



**THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP**  
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

**MEDIA RELEASE**

20 May 2020

**Funding boost for regional touring to assist hard hit communities**

The Morrison Government has today announced more than \$1.76 million to support a program of cultural and creative tours through the Playing Australia, Contemporary Music Touring Program and Contemporary Touring Initiative.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said as health advice allows Australia to start easing social distancing measures in place to deal with COVID-19, these creative and cultural tours will be a welcome boost for the arts sector and local economies on the road to recovery.

“There’s no doubt the arts sector has been hit by the impact of the coronavirus and this funding will assist performing and visual artists to share their works across 181 unique locations to reach audiences across all Australian states and territories, also helping support local businesses and tourism,” said Minister Fletcher.

The Morrison Government’s arts policies are delivering creative content and cultural experiences that reflect our rich and diverse history, culture and identity, for the benefit of all Australians. The touring program investment will support tours spanning music, theatre, visual arts and dance.

**Playing Australia**

**\$1,167,654** in funding will support 10 organisations to tour across all states and territories, including 84 regional and rural locations. Successful initiatives include Hit Production’s *Isaiah Live*, Regional Arts Victoria’s double bill *Stardust* and *The Mission*, and the Australian Theatre for Young People’s *Follow Me Home*.

**Contemporary Music Touring Program**

**\$335,389** will fund 17 groups of artists to perform at metropolitan and regional locations across the country, including more than 110 regional and remote towns, featuring country, folk, Indigenous, jazz, pop, rock and children’s music. Funding recipients include Tralala Blip’s *Eat My Codes If Your Light Falls Tour*, a differently abled electronic pop band from Northern NSW who will tour to locations including Wagga Wagga, Bermagui and Gunnedah.

**Contemporary Touring Initiative**

**\$257,861** in funding will provide three contemporary visual artists the opportunity to tour their exhibitions to 17 regional centres as well as cities including Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart. The funding will enable the Museum and Galleries NSW’s *Centre of the Centre*, a major new commission

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by internationally recognised Australian artist Mel O’Callaghan, to visit nine galleries and art centres across five states from 2021-23.

“The Playing Australia, Contemporary Music Touring Program and Contemporary Touring Initiative programs will showcase the incredible variety of Australia’s creative and cultural sector, providing rich and diverse experiences across Australia,” Minister Fletcher said.

“Playing Australia tours will include performances that feature First Nations artists, shows for children and young adults, and initiatives which explore important social issues, while the Contemporary Touring Initiative’s funding for Mel O’Callaghan’s *Centre of the Centre* is a great example of a rare opportunity for regional communities to connect with internationally acclaimed work by a pre-eminent Australian artist.

“I’m particularly pleased to see that the Contemporary Music Touring Program will enable Tralala Blip to stage special benefit shows in regional areas affected by the devastating bushfires earlier this year.”

Each organisation receiving funding will work with the Australia Council on the timing and delivery of their tours in line with COVID-19 health and safety measures.

Through record investment in the creative and cultural sector, the Morrison Government supports a \$112 billion industry that employs more than 600,000 Australians and supports social cohesion, mutual understanding and stronger communities.

For the full list of recipients and more information visit: [www.australiacouncil.gov.au/funding](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/funding)

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