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Fog Theatre Program

OPERATIONAL & WELCOME INFORMATION PACK

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About Vitae Veritas

[Latin- true meaning of life]



Vitae Veritas (VV) is a not-for-profit arts organisation based in Melbourne with a dedicated aim to promote cultural diversity, artistic excellence and inclusive arts leadership.

At the centre of our work we champion people, their creative practice and explore the role of artistic experimentation and how this directly informs co-designing accessible creative and aesthetic innovations and strategies for collaboration.

We advocate for equitable access to high quality arts and culture participation opportunities where leadership and involvement of diverse artists, individuals and community members are at the heart of co-design and delivery.

VV's work extends to different industry partnership and sector development projects that contribute to and expand contemporary arts practice across Melbourne, regional Victoria, as well as interstate, playing a primary role in the coordination, management and delivery of access and inclusion capacity-building strategies through training and development; consultancy, support and mentoring; artist and community engagement; audience development; providing high quality access events (Audio Description & Tactile Tours); and innovation in integrated access and cultural programming for Blind & vision impaired artists, audiences, and communities alike.

Vitae Veritas is the proud new home of Fog Theatre (1991-present) and Sparc Theatre. (2004-present).

Vitae Veritas boldly centres and promotes our participant's rights to pursue and achieve their life goals, ambitions and aspirations, by way of equitable access to high quality arts and culture, social, community and civic participation, professional development and training. Vitae Veritas aim to increase critical recognition, employment and funding opportunities for artists with disability and the value of their contributions benefiting the wider community.

Through direct service delivery, group-based programs and individualized support, including tailored services ie. mentoring; access to events and unique arts and culture projects, productions and partnerships, the work of Vitae Veritas is underpinned by:

- Diversity & Inclusion
- Leadership & Artistic Excellence
- Relationships, Community & Advocacy
- Integrity & Respect
- Collaboration & Creativity
- Change & Capacity-building
- Cultural Vitality

Although Vitae Veritas is not an NDIS registered provider, our governance and quality management framework, policies and procedures are informed and guided by the Human Rights Charter, Human Services Standards, the Rules and Principles outlined by the National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission and NDIS Code of Conduct. Participants who are NDIS plan approved who Self Manage or pay for Plan Management are welcome to engage in Vitae Veritas' programs, supports and services.

To receive more information about any of the above programs, services or supports, please contact nilgun@vitaeveritas.com.au

Fog Theatre Program

1. General Information

Fog Theatre is a long-standing performing arts program for adults with intellectual disability, Autism and neurodivergence and welcomes adults of all abilities.

Fog Theatre participants explore and develop skills in drama, acting, singing, improvisation, script, dance, movement and choreography in a socially, creatively and culturally inclusive, safe and welcoming environment.

Fog Theatre participants are also provided opportunities to perform in productions, films and live events, collaborating with other professional artists and companies in a variety of settings, public and online domains e.g. festivals, theatre venues, community & industry events.

Fog Theatre meets one day a week on Thursdays from 11.00am to 3.00pm at a wheelchair accessible Port Phillip Council-owned facility, during Victorian School terms (see 2022 Term Dates).

Fog Theatre is managed and supported by highly qualified disability arts practitioners and specialists. The team is comprised of Nilgun Guven (CEO & Artistic Director) and David Maney, Rachel Edward and Marjetka McMahon-Krizanic (Disability Arts Support Workers).

On average, 15 members participate in the program on an ongoing basis. Entry to Fog Theatre is determined by the process outlined in *Accessing the Service* section.

Fog Theatre staff and volunteers do not engage in restrictive practices. People for whom restrictive practice is necessary are ineligible to participate in Fog Theatre.

COVID-19 Safe Notice-

Vitae Veritas is following the Victorian State Government's roadmap for reopening.

From Friday 29 October 2021, all participants, staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors (excluding those with a valid medical exemption) attending Vitae Veritas sites and venues, programs and supports are required to be fully vaccinated and must show appropriate proof of their COVID-19 vaccination status prior to enrolment and entry, and is a condition of entry.

