




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Arts Sector, Support

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.06 am): Queensland's vaccine plan to unite families is well underway, and with our state now at over 80 per cent first-dose vaccination, we are continuing our support for the arts sector, which has been heavily impacted by the effects of COVID-19. Live music venues, festivals and arts workers were some of the first to feel the impact of necessary restrictions, which is why early in the pandemic the Palaszczuk government committed to a \$22.5 million Arts and Cultural Recovery Package and why we continue to invest in the arts.

Today, I am delighted to announce that round 3 of our Live Music Support Fund will open, supporting music venues to offset operating costs, programming and artist fees. A further \$7 million was allocated in this year's state budget to specifically support live music venues, and we are getting on with the job of delivering that much needed funding to the sector.

Last week in Toowoomba I visited the Met Hotel which received funding as part of round 1 and 2 and heard firsthand from the Met's owners, Kosta and Jasmine, about how vital that support has been for their business. Of course, the most important thing people can do to support live music venues right now is get vaccinated. We want to see full venues again and bumper crowds at festivals. The best way to ensure that happens is for everyone who loves live music and wants to support the sector to be double vaxxed.

I am also pleased to announce that applications will open today for the brand new Independent Creation Fund to create jobs and employment opportunities for artists and arts workers. This fund will provide grants of up to \$40,000 to support employment of independent artists, designers, technicians and other arts workers for a period of up to 12 months. This latest fund is another example of our practical approach to supporting the arts sector to keep people in work. I am also pleased to advise that applications are open today for the Sustain Recovery Fund 2021-22, another initiative of the \$22.5 million Arts and Cultural Recovery Package. This fund will support signature Queensland arts and cultural tourism events and festivals impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, program cancellations and access to interstate audiences.

Finally, I am pleased to inform the House that earlier this week at the launch of Opera Queensland's 2022 season I announced an additional \$500,000 investment from the Queensland government which will support the 2022 Festival of Outback Opera at Winton, Longreach, Barcaldine, Blackall and Windorah. The funding will also support a brand new mainstage production of *The Sopranos*—a newly commissioned work by leading Queensland based writer Sarah Holland-Batt—which will be presented at QPAC and then tour regionally. This new commission will provide employment to around 90 Queensland based artists and arts workers, featuring a large cast and chorus.

Next year's Festival of Outback Opera builds on the achievements of the inaugural 2021 festival where almost \$300,000 was injected into regional economies. The arts contributes some \$8.5 billion into the state's economy each year and supports more than 92,000 jobs for Queenslanders. The funding announced here today will further support this important sector in Queensland's road to economic recovery.