

Media Release



Martin Foley MP
Minister for Creative Industries

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\$20 MILLION INVESTMENT IN REGIONAL CREATIVITY AND CULTURE

Communities across regional Victoria will benefit from \$20 million for regional arts and creativity funds, Minister for Creative Industries, Martin Foley, announced today ahead of the 2015-16 Victorian Budget.

Mr Foley visited Bendigo Art Gallery, one of the state's premier cultural destinations and an internationally recognised gallery that shows the contribution the arts can make to a community – culturally, socially and economically.

The funding will help to ensure that all Victorians have access to rich cultural activities, wherever they live. More communities will have the chance to share in the benefits of creativity, which will boost tourism and education and create jobs.

The four-year package secures continued investment in around 40 galleries and performing arts centres across regional Victoria. It also provides new funding to enable these venues to better engage with their communities through education programs, professional development workshops and innovative community programming; as well as for ambitious projects that will attract significant cultural tourism and economic benefits.

The programs will be delivered by Creative Victoria and funded through the *Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund*. The \$20 million package also includes:

- A new touring strategy, bringing to regional Victoria major exhibitions, performances and programs from leading arts organisations such as the National Gallery of Victoria, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne Theatre Company and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.
- Support for significant and long-term creative projects and residencies that connect regional community groups, councils and businesses with professional artists to develop local skills, including the continuation of the successful *Small Town Transformation* initiative.
- The *Full House* pilot program, which will support five regional performing arts centres or galleries to develop and deliver a two-year intensive audience engagement strategy to build local audiences.
- The development of a *Regional Centre of Culture* program, a year-long arts and cultural celebration that will shine a spotlight on a particular Victorian region, attract tourism and deliver a lasting legacy.

The *Regional Centre of Culture* program will develop new local content reflecting the region's strengths, creativity and unique flavour, complemented by a range of high quality experiences and programs from outside the region. The first *Regional Centre of Culture* is expected to take place in 2018.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries, Martin Foley

"Arts, culture and creativity have a powerful role to play in our communities, socially and economically. This is as true in a small town as it is in a regional centre or city."

"Victoria is home to some of the country's best galleries and performing arts venues. This funding will help them realise their potential as the thriving heart of the creative industries in their communities."

Quotes attributable to Jaala Pulford, Minister for Regional Development

"This is fantastic news for regional and rural communities across Victoria. Not only will it ensure our regions are home to some of the best local and international art, culture and performances on offer, the increased visitor numbers will make sure our motels, hotels, cafes and restaurants are full and our communities are thriving."

"This will boost tourism and create jobs."

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