

2023 IN REVIEW

# MUSICNSW

CONNECTING AND EMPOWERING ARTISTS AND INDUSTRY

Sister Cities Tour,  
The Royal Hotel, Dungog, Mandy Hawkes  
Photo by Swamp House Photography

## CHAIR'S REPORT



The past year has been a time of great transformation and growth for MusicNSW, with a rapidly shifting government policy environment driven by a strong and ambitious government agenda for music in the state. This has seen the establishment of Sound NSW, a dedicated office within the NSW state government for the development of contemporary music in NSW, led by our outgoing Managing Director, Emily Collins. This proves that MusicNSW is a capacity building organisation which not only develops musicians and allied industry workers but operates as a development ground for future leaders in the music and arts sector. I want to express my deep thanks to Emily Collins for her exemplary service in leading MusicNSW for the past 8 years and achieving so much over that time. She left MusicNSW in an outstanding position as a major player in the advocacy and service space during what has been a tumultuous time for music in the wake of the pandemic. On behalf of the board and staff, I would like to applaud her achievements and we look forward to working with her in her new role.

The departure of Emily Collins prompted a wide search for a new Managing Director who could lead the organisation in its next phase of development. In November we were delighted to announce the appointment of Joe Muller. Joe has an outstanding track record in a variety of roles in the music industry, most recently as a music curator for prominent festivals such as VIVID Sydney and Queensland

Music Festival alongside roles in artist management and venue programming. Joe brings a formidable skill set to MusicNSW. He has done an outstanding job of stepping into a leadership position during a period of rapid growth and transformation, with an expanding staffing profile across regional and First Nations focus areas. I would like to extend my thanks to Joe for his professionalism and agility in handling the role at this important time in the organisation's development. I have no doubt that Joe will lead MusicNSW into a dynamic and highly impactful future.

Given MusicNSW's growing turnover and a need to bolster our risk management processes we have been operating quarterly finance sub-committee meetings throughout the year to ensure we are not only tracking our budget targets, but maximising opportunities and impact through our budget provisions. In other areas of our operation, we have conducted periodic reviews of our policies and contract provisions to ensure they meet our legal obligations and provide appropriate support to our staff. On behalf of the board, I would like to thank all MusicNSW staff for their hard work in delivering an outstanding set of outcomes for the year. I would also like to thank our board for the significant time they donate to ensure the organisation achieves its aims.

**Professor Julian Knowles**  
**Chair**

## MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Amidst an accelerated period of global sector change, 2023 saw MusicNSW continue our ongoing support for the NSW music industry's diverse range of artists, workers, businesses and audiences, through the delivery of a suite of programs and resources partnered with advocacy and strategic development aimed to empower and connect.

Our work is made possible through the ongoing investment of Create NSW whose multi-year and project funding investments allow MusicNSW to strive for a diverse and thriving sector. We would like to thank Create NSW and the NSW State Government along with APRA AMCOS and the Regional Arts Development Organisations Arts North West and Arts Northern Rivers who each also contribute funding that sustains our work.

I would like to extend immense gratitude and respect to my predecessor Emily Collins, who left MusicNSW in 2023 after 8 years of incredible custodianship. Emily's leadership is an inspiration to so many in our sector and her legacy illuminates every page of this report. Thank you Emily, these are gigantic shoes you've left under the desk.

In 2023, MusicNSW was instrumental in driving the Vote Music campaign, which resulted in a \$103m investment from the Minns government to the contemporary music sector and the establishment of Sound NSW. 2023 also

saw the establishment of a team of five regional music coordinators, industry experts strategically positioned in communities across the state. It saw the expansion of the work of First Nations Coordinator Kaleena Smith, with an incredible suite of First Nations resources launched with significant impact. And saw the ongoing delivery of our Sound Advice series, providing best practice advice and resources for early and mid career artists and industry.

Our advocate voice continued to contribute to meaningful sector change and we consulted with and participated in the Office of the 24-Hr Economy Commissioner's 24-Hr Economy Advisory Group, the NSW Government's Music Festivals Roundtable, City of Sydney's Cultural and Sector Advisory Panel, the Great Southern Nights Advisory Committee and more.

