

Radiothon 2026 Presenter's Handbook

Keepin' It Real
Local Voices. Your Community
Sept 11th - 19th



How to Subscribe:

- Go to www.mainfm.net and hit the 'Subscribe to MainFM' button on the right
- Call the office on 5472 4376

Welcome!

This handbook is split into 3 key parts:

- 1) Important info for Presenters
- 2) How to do a cracker Radiothon Show
- 3) Key details for you to read out on-air

Please read over everything. We will have printed copies in the office during Radiothon for you.

Contents:

Section One: Important info for Presenters

Page 3	Key Dates What is Radiothon A note on this year's theme What do I need to do BEFORE Radiothon?
Page 4	What to expect during my show in Radiothon What to know for your Office Support shift How the prize draws work
Page 5	Difference between subscribing and MainFM membership as a presenter

Section Two: How to do a cracker Radiothon Show

Page 6	Our approach to Radiothon Top tips for your show
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Section Three: Key details to read out on-air

Page 8	Key dates How people can subscribe/Subscription costs Overview of prizes
Page 9	Reasons to subscribe

Section One: Important info for Presenters

Key dates:

Radiothon is running from 7:30am Friday **September 11th** through to 8pm **Saturday 19th** September.

What is Radiothon?

In short, Radiothon is a dedicated period every year where we ask our community to demonstrate their support of MainFM by re/subscribing to our Station, making a cash payment which directly contributes to keeping us on the air.

Subscribers are the beating heart and soul of MainFM. We adore our subscribers! If people subscribe during Radiothon they go into the daily prize pool, and also the major prize pool, and their name and message (if they choose to leave one) gets read out live on air. Every subscriber also gets a Subscriber Pack, which among other things contains a subscriber card, giving them discounts at local businesses all year long.

A note on this year's theme:

This year's theme is ***'Keepin' It Real' - Local voices. Your community.***

We are the trusted voice of your community, a connecting force, a positive current that runs through our collective. We are many voices and many hands, coming together to share genuine stories that spark conversation. Week in week out, we share our time, energy, commitment and passion with our listeners. We share music, conversation and information. We share connection.

We want to celebrate and centre the human and community focus of MainFM this year. Being responsive and representative of our community is our strength and ultimate goal. It's what separates us from AI slop, generated playlists, overly produced and out-of-touch commercial radio.

In line with this, the incredible poster artwork this year is 100% handmade mixed media. The original artwork is courtesy of Ned Middleton (Glee - Saturdays 8am) and Tobias Richardson, from their giant mural community art project, and overlay text was crafted by Simon Dubbeld (Night Moogs - Thursdays 8-10pm) and our Station Manager Steph Riddel.

We love the way you represent and give a platform to different people and elements of our community in your shows. This year we are really encouraging you to lean in to interviewing local voices, organising audio testaments from the community to be played on your show, and highlighting how MainFM engages with the community over the year. We want to celebrate how we show up for our community, and how we can only do this work with community support (and subscriptions).

What do I need to do BEFORE Radiothon?

- 1) **Email our Programming Coordinator, Melissa**, to confirm if you can do your usual slot live during the Radiothon period. It's a Station expectation that you do a live show for Radiothon (but please reach out if this is an issue - particularly if you have a late night show - we get it). Email programming@mainfm.net
- 2) **[Sign Up](#)** for an Office Support Shift
- 3) **Plan your special show.** Read the 'How to make a cracker Radiothon Show' section below.

What to expect during my show in Radiothon:

- People will have signed up to be Office Support during your show. These people will be in the office helping process online subscribers, and answering the landline phone to process subscriptions and literally bringing you in names and messages of support from people who subscribe during your show slot. You will read these out live to air through your show.
- You will find a list of the daily prizes, and the major prizes on the desk in each studio. (Please ensure the date at the top of the page is your day!)
- You will need to remind listeners how to subscribe, the cost, and the benefits of subscribing. All this info is in the second section of this handbook for ease, and will be printed in studios for you.
- NO DRINKS ON THE DESK. NO DRINKS ON THE DESK! You do not want to be the person responsible for shorting out the panel...

What to know for my Office Support shift:

- As mentioned, you need to [sign up](#) for at least one Office Support shift during Radiothon (these are generally 2 hour shifts).
- There will be instructions printed in the office, but during this time you will help to pack Subscriber Packs, process Merch orders, process online subscriptions, answer the landline phone to take phone subscriptions, and write out the names and messages of people who have subscribed, and quickly taking it into the live presenter for them to read out on air to thank them. It's a way of reciprocating support to other presenters during Radiothon, and crucial to keep things rolling smoothly. There will be snacks and good vibes.

How the prize draws work:

We are so lucky to have so many businesses and organisations donate prizes for Ratiothon. Please plug and celebrate the awesomeness of our prizes. It generates hype, and also provides excellent advertising to the businesses/orgs who donate prizes.

Band/Musician prize:

A special prize draw exists for musicians and bands. (There's a tick box people select on their Subscription form to go into this draw)

Pet Subscribers:

There's a special prize draw for Pet subscribers.

Daily Prize:

Each day of Radiothon we have a daily prize draw. Subscribers will automatically go into the daily prize pool for the day that they subscribe. It is drawn the following day and winners read out on air (and notified via email/phone call by Sponsorship Manager Sue).

On the presenter's desk you will have:

- A printed list of the daily prizes to read out and plug for your day.
- A list of the prize winners from the following day. Reading out some of the winners from the day before helps to generate hype - community members love listening out for their name or someone they love!)

Major Prize:

All subscribers automatically also go into the Major Prize pool. Please plug the Major Prizes and differentiate between the Daily Prizes and the Major Prizes. (Please note, there will be a 30-45 sec promo scheduled into each hour for you to play during your show, listing all the major prizes, to save you having to read out the complete list of major prizes.) The Major Prize winners will be announced on air at the end of September (Sue will also notify them). (This gives more people time to subscribe if they missed the 11th-19th window, and also gives more air time to plug and celebrate our Major Prize businesses/donations).

Please note that as a presenter, you can subscribe to MAinFM! You will be eligible for the Daily Prize pool, but not the Major Prize pool

Difference between Subscribing and Membership as a presenter:

You can subscribe to MainFM as a presenter! This is encouraged! It's a way you can show that you value and enjoy other shows on the grid, and help to support everyone's show to stay on air. You also get all the benefits of being a subscriber - you go into the daily prize draw and you receive a Subscriber Card, giving you discounts at local businesses all year long.

Please note that MainFM Membership is different to subscribing! All MainFM presenters and active volunteers must be members of MainFM (subscribing and enjoying all the subscriber perks is optional). It's a constitutional requirement that all Presenters must be members of the organisation. MainFM Membership gives you voting rights at the AGM, covers you for onsite insurance, binds you to our Code of Conduct, and contributes to governance and Studio maintenance for your show. It's a privilege and a responsibility to be a MainFM presenter, and you must be a paid-up current member of the organisation to be on-air.

Please, [update/renew your membership](#) and make payment.

Section Two: How to do a cracker Radiothon Show

Radiothon is all about asking the community to take an active role in supporting MainFM by becoming a subscriber. Radiothon is a time to be playful and creative. The primary aim is to get listeners to call in and sign up as subscribers – and a great way to do that is to ensure you have fun. Last year we signed over 500 subscribers, which is amazing!

Often it's just about persuading people that their subscription matters and that it makes a difference.

Top tips for your show:

What is a Radiothon? It is a fundraiser, a special push to gain station subscribers.

What is a subscription and why do we call it that, as opposed to a donation? A subscription means that the listener is becoming an active contributor to the station and participating. As a subscriber you will receive our monthly newsletter and keep up to date with all station events and happenings. You will also be able to access discounts around town, and you will receive a MainFM bumper sticker.

A subscription is an act in ensuring the future of MainFM. Taking out a subscription means that you're playing a part in keeping MainFM on air for future generations to enjoy.

We only do Radiothon once a year, it's how we raise revenue and stay on air and pay our operating costs as a not-for-profit, volunteer driven local media organisation. Staying on air for a community broadcaster is a year-to-year proposition, please show your passion and enjoyment of what we do by subscribing.

Playful / Fun - Think laterally about what you want to do. By all means loosely follow your format, play the music you like- but maybe add some elements or segments you don't normally have.

Special Guests -

- Organise a guest co-presenter who you can bounce off
- Line up some guests to come into the studio.

Asking for money can be tiring and it can be hard to maintain enthusiasm when you are on your own in the studio. It's a great time to buddy up with another presenter! Chat to Melissa Scott if you are struggling for ideas or need some help (programming@mainfm.net).

In line with this year's theme '*Keepin it Real*' *Local Voices. Your Community*, you might want to invite a community member to join you on your show. Your neighbor! Your Coach! Your fellow BookClub member! If you have a show sponsor, you might like to invite your sponsor on-air, ask them to select a couple of their favourite tracks and what they love about MainFM/community radio! Highlight some more local voices.

Previous Guests - Email all the guests you've had on your show over the past year and invite them to subscribe to your show.

Endorsements - Start gathering endorsements! Use the [VOX POPS Sign up sheet](#) to get some question prompts you can ask community members and get out there and represent! Borrow the station's Zoom, or just use the audio recorder on your phone. Record people telling you what they appreciate about MainFM! (Bring this audio along to a free special editing workshop on Thurs 20th Aug 6pm - 8pm, pizza provided. Email Lauz on laura.cady@mainfm.net to register) if you want to make it sound snazzy for your show. Or just keep it basic and include it in your shows now in the lead up to Radiothon!

Friends & Family - Don't be shy in asking your friends and family to subscribe to your program. Let them know how much you love presenting your radio show and how important it is to your life - I'm sure they would love to show you their support. Get the word out: Email, Text message, Whatsapp, FB - spread the word. Here's the link <https://mainfm.net/subscribe-to-main-fm/>

If you need help – check out the new help guide on the Hub under the Training / Ideas / shows categories. It's called 'Presenter & Show Profiles on our Website'.

Plug other shows on MainFM in the lead up - support your peers, make mention of the variety and diversity of voices on our grid.

The Socials - Please promote your show on the [Friends of MAINfm FB page](#) and Instagram in the lead up to Radiothon by telling people what you've got coming up on the show- your playlist etc. **Use hashtags:**

#949mainfm #communityradio #mainfmradiothon

(We will try to share your stories on Instagram and FB when we see it, but with over 75 shows and a lot to do running the station, we can't focus on this. Apologies if we miss you, we appreciate your work on social media!). Please know we are showcasing every show with a dedicated 'a day on MainFM' post listing all the shows with a short description, and we will also select a few shows to highlight the diversity of shows/community groups we represent.

Invite your friends to like MainFM and Friends of MainFM so we can extend our reach, attract more listeners and more subscribers - and have more fun.

Section Three: Key details to read out on-air

Key dates:

Radiothon 2026 is running from 11th Sept - 19th Sep, with a daily prize pool, drawn each day.

Everyone who subscribes during the whole month of September is eligible for the major prize pool. Major prizes are drawn and announced at the end of September.

How to Subscribe:

- Go to www.mainfm.net and hit the 'Subscribe to MainFM' button on the right
- Call the office on 5472 4376

Subscription Rates

Full / waged individual \$50

Passionate \$80

Concession / unwaged / under 18 \$40

Single child under 12 \$10

Single pet \$10

Community Group \$100

Business \$150

What does a person receive when they subscribe?

- A special shout out on the radio and a warm and fuzzy feeling
- A subscriber pack in the mail with a bumper sticker, a postcard and their Subscriber Card, which they can show around town for discounts at participating shops
- There is an ever growing list of businesses around town offering discounts for subscribers

Are you a musician or part of a band?

If so, during Radiothon, musicians go into the special prize draw for a full day recording at Sound Recordings, you just have to tick the box on the Subscriber form.

