonstrating distance, there is text that reads "Disease Prevention, Maintain physical distancing, Source - World Health Organisation".

Slide 7

"So, you have an idea for an event, what next?"

I have already been having conversations with artists and community groups and have heard and seen so many ideas come about in the last few months, and if you have had an idea, you are already on your way.

This slide contains no images, just text and is similar to the other title slides.

Slide 8

For anyone who was involved in Midsumma Festival 2020, you will be pretty familiar with Eventotron. It is an online platform a lot of Open Access festivals use to get registrations. It's kind of where we get all the information about your events, for the printed guide, website and our ticketing system. This is the best place to start if you are considering an event for 2021. You don't have to finalise your registration all at once, you can update as you go and know more details. And you can save it so it's not one big clump of data. Just remember the August deadline.

You might already have a login from the last festival, if you are a returning artist or have done an event with a festival that has also used Eventotron. If you are new you can find all the info on our website and just see how easy it is.

If you have an event that will be returning to Midsumma 2021 and won't be changing much like a party that might be happening again or a concert that keeps running doesn't. You might also



be able to transfer some of that information to save you time, just check out our website for more details and see what is possible

Image description is a text slide, with an image that has a logo that reads “EVENTOTRON” the first O is 3 circles of green, pink and yellow creating colour scope by overlapping. Below it shows the website login that reads New Users, email address, password, confirm password with smaller text below “By registering you are agreeing to our terms and conditions and privacy policy.”

Slide 9

So why would it be helpful to start a registration? Well, it is a great way to know what you don't know about your event. Start one, fill out everything you know and see what is left, you can make a plan of attack from there.

We also see the registrations in progress, so it is a great way to just let us know you want to make an event happen. We can also reach out to check-in to see if we can help, also you can always reach out to us. Marketing wise, it is a great way to see the copy you will need to write and images you will have to provide for the website and printed program. Plus, you can see a preview of your event-listing, which is always exciting. You can also see what Venues a part of Midsumma before having been, we will touch on venues a little later.

Once again just reminding you, you don't have to pay for the registration until you finalise. You can log in and update 1 step a day and it will save your progress for you. Take your time, really think through your event.

Image description is there is a long image that is of the Eventotron user interface, it shows the step process of doing a registration, some of the steps are in boxes that are filled in with grey shading to show the percentage of that step being completed.

Slide 10

Marketing

When inputting information into Eventotron you will have to provide us with all of your marketing information, this mainly is images and copy, here are some tips to help.

- Shoot an eye-catching promotional image. It is going to be something that really drags the audience to your event and will be a big part of your marketing campaign.
- Write both a short and long blurb that clearly describe your show in an engaging way. Sometimes arts are a bit too descriptive with their text, sometimes not enough. It is a hard balance to find, take it step by step and make sure you are describing your show.



There is nothing more disappointing for an audience to go into a show expecting one thing and being delivered another. A great tip is getting a friend or a family member that doesn't know anything about the show to read the copy and look at the image and tell you what it is about, if it's so different from what you got maybe you will have to look at it.

- We have added a section for not just socials but also Google Ads, we recommend filling it all out so we can support you, though our google ads for the festival.
- Think of your hook! Why do people want to come to your event? What makes it step out from everyone else, and becoming a shining example of why people should come to your show
- Develop a strategy and timeline, look at how you will reach your audience including a social media strategy (Facebook, Twitter), e-communications (emails), print (posters, flyers). Try to look other ways you can also engage like website, blogs, online listings, all of those kind of things
- You can find even more tips and resources on our Event Producer Resources webpage.

Definitely check out the website to get the most out of our resources, there are a bunch of them. we are here to help as well so feel free to reach out. We'll do our best to support you if you have any questions about these things.

Image description is a performer in a two piece outfit, the pattern has bananas everywhere they are also wearing banana earrings and a banana scarf wrapped around their hair. They have a shouting expression on their face, the stance resembles a monkey like mannerism.

Photographer credit is for Suzanne Balding and the image is from CHURCH. That was at the Toff in Town

Slide 11

Let's talk about Venues, I know a lot of us are very enthusiastic about physical events again and getting back to your audiences. We still have a few hurdles to get over before we can make that happen, and a lot of organisations have been hit hard. Venues have been really impacted. As I said before there is a list of venues that have been part of Midsumma festival in the past, you can find it in Eventotron or on our website.

Please note that you should talk to your Venue before selecting it in Eventotron. They will have to approve it in their login and if you haven't spoken before it might seem rude to just get the notification from Eventotron.

If you are looking at doing a Digital event or a Visual Art event please contact us. We are working with artists to work out the best way to showcase their digital events, at the moment we don't have a specific platform to host the works, so want to make sure whatever we do works best for Midsumma, the artist and of course the audience. Visual Art events are normally straight forward but the system in Eventotron where you indicate the open times can sometimes



get confusing as the interface is set up for performances in mind, we just want to know so we can jump in and help and reduce any frustration.

