

Songsmiths Expression of Interest Guidelines

1. About Songsmiths

The Songsmiths songwriting program will provide up to twelve (12) songwriters who are d/Deaf or disabled with the opportunity to develop their craft and gain industry knowledge through collaboration, mentorship and access to professional studio facilities.

The program will take place both online and in person. NSW songwriters at all career stages are invited to apply.

Songsmiths will cover every stage in the creation, recording and releasing of a song, including:

- Introductory online sessions in which participants will get to know one another and the program's expert Facilitators, as well as receiving guidance and instruction on topics including Songcraft 101, copyright laws and how to navigate access requirements in a changing industry.
- Up to 6 days of in person writing and recording sessions in professional facilities, collaborating with other songwriters and expert Facilitators with and without disability.
- Sharing results with industry professionals, along with further guidance on releasing music, including Promotion, PR, digital aggregators, APRA AMCOS, social media, etc.

Facilitators for this program include:

- Bec Sandridge
- Bart Denaro
- Anna Laverty
- Annaïs Paris
- Irene Zhong
- Fletcher Babb

Sessions for the Songsmiths Program will be undertaken and completed on the following dates:

Stage 1

- A two-hour online session every week for 6 weeks, starting Wednesday 1 April 2026.
- Participants will be paid \$50/hour (\$600 total) plus 12% superannuation for Stage 1.

Stage 2

- Up to 6 days of in-person writing and recording sessions in professional facilities. Session Dates: 27, 28, 29 May and 1, 2, 3 June 2026.
- Participants will be paid \$50/hour for six 8-hour days (\$2400 total) plus 12% superannuation for Stage 2.

Stage 3

- A five-hour session, in-person or online, held in the week starting Monday 20 July, 2026.
- Participants will be paid \$50/hour (\$250 total) plus 12% superannuation for Stage 3.

2. Who Can Apply

- Applicants must identify as being d/Deaf or a person with disability
- Applicants must reside in NSW
- Applicants must be over the age of 18 when applying
- Applicants must have previous experience, at any level, in songwriting

3. About the Facilitators

Bec Sandridge

Bec Sandridge is a songwriter, mentor, producer and multi-disciplinary artist based on the South Coast of Australia. Sandridge's primary weapon of choice is guitar paired with her distinct vocals: she draws upon her folk roots to create 80s-esque, nostalgic-driven pop songs. Inspired by Cyndi Lauper, David Byrne and Prince, Sandridge transports listeners into a sentimental space via fuzzed out guitars, ethereal vocals and arpeggiator synthesizers, and in more tender moments, carries a story with just a guitar. Her single 'STRANGER' was co-written with Oscar Dawson of Holy Holy and was a

finalist in the International Songwriting Contest in the Unsigned category (as judged by Chris Martin of Coldplay, Dua Lipa and Tom Waits) in 2020. Sandridge has also co-written with many including Dave Jenkins Jr (Daniel Johns, Vera Blue), Lucy Taylor (Pawws, Dua Lipa, Ellie Goulding), Essie Holt, CHC (Nouvelle Vague), Andy Bull, Phebe Starr, Demi Louise, Xavier Dunn, Thomas McNeice (Gang of Four), Sarah Blasko, Japanese Wallpaper and Oscar Dawson. Her instrumentals and original songs can be heard on The Spirit of Tasmania commercial, Dulux Paint AU, Dance Academy worldwide and Showtime's The L Word Generation Q.

Website: <https://becsandridge.com/>

Bart Denaro

Bart Denaro lives on Dharug Country and works in Communications at the Aboriginal Legal Service. Previously, he's been Head of Content at MusicNSW, and Content Manager, Supporter Manager, Volunteer Manager and Office Manager at FBi Radio.

Bart has played in bands for more than 25 years, including 'Kid Confucius' and 'Briscoe', and has toured Australia extensively and played overseas. He's played a wide variety of music and also mentored young artists. Bart mainly plays drums and can also play keys and guitar. In writing, Bart likes problem-solving, so what some people might consider barriers to 'conventional songwriting' (such as physical, mental or skill barriers) he sees as just another tool to shape something interesting.

Anna Laverty

Award-winning producer Anna Laverty has built an exceptional and ever-growing show reel of credits, solidifying her reputation as one of Australia's finest creative talents. With an impressive catalogue of releases across multiple genres, Anna is renowned for her ability to pull innovative tones, write a catchy hook and help a project realise its sonic potential.