2. Quality Statement

Fog Theatre is exemplary in upholding the Human Services Standards and Human Rights Charter through the provision of high quality arts experiences, person-centred

planning and public engagement opportunities. Fog Theatre is informed and guided by the rules and principles as outlined by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission and NDIS Code of Conduct, ensuring people's rights are being promoted and upheld and that we:

- act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination, and decision-making in accordance with relevant laws and conventions
- respect the privacy of people with disability
- provide supports and services in a safe and competent manner with care and skill
- act with integrity, honesty, and transparency
- promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that might have an impact on the quality and safety of supports provided to people with disability
- take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, exploitation, neglect, and abuse of people with disability
- take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct
- have a culture of continuous improvement and focus on service user satisfaction

3. Staff

(Position Descriptions available upon request)

The group employs an Artistic Director who facilitates the program and guides its creative direction.

Fog Theatre also employ a minimum of 3 disability arts support workers, all who have extensive experience working on participatory, high quality community arts projects inclusive of people with disabilities, and bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to Fog Theatre.

Vitae Veritas oversees all administration and planning of the Program.

All program delivery staff have undergone pre-employment safety and worker screening checks, COVID-19 vaccination checks, including first aid and cultural competencies.

4. Activities

Through their involvement in Fog Theatre, members have the opportunity to:

- Develop drama, music and performance skills through weekly drama workshops
- Perform at local festivals and events
- Perform in theatre, film and hybrid productions
- Collaborate with other artists, and performing groups
- Attend performances by other theatre companies
- Work on special projects, developing particular skills, including public speaking engagement opportunities at conferences and seminars.

- Develop friendships, increase confidence and have fun!

5. Funding- Fee for service

Although Vitae Veritas is not a registered NDIS Service Provider, it does not preclude a person if they are funded and approved for Plan Management or Self Management of their NDIS package, a scheme that aims to:

- support the independence and social and economic participation of people with disability, and
- enable people with a disability to exercise choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports.

Vitae Veritas receives and manages funding for individuals' participation in Fog Theatre in a number of ways; through NDIS funding and service agreements, by invoicing the participant directly, by invoicing a participant nominated intermediary. These arrangements are made in consultation with the participant (and their advocate) at the time of commencing the service. Once received by Vitae Veritas the participant's funding is managed and monitored by the Finance Officer in consultation with the Fog Theatre Program Manager and with the support of the Vitae Veritas MYOB financial management system.

(See Appendix attachment- Fog Theatre Quote & Information Sheet for NDIS planning)

6. Service Agreements

Under the NDIS, for participants who have Fog Theatre activities approved within their plan, or manage their funding individually, Service Agreements describe funding allocation, payment and intermediary details.

Under this financial arrangement, Fog Theatre participants pay a service delivery fee equivalent to approximately 160 hours per annum following the Victorian School Terms, for NDIS Support Item: *Participation in Community, Social and Civic Activities* and current hourly rates stated in the NDIS Pricing Arrangements (most current at 1 Sept 2021) noting these figures are subject to change pending pricing structure updates and notifications.

Invoices will be issued according to attendance sheet records at the end of each term.

7. Absences and Cancellations

Should a participant wish to exit the program, they must give Vitae Veritas 30 days notice in writing.

Should a participant not be able to attend the weekly activity, they must give Vitae Veritas a minimum of 24 hours' notice in writing and if the notice is not provided by then, the provider can still claim for short notice cancellation.

