

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Acting Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Mental Health



Sunday, 23 May 2021

LANDMARK EVENT TO CELEBRATE VICTORIA'S LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY

One of Australia's leading lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) organisations will run *Melbourne Pride 2021*, a landmark event to celebrate our diverse rainbow communities.

Acting Premier James Merlino and Minister for Equality Martin Foley today announced that Midsumma had been selected to run the inaugural Melbourne Pride in late 2021 – ensuring that LGBTIQ+ voices are central to this important milestone event.

The Andrews Labor Government made an election commitment in 2018 to run Melbourne Pride 2021, to mark the 40-year anniversary of the decriminalisation of sex between men in our state.

Melbourne Pride will be one of the most significant LGBTIQ+ events in Victoria's history, with activities planned across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

This landmark event will help heal historic wounds by providing an opportunity for all Victorians to demonstrate their support for LGBTIQ+ communities. It will also provide important business and employment opportunities for industries, particularly LGBTIQ+-owned businesses.

Midsumma is an LGBTIQ+ arts and cultural organisation with a proven track record of delivering events for LGBTIQ+ communities, including the annual Midsumma Festival and Midsumma Pride March.

The Labor Government has delivered more than \$1.9 million to support Melbourne Pride 2021, including a further \$1 million in the *Victorian Budget 2021/22* released this week. Funding will support Midsumma to increase programming and engagement with regional communities, diverse communities and LGBTIQ+ businesses.

The Labor Government's support for Melbourne Pride 2021 is part of its broader determination to achieve equality for LGBTIQ+ Victorians. The *Victorian Budget 2021/22* delivers a \$45.4 million investment to improve the lives of people who are part of our rainbow communities.

Quote attributable to Acting Premier James Merlino

"We're proud to stand with Victoria's LGBTIQ+ community by backing Melbourne's very own Pride event, where the community can celebrate with friends, family and allies alike."

Quote attributable to Minister for Equality Martin Foley

"Melbourne Pride 2021 will be an opportunity to send a message that in Victoria, equality is not negotiable."

Quote attributable to Victorian Commissioner for LGBTIQ+ Communities Ro Allen

"This community-minded organisation has a strong record of running much-loved events for LGBTIQ+ Victorians, and Melbourne Pride 2021 will be no exception."

Quote attributable to Midsumma Chief Executive Karen Bryant

"We are thrilled to be working with the Victorian Government to develop and produce their event, that celebrates the meaning and stories behind this significant event and recognises and engages our many diverse communities."

Media contact: Jamila Fontana 0409 741 279 | jamila.fontana@minstaff.vic.gov.au