

**WESTERN
EDGE**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Recruitment Package



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Western Edge acknowledges that we work and play on the unceded lands of the Kulin Nation.

We honour and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging and recognise their continuing connection to and custodianship of land, waters and culture.

It is a great privilege to build community and tell stories on this land, home to the oldest living culture on earth. We commit to solidarity and action in the journey to reconciliation.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.



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DEAR APPLICANTS,



We are Western Edge, the only theatre company in Naarm’s vast and vibrant western suburbs working with young people from IBPOC and marginalised communities. We tell Australia’s new stories as a coalition of powerful artists, storytellers and cultural witnesses. We are a company of young voices, we are diverse and we are on the cusp of greatness.

Artistically, we create courageous and subversive theatrical performances that challenge the mainstream establishment with a new creative culture and process. Our stories are grounded in our culturally diverse, refugee and migrant diasporas. Our work is embedded in community and carried out in local art spaces across the West. Western Edge has been in the West for almost 30 years as a modest youth arts company with deep community roots. We have developed speciality community arts expertise over decades of navigating daily the disproportionate challenges entrenched in the region. Marginalisation, intergenerational and intersectional adversity is part of our everyday arts environment, exacerbated by the geographical vastness and isolation of the region and the historical sparseness of government investment.

Western Edge has been a small youth arts organisation for most of our 30 year history. In 2019, our leadership transition took us through a period of significant growth, we went from a core team of 4 with around \$450,000 revenue to securing major philanthropic support and Australia Council Four Year funding for the first time in the company’s history. We have emerged as a team of 10 with expanded artistic and operational capacity and reached a milestone of \$1M revenue in 2022.

We have some exciting plans ahead for the company, including spearheading a new youth arts precinct in the West; partnering with Victoria University to research our youth arts practice as a tool for community healing; and engaging in international collaborations with artists and arts organisations from the Global South. In our 2025-2028 Strategic Plan we have outlined our ambition to create a Western Edge Wellbeing Collective, a Youth Advisory Group and employ more Artistic Associates within the organisation to give more stability to emerging artists within our community. With a healthy financial reserve, a highly engaged and skilled Board, and community support around us, we are in a great position for the phase of our growth and sustainability.

This role would suit someone with a passion for **cross-cultural, intersectional, creative workplaces** and a **belief** that community IS the practice.

Someone who is eager to make space for young people’s voices and facilitate supportive pathways for young and emerging IBPOC and marginalised artists and arts workers into leadership positions.

Someone who is not afraid of difficult conversations, who can hold it down for our growing team of emerging artists and leaders, and who can keep calm under pressure.

Someone who is responsive to youth and community needs and can shift and adapt to new challenges and changing circumstances.

Someone who enjoys ground travel – the Western suburbs is a vast geographical area and it is important to meet our young people where they are at.

Someone who knows that just as the young people we champion and support are growing and becoming, so are we, and wants to be part of the next phase of this company’s beautiful evolution.

We are now stepping into our power as artistic and cultural leaders spearheading the culture of art making in Australia. As Naarm becomes Australia’s largest city, the West is taking its place as an ambitious region of creative and economic importance, powered by vibrant youth culture, ongoing immigration and unbeatable drive. We represent the ambitious, vibrant future of Australia and we invite you to read this Recruitment Package with a spirit of possibility, hope and excitement for what may lie in store.

With care,
The Western Edge Community

VISION

A thriving community of *next generation artists* shifting the culture of art making in Australia.



PURPOSE

We exist to transform how, why and for who art is made in Australia.



VALUES

We move at the speed of trust.

We speak and act from a place of integrity and respect.

We centre play and joy in our artistry, operations and governance.

We have each other's backs and show up for our community.

We hold ourselves and each other accountable and move through discomfort with generosity and care.