Notifications can be given via the following email address- nilgun@vitaeveritas.com.au

8. Accessing the service

Entry to Fog Theatre is outlined by the following process-

- i. Contact- individuals (or their advocates) can make enquiries to the Program Manager in person, via email or phone.
- ii. Initial discussion- an opportunity to communicate whether there is a vacancy or not. If there is a vacancy the next steps take place. If no vacancy, the individual is asked if they would like to be placed on the waiting list.
The initial discussion provides an opportunity for the individual/representative to share information about their interest, goals and needs and learn about the Program and next steps.
- iii. Pre-participatory visit (usually half day)- provides opportunity for the interested individual to attend the Program either as an observer or active participant. During this visit the individual, group and staff meet each other and can experience the content, flow and structure of Fog Theatre workshops.
- iv. Post-visit discussion- the individual/representative and Program Manager are given opportunity to reflect on the visiting experience, and desire/suitability to enter into a trial period. The trial period is negotiated to suit the needs and availability of the individual and group and is typically between 2-4 weeks, half or full days, to be decided and agreed at this meeting.
- v. Trial Period Attendance- the individual is expected to attend and actively participate in the weekly workshops, where engagement, suitability and needs is reviewed and reflected upon weekly until the trial period is over. The person may withdraw/discontinue voluntarily or by request from the Program Manager at any time.
- vi. Trial Outcome meeting- after completion of the trial period and noted discussions between individual/representative and Program Manager, a final assessment/decision will be made on the suitability of the applicant to the Program. An 'Invite' or 'Decline' letter will be sent to the individual/representative.
- vii. Enrolment- Once the Letter of Invite is accepted by the individual, commencement of the enrolment process will begin including all necessary resources, agreements and forms to be completed.

9. Nominated representative/Advocate/Carers

At any time throughout a participant's engagement in the Fog Theatre program, they wish for a nominated representative, advocate or carer to be present, the participant can request this arrangement to be made and if required or requested- on their behalf.

Disability advocacy provides assistance and support to ensure that:

- The rights of people with a disability are upheld as valued members of the community
- People with a disability actively participate in decision making processes, particularly those where the outcomes impact on their lives
- The needs and views of people with a disability are presented to government, service providers and the broader community

The need for advocacy can be identified in a number of ways. Advocacy is provided when requested by people with a disability. Family or carers might also request advocacy support, when appropriate.

Advocacy strategies may include:

- Acting with, or making representation on behalf of, people with a disability
- Referrals to appropriate bodies to effect the resolution of complaints
- Influencing policies and practices to promote fair treatment and social justice for people with a disability.

Self-advocacy:

Self-advocacy plays a significant role in enabling people with a disability to develop the skills to ensure that their rights and interests are respected and realised.

For people with a disability self-advocacy is about:

- Speaking on one's own behalf
- Understanding rights
- Making real choices
- Learning new skills

The Victorian Government helps to promote the participation and voice of people with a disability by funding. Disability advocacy and self-advocacy organisations play a vital role in promoting and advancing the rights of people with a disability.

For further information on disability advocacy and finding a disability advocate, see the Disability Advocacy Finder-

<https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/>

DARU is unique in Australia as a dedicated resource unit funded to work with disability advocacy organisations to promote and protect the rights of people with disability. DARU develops and distributes resources and provides training opportunities to keep disability advocates informed and up-to-date about issues affecting people with disability in Victoria.

<https://www.daru.org.au/find-an-advocate>

10. Language Interpreting Services

Interpreting Services allow the transfer of communications from a person's preferred spoken language into English. Interpreting Services are delivered by TIS National on behalf of the NDIS. NDIS participants and carers are not charged for language interpreting services. Your NDIS Provider is responsible for offering you interpreter services to help you use the supports you have funded in your plan.

More Information: NDIS 1800 800 110; TIS National 131 450

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/language-interpreting-services>

<https://www.tisnational.gov.au/en/About-TIS-National>

11. Transport & Money Handling

Fog Theatre members arrange for their own transport to and from weekly workshops.

Fog Theatre staff and volunteers will not handle individual's money. Individuals will be directed to perform their own financial transactions where necessary, for example paying for cab fare.

12. Access Support

Participants may discuss their physical, sensory, cultural and communication needs with Fog Theatre staff or manager at any time, especially during enquiry, intake and biennial Work Plan meetings. This information may be given in writing, in person, on phone, or via email.

Fog Theatre will provide any resources or material required or requested in accessible formats including translated materials, and through liaison with relevant representatives, advocates, NDIS planners or support coordinators to assist in making suitable arrangements for an interpreter to be provided.