Having cut her teeth under the tutelage of award-winning producers Paul Epworth (Adele, Primal Scream, Foster The People) and Ben Hillier (Blur, U2, Elbow) at London's famed Miloco Studios, working on releases by the likes of Florence and The Machine, Bloc Party, Depeche Mode and Pete Doherty, Anna brought her talents and experience back to Australia and has become a go-to producers in the nation's music scene.

Website: <https://annalaverty.com/>

Fletcher Babb

Fletcher Babb (aka Cold Ghost) is a Gold Coast-based songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, producer and Creative Support Worker who explores composition as a

vehicle for stories—real and imagined—while using sound design and post-production as extensions of his instrumentation.

As a partially deaf musician who lost hearing in his right ear to mumps as a child, Fletcher brings valuable lived experience to his work in accessible and therapeutic arts. His disability perspective has enhanced his resilience, problem-solving abilities and empathy, directly informing his approach to creating inclusive environments across health, education and disability sectors.

Website: <https://coldghost.net/>

Annaïs Paris

Annaïs Paris is a producer/singer/songwriter and successful graduate of The Australian Institute of Music with a composition & music production degree.

Annaïs is currently the Lead Singer/Songwriter/Band Manager for Sydney-based synth-pop band Infinite Skies. She also facilitates Club Weld workshops at the Arts and Cultural Exchange, Parramatta - a platform designed for neurodiverse musicians and musicians with disabilities to create and release music.

Annaïs was diagnosed with Aspergers and ADHD at age 7 and identifies as queer.

Website: <https://infiniteskiesmusic.bandcamp.com/music>

Irene Zhong

Irene Zhong (they/them) unearths seldom told stories about us, the world, and what goes on in between. Their music inhabits a delicate, chamber folk sound-world, drawing on Hakka-Chinese melodies, western art music, and an overflowing stash of observations a bit too queer for saying aloud in polite company. Irene took part in Arts Access Victoria's Music Makers Mentorship program under the guidance of Parvyn. They recently premiered their classical composition, 'Sappho Fragments', commissioned by Melbourne Recital Centre (May 2022). Irene also took part in APRA AMCOS' 321 session, curated by David Ansari, in 2023.

Irene is one half of the dream-pop duo Between Mirrors, with Nicholas Gray. Their first EP, Blue Dreams, was released in early 2023. Irene identifies as a songwriter primarily, but also a composer.

Website: <https://www.irenezhong.com/>

Bart Denaro

4. Access

Applicants must provide information on their access requirements via the application form.

Accessible Arts will provide access support to both the facilitators and the participants throughout the Songsmiths program. To ensure that the access support can be tailored to the specific needs of each individual, you will be asked to complete an access rider form provided by Accessible Arts. Where appropriate, participants will be encouraged to use their NDIS package (if available) to support their participation in the program.

Successful applicants will be provided with Music Access and Inclusion Masterclass Training facilitated by Accessible Arts.

The Songsmiths guidelines and application forms are available in accessible formats upon request.

5. How to Apply

Applicants will be asked to provide the following information:

- Contact Details
- Applicants must identify as being d/Deaf or a person with disability
- An outline of any access requirements you might have
- A CV and short bio – including your experience in songwriting and any projects recently completed
- List of the instruments, devices and genres that you primarily work in
- A description of the creative and professional goals you hope to achieve by being a participant in the Songsmiths program (including specific aspects of songwriting or specific related skills that you want to improve in)

Successful applicants will be required to enter into an agreement which will contain additional terms and conditions in accordance with existing policies of Accessible Arts. The successful applicant must provide Accessible Arts permission to promote and/or share the outcomes of the Songsmiths Program. For the purposes of promoting

Songsmiths, the successful applicant must also agree to make themselves available for interviews, filming, and other social media opportunities.

6. Application Form

You can apply online via SurveyMonkey or download the application form on the Accessible Arts website.

If you cannot access the online Survey Monkey application form, please note that applications will be accepted in other formats that are accessible including Auslan, audio, video, printed, dictated, electronic and handwritten formats.

7. When to Apply

Applications close **Sunday 8 February 2026 at 11pm.**

8. Application Assessment

Applications will be assessed by a panel of Accessible Arts staff, including people with disability.

9. Application Key Dates

Applications open: Wednesday 10 December 2025

Applications close: 11pm on Sunday 8 February 2026

Applicants notified of funding outcome: Early March 2026

Announcement of successful applicants: Mid March 2026

Enquiries

Please direct any enquiries to info@aarts.net.au or call (02) 9251 6499.

This NSW Songsmiths initiative is proudly supported by Music Australia, [Sound NSW](#), [APRA AMCOS](#) and [Create NSW](#), the principal funding partner of [Accessible Arts](#).

