

The Guardian

Job Description

Head of design, Australia

Department	Editorial
Reports to	Editor, Guardian Australia Creative Director, Editorial, UK
Normal location	Sydney, with regular collaboration across the Melbourne office and international Guardian teams
Terms and conditions	Full-time, permanent role
Purpose	Creatively lead Guardian Australia's visual and editorial design team day to day as a hands-on editorial designer and visual storytelling lead in an engaged, fast-paced newsroom environment. To collaborate with editors, journalists, photographers, developers and visual creatives across Australia and the wider Guardian network to elevate the digital experience of our journalism across web, app and emerging platforms. The role will help shape and evolve Guardian Australia's visual identity and storytelling ambitions in the context of the Guardian's global digital products and editorial strategy.

Key responsibilities and accountabilities

- Working to tight deadlines in collaboration with editors, reporters and developers to create compelling visual storytelling and design concepts that express Guardian journalism and values, with the reader at the centre.
- Creatively lead a multidisciplinary visual and editorial design team producing innovative and engaging storytelling across design, photography, illustration, graphics, animation and interactive formats.

- Be a source of editorial and visual expertise for projects and initiatives from inception to implementation.
- Ensure visual and design work consistently meets high standards in storytelling, accessibility, usability, functionality and editorial quality across all platforms and devices.
- Use imagination, energy and flair to innovate and evolve visual storytelling formats.
- Influence design direction and contribute to broader editorial visual strategy alongside the Creative Director and senior editorial leadership.
- Assist in building a dynamic, collaborative and creative newsroom environment that supports ambitious journalism while motivating and mentoring team members.
- Balance reactive daily newsroom demands with longer-term enterprise and investigative projects, ensuring priorities are clear and achievable.
- Work closely with engineering, product and audience teams to create visually compelling experiences that are technically efficient, scalable and audience-focused.
- Support Guardian Australia journalism through art direction, illustration, motion graphics, data visualisation, interactives and multimedia storytelling.
- Practical application and evolution of visual and design guidelines for news and feature stories, understanding their place within the wider editorial agenda.
- Develop an understanding of Guardian Australia audiences and how they engage with our journalism, applying these insights to the development of visual work.
- Collaborate with editors across news, features, sport, culture, investigations and other desks to ensure visual storytelling supports editorial intent from the outset.
- Advocate for visual journalism and greater visual literacy across the newsroom, helping colleagues understand design processes, storytelling opportunities and emerging technologies.
- Collaborate with colleagues across editorial, engineering, UX, product and audience teams to support broader strategic objectives and ensure effective delivery.
- Coordinate with Guardian colleagues internationally on shared editorial and visual projects.
- Maintain strong relationships with photographers, illustrators, animators, designers and other external creative collaborators.
- Participate in workshops, planning sessions and editorial discussions to shape storytelling strategy and visual innovation.

- Spread awareness of opportunities and challenges in digital visual storytelling and editorial design.

Key contacts and relationships

Editor, Australia; Creative Director UK; Australia editorial design and visuals teams; photography, graphics, interactive, multimedia and commercial teams; product and engineering teams; audience and social teams; editors and journalists; UK and international visual teams; external photographers, illustrators, animators and other creative collaborators.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge and experience

- Exceptional talent and skill in editorial design and visual journalism.
- At least eight years' experience in digital editorial design, visual storytelling and interactive formats.
- Experience creating engaging and accessible storytelling experiences across web, app and digital platforms from concept to execution.
- Demonstrated experience managing and giving creative direction on multiple complex editorial projects simultaneously.
- Knowledge of capabilities and constraints of web and native platforms.
- Experience with Figma, Photoshop, Illustrator, Premiere and After Effects.
- Knowledge of HTML, SCSS/CSS and digital production workflows.
- Understanding of JavaScript and interactive storytelling approaches.
- Awareness of web standards and accessibility guidelines.
- Experience working in a fast-paced newsroom environment to strict deadlines.
- Ability to maintain a consistent visual style and editorial approach across multiple products and platforms.
- Demonstrable interest in Australian news, features and multimedia journalism.
- Broad understanding of Guardian audiences and how audience behaviour informs storytelling and product development.
- Up to date with developments in visual journalism, storytelling technologies and digital trends.
- Up to speed on the latest trends and technologies

Skills / behaviours

- Able to manage multiple projects and competing deadlines effectively.

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Ability to build collaborative working relationships across editorial, product, engineering and creative teams.
- Ability to guide and mentor designers and visual journalists through iterative creative processes.
- Ability to lead workshops, planning sessions and collaborative editorial discussions.
- Ability to work with and lead a multidisciplinary team.
- Creative, innovative and solutions-oriented.
- Strong editorial judgement and attention to detail.
- Highly organised, with excellent time management skills.
- Resilient under pressure and adaptable in a fast-moving newsroom environment.
- Proactive and self-motivated.
- Confident advocating for visual and creative priorities.
- Commitment to the Guardian's values — honesty, integrity, courage and fairness.

This job description is a guide to the work you will initially be required to undertake. It summarises the main aspects of the job but does not cover all the duties that the job holder may have to perform. It may be changed from time to time to meet changing circumstances. It does not form part of your contract of employment and, as your experience grows, you will be expected to broaden your tasks, suggest improvements, solve problems and enhance the effectiveness of the role.

This role may be exposed to traumatic and distressing material. Guardian Australia is committed to the safety and wellbeing of our employees, and provides targeted wellbeing plans to support news professionals covering tough stories or dealing with the cumulative impacts of difficult topics.