



ROYAL SOUTH STREET SOCIETY  
BALLARAT EISTEDDFOD

# Volunteer Handbook

2026 Information Manual

Royal South Street Society -

Home of the Ballarat Eisteddfod

We are delighted to welcome you to the heart of our community at the Royal South Street Society Ballarat Eisteddfod. Your decision to contribute your time and skills as a volunteer is a cornerstone of our event's success, and we are genuinely grateful for your commitment.

As a volunteer, you play a pivotal role in bringing the magic of the arts to life, creating an atmosphere of camaraderie, and ensuring the seamless execution of our eisteddfod. Your dedication is what makes this event not just a showcase of talent, but a celebration of collaboration, creativity, and community.

This handbook is designed to be your guide, providing essential information about your role, responsibilities, and the various aspects of our eisteddfod.

As you embark on this journey with us, remember that your enthusiasm and dedication are the driving forces behind the success of the Ballarat Eisteddfod. Together, we will create lasting memories for performers and audience members alike, fostering a spirit of inclusivity and appreciation for the arts.

Thank you for being an essential part of our volunteer team. We look forward to working together to make this year's Ballarat Eisteddfod an outstanding success.

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# WELCOME

## Royal South Street Society Vision

To conduct Australia's premier eisteddfod - promoting and encouraging participation, enjoyment and enrichment through the performing arts.

## Royal South Street Society Values

- We are welcoming, professional and respectful.
- We provide opportunities for performers to develop and flourish.
- We are inclusive and embrace diversity.
- We act with honesty and integrity.
- We are committed to excellence.

## Royal South Street Society Volunteer Mission Statement

At Royal South Street Society, we believe in the power of volunteering to create positive change and build stronger communities. Our mission is to harness the passion, skills and commitment of our volunteers to make a meaningful impact on the experience of both the volunteers and the competitors during the Eisteddfod. Through the development and implementation of a comprehensive Volunteer Management Plan, we aspire to cultivate a culture of service that not only addresses immediate needs but also fosters long-term sustainability.

## History of Royal South Street Society

The Society began in 1879, as a young men's Debating Society. They were very active, and soon took over a hall in South Street, Ballarat, and thus became known as the 'South Street Society'. They engaged in other debating competitions for the next 12 years, then commenced their own 'South Street Competition' in 1891. Their efforts expanded into many areas including acting, singing, music, dance and calisthenics. They even expanded into spelling, typewriting, cooking, gum leaf playing and school aerobics on occasions. Brass Bands commenced in 1901 and became immensely popular. Calisthenics commenced in 1903 and to this day, Ballarat is still considered to be Australia's Premier Competition for Calisthenics.

The Society was granted 'Royal' status in 1962 for services to the community. We have won countless community service awards and have also helped develop national copyright protocols for competitions and established the Australian Eisteddfod Association.

# ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

## Board

The Royal South Street Society is run by a voluntary board of up to 14 people who have a passion for performing arts or skills in general business management, human resources, finance, education, advertising, or marketing.

The Board oversees the whole organisation and guides the direction of the Society. The Board oversees the members of staff.

### 2026 Board Members

Lindsay Eaton (Chair)

Danielle Coltman (Deputy Chair)

Barbara Stead (Secretary)

Virginia Wise

Narelle Carr

Adam Miller

Andrea Brown

Nichola Sleight



Left to Right – Nichola Sleight, Danielle Coltman, Andrea Brown, Karen Daniell (resigned), Adam Miller, Barbara Stead, Narelle Carr, Virginia Wise, Lindsay

## Staff

As of January 2026, the Royal South Street Society staff consist of

- Executive Officer – Judy-Ann Quilliam
- Eisteddfod Coordinator – Louise Brooks
- Eisteddfod Development and Volunteer Coordinator – Carolyn Bennett
- Finance Officer – Susie Schmidt

These roles are the only paid roles within the Society.

## Discipline Chairs and Committees

Each discipline is headed by a Discipline Chair volunteer who guides a small committee of interested volunteers. The Discipline Chair and Committee make decision on sections, adjudicators, timetabling and schedules. They are assisted by the Eisteddfod Coordinator to plan and stage their discipline every year.

