

Black Marks

Information Pack and FAQs

3000 words / 9-10 minutes read

Please note, all Arts House and YIRRAMBOI activities operate under a COVID Safe plan and within current government restrictions.

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Contact

If you have read this document but still have questions, please contact:

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Overview

Black Marks seeks to empower and support a community of Black creatives to develop their writing skills, with a focus on professional writing and skills development. Black people are experts in their own histories, practises and contexts, though Black voices have been relegated to the margins. Black Marks will offer a space to critique work and have discussions, without the gaze of non-Black people.

With a process driven by collaboration between participants and teachers, this program is for practitioners at any stage of their career. The program prioritises skill development and opportunities over set outcomes. This program will be tailored to focus on the desired outcome of the participants. Practical skill development can look like writing bios, artist statements, grant applications, and research methods.

Black Marks will take the format of 14 in-person sessions over a ten-month period from July 2022 – March 2023.

These sessions will alternate between learning and development sessions. The learning will involve a guest expert sharing practical writing skills and advice. The development sessions will be a space for the writers to utilise these skills, debrief, and share their ideas with the group. By the end of the program, the participants will have a catalogue of professional writing.

Solidarity between Black communities in so-called Australia is vital. This program will seek to foster relationships and facilitate mutual understanding between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Black people while always being anchored in First Nations knowledges and expertise.

EOIs for the Black Marks program close **Monday 27 June**, 5pm AEST.

[Apply here for Black Marks](#)

Key Dates

EOIs close: Monday 27 June, 5.00pm AEST

Black Marks Program Dates:

- First session week 11 July, 2022

Access & Inclusion

1. Who is Black Marks for?

Black Marks is a 10-month-long writing program for Black Victorian-based artists, thinkers and makers who are interested in developing their writing practice.

Black Marks is designed for people who are at any stage of their career. We are looking for self-motivated people who work well with others and also independently.

We encourage EOI submissions from people with an experimental arts practice and those with interests that also sit adjacent to and beyond the arts - e.g. health, environment, activism, science, architecture, space, mathematics, engineering, sport, food etc.

This program will accept EOIs from artists who self-identify as Black. We encourage applications from First Nations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, African, Melanesian, and any other Black-identifying folk. We want to support the diversity of Black lived experience in the artistic community and beyond. With this in view, we especially encourage applicants from the intersections: Black folks living in regional Victoria as well as those who identify with Disabilities, D/deafness, neurodiversity or chronic illness. We want to support the diversity of Black lived experiences in the artistic community.

2. How is the Black Marks EOI process accessible to me?

Black Marks EOIs are submitted through the SmartyGrants portal.

We want you to apply in the format that is easiest for you. You can submit in these formats through the SmartyGrants system:

- Written
- Video
- Auslan video (we can arrange interpretation of your video if needed)
- Audio

If you need to submit your EOI outside of the SmartyGrants system or have access requirements that mean an EOI via a recorded Zoom conversation, Word document,

Auslan or another method would work best, please get in touch with us at least 72 hours prior to the closing time to discuss – contact details above.

3. How will my access or inclusion needs be supported, if I am selected?

- We encourage all artists to let us know how we can best support their participation in Black Marks. You will be asked a question in the EOI where you can outline this, if you wish.
- If you are selected to participate, we will initiate an access check-in with you prior to commencement of the program, in which you can choose to outline your specific requirements and participation needs.
- Through this dialogue we will respond to your requests, and maintain regular check-ins with you to confirm approaches are sufficient.
- If required, we can supply live captioning, voice-to-text formats and/or Auslan interpreters for all activities.
- If a selected participant with access needs requires a support person to engage in the program, this can be discussed at the access check-in. We have financial resources available to ensure that this support person is paid to attend key meetings. This person can be identified by the participant, or sought and supplied through our networks. You can identify if you require this in the EOI process.

4. Is there a dedicated access officer who can support me?

Currently we do not have a designated access officer. We have an internal working group with representatives from each department who manage and report on the [Disability Inclusion Action Plan](#) and can provide additional support and assistance when required.

About the EOI process

5. What does my EOI need to include?

EOIs are made through the SmartyGrants portal. [APPLY HERE](#)

Responses to each question can be up to:

- 500 written words (or)
- 3.5 minute video or audio (or)
- 8 minutes Auslan
- If you are applying via a recorded Zoom meeting, the same duration applies.

Questions:

1. Your bio (200 words)
2. A brief explanation of your interest in the program (200 words)
3. Your top 2 local teachers/writers you want to work with and a brief explanation as to why
4. 1-3 Support materials - these can be any materials relating to your creative practice and do not need to be strictly writing samples i.e. a photo of your work if you are a ceramicist.
5. Please detail your access needs to be able to participate in the program.

Plus the following information:

- Your access needs. There will be space to describe this in your own words, if you wish
- Question on demographics of artist
- Provide up to 3 weblinks of support material

Support material is required through web links. If you have a website, or an article written about your work, or examples of your work online, please include a link. There is space for three links in the submission process.