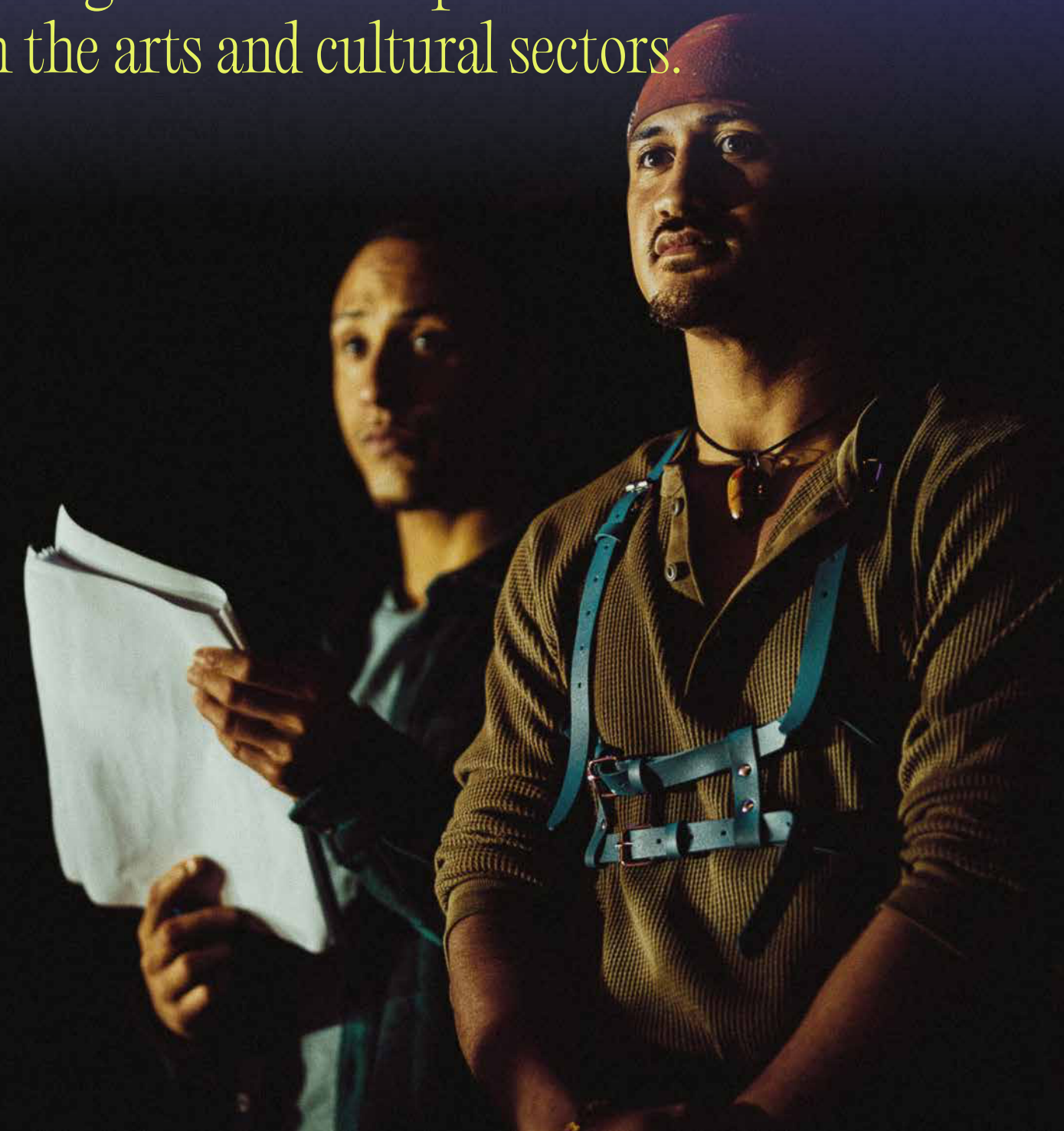
GOALS

We have engaged all members of our community in a Theory of Change process to inform our three key goals:

Young people feel worthy and valued as individuals and artists;

Young artists experience social mobility through the arts and cultural sectors;

Young artists are in positions of influence in the arts and cultural sectors.



APPROACH TO PRACTICE



▶ Youth-led

Young people have the ability to speak truth to power, shift paradigms, and re-centre conversations around what matters. We encourage all young artists to lean into their age, experience, and background to drive the creative process rather than limit it. We respond to the specific needs, interests, cultural backgrounds, knowledge systems and creativity of young artists ensuring the work serves and reflects them. We embrace and champion plurality and diversity.

▶ Collaborative

We champion collaboration in all forms across Western Edge, with ensemble-based artistic practice in our programs to co-leadership practice in facilitation and governance. We understand that true power rests in the collective. We celebrate the unique strength of a community that builds a shared vision, approach and practice from the multiplicity of individual identities, experiences and expertise.

“

In a Western Edge room you never have to prove who you are or why you're allowed to be there.

”

▶ Care and Rest

We prioritise care and rest, both as a healing and wellbeing tool and as a political statement for our people and communities who experience disproportionate levels of trauma and systemic oppression. We do this in a multitude of ways: meal-sharing; welcoming, comforting spaces; developing, piloting and delivering projects with sustainable timelines; wellbeing check-ins; our company therapists and support networks; debrief and group reflection processes; office closures and paid leave – to name a few.

▶ Play and Joy

In step with our 'Care and Rest' philosophy is our belief and investment in play and joy as essential to safer, sustainable, embodied artistic and workplace practices. We see the difference in our work when we allow for imagination and playful creation. We follow our curiosity and joy in making, to cultivate healthy and enjoyable practices.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Western Edge is seeking the company’s new Executive Director to collaborate with our Co-Artistic Directors to guide the organisation into its next evolution. It is a shared leadership role, with both the ED and AD positions reporting to the Board. Our expectation is that the successful candidate is able to invest in shared models of leadership, working effectively with the Artistic Directors to demonstrate the values of collaboration, solidarity and multiplicity.