Prizes: (Spruik the daily prizes listed on the desk during your show)

Pet Prize

- You can subscribe your special furry friend and go in the Pet Prize draw.
- To have your pet featured on the MainFM socials, please send us a photo to info@mainfm.net

REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE (choose the ones that resonate for you to share on air!):

- “Community radio helps to build a sense of community. MainFM helps to strengthen ties and build awareness of our common values, challenges and solutions within the community.”
- “Your subscription helps us deliver diverse and engaging programming, with over 70 shows on the grid each week bringing you information, conversation and discussion. MainFM is a connecting force in the community.”
- “MainFM transmits 24 hours each day - we’ve got a lot of gear to service and bills to pay. We need your help to pay the bills - Rent, Insurance, Internet, Licensing, Equipment.”
- “MainFM communicates to locals what’s going on in their backyards, what’s going on down the street, what’s going on with local councils and local arts and culture. MainFM communicates what’s happening in local politics. We let listeners know about what’s going on in a grass roots, local context. Imagine if that didn’t exist!”
- “All income generated is used for the operation, development and maintenance of the station. Radio stations are not cheap to run - there’s lots of tech that needs to be maintained and new technical equipment that we always need to purchase to stay on air. Your subscription helps us pay for that technical infrastructure.”
- “Taking out a subscription is an act of participation in keeping us broadcasting. The most valuable way you can contribute as a listener is to take out a subscription. A subscription is an act of participation in keeping us on air.”
- “Community radio fosters a sense of connection – when you hear someone telling their story who shares your everyday experiences and comes from your community, it can reassure you that you are not alone and that there are other people in the same situation as you.”
- “Volunteer presenters take their roles very seriously and individually curate their shows accordingly. They aren’t motivated by pay cheques, they are volunteers and are motivated by a passion for creating great radio and grass-roots media, reflecting the culture and interests of local people.”
- “MainFM believes in diversity and giving a voice to underrepresented members of our community.”
- “MainFM is independent media serving the community – we are not controlled by commercial interests.”
- “Our presenters are a rad bunch of humans made up of locals who know and love the region. We have over 100 amazing volunteers presenting over 70 shows a week - for a regional station, that is a BIG deal - it’s actually huge. Show your support by taking out a subscription.”
- “MainFM supports local and independent musicians – You can tune it to hear news about gigs, shows, events happening around town.”

- “MainFM contributes to national media diversity by providing a platform for alternative voices. Each presenter decides who goes on their show and what music is played. This means that you get really interesting, thoughtful and creative radio. Unlike mainstream media, we are not dictated to by just a small group of editors and media owners.”
- “Community radio promotes economic growth by encouraging people to shop local, and MainFM is a big supporter of local business.”
- “Imagine a world without MainFM - a world without hearing new music, good music, arts and culture that reflects what’s going on locally.”
- “We have programs that cover current affairs, gardening, mental health, history, environment, wellness, disability, art, the queer community, radio dramas, philosophy, young people’s voices, poetry and spoken word as well as music shows featuring rock, pop, funk, soul, hip hop, punk, garage, country, indigenous, folk, world music, electronica, experimental, lounge, roots, reggae, blues and roots, jazz, classical ... pretty much every genre you can think of ...”
- “MainFM gives youth a voice. Castlemaine Secondary College has its own radio show, CSC Hype, led by Vocational Major and FLO students. MainFM also works with Mount Alexander Shire Council’s Youth Advisory Group, and hosts work experience students. MainFM believes in giving young people a go and giving them access to a broader audience: We support them to help host Outside Broadcasts, design our posters and perform at our events.”
- “Australia’s media landscape is constantly evolving and in some cases collapsing. This has particularly impacted rural towns and communities across Australia where concentrated media ownership has become the norm. A diverse media landscape fosters a rich and vibrant culture and it lifts the political landscape. Media diversity ensures integrity in the way information is communicated, distributed and consumed.”
- “Anyone with an interest can get involved in these stations’ activities. Local people can become board members, managers, technicians, producers, presenters, admin support or journalists.”
- “We’ve won awards!
 - 2025 CBAA Award Finalist - ‘Outstanding Fundraising & Sponsorship Contribution’
 - 2024 CBAA Award Finalist – ‘Excellence in Special Event and Outside Broadcasts
 - 2023 CBAA Award - Best Radio Program (Talks) Saltgrass
 - 2023 CBAA Award - Excellence in Digital Media for the Pride Across the Ages Podcast
 - 2021 CBAA Award Excellence in Journalism (Elizabeth Scanlon)
 - 2021 CBAA Award Best New Show (Welcome to the Library)
 - 2020 CBAA's Most Outstanding Small Station Award

Help us keep kicking goals for our community!”