6. What are the selection criteria for Black Marks?

EOIs will be reviewed in response to the following criteria:

- Creative potential of the applicants work based on their previous practice
- Commitment to developing skills and craft as shown through progress in previous projects
- Work is grounded in the artists' community, place and/or context

- A willingness to collaborate with and learn from peers and teachers
- Practitioners from all stages of their career are welcome to apply
- Balance of perspectives, practices, and areas of interest across the cohort

7. What and how will I be paid?

For participation in Black Marks you will be paid an artist fee of **\$4,650 AUD** (ex GST), plus Superannuation and Workcover.

Payments will be made to you through an auspicing body, Auspicious Arts. Auspicious Arts will manage any obligations to you regarding Superannuation or WorkCover. Auspicious Arts will also meet your public liability insurance obligations.

8. Do I need to submit a budget as part of the EOI?

No, there is no budget required as part of the submission process. The fee paid is an honorarium that is expected to cover your time.

9. Who selects the participants?

Black Marks participants are selected by Arts House and YIRRAMBOI creative team members with advice from industry experts.

10. Will I receive feedback from my submission if I am not accepted?

Whilst we are unable to provide feedback on individual submissions, general feedback on the call-out will be provided to all unsuccessful applicants.

11. Can I discuss my EOI with someone before submitting?

Yes! Arts House and YIRRAMBOI creative team are available to answer any questions you have about this submission process and if Black Marks is right for you. Please get in touch - see contact details at the top of this document.

12. Do I need Public Liability Insurance?

No, if successful, the auspice body Auspicious Arts will cover your Public Liability Insurance.

13. Will these finances affect my Pension payments?

If you are receiving a pension support and would like to arrange a payment schedule to minimise the impact of the Black Marks payments, you can arrange this with Auspicious Arts at the contracting stage.

About the program

14. What kind of writing and discussion will be explored in Black Marks?

Black Marks is about all forms of writing, with a focus on practical skill development. This includes the following forms of writing: writing bios, artist/curatorial statements, art criticism, grant applications, research methods and experimental texts, professional writing such as grant writing, bio writing, and art criticism. There will be the opportunity to explore creative writing forms if the group wants to focus on that.

15. What will participants be doing in this program?

Black Marks is artist-led and the teachers alongside participants determine the creative process and key themes of the program. The brief to the guest teachers is to share their knowledge in practical ways. The workshops will consist of small group discussions and free writing sessions. Participants will be able to work on and develop their own work. We hope the sessions are nourishing and held in the spirit of open communication and rigorous discussion.

Black Marks sessions will take place online and in-person (COVID permitting), with in-person sessions prioritised. Alongside this, you will be working autonomously on your research, practice or other areas of enquiry. The work you are doing in this program as a participant will be led by your own creative practice or enquiry.

16. What is the time commitment for Black Marks writers?

Because this is a group collaboration, it is important that participants attend regularly. You will be expected to attend the majority of sessions. The dates and times of these 14 workshops over the 10-month timeframe will be decided as a group.

It is important that you take into consideration your availability and level of engagement in your research for Black Marks, alongside any other projects or work you have and proportionate to the fee offered.

NAVA guidelines on equivalent hourly pay rates can be found [here](#). See 7.3.3 Practitioner fees hourly rate.

17. Am I able to apply for Black Marks as a collective?

No. Black Marks is open to individual artists only. We wish to substantially support an artist's practice throughout the year, and whilst the research and process may involve collaboration, the program is only for individuals.

18. How many writers will be selected to be part of Black Marks?

There are resources available for 8 participants in the program, and (if required for access purposes) the support persons for any of those participants. Arts House Creative Team Members and independent artists Kalyani Mumtaz and Samira Farah will support throughout. There will be Elders and community members who also feed in across the ten months. We will also provide brokerage, advocacy or introductions, as required, through our broader networks.

19. Will the teachers be mentoring me?

No. The teachers will not mentor you one-on-one. Their role is to run sessions and facilitate skill development. They will provide guidance, activities, provocations and ideas. They will host whole-of-group activities online and in person, and be available on the platforms set up for conversation and further discussion, but much of the process will be driven and completed by you, in your time and during the allocated weeks.

20. Where will Black Marks take place?

Arts House is located on the lands of the Eastern Kulin Nations in Naarm, Melbourne. The program will take place in person at Arts House, unless COVID restrictions persist in which the program will be online.

21. Can the Black Marks honorarium be used to cover travel?

There is no requirement for travel in the Black Marks program. It is expected that you use the funds as an artist fee to carve out the time for your participation, not travel or other expenses.

Got a Question?

If you have read our documents and attended the Info Session but still have questions, please contact:

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National Relay Service (NRS)
TTY users: phone 13 36 77 – then ask for – 03 9322 3720
Speak and Listen users: phone 1300 555 727 – then ask for – 03 9322 3720
Internet relay users: connect to the NRS (internet-relay.nrscall.gov.au) – then type in –
03 9322 3720

