

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery

Minister for Trade

Minister for Business Precincts

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Racing



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MELBOURNE'S ABILITY FEST SET TO RETURN IN 2023

Australia's most disability inclusive, accessible music festival will be held in Melbourne once again in 2023 – thanks to support from the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula and 2022 Australian of the Year and festival founder Dylan Alcott announced that Ability Fest will return for its fourth year featuring more than 50 Australian bands and DJs, including performers with disabilities.

The one-day music festival provides elevated platforms, accessible pathways and ramps, Auslan interpreters, dedicated quiet zones, disability inclusive training delivered to staff and volunteers and companion card ticketing

The first Ability Fest was held in April 2018 at Coburg Velodrome, attracting 5,000 attendees and growing to 6,500 in April 2019. Following a COVID-enforced hiatus in 2020, Ability Fest drew crowds of 5,000 to its most recent home at Alexandra Gardens in November 2021.

Ability Fest draws crowds in their thousands to celebrate live music, promote diversity and inclusion and raise money for the Dylan Alcott Foundation to empower young people with disabilities to achieve their ambitions.

More details on the 2023 event, including the date, venue and line-up, will be announced later this year.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula

"Ability Fest is a unique event that Melbourne – Australia's home of live music and major events – embraces each year and that's why we're supporting it."

"The event sets the standard for inclusion and supports hundreds of local jobs, many of which are filled by people with a disability."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Anthony Carbines

"We're proud to support Ability Fest because it provides opportunities for Victorians with a disability to enjoy our incredible live-music scene in a setting that encourages and welcomes everyone to create a more inclusive Victoria."

Quotes attributable to 2022 Australian of the Year and Ability Fest founder Dylan Alcott

"Ability Fest is proudly Australia's most accessible music festival, and this investment will make our state the accessible music capital of the world."

"Ability Fest Supports talented local artists and the work of the Dylan Alcott Foundation, empowering young people with disabilities to realise their ambitions across sports, education and employment."

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