



AFA ANNOUNCES NEW BOARD TO LEAD RECOVERY OF \$2.7BN FESTIVAL SECTOR



AUSTRALIAN FESTIVAL
ASSOCIATION

The members of the Australian Festival Association (AFA) are excited to reveal its new board members.

The ten-strong board of industry heavyweights include the re-election of founding members **Adelle Robinson** (MD of Fuzzy Operations), **Danny Rogers** (Director, Laneway Festival) and **Jessica Ducrou** (Co-CEO, Secret Sounds) who will join **Christopher Reid** (Partner, Ernst & Young), **Denis Sheahan** (Director, DESM), **Diane Sneddon** (Port Phillip Council), **Jacqui Elmas** (In-house Counsel, Chugg Entertainment), **Kat Dopper** (Director, Heaps Gay), **Kathryn Holloway** (General Manager, Cattleyard) and **Zack Alcott** (Director, Get Skilled Access).

The new board will hit the ground running to help rebuild Australia's \$2.7 billion festival industry, following the devastation caused by COVID-19 and prior to that, the 2019 bushfires and ongoing regulatory disruption. The impact of the virus has been far-reaching, seeing an 86% decline in output and leaving the majority of the 10,000 FTE workers without income.

Representing members in each state and territory across promoters, venues, suppliers and sole traders, the AFA is dedicated to lead and rebuild the festival industry into a new era. The AFA is taking action by utilising this time as an opportunity to restart and recharge while capitalising on Australia's strong position of recovery.

AFA's General Manager, **Julia Robinson**, states: *"The election of this new board by our members shows a commitment to the future of festivals, as well as embracing the idea of "restarting right". That begins with; always considering our role in acknowledging First Nations people, ensuring equity for minority groups and ensuring a sustainable future of the industry – both environmentally and for the longevity of the industry. We are confident in delivering COVIDSafe festivals that meet these objectives, while helping Australia's local tourism and wider economy recover. I am excited to work with such an amazing board".*

Re-elected board member, **Adelle Robinson** shares: *"I am very excited to be serving another term on the newly formed and expanded AFA committee. Never has there been a time so precarious for our industry but I am hopeful that the team promoters and industry players on the new committee will help lead festivals out of the COVID pause and into a safer, more vibrant and diverse playing field."*

Newly-elected board members share the following:

Christopher Reid, Partner, Ernst & Young: *"As a passionate music fan and lover of music festivals, I am humbled to be elected to the Board of the Australian Festivals Association. At such an important time for the industry, I look forward to supporting the Association and bringing an independent, complimentary skill set to those members embedded in the festival industry".*

Diane Sneddon, Port Phillip Council: *"I am very excited to have been appointed on the board of the Australian Festival Association. It will be great to work with a range of people including producers and promoters to ensure this industry is not overlooked post COVID. We cannot forget how important this industry is to support arts, creativity and culture in our community."*

Kat Dopfer, Director, Heaps Gay: *"I'm honoured to be joining this Board of elected industry legends! There is no doubt that the arts and entertainment industry, including our festivals, must be re-imagined in order to survive following a period of complex over-regulation, a global pandemic and increasing social division and hardship. From my experience working on grass-roots events with diverse communities, I've seen first-hand the power of great festivals and events to create positive change. Collectively, we can steer the direction of an industry that may be more important than ever before for unifying people, bringing communities together, and celebrating the diversity that makes us exceptional."*

Kathryn Holloway, General Manager, Cattleyard: *"I'm honoured to be working alongside a passionate, diverse and dedicated team of industry professionals. The AFA is a progressive organisation who collectively will help make a positive impact on an industry that brings happiness to many people around Australia through shared live experiences. Being part of the collective effort to bring festivals back to life for young people and the communities of regional Australia is something I'm really excited to be part of. Festivals and events are so important to so many people around Australia. They bring people together, provide a space for shared experiences, celebrate creatives and communities and ensure employment for the thousands of people who put them on."*

The Australian Festival Association is proud to have a 60% non-male identifying committee on the 2020/2021 'line-up' and is excited to begin the work of “*re-starting right*”.

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ABOUT AFA

The Australian Festival Association (AFA) represents the shared interests and importance of the Australian festival industry. The AFA is committed to delivering safe and well-run festivals around Australia by providing a framework for industry operating standards. Our members are committed to ensuring the ongoing viability of festivals as thriving businesses, significant municipal events and sites of global cultural exchange in the interest of all Australians.



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