### 2026 Discipline Chairs

All Abilities – Rebecca Norris

Calisthenics – Andrea Brown

Choral – Brooke Johnson

Comedy – Kris Carroll

Dance – Jessica Godfrey and Danielle Coltman

Debating – Loretta Kaval

Festival of Schools Instrumental Music – Karen Pengelly

Pianoforte (inc Chopin) – Carolyn Bennett

Speech and Drama – Kris Carroll

Vocal (inc Herald Sun Aria) – Carolyn Bennett

## Volunteers

Volunteers make up the bulk of our organisation and assist with each event in the roles of ushering, backstage, stage management, registration, master of ceremonies, ticket and merchandise sales, and general duties as required.

Volunteers must be 15 years of age or older.

All volunteers over the age of 18 must have a current Working With Children Check.

# COMPLIANCE

## Child Safety

The Royal South Street Society is a Child Safe organisation. We are committed to child safety; we have zero tolerance for child abuse along with a commitment to children's best interests and keeping them safe. We actively work to listen to and empower children who perform at our eisteddfod. All children have the right to feel safe and to be safe all of the time.

In 2016, the Victorian Government legislated 11 Child Safety Standards to protect children and young people from abuse. As an organisation that involves children, the Royal South Street Society must be compliant in all areas of this legislation.

Board, Staff and Volunteers MUST be trained in Child Safety laws and while the Board is responsible for ensuring the whole organisation is compliant, all volunteers must be trained and show understanding in the following areas

- Be familiar with the 11 Child Safety Standards
- Know what is appropriate when dealing with a child or young person
- Know what is *not* appropriate when dealing with a child or young person
- Know what signs to look out for
- Know how to report suspected issues of Child Safety or abuse

The Royal South Street Society has put together a training course for all volunteers to complete. This can be done online in approximately 40 minutes and consists of several information modules followed by RSSS specific training scenarios and questions.

This training can be completed in the RSSS office for those who are not able to access a computer or the internet. There is also an option to complete a 5 hour training course via the Ballarat Neighbourhood House for those who prefer in person training.

Child Safety is something that requires ongoing vigilance and refresher training. We must be actively complying to all standards, be aware at all times, and remember that all children and young people deserve to feel safe in our care.

**The RSSS Child Safety Training can be found on the volunteer page of our website.**

[Victoria's Child Safe Standards - RSSS Volunteers](#)

Volunteers should also be familiar with the following Child Safety documents. These are located on our website and can be downloaded as required.

[Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)

[Child Safety Reporting Policy](#)

[Child Safety Report Template](#)

[Child Safe Policy](#)

## Working With Children

All Volunteers must have a current Working With Children Check. This is available through the Victorian Government website [Working with Children Check | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au/Working-with-Children-Check)

Volunteers will need to list the Royal South Street Society as one of their volunteer organisations. This ensures we are kept informed of any changes and sent a copy of your card when you renew.

Before each event, we run your WWCC numbers through an online checker, to ensure all cards are up to date and valid.

## Work Health and Safety

Volunteers have the same work health and safety duties as paid workers. Volunteers must take reasonable care for their own health and safety. Volunteers must also follow reasonable instructions, policies and procedures. The Royal South Street Society also commits to providing a safe environment for its' staff and volunteers. Click [here](#) to read about the Work Health and Safety laws in detail.

## National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

This set of standards has just been refreshed. You can download the current version of the standards [here](#).

## Insurance Cover

Our volunteers are covered by Community Underwriting. The Group Personal Accident Insurance is designed to provide insured persons with certain benefits. For example, if an Insured Person suffers an injury as a result of an accident while performing authorised voluntary work for Royal South Street Society that prevents them from working in their Occupation, Community Underwriting will pay the insured Person a weekly benefit calculated in accordance with the Policy and the limits set out in the Schedule.

For an injury to be covered it must occur when the Insured Persons are;

- Performing authorised voluntary work for Royal South Street Society.
- Travelling from their usual place of residence to the voluntary work or from the voluntary work to their usual place of residence.
- Travelling during the course of carrying out authorised voluntary work.

If you need to make a claim, please contact [volunteer@royalsouthstreet.com.au](mailto:volunteer@royalsouthstreet.com.au)

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## Purpose

The [Code of Conduct](#) and the [Code of Conduct – General Entry & Audience](#) are public statements of how we conduct our organisation, and our business and how we treat our employees, volunteers, competitors, adjudicators, sponsors, audience and stakeholders. The clarification of the expectations reinforces our commitment to respect, fairness, and high social and ethical standards within the workplace. It is designed to assist staff and volunteers in understanding what acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in the workplace are.

Royal South Street Society does not discriminate against staff, volunteers or client on the basis of race or skin colour, gender identity, sexual orientation, intersex status, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, family or carer's responsibilities, pregnancy, religion or political opinion, national extraction or social origin.

