



Media Release – For immediate release

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\$345 million plan to restart and rebuild live performance industry

Live Performance Australia has developed a \$345 million plan to help the live performance industry restart, rebuild and reopen for audiences following the shutdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The plan includes capital investment in performing arts companies and productions to help them restart, extending income support to businesses and individuals to retain jobs, and incentives to encourage Australians to return to live performance events.

“As we enter the 12th week of shutdowns due to the public health response, it’s well and truly time for the Federal Government to get behind Australia’s arts and entertainment industry and deliver a comprehensive and properly funded plan so our world-class industry can get back to work,” said LPA Chief Executive, Evelyn Richardson.

“We welcome the Morrison Government’s acknowledgement of the impact that COVID-19 has had on the arts and entertainment industry, but it’s now time for real action backed by substantial targeted investment,” Ms Richardson said.

“Unlike some other parts of the economy, a gradual re-opening process is not commercially viable for most of our industry. We can’t re-open venues that only have dozens in the audience. That’s why we will need a sustained and strategic investment by government to get our industry up and running again,” Ms Richardson said.

The LPA plan includes a \$90 million Business Reactivation Fund which includes capital investments to restart and market productions and tours; support for service providers to the live performance industry (such as production and technical businesses, stage-hands, riggers, video, sound and lighting specialists); a Community Engagement Fund to support regional venues to get local communities engaged and to develop work; an Australian Music Recovery Fund; and funding to help the industry operate in a ‘COVID safe’ way.

The LPA plan also features digital and technology innovation; \$70 million in additional support for the Australia Council; domestic incentives to help Australians reconnect with live performance events through a \$55 million ‘See It Live’ household e-voucher scheme and travel incentives to attract international visitors to attend live events in Australia.

“Australians have always been great supporters of live performance, and buy more tickets to live performance events than all of our major sporting codes combined. Our proposal for a ‘See it Live’ e-voucher program for households will help them get back to their favourite live performance event.

“It will take time for the live performance industry to rebuild, so we also need to continue to provide income support through programs such as JobKeeper and JobSeeker for industry workers who have been displaced by COVID-19,” Ms Richardson said.

The LPA two year recovery plan also includes longer-term initiatives to support the growth of the Australian live performance industry, including tax incentives for pre-production costs and live music venues; an Arts and Entertainment Loan scheme to encourage investment in commercial product; the waiving of visa fees for



international touring performers; and a contingency fund to support events which may be impacted by future restrictions due to COVID-19 outbreaks, in particular locations that require a targeted public health response.

“Our \$4 billion dollar industry will be a major driver of economic activity, jobs and cultural tourism recovery. Our number one priority is getting our venues open and our people back to work. We look forward to working closely with governments at all levels to make this happen in the coming months. Getting our theatres open in spring is our first priority followed by our larger events such as concerts and music festivals. Our Kiwi cousins are back in theatres in the next two weeks with no physical distancing, so we believe our September timeframe is very achievable”, she said.

Full details of the LPA plan are attached.

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About LPA

Live Performance Australia (LPA) is the peak body for Australia’s live performance industry. Established over 100 years ago in 1917 and registered as an employers’ organisation under the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*, LPA has over 400 Members nationally. We represent commercial producers, music promoters, major performing arts companies, small to medium companies, independent producers, major performing arts centres, metropolitan and regional venues, commercial theatres, stadiums and arenas, arts festivals, music festivals, and service providers such as ticketing companies and technical suppliers. Our membership spans from small-medium and not-for-profit organisations to large commercial entities.

LPA has a clear mandate to advocate for and support policy decisions that benefit the sustainability and growth of the live performance industry in Australia.

COVID-19: Live Performance Industry Rebuild & Recovery Package



**Total package
\$345m**



*Investment in arts and entertainment industry
=
Direct driver of economic activity, jobs and
cultural tourism recovery*

What's needed to restart and rebuild ...

Workers

- **Extend JobKeeper for an additional 6 months** (Oct 2020 – Mar 2021) – for those businesses that continue to be impacted by COVID-19 during reactivation phase
- **Guarantee a 6 month phase out period for JobKeeper** (Apr – Sept 2021) once venues are open and as productions/events reactivate, allowing the industry to move to increased operational capacity
- **Extend JobSeeker for an additional 6 months** – for those (e.g. freelancers, casuals) who can demonstrate they are unemployed because of loss of industry work due to COVID-19

Investment (\$170m)

- **Business Reactivation Fund (\$90m)** (July 2020 – Dec 2021) – to enable businesses to create jobs and to:
 - **(\$50m)** invest capital to restart and market productions and tours (theatre producers, music and multi-art form festivals, promoters)
 - **(\$10m)** ensure supply chain viability through service providers (e.g. crewing companies and production houses)
 - **(\$10m)** ensure COVID safe compliance (e.g. staff training, WHS measures and tools, hand sanitising stations, etc)
 - **(\$20m)** Australian Music Recovery Fund to catalyse Australian music nationally and ensure sustainability of venues and music businesses
- **Community Engagement Fund (\$25m)** (Oct 2020 – June 2021) – support regional venues to engage local communities and bring patrons back to their venues – including development and/or restaging work, marketing support and a guarantee against loss for key tours
- **Tax incentives** (from 1 July 2021) – extend tax incentives to pre-production costs for live productions (commercial theatre and subsidised companies) and live music venues
- **Arts and Entertainment Loan Scheme (2 years)** – Low interest loans to enable co-investment in commercial product (e.g. musicals, theatre, music festivals, service providers)
- **Waive subclass 408 (entertainment activities) visa fees (\$5m) for 24 months** after international travel bans are lifted
- **Events Contingency Reserve (\$50m)** – emergency support funding if venues are closed and productions/festivals are cancelled/postponed due to another outbreak of COVID-19

Innovation (\$30m)

- **Digital Innovation Fund (\$20m)** (2 years) – funding to support creation of digital content, drive new business opportunities (marketing, education programs linked to school curricula) and extend audience reach (e.g. education programs, regional, people with disability, etc); First Nations digital platform
- **Technology Innovation Fund (\$10m)** (6 months) – to enable companies to develop and implement new COVIDSafe technology solutions and business practices (e.g. reconfiguring ticketing systems)

Australia Council (\$70m)

- **Business stabilisation and recovery grant (\$20m)** – capital grants for business continuity and recovery
- **Reserves incentive scheme (\$30m)** – matched funding; support rebuilding and future resilience of major performing arts companies
- **Extend Resilience Fund (\$10m)** – for small to medium companies, groups and individual artists to create work and jobs
- **Sector Development Fund (\$10m)** – for content creation, audience development, capacity building

Consumers (\$75m)

- **Marketing campaign (\$15m)** – launch a national marketing campaign to give consumers confidence to attend live events; part of broader Cultural Tourism Strategy
- **'See It Live' e-voucher (\$55m)** (Sept 2020 – June 2021) – e-vouchers to stimulate Australians to attend live events
- **'See it Live' international travel incentive program (\$5m)** (Jan 2021 – June 2022) – entertainment vouchers to attract international visitors to attend live events in Australia