Midsumma also asks you to have an agreement with your Venue, this is important. With restrictions changing and being unpredictable, we recommend taking out plans with your venue and having them in writing. This can sometimes seem aggressive asking for an agreement, it really isn't. It helps you and the venue know what steps should be taken when unpredictable things happen and will reduce what could become aggressive conversations down the line. We have a basic template on our website and in Eventotron that you could use.

Ultimately, in the grand scheme of things. Be patient and kind, we are all going through a difficult time.

Image descriptions, there are two, one is a venue set up and it is empty, the stage has instruments and microphones on it, there are plants that dress the stage and there are fabric vines hanging from the ceiling. There is also a screen with the aboriginal flag on it. The next image is the same venue but zoomed out a little bit, filled with people, and the stage has artists on it, the screen now reads FAMILI. These images were captured from the event Famili by Suzanne Balding as the photo credit.

Slide 12

As said, we don't know what the rules are in January, but we can try to plan for them. Here are some of the things to maybe consider.

- Consider the size of your audience, will the venue only be able to hold 20 – 40 % of capacity?
- What measures can you put in place, will you have masks and sanitizer available?
- Is the stage big enough for your performers to be distant?
- Does your event encourage safe social practices?
- What are the restrictions on bars? Is it 1 drink per person? Does that effect the venues bar income?
- There are a lot of unknowns, and you might not know the answers to these questions. We will provide updates in our Producer Updates closer to the festival.

Take these questions and think about them every step. It's going to be hard but the more we think about these things, the less we will be surprised about them down the track.

The image description is the Melba Spiegeltent at our volunteer briefing, there is an audience in chairs. looking at a woman in a Midsumma branded blue t-shirt, giving a presentation with a screen that is also branded for Midsumma.

Slide 13



One of the most important things to consider is access, and I think it's been highlighted a lot now that people can be accessible if they put their energy towards it. Access can mean a lot of things to different people and Inclusivity and diversity is at the heart of Midsumma Festival. As such, we're dedicated to making the festival accessible to audiences with disability. We will have another video similar to this talking through access steps that can help make your event more inclusive. It is important to think about this in the onset, access isn't just a take on.

We also have a bunch of resources and can also help put you in contact with professionals to assist in making your event accessible. It can be intimidating taking on Access and building it into your events, but it is easier to do it from the start, integrates earlier and just makes life easier taking it into consideration when you are planning for your budget, for your venue and other aspects. If you want to be accessible and don't know how, just ask. Reach out to Midsumma, we will help where we can.

With the world going through changes in the next few years we will have to reinvent events and what better time to make sure that we make space for everyone from the get-go.

Some things you can consider in the meantime access wise:

- Can my work include access elements such as Auslan interpretation, audio description, a Tactile Tour or Relaxed Performance?
- Does the Venue you are using have gender inclusive bathrooms/other queer safe space options for your audience?
- Does my event fall on invasion day? We at Midsumma strongly recommend not holding events on this day unless they are culturally significant and safe events run with or in collaborations with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

One last added bonus if you needed anything other than just being awesome to sweeten the pot is that, if you provide an accessible service (such as Auslan interpretation, audio description, tactile tour or relaxed performance), Midsumma will promote your event to that community that requires that service. An extra notification, an extra little platform to get your event out there and into that community

Image description there are four access signs, for Auslan interpretation, Closed caption events, Wheelchair accessible and Tactile Tour.

Slide 14

Registration Costs

So, Midsumma Festival has scaled registration costs depending on how many events and if you are charging for tickets. The scale goes

Free event is \$295 (This might be a community event or an exhibition)



Priced event with 1 or 2 Sessions \$380 (This might be a one off concert or if you have a 2 night season on weekend)

The Priced Event (3+ Sessions) \$430 (this might be a stereotypical performance season or such)

We also have the After Party for \$220 (Now, these are events that register to be an official afterparty as part of Midsumma festival for Carnival and Pride March, you can find more about these online)

We also then have our Community Groups and Independent Practitioner price that applies to events except for the After Party Events.

The Free event goes down to \$195

The Priced event for 1-2 Sessions goes to \$280

And the Priced Event for 3+ Sessions goes to \$330

To be eligible as a Community Groups you have to have under \$300k turnover per annum and as an Independent Practitioner you have to be earning under \$75k per annum the producer needs to provide proof of eligibility for this discount, this might be an annual report, tax return, other documentation that you will see through your event registration

Some other points to consider is:

- You don't have to pay upfront; you only have to pay when you finalise the event. At the moment the final deadline is 24th of August.
- These prices are for both physical and digital events, we will talk about digital events a little bit later.
- As I have mentioned you have to show proof to get the Community Group/Independent Practitioner rate.
- If you are not in a financial situation to pay the registration fee upfront, please get in contact and we can try and work out a plan together.
- If your event is forced to cancel due to coronavirus policies enforced by the government, Midsumma plans to refund registration costs paid in advance. Please keep in mind our standard refund policy applies and Midsumma retains full discretion on providing refunds.

There are no images on this slide, just a table that outlines that I've gone through and that's about it.

Slide 15 - Digital Events

Moving on from registrations. Let's get digital, in the past few months many artists have transitioned into the digital space and digital practitioners have been embraced by isolated audiences. Though we might be back to physical events you may still want to do a digital event, or even consider a digitally augmented event.



As an open-access festival, we don't run events outside of our Midsumma Presents program. And we don't want to tell you how to make an event digital. Even if you aren't going completely digital, maybe consider live streaming or how you can make your event digitally accessible.

Going digital has many positives to it: It is very safe social distancing, it can reduce venue costs, and it has the potential to reach a large audience. If you are considering a digitally augmented event like a live stream, you might want to charge a cheaper ticket for a digital way to experience the work. This could help increase your box office, while also creating bigger audience impact and also giving you a way to capture your event for documentation. Which so many artists fail to remember until it's too late.

Although with this list, saying it would be easy would be wrong, it is worth considering some of the following points for your events:

- Does your event translate to digital? If it relies on audience or physical presence it may be difficult, and you may need to rethink it.
- Does your art become something new when digital? For example, does your Sculpture work suddenly become photography when putting it online and does that change your art?
- Do you have the resources to host an event? What platform would you use? Do you have strong enough tech and internet to broadcast clearly for your audience?

Whatever your thoughts or questions, I recommend reaching out to us at Midsumma, these events though exciting have some logistic bugs to work out.

Image description is a digital work of art, and animated person is being reflected in an oval mirror standing and posing to the mirror. They seem two dimensional while the background has a three dimensional effect on it, the background has a vase with a single purple flower in it and a smaller pot next to it. The far background has three squiggly lines, one yellow, one purple and one spotted randomly like a dalmatian dog. This image was taken from a work called Queery by Glynn Urquhart.

Slide 16 - Money

One of the biggest components we will have to think about is money. In the festival circuit and arts sector, we are no strangers to bending over backwards to get money for our projects, this year is no different if not infinitely more complex. We have an amazing list of grants and opportunities up on our website. The link is in the slides, but if you google Midsumma list of grants, it should pop up. Or just find our Producer resources page. Be aware that a lot of the funding rounds you might be used to are not the same this year, a lot of councils have been great in getting out responsive grants for COVID - 19 but they have had to change their other rounds.



You might have to use other avenues, such as crowdfunding. Some of the usual platforms are Pozible, Australian Cultural Fund, GoFundme and so on, these are great options and can be a brilliant way to connect with your audience and community. Though I would say be aware of fatigue. There have been a lot of causes people have been donating to in the last 6 months, Fire & COVID relief and also many funds supporting the Black Lives Matter movements. Your usual audience of friends and family who might be willing to give you money, just might not have the resources to do that right now.

We have a template budget you can access on our webpage and through Eventotron as well. In planning this out try to consider what income is certain and which is not, for example you may want to adjust the projected Box office income. If you normally sell 200 out of 400 tickets across the season but can only sell up to 100 in total with restrictions, you may feel confident to assume you will sell out. You also might feel you can't reach your normal sales target, which is totally fine, I think being cautious and taking your time to really think it out and restricting financial risk is a really smart thing to do.

Image Description. A performer dressed as Freddie Mercury, a silver sparkling onesie, black glove, black arm band and glittery shoes. The performer is bending over backwards and reaching out towards the camera with their gloved hand.

Slide 17

Recap

Ok we are almost there and thank you for paying attention for this long. If you take anything away from this video take this slide.

- Start your registration early, you don't have to pay right away, and you can save your progress, so you don't have to do it all at once!
- Start thinking about Access. It is better in the process to think about it early, and don't be scared of it!
- Really think about your event and talk to your venue and collaborators. Have a couple of plans in place and have them in an agreement.
- Keep UpToDate with safety restrictions that have been put in place and make sure to read those Producer Updates when they come through.
- If you are thinking about a Digital event or a Visual Art event please get in contact with us to talk it through.
- Use this time to think about your Marketing, can you get images that might be useful for future events as well?
- Most importantly, look after yourself and those around you. It is exciting at the prospect of getting back to physical events and parties, but we need to be patient and do this well.



Image description for this one is a performer standing on a stage in front of three stained glass windows, the performer is singing into a microphone held in one hand, there are instruments placed around them on stage.

Photograph credit here is Suzanne Balding. Artist is Essie Holt as part of POWER @ Chapel off Chapel,

Thank you once again for bearing with me through this long bit of presentation, one final point is you can always contact us at events@midsumma.org.au and our office number is 039296 6600 if you call we are not in the office at the moment we are all working from home. But if you leave a message we get an email message about it and can call you back and yeah we would love to talk to you, please reach out. We will only get through this together. Stay Sanitized stay safe and stay strong.