13. Customer Satisfaction Surveys and Work Plan Meetings

Existing members participate in biennial work plan meetings, and annual Customer Satisfaction Surveys.

These opportunities provide invaluable information about Fog Theatre member's desired objectives and outcomes while at Fog Theatre.

Work plan meetings take place at the service venue or alternate meeting room and involve each Fog Theatre member, the Program Manager and one representative or advocate (usually a family member, carer or friend).

Personal and private information is not contained in the work plan. Individual work plans will be made available to agencies who manage Fog Theatre Members' Support Plans.

Work plans for new members are completed no later than 30 days after commencing at Fog Theatre.

In addition to this, participants are able to communicate their feedback weekly or out-of-hours, via formal and informal mechanisms i.e. directly with staff, via email or phone, during workshop through discussion, Q+A, reflection and feedback, arranged meetings and weekly activity reports.

14. Complaints

On commencement, Fog Theatre members will be made aware of Vitae Veritas Client Complaint Management Policy and will receive a copy of it. If a Fog Theatre member wishes to make a complaint they will be directed to Vitae Veritas' complaints management procedure outlined in this policy.

If the Fog Theatre member (or their representative) is not happy with the way Vitae Veritas has handled the matter, they can contact third party (as per Vitae Veritas and City of Port Phillip Memorandum of Understanding)-

Cathy Horsley
Team Leader Community Building and Inclusion
City of Port Phillip
E: cathy.horsley@portphillip.vic.gov.au
T: 03 9209 6260

If the Fog Theatre member is still dissatisfied with the way the matter has been handled, they can contact any of the following external agencies:

- NDIS Commission

1800 035 544 (free call from landlines) or TTY 133 677. Interpreters can be arranged. National Relay Service and ask for 1800 035 544.

- Disability Services Commissioner
1800 677 342
Email: complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au
<http://www.odsc.vic.gov.au/>

- Office of the Public Advocate
1300 309 337
<https://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/>

- Victorian Ombudsman
(03) 9613 6222
<https://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/complaints/>
<http://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au>

Once your complaint has been received it will be addressed according to the nature of the complaint. Ways of addressing complaints include (but are not limited to); telephone calls to service users, parents/carers/advocates; meetings with service users, parents/carers/advocates; creation of a documented set of actions to address the complaint; an action plan to address the complaint; a timetable for actions and outcomes in relation to the complaint.

15. Consent & Release Form

Consent and release will be sought for some aspects of Fog Theatre including (but not limited to), photography, video, sound recording, performances, interviews. Example of the consent and release form and other forms and resources are included in the Fog Theatre Welcome and Information Kit.

16. Privacy, Consent to collect and share personal information, Medical and Indemnity Form

As part of the Fog Theatre enrolment process a number of forms are required to be completed and are documented in a way which meets program/ funding guidelines, ensures support and a continuum of care for clients and maintains confidentiality/ privacy. We will only collect personal information, health information, and sensitive information in a lawful and fair way and to perform our functions as an organisation. Where possible, we will collect personal information, health information, and sensitive information from the person with a disability or their guardian or next of kin or from other sources such as family and friends, disability advocates, or disability support workers and other professionals providing services or support to the person.

We collect personal information about employees and prospective employees in order to conduct employment and employment-related activities such as payroll services, recruitment and selection, performance management, reporting and work health and safety. Our collection, use and disclosure of personal information about employees and prospective employees is in accordance with the Fair Work Act 2009.

Vitae Veritas is committed to protecting the privacy of this personal and health information and we are bound by various laws, including:

- Privacy Act 1988
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Health Records Act 2001
- Disability Act 2006
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Freedom of Information Act 1982

17. Primary Contact Fog Theatre-

Nilgun Guven
Program Manager & Artistic Director
Vitae Veritas
Mobile: 0400 901 848
Email: nilgun@vitaeveritas.com.au

Alternate Contact Vitae Veritas-
Nikolaos (Panos) Alexandratos
Co-CEO & General Manager
Mobile: 0468 475 945
Email: info@vitaeveritas.com.au

Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm