

PURPOSE

To inform the Board of an Observership Program opportunity which may lead to increased Board diversity; and to seek a decision about whether Flinders Quartet should apply for either the 2024 or 2025 programs.

THE OBSERVERSHIP PROGRAM

Creative Victoria has informed us of their partnership with [The Observership Program](#) to deliver a diversity program to not-for-profit creative industry boards over 2022-2026. This program will not only address appointments to boards but is also aimed at creating and nurturing a pipeline of diverse talent, and growing capability and networks to provide a safe working culture for new entrants to the board environment.

- The program places talented young professionals aged 25-40 on not-for-profit boards for a period of 12 months as Observers.
- Organisations are paired with Observers who have been selected and carefully matched for the 12-month period (the selection process can include identifying candidates with a particular/sought skill set to contribute to specific areas of the Board's work).
- During the 12-month period, organisations facilitate Observers attending all board and/or committee meetings as non-voting members so they can both contribute and learn about fundamental principles and functions of not-for-profit boards, the role of board members, the decision-making process and governance priorities.
- While the Observer cannot vote, they can participate as much or as little as the Board stipulates.
- Observers are required to participate in a formal professional development program comprising a series of facilitated sessions on key topics about directorship over the 12 months, including components created and delivered by the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) and The Ethics Centre. Observers also sign a code of ethics and confidentiality agreement to ensure that absolute integrity is upheld.
- There is no ongoing commitment to retain the Observer at the end of the 12-month Program.
- Option to invite the Observer to join the board at the end of the 12-month period and/or invite the Observer to stay on in an advisory or voluntary capacity
- Involvement in this program allows for recruitment from the program's growing "board ready" alumni pool who are actively seeking engagement with the not-for-profit sector

Details regarding The Observership Program can be found in:

- [2023 Melbourne Observer Handbook](#)
- [2024 Board Briefing and Participation Agreement](#)

Deadline to apply for the 2024 program is 30 September 2023.