

NORTH AUSTRALIAN FESTIVAL OF ARTS

Position Title	Executive Director
Reports to	Board of Directors
Award	Non-Award role
Workload	3 days per week (0.6FTE)
Location	Predominantly office-based in Townsville, with flexibility for hybrid/remote work as required to fulfil the role.
Revision Date	27 January 2026

Role purpose

The Executive Director is the organisational, financial and operational leader of the North Australian Festival of Arts (NAFA). The role is responsible for ensuring the organisation is financially sound, well governed, operationally robust and strategically positioned to deliver its artistic ambitions safely and sustainably.

The Executive Director prioritises First Nations leadership, voices and Cultural protocols, and ensures the festival reflects its place in North Queensland through ethical, respectful and meaningful engagement.

The Executive Director operates in a co-leadership model with the Artistic Director, translating artistic vision into viable organisational plans, budgets and systems, and ensuring the organisation meets its legal, financial, employment and risk obligations.

Key accountabilities

The Executive Director is accountable for:

- Organisational execution of strategy
- Financial management, budgeting and financial sustainability
- Governance, compliance and risk management
- People leadership, workplace culture and organisational systems
- Operational readiness and delivery of NAFA's activities
- Strategic partnerships and stakeholder relationships (excluding marketing and communications)

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Key responsibilities

- Provide organisational leadership to deliver NAFA’s strategic plan in alignment with the Board’s direction
- Lead financial management including budgets, forecasting, cashflow, financial controls and reporting to the Board
- Ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory, funding and workplace obligations
- Lead organisational risk management, including WHS, insurance, contracts, safeguarding and reputational risk
- Oversee organisational operations, policies, systems and infrastructure to support effective festival delivery
- Lead and manage staff, contractors and senior leadership, fostering a healthy, ethical and inclusive workplace culture
- Work in close partnership with the Artistic Director to align artistic ambition with resources, timelines and risk appetite
- Work in close partnership with the Artistic Director to achieve fundraising budgets
- Support and enable the Creative Director to deliver the festival safely, on time and within approved budgets
- Act as a senior organisational representative with government, funding bodies, partners and key stakeholders
- Prepare Board papers, reports and briefings and support effective Board governance

Key performance indicators (KPIs)

Performance will be assessed against the following indicative KPIs:

KPI	What success looks like	How this will be measured
Organisational sustainability and financial management	The organisation operates within approved budgets, maintains adequate reserves and meets all financial obligations.	Audited financial statements, Board reporting and budget performance.
Demonstrated prioritisation of and genuine respect for First Nations Peoples across programming and partnerships	First Nations Peoples are meaningfully prioritised in operations and decision-making. In consultations, Cultural authority is respected and decisions involving First Nations projects or	Comfort of key Community members in the office and with all NAFA staff. Evidence of appropriate Cultural authority and

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KPI	What success looks like	How this will be measured
	activities are made in ways that are ethical and community led.	protocols being followed.
Stakeholder & Philanthropic Leadership	Participate in the cultivation and strengthening of high-value relationships with government, philanthropic, and strategic stakeholders	Demonstrable contribution to successful funding, sponsorship, and philanthropic outcomes
Effective governance and compliance	NAFA meets all statutory, funding and contractual obligations with no material breaches.	Compliance registers, audit outcomes and Board feedback.
Operational effectiveness and risk management	Festivals and activities are delivered safely, lawfully and with appropriate risk controls in place.	Post-festival reviews, incident reporting and risk assessments.
Leadership and organisational culture	Staff and contractors report clear leadership, strong systems and a respectful workplace culture.	Staff feedback, retention and performance processes.
Effective co-leadership with the Artistic Director	Organisational decision-making is collaborative, timely and aligned with artistic priorities.	Senior leadership feedback and Board assessment.

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Decision-making authority

- Final authority over organisational operations, finances, staffing and risk management
- Shared decision-making authority with the Artistic Director on matters with material artistic, financial, safety or reputational implications
- Authority to make operational decisions within Board-approved policies and budgets

Essential skills and characteristics

- At least five years' experience in a similar executive leadership role
- Strong financial management and governance capability
- Demonstrated experience managing complex operations and risk in high pressure/event-based environments
- Excellent people leadership and organisational development skills
- Ability to work effectively in a co-leadership model
- Strong strategic thinking and efficient execution capability

Desirable skills and characteristics

- At least five years senior leadership experience in an arts, cultural, not-for-profit organisation
- Experience working with Boards and public funding bodies
- Experience in festival or major event organisations
- Understanding of regional or place-based cultural contexts
- Experience managing growth, change or organisational restructure

Cultural commitment

NAFA is committed to elevating First Nations Peoples, stories and leadership. The Executive Director is expected to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to Cultural respect, ethical engagement and the amplification of First Nations voices in line with community expectations and with the relevant Cultural authority.