

# Media Release

The Hon Colin Brooks MP  
Minister for Development Victoria  
Minister for Precincts  
Minister for Creative Industries



Tuesday, 13 February 2024

## BACKING MORE EMERGING COMIC TALENT IN VICTORIA

The Allan Labor Government is removing barriers for more emerging comic talent across Victoria, with the Labor Government's *Stand Up!* initiative ensures more people can deliver the laughs at this year's Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks today announced the recipients of the 2024 *Stand Up!* Grants program which supports women and non-binary comedians to showcase their work at the festival, making it easier and more accessible for emerging performers to join the industry.

This year's recipients include Melbourne comedians Nat Harris and Bridget Hassed, as well as the comedy collective *Breast of the Fest*, with grants supporting marketing and promotion expenses and costs for both venues and rehearsal spaces.

Award-winning comedian and radio broadcaster Nat Harris will perform *Lathered*, a show that draws on the glamour and tropes of TV soap operas while Bridget Hassed, who was a RAW Comedy state finalist in 2019, will present her debut solo show *GIRL GIRL GIRL*, following recent seasons in Brisbane and at Sydney Fringe Festival.

*Breast of the Fest* is an annual showcase of early-career comedians and this year's stellar line-up stars comedians Patti Fawcett, Helena Hogan, Tarsh Jago, Montana Papadinis, Bell Woolley, Grace Zhang and Sez.

The *Stand Up!* grants program was established by the Government in 2019 in partnership with the Melbourne International Comedy Festival to back the careers of women and non-binary comedians and overcome barriers in the industry.

Melbourne International Comedy Festival 2024 runs from 27 March – 21 April 2024. To book your tickets to *Stand Up!* supported shows and to view the full 2024 program visit [comedyfestival.com.au](https://comedyfestival.com.au)

### Quote attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks

*"We're proud to back these performers as they hone their craft and take their next big career step, while platforming new voices and increasing diversity in the industry. For comedy lovers, this is your chance to see these rising stars take to the stage at one of the world's greatest comedy festivals."*

### Quote attributable to Melbourne International Comedy Festival Director Susan Provan AO

*"Since 2019, Stand Up! grant recipients have represented a diverse range of clever, funny performers with rapidly developing public profiles including Grace Jarvis, Annie Louey, Hannah Camilleri, Scout Boxall and Emma Holland. This year's recipients are all on the verge of the next big thing and we can't wait to celebrate their successes!"*

### Quote attributable to 2024 Stand Up! Grant recipient Nat Harris

*"Receiving the Stand Up! grant is not only an incredible financial support to envision and create my show for the Melbourne International Comedy Festival but also a huge confidence boost to be recognised as a woman in comedy. I am excited for what's to come."*

**Media contact:** Bodil Droga 0413 701 929 | [bodil.droga@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:bodil.droga@minstaff.vic.gov.au)