

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Equality
Minister for Creative Industries



Thursday, 21 May 2020

CREATIVES RISING TO THE TOP THROUGH NEW FESTIVAL

Melbourne's much-anticipated new winter festival is helping local artists rise to the challenge of our times with a \$2 million commissioning program to boost creative jobs and create ambitious works for the festival.

Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley together with co-artistic directors Hannah Fox and Gideon Obarzanek today revealed the festival name, RISING, and a new program that will invest in local artists when they need it most.

The funding, originally allocated for the 2020 festival which has been cancelled due to the impact of coronavirus, has been redirected to support local artists to create work and help shape RISING 2021 and future festivals.

The first RISING festival has been scheduled to run from 26 May to 6 June next year. It will take the place of the Melbourne International Arts Festival and White Night Melbourne and is set to become a landmark Victorian major event.

As well as investing in local creative jobs and opportunities in the immediate term, the new festival stands to play an important role in reviving Victoria's visitor economy as travel restrictions are progressively lifted. Cultural tourism is one of the top reasons visitors come to Victoria, and was previously worth more than \$2 billion a year.

Victorian artists are invited to submit ideas for artworks, shows, exhibitions and events that can attract new audiences and capture national and international attention

One hundred artists or creative teams will be selected in the first phase of the program and each will receive \$2,000 in seed funding. Of those, some will go on to a paid creative development phase, working with RISING festival producers and production managers to develop their projects.

Some works will be produced for the 2021 or future festivals, and further presentation opportunities will be facilitated by the festival, working with its national and international curatorial advisory group.

The RISING commissioning program is another way that the Victorian Government is supporting the state's creative industries which have been hit hard by the coronavirus crisis. It follows the announcement of more than \$49 million in Government funding to safeguard our arts and cultural bodies and to keep creatives working.

More information about RISING and the artist call-out can be found at www.rising.melbourne.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley

"RISING is set to play an important role as we emerge from this crisis, reigniting the exciting creative offering Victoria is known for and rebooting our visitor economy."

"While this festival will be global in its ambition and scope, Victorian artists and creativity will be at its heart."

Quotes attributable to RISING co-artistic director Hannah Fox

"This moment has forced us to think deeply about the future of festivals and about how we can build greater sustainability."

"It challenges us to champion local artists without being parochial and to find new ways to stay connected internationally."

Quote attributable to RISING co-artistic director Gideon Obarzanek

"We draw great inspiration from Victoria's vibrant arts community and are excited by this chance to provide new opportunities."

Media contact: Stephanie Hobbs 0429 275 437 | stephanie.hobbs@minstaff.vic.gov.au