As we look to the future, MusicNSW continues to ask - how great can we be? What are the evolving needs of artists, industry and audiences and how can we, as a sector, undertake the structural change required to empower and support them? We will continue to strive for a safe, inclusive and thriving industry, valued for its economic, cultural and social contributions to NSW.

**Joe Muller**  
**Managing Director**

MusicNSW acknowledges First Nations peoples across the state and acknowledges that sovereignty has never been ceded. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and extend those respects to the First Nations peoples across the state and beyond. Always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

Artwork by Kaleena Smith



## 2023 ACHIEVEMENTS



**471**

Activities and events delivered



**3,164**

Attendees at events



**123**

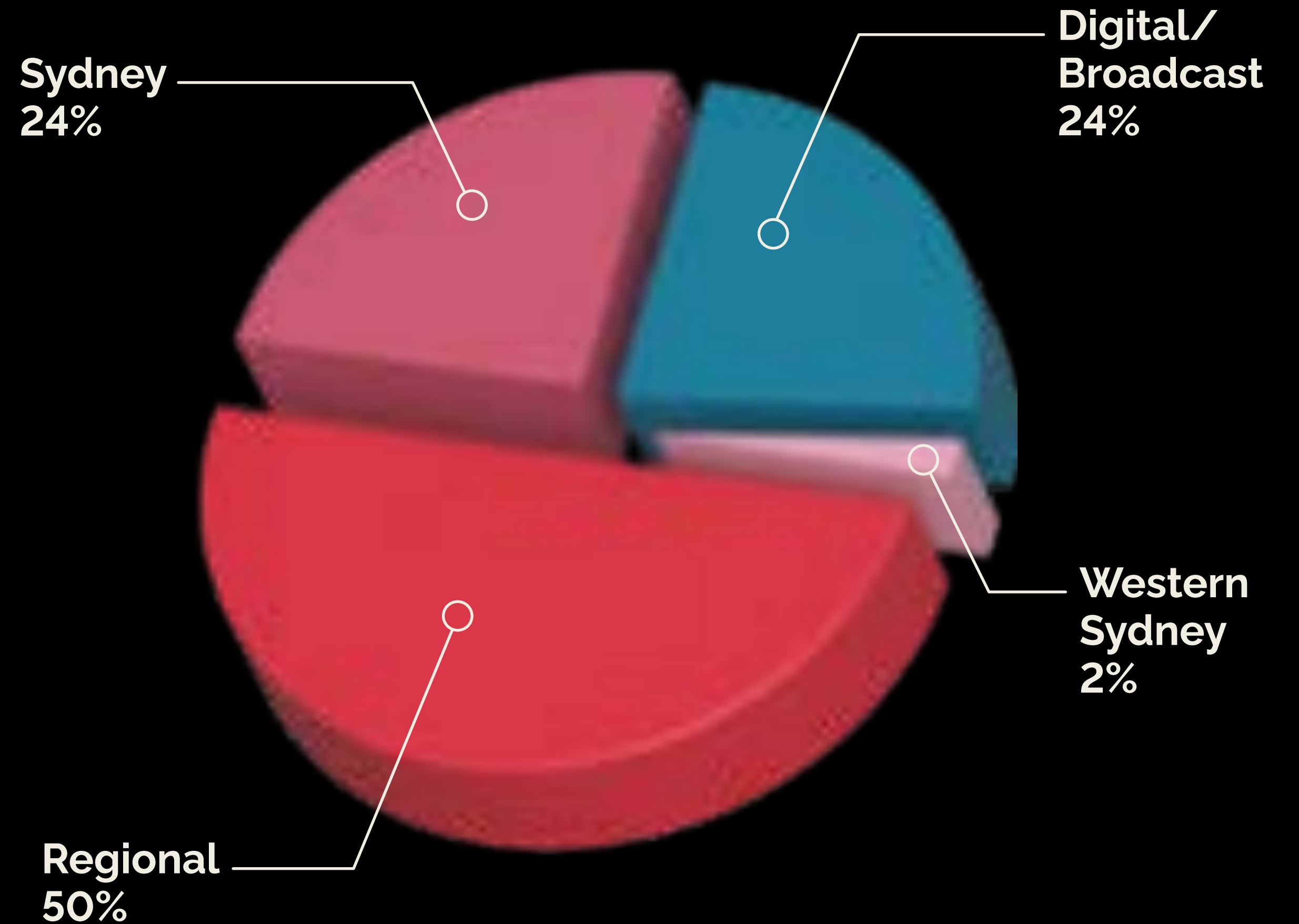
Artists and industry speakers



**18%**

Activities engaged with First Nations people

## BREAKDOWN OF ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION BY LOCATION



## CONTENTS

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Sister Cities Tour, Fitzroy Lee Feat Fluxa, Bellingen Brewery, Photo by Samson Catling

MUSICNSW PRESENTS

# SOUND ADVICE



L-R: Slaying Streaming, AIM Sydney, Photo by GabrielleMary Photography (photos 1 & 2)  
| Collab in the AI Era, AIM Sydney, Photo by Georgia Griffith (photo 3)

Sound Advice is a professional development series focused on connecting emerging artists to industry professionals and industry best practice through free panels, talks, masterclasses and one-on-one support.



L-R: Collab in the AI Era, AIM Sydney Photo by Georgia Griffith | Slaying Streaming, AIM Sydney, Photo by GabrielleMary Photography | Build A Brand Your Fans Will Love, Crown Hotel Parramatta, Photo by Chris Frape | Green Your Music, Ace Hotel Sydney, Photo by Georgia Griffith



**EVENTS PROGRAM**

In 2023, Sound Advice included seven events focused on topics spanning audience building, sustainability, tech and finance. 20 artists and industry professionals were featured as speakers and the series had an audience of over 400. The program included:

**Collab in the AI Era**

A discussion with two collaborators - Daniel Stricker (The Deep Faith / Siberia Records / Midnight Juggernauts) and Serwah Attafuah (artist) - who work with NFTs and AI tools to release music and create multidisciplinary works. Hosted by Kartini Ludwig (Kopi Su).

**Slaying Streaming**

Presented in partnership with the ARIA Awards, Elise Naismith (Lemon Tree Music), Rochelle Flack (TikTok Music) and Mardi Caught (The Annex) shared tips and tricks on setting up digital releases for success.

**Green Your Music**

Emma Bosworth (Green Music Australia) presented info on music's environmental footprint and how decisions about gigs, tours and transport, merch, packaging and waste all have an impact, along with tips for attendees on how to be more sustainable and contribute to cultural change in the industry. A checklist guide to improving sustainability practices was also published on the MusicNSW website.

**Build A Brand Your Fans Will Love**

Ricky Simandjuntak (Artist Manager for ONEFOUR) curated and presented a discussion on the importance of fan-first branding, sharing how to build a fanbase based on trust. Panellists included Clare Holland (Head of Culture, Red Bull) and Alexander Franco (Sony Music Australia A&R & Artist Manager, Everything Nice).

L-R: Green Your Music, Ace Hotel Sydney, Photo by Georgia Griffith | Build A Brand Your Fans Will Love, Crown Hotel Parramatta, Photo by Chris Frape | Green Your Music, Ace Hotel Sydney, Photo by Georgia Griffith



**Are You Being Ripped Off? (online)**  
After superannuation laws changed in 2022, accounting expert Emma Brophy (Generate) shared an update to help sole traders in the music industry and businesses working with contractors understand their rights and obligations. An infographic guide to understanding superannuation was also published on the MusicNSW website.

**Sync Brief Basics (online)**  
Music Supervisors Jen Taunton (Midnight Choir, Level Two Music) and Kevin Call (Midnight Choir) shared the basics of sync, from what is a sync deal to accessing the sync world as well as dos and don'ts when responding to briefs to give attendees the best chance at a sync licensing deal.

**ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORT**  
**Grant Writing One-on-Ones**  
Through Sound Advice, the MusicNSW team also supported 80 artists and industry via one-on-one sessions focused on grant writing, from figuring out which grants are best for a project through to understanding what funding bodies are looking for in an application, and how to put together a strong case for support. This included support for 27 First Nations artists and industry.



# FIRST NATIONS MUSIC DEVELOPMENT



L-R: Artwork by Kaleena Smith  
Sister Cities Tour, Bellingen Brewery,  
PRODIKAL-1 | Photo by Samson Catling

## CALLING FIRST NATIONS MUSICIANS

There's new tools to help you make your music dreams come true.

### NAVIGATE THE INDUSTRY USING OUR:

- Artist guide to starting out
- Grant writing checklist
- First Nations music business directory
- How to write a bio
- & more...

Find them at [musicnsw.com/firstnations](https://musicnsw.com/firstnations)



**KALEENA SMITH**

FIRST NATIONS DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR, MUSICNSW & ARTIST

## FIRST NATIONS MUSICNSW

Since 2022, MusicNSW, led by First Nations Development Coordinator Kaleena Smith, has been:

- Supporting NSW-based First Nations creatives and connecting them to opportunities and resources to help build and sustain their music careers
- Consulting with First Nations-led organisations, industry bodies and artists to understand challenges and identify opportunities for growth

In 2023, this included the development of ten resources in consultation with First Nations organisations and artists to provide First Nations artists and industry with easy-to-use guides, checklists and templates.

These resources were launched in December 2023 in a dedicated hub on the MusicNSW website:

1. Starting Out: The Artist Guide
2. Music Business Directory
3. Grant Writing Checklist
4. Marketing & Publicity Guide
5. Electronic Press Kit (EPK) Essentials
6. How to Write a Bio
7. Getting Played on Radio
8. Template: Submitting Your Track to Radio
9. Invoice Guide
10. Royalties Explainer

Our partners included Koori Radio, 33 Creative, Awesome Black and the APRA AMCOS National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Music Office. The resources were launched

in December 2023 in a dedicated hub on the MusicNSW website.

These resources represent a significant stride towards providing tailored support for First Nations artists. Consultations with First Nations artists and industry also identified the need for MusicNSW's ongoing investment in professional development to support future empowerment of First Nations artists, which has shaped our 2024 program.

In 2023, MusicNSW's brand was expanded to include a First Nations identity to be used across all program content. The First Nations MusicNSW logo was designed by Kaleena Smith and inspired by connection and memories of culture and country.

A group of people are dancing at a social event. The scene is dimly lit with warm, orange and red lighting. In the foreground, a woman in a patterned, long-sleeved top is dancing. Behind her, several other people are visible, some with their arms raised, suggesting a lively atmosphere. The background shows a doorway and more people in the distance.

# REGIONAL MUSIC DEVELOPMENT



In 2023, MusicNSW established a team of five regionally-based staff to increase contemporary music touring activity in regional NSW, gather local information and expand the reach of MusicNSW across the state. The team is focused on growing the knowledge and skills of artists and industry workers in regional areas and supporting access to professional development, funding support and music industry networks.

In 2023, MusicNSW:

**Shared industry expertise on regional touring**

Through six professional development workshops delivered as part of the Sound Advice program, 300 emerging artists and industry accessed insights from experts across a range of aspects of touring:

1. Are You Ready? with Katie Rynne (Village Sounds)
2. Fine Tune Your Finances with Daniel Radburn & Mark Bawden (Rad Music)
3. Planning Essentials with Loren Ryan (2023 Toyota Star Maker Winner), Raechael Witchurch (Sure Thing Agency), Tom Gordon (Mary's, Planet Shhhh)
4. Find Your Fans with Cooper Parsons (Comes With Fries)
5. Publicity Playbook with Rhiannon Cook (Positive Feedback)
6. Tamworth, Let's Talk Touring at Tamworth Country Music Festival with artists Alison Forbes, Andy Golledge and Joey Leigh Wagtail, and Cheryl Brown (Country Capital News, Toyota Starmaker)

The series also produced resources including templates for tour budgeting and marketing plans.

**Met with over 300 regional artists and industry**

230+ one-on-one meetings helped break down barriers for regional artists to access resources like professional development workshops, best practice guides, and grant application support. Another 70 people attended casual industry meet-ups held by the Regional Coordinator in their area.

L-R: Tanuki Band, The Citadel, Murwillumbah, Photo by Dom Sullivan  
Yt DiNGO, Bellingen Brewery, Bellingen, Photo by Samson Catling



### **Collaborated with Regional Arts NSW and Regional Arts Development Organisations across the state**

Through the establishment of its regionally-based team, MusicNSW has developed partnerships with Regional Arts NSW and 15 Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs) across NSW. This has allowed both parties to amplify their work through each other's networks, and increased contemporary music industry development broadly. This included partnering on events including local industry mixers, Tamworth Country Music Festival, South Coast Arts Workshop and Orana Arts STUDIOCO!LAB talks. Arts North West and Arts Northern Rivers each have partnered closely with Regional Manager Dave Burgener to drive additional sector engagement in their regions.

### **Connected online with a growing regional NSW music community**

Each region has its own Facebook Group, providing the local music industry community the opportunity to connect, share information and receive updates from their Regional Coordinator. In 2023, these groups grew by 41%.

### **Celebrated music made by artists in regional NSW**

Through:

- Eight regional Spotify playlists showcasing more than 123 new releases from regional NSW acts
- ARIA YouTube playlist showcasing 34 artists from regional NSW



L-R: YT Dingo, Brunswick Picture House, Photo by Dom Sullivan  
 YT Dingo | Brunswick Picture House, Photo by Dom Sullivan  
 Fitzroy Lee Feat Fluxa, Brunswick Picture House, Photo by Dom Sullivan  
 Andy Nelson, Reckless Brewing Co, Bathurst, Photo by Hannah Grogan  
 Caliko, Tukka Cafe Moruya, Photo by Layla Mansour-Coppel



**Supported 16 regional acts to tour regional NSW**  
 From Brunswick Heads to Bermagui, 54 artists took part in five tours spanning genres from hip hop to alt country, folk and soul. The tours supported emerging artists to build knowledge, skills and networks around touring, promoted venues and new touring routes across the state and brought new contemporary music to regional audiences. A strong response to the initial EOI process indicates a strong desire for performance opportunities in the regions.



Robyn Martin, Bermagui Country Club,  
Photo by Layla Mansour-Coppel



“I’ve made friends for life in the other performers, I’ve booked a follow-up gig at a venue I’ve been trying to get into all year, I’ve become aware of new venues and had further performance opportunities open up to me through that. Spending time with the other artists has been creatively inspiring and we have discussed many practical and creative things. I am sure we will be supporting each other and sharing resources, networks and more fun adventures for a long time into the future.”

- Robyn Martin, artist participant on 2023 Sister Cities tour program



**Expanded the Regional Touring Network (RTN)**

The Regional Touring Network is a powerful, free map-based tool that spotlights almost 200 venues in regional areas and allows artists, managers and agents to easily plan their way through regional NSW. It offers easy-to-use mapping and route-building where users can access detailed venue information, including contact and booking details, capacity and accessibility info, and technical specifications – everything needed to take the stress and guesswork out of touring to new locations. 16 new venues were added in 2023.



# ADVOCACY



Vote Music Campaign Launch, Pleasure Playhouse, Photo by Ravyna Jassani

In the lead up to the State Election in March 2023, MusicNSW partnered with VibeLab to lead landmark industry consultation to develop a comprehensive plan for music development and campaign for a \$100m commitment from all parties and candidates.

A public facing campaign was launched in January 2023, which was shared across the socials of numerous high profile artists as well as music organisations, resulting in 9M+ campaign reach the week prior to the NSW election.

The Vote Music plan was supported in full by NSW Labor and backed up with a \$103m commitment ahead of the election. This is almost three times the largest ever pledge to music on a state level, and the largest

investment ever in contemporary music in Australia. The Vote Music campaign was backed by over 30 music industry organisations and leaders and the policy paper outlined the NSW music community's vision for a better NSW - one that celebrates, supports and invests in its music, artists and culture - and outlines a clear path to ensuring NSW is the premier music destination in Australia. Find out more at [www.votemusic.com.au](http://www.votemusic.com.au)

Since NSW Labor formed government and The Hon. John Graham, MLC became Minister for the Arts and Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, key actions from the Vote Music plan have been progressed, including the establishment of Sound NSW as a dedicated contemporary music office within Create NSW. Further, in late 2023, regulatory reform updating and simplifying regulation around noise, planning and liquor licensing was streamlined, updated and simplified to support venues in NSW hosting entertainment, especially at night.

In order to contribute to industry development and government consultation, MusicNSW also participates in a range of events, panels, committees, working groups and industry discussions. In 2023 this included:

- Vote Music campaign launch
- Office of the 24 Hour Economy Commissioner's Advisory Group
- Great Southern Nights Advisory Committee
- NSW Government's Music Festival Roundtable
- Green Music Australia's Green Action Plan program
- APRA AMCOS Professional Development awards judging panel
- Association of Artist Managers (AAM) Australia awards judging panel
- City Of Sydney's Cultural and Creative Sector Advisory Panel
- Northern Rivers Creative Sector Research Project Working Group
- Regional Arts NSW members meeting
- SXSW Sydney
- BIGSOUND
- 24 Hour Nation's Sydney Unlocked
- NEON Night Time Economy Arts and Culture forum
- Wollongong Night Time Economy forum
- Bondi Lines
- Abbey Road Institute forum
- APRA AMCOS Connects
- FBi Radio Open Day

PARTNERS



APRA  
AMCOS

ARTS  
NORTHERN  
RIVERS

Arts  
north  
west

COLLABORATORS



4ESYDNEY  
THE HOME OF HIPHOP



ARIA



AWESOME  
BLACK



vibelab

## SPEAKERS

Alexander Franco | Sony Music Australia / Everything Nice  
Alison Forbes | artist  
Andy Golledge | artist  
Cheryl Brown | Country Capital News / Toyota Starmaker  
Clare Holland | Red Bull  
Cooper Parsons | Comes With Fries  
Daniel Radburn | Rad Music  
Daniel Stricker | The Deep Faith / Siberia Records / Midnight Juggernauts  
David James | Universal Music  
Elise Naismith | Lemon Tree Music  
Emma Bosworth | Green Music Australia  
Emma Brophy | Generate  
Fiona McAuliffe | ABC Music  
Jane Slingo | Electronic Music Conference  
Jen Taunton | Midnight Choir / Level Two Music  
Joey Leigh Wagtail | artist  
Julia Maree-Herbert | Universal Music  
Kartini Ludwig | Kopi Su  
Katie Rynne | Village Sounds  
Kevin Call | Midnight Choir  
Loren Ryan | artist  
Mardi Caught | The Annex  
Mark Bawden | Rad Music  
Raechael Whitchurch | Sure Thing Agency  
Rhiannon Cook | Positive Feedback  
Ricky Simandjuntak | When Worlds Collide  
Rochelle Flack | TikTok Music  
Serwah Attafuah | artist  
Tom Gordon | Mary's Group / Planet Shhhh

## OUR BOARD



Julian Knowles  
Chair



Kathryn Holloway  
Deputy Chair



Kristy Wilson  
Treasurer



Joe Muller  
Secretary



Emily Nicol



Jane Slingo



Vic McEwan

## OUR STAFF



Joe Muller  
Managing Director



Laura Murdoch  
Operations  
Manager



Helen Henry  
Community &  
Digital Strategist



Kaleena Smith  
First Nations  
Development  
Coordinator



Dave Burgener  
Regional Manager



Ali Buckley  
Regional  
Coordinator



Sophie Jones  
Regional  
Coordinator



Kayne Mills  
Regional  
Coordinator



Sam Rees  
Regional  
Coordinator

# MUSICNSW

Lucky Day  
Muswellbrook RSL, Muswellbrook  
Photo by Dom Sullivan