



**2025-2026 Pre-Budget
Submission**

January 2025

The Push is an Australian youth music organisation and registered charity.

Over three decades we have supported millions of young people with access to contemporary music programs and events - fostering a pipeline for young people into the contemporary music sector as artists, audiences and industry practitioners.

Our work is guided by our purpose to give every young person the opportunity to participate and thrive in Australian music.

The Push is seeking investment of \$6.8m over four years to establish a national All-Ages Events Teams program - providing outer-suburban and regional young people with local and affordable live music experiences, performance and career development opportunities.

All-Ages Events Teams will provide safe and accessible opportunities for young people to build connections and interact with their local communities.

Based upon the Victorian FReeZA program model, the introduction of new national All-Ages Events Teams will provide grants of up to \$50,000 to 25 outer-suburban and regional LGAs to support teams of young people to lead the planning, development and delivery of music events in their local communities.

As a part of the All-Ages Events Teams program, The Push will also deliver a national support service providing industry advice, training packages, worker onboarding, best practice resources, professional development webinars and networking opportunities. This program model has a proven track record of being impactful and cost-effective.

This initiative would reach more than 120,000 young Australians, create an estimated 1,200 employment opportunities at a cost of up to \$6.8 million over four years.

Background

Music plays a vital role in the daily lives of young Australians.¹ Participation in music at any level can be the defining moment in a young person's life. It helps young people shape their identity and establish lifelong relationships. Attending a live music performance can provide feelings of social connectedness, commonality and belonging, and collective understanding.²

Research from 2023 has revealed that young people across Australia are becoming lonelier and experiencing more psychological distress.³ This follows the 2022 National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing which demonstrates, there has been a significant increase in the rate of mental ill-health amongst young people.⁴ There is a mounting body of evidence highlighting the powerful health, social and educational benefits participation in music generate.⁵

We know that young people who participate in music programs are more likely to be in good health, go on to further education, volunteer and be part of their local communities.⁶

While this is understood, access to live music events is not a reality for all young people in Australia. There are fewer events in regional and outer-suburban areas, many events come with unaffordable ticket prices, and rarely are live music events staged for underage audiences or designed to be accessible and culturally safe.

Over the last decade there has been a steady decline in the number of all-ages live music events staged across the country, as well as a decline in attendance by young people at music festivals in general. Research reveals that young people aged 18-24 are purchasing fewer tickets to music festivals, decreasing from 41% of ticket buyers in 18/19, to 27% in 22/23.⁷

¹ Australia Council for the Arts. *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Arts Participation Survey* [Internet]. Canberra: Australia Council for the Arts, 2020 [cited 2022 August 20]. Available from <https://australiacouncil.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Creating-Our-Future-Results-of-the-National-Arts-Participation-Survey-PDF.pdf>

² Perkins, R., Mason-Bertrand, A., Tymoszuk, U. et al. Arts engagement supports social connectedness in adulthood: findings from the HEartS Survey. *BMC Public Health* 21, 1208 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11233-6>.

³ Murray, A. (2020). HILDA Survey. [online] Melbourne Institute. Available at: <https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/hilda>.

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023). National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing. [online] Australian Bureau of Statistics. Available at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/mental-health/national-study-mental-health-and-wellbeing/latest-release>.

⁵ MacDonald, R.A.R. (2013). Music, health, and well-being: A review. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, 8(1), p.20635. doi: <https://doi.org/10.3402/qhw.v8i0.20635>

⁶ Tait, R., Kail, A., Shea, J., Mcleod, R., Pritchard, N. and Asif, F. (2019). How can we engage more young people in arts and culture? Available at: <https://www.thinknpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Arts-Engagement-Report-2019-web.pdf>.

⁷ Creative Australia. (2024). Soundcheck: Insights into Australia's music festival sector. [online] Available at: <https://creative.gov.au/advocacy-and-research/soundcheck-insights-into-australias-music-festival-sector/#:~:text=Soundcheck%3A%20Insights%20into%20Australia>

In a first of its kind national survey, The Push has found that while a significant proportion of young Australians say attending live music is important to them, rising costs are a major barrier to young peoples' attendance at live music, followed closely by age restrictions and the location of where events are staged.⁸

The Push's 2024 Young Australian Music Audiences report highlighted:

- Two thirds (64%) of young Australians say attending music events is important to them.
- The most common barrier stopping young Australians from attending more live music events is cost, followed by age restrictions and location of where events are staged.
- A significant majority (81%) of young Australians support a national government program for young people to stage music events in their local community.

Aims and Objectives

The All-Ages Events Teams program aims to support young people's participation through leading the planning and delivery of music events in their local communities.

