**International Literary Programmers Roundtable**

*We are delighted to bring back our innovative networking event for its fifth iteration!*

**About the program**

The International Literary Programmers Roundtablecombines the highlights of visiting Melbourne, with a range of professional opportunities for delegates and a chance to experience Melbourne Writers’ Festival.

The program includes networking and exchanging best practice ideas, meeting Australian publishers and local literary organisations, enjoying events and gatherings and, of course, getting to know Melbourne, a UNESCO City of Literature.

This delegation will comprise 6 people from literary organisations based within UNESCO Creative Cities and 6 delegates from Melbourne’s literary sector.

We particularly want to connect with organisations interested in showcasing Australian writers in their programs and creating cultural partnerships with Australia. We also want to provide opportunities for smaller literary organisations not already well-represented on the international travel circuit.

**Eligibility**

This initiative is open to any UNESCO Creative City professional who works in the literary sector and delivers programs for an audience. They could be a festival director, librarian, bookshop programmer or any other professional that fits the above description.

**Dates**

The program starts with three online meetings between February and April for participants to introduce their work

The in-person program will the run from 4- 9th May 2026, during Melbourne Writers Festival

The program concludes with a meeting post the in-person program

**Travel and accommodation**

The Melbourne City of Literature Office will provide all airport transfers, meeting expenses, lunches and accommodation for 7 nights in Melbourne.

We can also offer a subsidy of AUD$1500 for your flight for any delegates who need this. This subsidy will be payable at the start of the program.

Delegates will be responsible for all other costs, including visas and travel insurance. Please note that all delegates will need to book their flights by the end of June.

Expressions of interest close on Monday the 6th October 11.59pm (AEDT)

All applicants will be advised of outcomes the week of 3rd of November 2025

The International Literary Programmers Roundtable will be co-run with the [Melbourne Writers Festival](https://mwf.com.au/)

To express your interest, please fill in the [following form:](https://cityofliterature.wufoo.com/forms/zdnpab1090ocw7/)

If you have any questions, please email Melbourne City of Literature Office Director David Ryding.

Some feedback from past participants:

*‘It was just really helpful to see how and what is being done in Melbourne. From hiring a social worker at the public library to how acknowledgments are woven throughout a program - soaking in Melbourne through watching it go about its business (vs performing it) was inspiring in helping me think of other ways of doing and being.’*

**Shin-Yu Pai, Civic Poet of Seattle, VILP 2023**

*‘Whatever expectations I had were far exceeded – I left the round table energized for what I do, and with many new friends! The openness of everyone taking part in the programme and their willingness to share the good and the bad of their experience as literary producers made me feel part of a very special group of people.’*

**Ann Landmann, Cymera: Scotland's Festival of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Writing, VILP 2023**

*‘I thoroughly enjoyed, valued and was challenged by the conversations I had with my programming peers. The welcome, hospitality, facilities and programme offered to us by Melbourne UNESCO City of Literature Office and the Wheeler Centre made a very conducive environment for constructive and candid sharing and learning.’*

**Peggy Hughes, National Centre for Writing (formerly known as Writers’ Centre Norwich) VILP Participant, 2019**

*‘It was a unique experience to be able to connect with peers from around the world... I would now like to work closer with, not only with Australian literary organisations, but with all of the delegates’ markets as well.’*

**Emirates Literature Foundation**

*‘I made a number of important connections which will hopefully lead to more partnerships in the future. We plan a special focus on Australian cities in our work next year...[and] I am thinking of running a similar program in our Festival of the Future City in 2019.’*

**Bristol Festival of Ideas**

*‘The program is one of its kind and coming from a region where there are few literary organisations and even fewer literary arts programmers, it was immensely beneficial from a professional development standpoint.’*

**Singapore Arts House**

 *‘The roundtable was very well-conceived... it was a pleasure to interact with my counterparts from across the world and gain from their experience. I particularly enjoyed the interactions with the various literary organisations at the Wheeler Centre... We would like to see more Australian writers in India and familiarise Indian readers with their work.*’ **Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival**