**Annual General Meeting**

**2021 Proxy Voting Form**

The Annual General Meeting of Writers Victoria Incorporated (ABN 18 268 487 576) for the 2020 Calendar Year will be held on **Wednesday 21 April 2021 at 6pm** (via Zoom).

If you wish to appoint a proxy, please fill in and return this form to:

Email: to [members@writersvictoria.org.au](mailto:members@writersvictoria.org.au) (preferred)

Post: Writers Victoria, Level 3, the Wheeler Centre, 176 Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne 3000

so that it is received (not postmarked) no later than **6pm on Tuesday 20 April 2021**.

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [**print name**]

of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [**print address**]

being a financial member of Writers Victoria Inc., hereby appoint [**select option (1) or (2) of the following**]:

(1) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**[print name and address],** being a financial member of Writers Victoria Inc;

**OR**

(2) the Chairperson of the Board of Writers Victoria Inc;

as my proxy, to vote for me on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Association to be held on **Wednesday 21 April 2021** and at any adjournment of that meeting.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My proxy is authorised to vote as follows (see over the page):

1. Election of Board Members

**Select option (a) or (b) of the following.**

(a) in favour of [**select four (4) nominees**]:

* ANGIUS-SALVATORE, Melissa
* BENAKOVIC, Shyamala
* DAVIDSON, Lisa
* FENNESSY, Kit
* HAMMOND, Alex
* HARSEL, Noé
* JOINER, Rosemary
* MERCURI, Mandy
* NICHOLSON, Ralph
* SLESS, Justine
* SUTHERLAND, Paul

**OR**

(b) at his/her/their own discretion for **four (4)** nominees.

Please note: you must vote for **four (4) nominees**. Selecting more or fewer than four (4) nominees will make this ballot form invalid.

**Annual General Meeting  
2021 Board Nominees**

**ANGIUS-SALVATORE, Melissa**

**Biography:**

I have qualifications in education and visual arts. I have experience in development, custodial work, youth work and OH&S/ safety management. I have worked in a variety of roles and settings including within schools, universities, accommodation and youth justice. I have had a poem selected for the 2020 lockdown anthology with Writers Victoria. Since becoming a member, I have been encouraged to write more; I am currently completing a memoir which is being edited and will be published. I enjoy writing fantasy, poetry and short stories.

**Statement:**

My specific skills lie within program development and management, incident control management, problem solving, staff recruitment and training, stakeholder management, budgeting, accommodation management, re-engagement for disengaged youth within and external to the justice system and mental health support. I have worked overseas in Nepal, managing school and hospital projects and have been employed in diverse areas of education, youth and community work.

**BENAKOVIC, Shyamala**

**Biography:**

I have had wide-ranging and diverse career path. In my arts life, I am an emerging writer of short stories which I hope to publish 2021. In my civilian life, I started out as a teacher of Mathematics but was seduced by the glamour and prestige of Management Consultancy. I worked as a Management Consultant for over 15 years helping organisations produce their best work. In the words of Seth Godin I believe in “work that matters” and I work closely with organisations to understand their purpose and deliver their vision. In the last 10 years I moved into the not-for-profit sector working for membership organisations that advocate and support their members. I am currently with an organisation that provides advocacy services to Survivors, families and communities impacted by Institutional abuse. In 2020, I decided to stop scribbling and commit to writing which led me to the Writers Victoria community.

**Statement:**

I am an avid reader and have a strong passion for all things writing and reading. I have followed the growth, changes and development of this sector, particularly in Victoria for many years. I am familiar with the authors, festivals, prizes, awards and stakeholders in this sector.

In 2020, I dedicated most of my energy and passion to writing and got to know the sector more. I would now like to extend this by contributing to this sector. My knowledge of not-for-profit membership organisations and my management consultancy experience particularly in the area of Information Technology, I believe will support the strategic goals of Writers Victoria.

I have significant experience in growing membership, advocating for members, working with stakeholders, managing events and implementing relevant IT solutions for organisations.

I have the drive, passion and energy right now to support Writers Victoria achieve it strategic vision and objectives.

**DAVIDSON, Lisa**

**Biography:**

I have a Bachelor of Communications, Majoring in Journalism and Photography. I have spent most of my working

life at member organisations, including the Australian Medical Association. For the last 13 years, I have worked for

the College of Intensive Care Medicine, a not-for-profit medical College. I am currently a General Manager

responsible for several departments including Communications, Member Services, Policy, Advocacy and Events.

During my time at the College, I have been involved in high-level strategic planning, project and events management

as well as Committee and administrative work. Throughout my career, I have interwoven my love for writing into as

many aspects of my roles as possible. I have worked closely with the Board of the College and have observed several

tailor-made workshops conducted by the Australian Institute of Directors.

**Statement:**

While I am only a relatively new member, I have attended events and availed myself of the resources provided for

years. Ensuring Writers Victoria continues to inspire and support writers will be my focus if elected to the

Board. After spending over 13 years working for a wonderful member organisation, I have made the decision to

take a step back from full time corporate work and spend more time working in volunteer positions and focussing

on other pursuits. Working for a small organisation has meant I have been exposed to all levels of a not-for-profit

member organisation. I am aware of the importance of ensuring the financial sustainability of the organisation

while also ensuring the needs of the members and staff are of the highest priority.

**FENNESSY, Kit**

**Biography:**

Kit is the published author of a few books (mostly fiction, including Tales of the Dark and the Hidden People – on sale at Dymocks), and is a member of Writer’s Victoria of many years standing. This is the third time he’s nominated for the Board (clearly a glutton for punishment).

In business, Kit is the Director (and CFO) of Blue Vapours Pty Ltd; a strategic planning and design studio he’s run with his wife Jane for 18 years. He has a Bachelor of Arts from Melbourne, studied a Bachelor of Business at RMIT, and has attained other lesser professional certificates (e.g. Screen Writing, VCA).

Kit is a member of the Bass Coast Council’s Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee, where he participates in cultural planning and artist selection for grants. Now living on the Bass Coast, with an interest in regional arts programs, he regularly visits Melbourne for work.

**Statement:**

Why vote for me? I’m interested in the literary arts, sure. I also like people, and hope to meet you to hear your thoughts on making things better. But mostly because I’m a safe pair of hands, in terms of administrative experience and financial literacy, and think I could help.

I’d like Writer’s Victoria to operate for the benefit of all members. I’d promote greater emphasis on industry events with the few major publishers in Australia (with the Wheeler Centre), so that our members can find out what publishers are looking for, and so publishers can meet new talent.

I’d also like to see more member social events, for a greater esprit de corps and value for money, along with drives to attract MORE members to ensure the future of this worthy institution; turning all aspiring writers in Victoria not only into writers, but into active members of our community.

**HAMMOND, Alex**

**Biography:**

I am the author of The Paris Collaborator (released 4 May 2021, Echo). My previous novels are Blood Witness (2013, Penguin, shortlisted Ned Kelly Award for Best First Crime Novel) and The Unbroken Line (2015, Penguin). Both were optioned as a TV series. These novels were also selected to be part of the State Library of Victoria's Summer Read.

I have presented at the Emerging Writers Festival, Stonnington Literary Festival, State Library of Victoria, NSW Writers' Centre, Casey Winter Arts Festival, City of Yarra and Melton City Council.

I graduated from The University of Melbourne with an Arts/Law degree and am currently the Assistant Director of Digital Engagement for RMIT. I have successfully managed the university's website, defining its digital strategy and significantly increasing user engagement. I also deliver rapid, critical online initiatives such as RMIT's 2020 digital Open Day in response to COVID.

**Statement:**

As a committee member, I can make a difference to Writers Victoria's digital presence and provide a successful online engagement strategy in addition to my general recruitment and business experience. I am a digital professional of 20 years and hold a senior strategic leadership role at RMIT University and am keen to give back to the writing vocation I feel passionate about.

In my professional role, I am accountable for the operational management of RMIT websites, including optimising the online experiences through strong analytics rigour and a test-and-learn continuous delivery approach. My responsibilities include delivering strategic business objectives on behalf of the university as well as leading website governance and risk mitigation, including data privacy initiatives.

I would use my experience to support your digital team with advice around search volume analysis, user and A/B testing to optimise your website to attract new visitors and convert them to members.

**HARSEL, Noé**

**Biography:**

Noé Harsel has worked for 15 years in the not-for-profit arts and culture space. She hosts Live Write, an online writers’ group and is the co-creator and co-host of IGTV show, Sless to Harsel, an irreverent look at books, writing and friendship.

Noé’s experience includes fundraising, communications and strategy for organisations such as The Stella Prize, Monash University, the University of Melbourne and the Australian Centre for the Moving Image.

Her articles have been published in the Australian Film Institute magazine, Broadsheet, Melbourne Magazine, among others, and her stories published in a number of magazines and anthologies. She has lectured at the University of Melbourne, RMIT, LaTrobe and Swinburne universities.

Her current novel-in-progress explores the cultural intersection between Japanese and Jewish histories.

A member of Writers Victoria since 2011, Noè chairs the Development subcommittee, sits on the Financial subcommittee and Membership subcommittee, and is the current Chair of Writers Victoria.

**Statement:**

I have been privileged to be on the Board two years and Chair for a year. I would like to continue because I still have more to offer in this space.

While so far I am honoured to have been part of seeing a new era with the hiring of a new CEO, the initiation of the new Strategic Plan and the incredible warmth from our community during the time of terrible upheaval and despair in the arts, I still strive to see further representation of a broad spectrum of writers represented and spoken to through Writers Victoria’s membership and programs.

I have tangible skills in communications, marketing, management, fundraising and governance to see through the significant in-roads we have made. As a writer and arts practitioner, I have the drive, commitment and passion to continue working for you on the Board and would consider this to be an honour.

**JOINER, Rosemary**

**Biography:**

Rosemary Joiner has over twenty years’ experience in the community, healthcare and volunteering sectors, has chaired and facilitated numerous committees, and now runs a consulting business.

An experienced engagement leader who has worked with not-for-profits on key projects including diversity and inclusion, community engagement, narrative medicine storytelling and co-design, and volunteerism.

A passionate regional voice. Rosemary holds a Master of Arts in Writing, is currently undertaking her PhD, and is now working on her first novel.

* Strategic Thinking/Planning – Led significant governance and accreditation work in various roles.
* Marketing / Community Engagement - Over twenty years professional experience in Community Engagement, Graduate Certificate in Consumer and Community Engagement.
* Governance –Extensive committee experience as Chair, certified Facilitator
* Writing –Extensive corporate writing experience, Master of Arts (Writing,) currently undertaking my PhD with practice-led creative writing model.
* Human Resources, specifically Volunteer Engagement –Over twenty years professional experience in the community and volunteering sector.

**Statement:**

I have a strong commitment to Writers Victoria’s values of Inclusion, Community, Participation, Innovation and excellence, Professionalism and Respect.

I have extensive experience as committee member and chair in the not-for-profit sector. I bring professionalism to any committee.

My communication and leadership skills are strong, with a balance of professionalism, clarity, passion and empathy.

I have a good understanding of and experience in corporate governance and compliance.

A proud Gippslander, I will strengthen the regional voice on Writers Victoria’s Board.

**MERCURI, Mandy**

**Biography:**

Writing has formed a large part of my professional life spanning academia, community health and the Not-For-

Profit sector. I intermittently blog about my experiences self-managing chronic pain and being mindful. Last year, I

pursued a lifelong dream and wrote a draft of my first novel. As an emerging writer, I have immersed myself in the

writing community, undertaking courses (including from Writers Vic!) and honing my craft.

I completed a PhD in science then moved into grant writing, took a career break to raise my two children and

returned to professional life in 2016. I have been responsible for managing a membership based partnership with

Government funding over $300K, successfully obtaining large multi-organisation research grants, and coordinating

the philanthropic and government funding of a national charity. As a support to our family business, I

also have experience in financial, legal and IT related aspects of running a small business.

**Statement:**

Writing brings me immense joy and utilising the relevant and helpful skills from my professional life, I would love

to have the opportunity to support Writers Victoria to spread this joy and enthusiasm to its members and the

broader community. I am a greater connector of people and enjoy supporting and initiating collaboration and

partnership. I have been extremely fortunate to experience amazing support from the Victorian writing

community and I would love to see this community supported to continue sharing their many and diverse stories.

I have the skills and background to assist Writers Victoria into the next exciting phase of strategic development in

delivering their high-quality services in the post-covid era. With strong skills in grant seeking, writing and

management, I would love to help Writers Vic build on and increase its long-term financial security.

**NICHOLSON, Ralph**

**Biography:**

I have been a writer, journalist, broadcaster and senior executive working all over the World for more than 30 years. I worked in both television and newspapers, here in Australia (in both Perth and Sydney), for more than ten years. I then spent 20 years with the International news agency, Reuters, based in Jerusalem, Washington DC, Moscow, Rome, London and New York. I have held senior executive roles with Reuters, notably, Managing Editor of the global television service in London, and was an Executive Vice President of Media based in New York City. I spent five years in Central America, where I founded, published and edited my own weekly, English-language newspaper, and I managed Video Cairo Sat, the Middle East's oldest independent television and production facility. I have always written, edited and published --- I am currently writing a memoir --- and joined Writers Victoria for just this purpose.

**Statement:**

Writers Victoria lists ten skills they wish of their board members. I have broad experience in at least seven of those. I've been a writer, editor, broadcaster, publisher and business professional all my adult life. I have strong business skills and have run successful budgets, both big and small, for private and publicly traded companies. I have managed multi-cultural teams, often in different languages. I'm a strong strategic thinker. I worked in newspapers for a dozen years, and published and edited my own, 36-page weekly for five of those. We published two, hard-back, picture books. I am an accomplished team-builder, have good mentoring skills and regularly guest-lectured at universities in Western Australia. In choosing Melbourne in which to live, I wanted a sense of community. I joined Writers Victoria for the same reason and have taken part in a workshop. I’d now like to help further build your community.

**SLESS, Justine**

**Biography:**

I have worked in NFP and local government sector for over twenty years. I have strong financial skills; managing

NFP’s with income from federal, state, local government and philanthropic trusts.

Previously worked as a bookkeeper for a law firm, using MYOB for payroll and BAS, profit and loss statement.

I have a bachelor of Community Development and an MA by research in creative writing.

Member of WV for five years. I write, teach and research comedy, I am a big fan of and write a lot of short stories

and often combine comedy and the short story together.

I am the current Australian Producer of Funny Women – a global organisation promoting women in comedy and

was the former creative director of Melbourne Jewish Comedy Festival.

**Statement:**

I would like to contribute my strong financial skills and experience as board member on the peak body of

Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres as treasurer. I have a sound understanding of governance practices

having worked for NFPs for over twenty years.

As a board member I would bring a commitment to ensuring that the mission and vision of WV is fulfilled and

contribute to the development and growth of WV at a board level.

**SUTHERLAND, Paul**

**Biography:**

I am a former ABC broadcast journalist and political media adviser now advising some of the world’s most prestigious professional services firms, including management consultancy The Boston Consulting Group and global law firm Herbert Smith Freehills — my current employer. I have a Bachelor of Journalism from Queensland University of Technology, a Graduate Diploma in Crisis Communications from the Chartered Institute of Public Relations in London and am in my final year of RMIT’s Associate Degree in Professional Writing and Editing. While my work experience has focused on media and public relations in Australia and overseas, my interests lie in writing fiction and creative non-fiction. I am currently contracted to ghost write a history of Australia’s marriage equality movement and have near-completed a manuscript of my first novel (which has been assessed by a Writers Victoria editor). I am 33 and live in Northcote with my Bernese Mountain Dog, Margaret.

**Statement:**

As Australia’s creative industries are dragged further out of financial reach for many students, and when funding for arts programmes and our national broadcaster has been slashed, we need organisations like Writers Victoria more than ever. Writers Victoria is an incredible resource and supportive body for writers of all stages of their careers. I have personally found Writers Victoria a remarkable source of content and thought leadership that has impacted my own writing. To that end, I would be honoured to have the opportunity to help shape the direction of Writers Victoria and to use my skills in public relations and reputation management to steer the organisation towards greater recognition, which in turn will boost member numbers and allow Writers Victoria to support even more writers. My contribution as a board member could include providing strategic advice around publicity and marketing alongside crisis communications support should the need arise.