The program model is based on a 'by young people, for young people' approach and is achieved through the establishment and support of a self-determining 'All-Ages Events Team', who take key roles in the delivery of the program. The establishment of the All-Ages Events Team is integral to the program and the successful delivery of events, which also provides important performance opportunities for local young artists.

Measurable outcomes will demonstrate clear social and economic impact through Audience Development (fostering a new generation of Australian live music audiences), Career Pathways (contributing to the resilience and work-readiness of future industry practitioners) and Community Connectedness (providing formative opportunities to contribute and be connected to community and government).

Participants of All-Ages Events Teams and audiences who attended all-ages events as a part of the Victorian FReeZA program in 2023-2024 report clear positive impacts:

- 99% of audience felt safe and welcome at the all-ages event they attended
- 90% of program participants learned new skills and 97% gained new insights or knowledge within a year
- 96% of participants reported feeling that their contribution mattered

⁸ Strong, C. (n.d.). Young Australian Music Audiences. The Push CO-AUTHORED BY The Australia Institute. Available at: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5da3b7b797390948a4b8e7ad/t/6704a38af000eb79af1afac5/1728357274070/20241008-WEB-ThePush-YoungAustralianMusicAudiencesReport-03.pdf>

Program Objectives	Measurable Outcomes	Audience Development	Career Pathways	Community Connectedness
Implement a youth participation approach for engaging young people in the planning and delivery of events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 1,000 young program participants driving the planning and delivery of events for their peers 	✓	✓	✓
Stage a broad range of events that are reflective of young Australians and their local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 120,000+ young people attending music events that are fully supervised, drug, alcohol, vape and smoke-free • Place-based program accessible for all young people, including vulnerable cohorts of young people experiencing additional disadvantage • Young people feel safe and welcome at events in their local communities 	✓		✓
Provide youth development and training activities to develop young people's skills in the contemporary music and event sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased transferable and technical skills to support the successful delivery of All-Ages Events Teams events in their community • Increased rates of volunteering, internship and employment in the music and creative industries • Ongoing performance opportunities at All-Ages Events Teams events to showcase emerging artists 	✓	✓	
Strengthen connections and partnerships with local businesses, schools, training institutions and other youth service providers in the staging of events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established networks and partnerships with other community organisations and businesses in their local community • Increased engagement with and trust of local government, social agencies and social services • Greater acknowledgement for young people's contribution to the cultural life of the local community 	✓	✓	✓

Organisational Capacity

Since 1997, The Push has been a trusted service provider of youth music programs funded by the Victorian Government - most notably the successful delivery of the FReeZA Support Service. Through this program, The Push delivers direct advice and training to 82 youth service providers across Victoria - supporting the staging of all-ages events in metropolitan, outer suburban and regional locations. The Push has supported FReeZA providers to engage with an estimated 3.8 million young people during this time.

Over three decades, The Push has coordinated and implemented dynamic multifaceted programs, delivering successful industry development initiatives that support young people. Over the last two years The Push has expanded its reach nationally, successfully delivering a range of youth music programs and events across the country including the Music Careers Expo in Queensland, South Australia and Victoria, and working with partners such as Queensland Music Festival, Vivid Sydney and triple j's One Night Stand.

Board of Directors

The Push is a not-for-profit registered charity with DGR status, trading as a Company Limited by Guarantee. Governed by a Board of Directors, that oversees the organisation's strategic direction and management, including finances and legal obligations and ensures that The Push achieves its aims and objectives. Our Board of Directors is made up of a maximum of 12 members at any time and the current strategy sets a target of 50% of young board member representation (aged 18 - 25 years) by 2025.

Conflicts of Interest

To ensure The Push's staff, board, volunteers and contractors effectively identify, disclose and manage any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest, The Push has a conflict-of-interest policy that is reviewed annually by our Board. Where any staff, board members, volunteers or contractors share a conflict, the CEO or Board Chairperson will ensure that proper disclosure occurs. The Push has a register of interests and record information related to a conflict of interest (including the nature and extent of the conflict and any steps taken to address it).

Program Budget

The Push is seeking investment from the Federal Government that greatly enhances the engagement of young people in Australian music, with a focus on audience development, career pathways and strengthening community connectedness.

The All-Ages Events Teams program would reach more than 120,000 young Australians, create an estimated 1,200 employment opportunities at a cost of up to \$6.8 million over four years.

		Forward Estimates			
Portfolio Entity	Budget 2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	All years
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	\$1.7m	\$1.7m	\$1.7m	\$1.7m	\$6.8m