The Executive Director will bring with them experience in strategy, finance, team management, HR, governance, fundraising and a broad range of stakeholder relationships including marginalised communities (ideally in Melbourne’s West), the arts and cultural sector, the for-purpose sector, cross sector organisations and corporate partners, government, philanthropy and private giving.

They will also be able to understand the nuances of working cross-culturally and intersectionally within marginalized communities, and their leadership style will be one of compassion, curiosity and equity.

They will work with the Co-Artistic Directors to realise the vision of the organization and to update and implement new strategies, policies and procedures to ensure that our artistic program (which spans across arts education, community youth theatre, professional development and national and international partnerships) is running efficiently, sustainably and with cultural safety at the forefront.

They will work with our Board to imagine new frameworks for leadership that champion and celebrate power sharing and systems change, and will advocate for the young people and communities we serve locally, nationally and internationally.

We have just completed our 2025-2028 Strategic Plan which will be the north star for our company over its next evolution. Alongside the Co-Artistic Directors, the Executive Director will regularly review and report on this plan, with a readiness to respond to the changing needs and circumstances of young people and communities across Naarm’s West, and the rapidly evolving world we are living in.

“
Western Edge is family.
It’s community.
It’s the blueprint.”



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title:	Executive Director
Reports to:	Board
Report Alongside:	Co-Artistic Directors
Direct Reports:	General Manager (note: this role oversees the GM’s management of Development Manager, Marketing Manager, Operations Coordinator).
Stakeholder Relationships:	Western Edge young collaborators; Western suburbs community members; local, national and international artists and organisations, sector colleagues. venues and presenters; funding partners (local, state, federal and philanthropic).
Benefits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 weeks annual leave per annum, accrued• 2 weeks wellbeing leave• 12 days, personal/carers leave per annum, accrued• Flexible work options• 6 weeks paid parental leave after 12 months continuous employment• Professional development stipend• Access to company therapist
Employment Basis:	1 EFT
Salary:	\$100,000+ (negotiable, commensurate with experience) plus super
Location:	Western Edge is a Company in Residence at The Substation, 1 Market Street, Newport, 3011

Key Responsibility Areas

1. Contribute to visionary and cohesive leadership in partnership with our co-Artistic Directors, investing in models of power-sharing and learning.
2. Implement the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan to achieve critical objectives around artistic innovation, self-determined practice, and healthy and sustainable growth.
3. Oversee the organisational management to enable a safe and stable workplace with generative learning practices at the heart of management.
4. Provide human resource leadership within a culturally safe framework that allows our workforce to develop and grow in confidence and capability.
5. Oversee the financial management of the organisation to generate new and sustainable income models.
6. Broker and nurture external relationships and partnerships to build our capacity for influence and a secure future.
7. Represent the company through ethical and values-based leadership.

Selection Criteria

Essential

1. Significant experience managing teams and culture building.
2. Passionate about investing in young people and intergenerational practice.
3. High level understanding and practice of cultural equity and cultural safety.
4. Effective at understanding, implementing and transforming organisational systems.
5. Experience in managing financial systems.
6. Experience in brokering and maintaining key government, philanthropic and sector stakeholders.

Desirable

1. Lived experience of diversity.
2. Personal connection to the West.
3. Experience in arts leadership/arts management.
4. Ability to understand and intervene in issues of systemic inequity.
5. Capacity to manage growth in capability.

Please Note:

We are a proudly diverse organisation with a strong belief that our strength is in our diversity. We highly encourage and welcome applications from First Nations People, People of Colour, LGTBQIA+, and People with Disabilities.

Child Protection Policy:

Western Edge has zero tolerance for the abuse of young people and children. All staff and volunteers are required to uphold the Child and Wellbeing Safety Act 2005 (VIC) and the Children Legislation Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2017 (VIC). Young person and child safety is a key consideration in the hiring process and all successful applicants will be required to hold a valid Working with Children’s check and undergo young person and child safety training.

APPLICATION

Please email the following documents as one PDF to veronica@veronicapardo.com.au by:

5pm-Friday September 22nd

A cover letter outlining
your reasons for applying
for the position

Your CV or
career summary

Your response to the
selection criteria, no more
than 2 pages in length.

Any access requirements
for the interview process

If you would like to submit your application in an alternative format,
we are open to this possibility.

Please give our Chair **Veronica Pardo** a call to discuss on **0412848645**.





WESTERN EDGE

Western Edge is based at The Substation, 1 Market Street, Newport 3015
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