## Eisteddfod Events

### **Employees and volunteers of RSSS will:**

- Act in accordance with legislation and policies that are applicable within RSSS
- Follow lawful and reasonable directive from management
- Always promote the best interests of the organisation
- Be aware of and align with the RSSS mission and values
- Treat each everyone with respect, fairness and consideration
- Not tolerate misconduct or inappropriate behaviour
- Maintain confidentiality, not disclosing or misusing RSSS information
- Not be involved in any activity that may cause conflict of interest
- Be accountable for your own action and decisions
- Be ever mindful of the health and safety of yourself and others in the workplace
- Uphold the principles of equal opportunity
- Perform their role with professionalism, care and responsibility

The public facing role of our staff and volunteers at our Eisteddfod events at a range of venues is very important. We are ambassadors for the Royal South Street Society Ballarat Eisteddfod. At all times, staff and volunteers should:

- Ensure that their standard of appearance is neat, clean and appropriate for their area of work. Where a uniform and/or personal protective clothing/equipment is provided, it must be worn. A high standard of personal hygiene is expected at all times.
- Refrain from any form of personal or public comment about performers, performances, sponsors, adjudicators, decisions or outcomes at any stage of the eisteddfod.
- Observe and support child safety and wellbeing standards at all times
- Observe meal breaks in private designated areas – not eat when on duty in any formal office, front or back of house.

# VOLUNTEER BENEFITS

## Benefits

Volunteering for Royal South Street Society may provide numerous benefits for individuals including

- Personal Fulfillment
- Skill Development
- Networking Opportunities
- Sense of Community
- Mental and Emotional Well-being
- Personal Growth

We aim to empower volunteers by providing meaningful opportunities that align with their skills, interests, and values. We also aim to provide training and upskilling for volunteers along with mentor/mentee opportunities.

## Recognition Programs

In 2024, we enhanced our recognition programs for volunteers and developed incentives for active volunteers. Our new Volunteer Management Plan includes mechanisms for regular acknowledgement, appreciation, and programs to celebrate the achievements of our volunteers.



In addition to the benefits above, you can also expect

- Social events at least twice a year
- 'Thank you' event at the end of every season
- 'Years of Service' acknowledgement
- Profile on special moments through social media or the newsletter
- Regular communication via a fortnightly newsletter

## Training and Upskilling

All volunteers are requested to attend a new 'annual volunteer training day' in April. During these training sessions we will cover various elements of the following

- Introduce the Volunteer Management Plan to volunteers
- Introduction to the RSSS Staff, Board and Discipline chairs
- Overview of the year, disciplines and calendar dates
- Training on the CMS
- Guest speakers on relevant topics
- Skill development
- Safety and Security training for venues
- Compliance training (ie Child Safety)
- Mentorship programs and cross training
  - Establish a core group of volunteers who are keen to train new members while on shift.



# REGISTRATION ROLE DESCRIPTION

The first point of contact for competitors as they arrive



### Skills Required

- Welcoming and friendly
- Good communication skills
- Efficient and organised
- Basic computer skills required for most disciplines

### Duties

- Register competitors as they arrive
- Check correct item details
- Collect music if required
- Direct to dressing rooms



**DETAILS VARY SLIGHTLY FOR EACH DISCIPLINE...  
AND ON SHIFT TRAINING IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE**

☎ 5332 1054 For further details contact [volunteer@royalsouthstreet.com.au](mailto:volunteer@royalsouthstreet.com.au)

# STAGE MANAGER

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

The first point of contact for competitors as they arrive



### Skills Required

- Calm and efficient
- Good communication skills
- Organised
- Firm and decisive

### Duties

- Organise competitors backstage so they are ready to perform
- Find competitors as needed
- Liase with chairperson if delays occur or competitors need to perform out of order

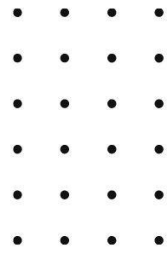


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# CHAIRPERSON

## ROLE DESCRIPTION



The 'Master of Ceremony'



### Skills Required

- Confidence with public speaking
- Reading fluency
- Organised and calm
- Knowledge of the discipline is an advantage but not essential

### Duties

- Welcome audience, adjudicators and sponsors
- Announce competitors
- Acknowledge sponsors and promote RSSS
- Help with award presentations



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# USHER

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

The customer service representative



### Skills Required

- Friendly and welcoming
- A willingness to assist the public
- Knowledge of the section
- Knowledge of the venue layout

### Duties

- Staffing the theatre entry and exit points
- Opening doors between items and checking tickets
- Ensuring public don't enter or exit during items
- Assisting public as needed with seating or questions



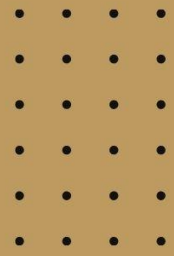
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# GOFER

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

A role to keep you fit and active



### Skills Required

- Fast of foot
- Ability to multi-task
- Ability to follow directions
- Knowledge of the venue layout and roles of volunteers and staff

### Duties

- Run errands and messages as directed by other volunteers
- Take running sheets backstage
- Collect trophies, ribbons and prizes
- Find competitors and assist other volunteers who cannot leave their post



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# ADJUDICATOR ASSISTANT ROLE DESCRIPTION

The adjudicator's personal assistant



## Skills Required

- Ability to maintain confidentiality
- Capacity to walk up and down stairs several times in a session
- Warm and welcoming
- Good communication skills

## Duties

- Wear headphones and act as the communication point between the adjudicators and back stage or office
- Ensure adjudicator has everything they need (crits, microphone, tea/coffee)
- Deliver completed crits to registration for collection



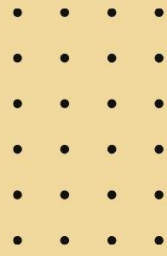
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# TICKET SALES ROLE DESCRIPTION



The main point of contact for audience members



## Skills Required

- Computer literacy and cash skills
- Ability to multi-task
- Confident and welcoming
- Knowledge of the discipline to direct others and answer questions

## Duties

- Credit card and cash sales for tickets and merchandise
- Photocopying or printing as required
- Answering questions and directing public
- Assisting the office staff as required



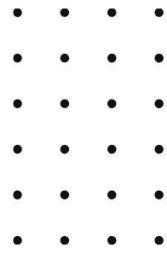
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# WRITER ROLE DESCRIPTION



| Giving voice to the adjudicator



## Skills Required

- Efficient and legible hand writing skills
- A knowledge of the rules of the section
- A knowledge of commonly used musical or dance terms and phrases
- Discretion and confidentiality

## Duties

- Ensure crits are ready and in correct order
- Write crits as dictated by adjudicator
- Assist with adding scores and final tallys
- Assist as needed by stocking supplies, organising copies of music, tea/coffee etc



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## Expectations

The Royal South Street Society volunteers are asked to follow certain conventions while engaged with the Ballarat Eisteddfod.

- Commitment and Reliability - a willingness to volunteer for events and reliability to attend scheduled shifts.
- Professionalism and Friendliness - a willingness to conduct oneself in a professional and friendly manner when representing RSSS.
- Teamwork and Collaboration - ability to communicate effectively with other volunteers and staff while working a shift.
- Adaptability - Flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances if required and the openness to learning new skills.
- Respect for Diversity and Inclusion - a willingness to appreciate that all volunteers, staff, competitors, and parents have different needs, backgrounds and perspectives and to show tolerance and understanding to all.
- Safety Awareness - adhere to safety guidelines and protocols relevant to the venue and reporting any safety concerns promptly.

As a volunteer, you can expect the following from the Royal South Street Society.

- Clear communication - Regular contact and updates via the newsletter, website, and social media.
- Forward planning - Timely and accurate distribution of information relating to events and rostering with advance notice on upcoming calendar dates.
- Acknowledgement, recognition, and appreciation - a sense of feeling valued for your support including social events, celebration of milestones, years of service, birthdays and success stories.
- Transparency - An open and welcoming environment where you can feel comfortable raising concerns, asking questions and providing feedback and suggestions for improvement.
- Upskilling - Training, upskilling, and learning opportunities.
- Sense of Community - the feeling of being connected to others with similar passions and interests.

## Dress Code

We encourage volunteers to purchase an official Royal South Street Society branded top to wear with dark color pants or skirt. The wearing of a uniform creates a sense of community and connection and helps to present a cohesive and professional front to the public.

If you are unable to purchase a RSSS branded top, we ask that you wear a neat black top with dark color pants or skirt.

**Branded RSSS shirts are \$10.**

**Please order via [volunteer@royalsouthstreet.com.au](mailto:volunteer@royalsouthstreet.com.au)**



# COMMUNICATION

## Where To Find Current Information

Our website is the hub of updated information and will operate as the first stop for all information for volunteers, competitors and the public.

The volunteer page on the website is host to the Volunteer Handbook, compliance documents, volunteer feedback survey, newsletters, and the Child Safe Standards Training Course.

Our website is [www.royalsouthstreet.com.au](http://www.royalsouthstreet.com.au)

We also have a Facebook and Instagram account that will highlight interesting snippets and stories of things relating to RSSS. If you have an account, make sure to follow us! Updates are posted several times a week.

Facebook - search [RoyalSouthStreetSociety](#)

Instagram - search [RoyalSouthStSocietyEisteddfod](#)

You can contact the office directly Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm on 5332 1054 or via email [volunteer@royalsouthstreet.com.au](mailto:volunteer@royalsouthstreet.com.au)

## Providing Feedback and Suggestions

There is a permanent feedback form on the volunteer tab of our website [www.royalsouthstreet.com.au](http://www.royalsouthstreet.com.au). This survey allows you to provide feedback directly to the staff at Royal South Street Society. This is a safe forum for you to suggest ideas for change, or to report on things that are not going well. Your feedback is valuable to us and often provides great insight, giving us the chance to change and adapt as required. This can be anonymous, or you can supply your name if you would like to receive a response from us. We want our community of volunteers to feel safe, happy, and empowered to make change.

Here is a direct link to our survey [Royal South Street Society - Feedback Form](#)



## Conflict Resolution

Conflict is a natural part of any organisation. We have established clear policies and procedures to ensure that all volunteers are aware of the steps they can follow in case of a conflict.

We hope our organisation is one of open and transparent communication, and one where all individuals feel comfortable expressing opinions or concerns without fear of retaliation.

### Steps to our Conflict Resolution plan

1. Promote Open Communication - In the first instance, we hope that both parties are able to talk openly about the issue with the aim of resolving differences.
2. If that fails, you can make a formal complaint by completing the Grievance and Complaint Form or send a written letter/email to the Business Manager or if this is not appropriate, the Board Chair.
3. Address Issues Promptly – Once a formal complaint is received, the Business Manager (and/or Board Chair) will arrange a meeting with the party/s to enable them to formally present their case. The outcome of this meeting will be provided in written format to the party/s involved with an explanation/outcome/action. We will take all reasonable measures to finalise the grievance and complaints process within 10 working days.
4. Promote Understanding - We encourage individuals involved in conflict to try and understand each other's perspectives. We hope to foster empathy and active listening to facilitate a deeper understanding of the underlying issue.
5. Collaborative Problem-Solving - We promote a culture of collaborative problem-solving and will always seek advice from those with experience in the area.
6. Documentation - We use documentation to identify patterns, improve processes and prevent similar conflicts in the future.
7. Follow Up - We will conduct follow-up discussions after conflicts have been resolved to ensure that the resolution is sustainable. We will continue to monitor and provide additional support if needed.

Please be assured that we respect the confidentiality of all parties involved in the grievance process. Information will only be disclosed to those directly involved in the resolution process.

[Grievance, Complaints and Compliments Policy](#)

[Grievance, Complaints and Compliments Procedure](#)

[Grievance, Complaints and Compliments Form](#)

## Newsletters and Communication

As a volunteer member of the Royal South Street Society, you will receive a fortnightly newsletter to your nominated email address. If you do not have an email address, you may come and collect a hard copy newsletter from the RSSS office during business hours (11 Lydiard Street South) or we can post a hard copy in the mail. Newsletters are also kept on the volunteer page of our website.

The newsletter will contain information relevant to members including diary dates, training sessions, discipline dates, volunteer spotlight information, special events and relevant community news.

In addition to the newsletter, if you have chosen to actively volunteer at events, you will receive rosters for our Eisteddfod. The amount of time you choose to volunteer is up to each individual, but we do encourage everyone to volunteer for at least five shifts per year.

Our website has a volunteer page with everything you need to know and links to relevant surveys and forms. The website will have information on all disciplines, links and news from our social media sites and will also display our society historical information.

## Conclusion

Volunteers are the lifeblood of this organisation. If at any time, you can see the opportunity for improving the way we do things, if you would like to request more information on any of our policies or procedures, or if you need to get in touch about anything, we are always listening.

You can contact us via email, phone or by dropping into the office.

Thank you for the time you give to this organisation. We truly hope the experience is a rewarding one.

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**Email**

[volunteer@royalsouthstreet.com.au](mailto:volunteer@royalsouthstreet.com.au)

**Phone**

5332 1054

**Office Address**

125 Albert Street, Ballarat 3350