

Media Release

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



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LIFELINE FOR VICTORIA'S FAMOUS LIVE MUSIC VENUES

The Victorian Government is supporting our world-famous live music venues to respond to the devastating effects of the coronavirus pandemic with a new program providing grants to help pay wages and basic business expenses.

Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley today announced the creation of the \$15 million Victorian Live Music Venues Program to secure the future of grassroots venues which are the heart and soul of Victoria's \$1.7 billion live music industry.

Melbourne is the live music capital of the world – with one venue for every 8,915 residents it comes up trumps ahead of other renowned music cities including Berlin, New York, London and Austin, Texas. Across Victoria, live venues play a crucial role in communities and in providing a foundation for new talent.

Tash Sultana moved from busking in Bourke Street to small gigs at the Corner Hotel as she travelled a path to international acclaim while fellow Melburnian Angie McMahon also built a buzz through appearances at the Corner. This program will help to ensure similar opportunities exist for the next wave of performers.

Music venues were among the first businesses to shut down and are expected to be among the last to reopen. Across the state, live music venues attract more than 17.5 million people each year, but the coronavirus restrictions have brought this activity to a halt, resulting in millions of dollars in lost revenue and thousands of lost jobs.

The Victorian Live Music Venues Program will be open to venues across Victoria with a capacity of 50 to 1,200 people. It will support venues that have a solid reputation for presenting original live music and demonstrate best practice in business operations.

The \$15 million program is in addition to \$4 million previously announced for the music industry focused on supporting musicians and industry workers who have lost gigs, income and employment as a result of the pandemic.

The Victorian Government's response to safeguard the wider creative sector now stands at more than \$66 million.

Applications for the Victorian Live Music Venues Program will be open from 16 July to 6 August. Guidelines and application details will be made available on the Creative Victoria website – creative.vic.gov.au – in coming days.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley

"Venues have been a vital part of our music culture and economy – hosting thousands of gigs a week, providing a vital career-making platform for artists and employment for industry workers."

"While our love of music has continued online throughout the shutdown, paid work for many in the industry has dried up. By helping to secure venues for the future, we'll help the industry bounce back when it is safe to do so."

Quotes attributable to musician Angie McMahon

"These venues are like the community halls, the churches, the gathering places for generations new and old to share their experiences and beliefs inside the warm embrace of music."

"If they were to fall under, our state would lose its unique voice, and the thriving culture that makes it such a progressive and exciting place to live."

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