

Media Release

The Hon Colin Brooks MP
Minister for Development Victoria
Minister for Precincts
Minister for Creative Industries



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POWERING UP THE VICTORIAN FIRST PEOPLES ART AND DESIGN FAIR

Preparations for the Victorian First Peoples Art and Design Fair is gaining pace with the appointment of two curators and support for eight First Peoples organisations across the state to generate a pipeline of new creative work that will have a starring role at the fair – backed by the Allan Labor Government.

Esteemed First Peoples creative leaders Stacie Piper (Creative Hub Manager) and Jessica Clark (Curatorial Manager) have joined the fair's Senior Project Manager Janina Harding to help bring the new major biennial event to life starting with a showcase event in 2025.

Stacie Piper is a Curator, Djirri Djirri Dancer and Educator, who currently works as a Curator at the State Library Victoria's Victorian Indigenous Research Centre. In 2021 Stacie was lead curator of the Creative Victoria First Peoples visual art program Yalingwa and presented the exhibition *Wilam Biik* at TarraWarra Museum of Art.

Jessica Clark is a proud palawa woman and respected independent curator. Jessica is the current Yalingwa Curator at ACCA, having recently curated exhibitions: *Between Waves*, *From the other side*, and the upcoming *Tennant Creek Brio: Juparnta Ngattu Minjinyapa Iconocrosis*.

Jessica has also curated exhibitions for Experimenta, Benalla Art Gallery and Ballarat International Foto Biennale, among many others.

The Victorian First Peoples Art and Design Fair is an initiative of the Creative Victoria First Peoples Directions Circle, more than just a biennial event, the fair aims to build the market for First Peoples creative work across the state and upskill creators all year round.

To support the First Peoples creative community to develop work in the lead up to the 2025 event, and beyond, eight First Peoples organisations will share in more than \$654,000 from the Creative Spaces and Places program to create new and improved spaces that will enable creatives to develop work and develop their skills.

Mob in Fashion is set to transform their Brunswick fashion studio with an interior fit out, while Djirra in the West will purchase much needed equipment and convert a shed into a functional art making hub for Aboriginal women.

Murran Hub in Geelong will upgrade infrastructure and equipment and Carlton based The Torch will fit out their hub and gallery to include a creative studio, build fit-for-purpose large artwork storage facilities and make improvements to their digital infrastructure.

The Motherless Collective in Collingwood, Baluk Arts in Mount Eliza, In Print Projects in Tyrendarra and Shepparton's Kaiela Arts will purchase new equipment, upgrade their spaces and improve their digital resources.

The Victorian First Peoples Art and Design Fair will launch with a showcase event at Melbourne Art Fair in early 2025. For more information visit creative.vic.gov.au/first-peoples

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks

"The First Peoples Art and Design Fair Showcase will be a celebration of the incredible First Peoples creative community that calls the place we now call Victoria home."

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“We’re thrilled to welcome the team, and so proud to back these impressive First Peoples led organisations to transform their workspaces and give artists the tools they need to make their work that will go on to be featured at the Fair.”

Quotes attributable to Senior Manager, First Peoples Art and Design Fair Janina Harding

“As we gear up for the 2025 Victorian First Peoples Art and Design Fair, we are so happy to have a dream team on board to make it happen. The new and improved spaces will also mean First Peoples artists and designers can come together to create their work, share and connect – and we’re looking forward to having the opportunity to present their amazing work.”

Quotes attributable to First Peoples Directions Circle Chair Vicki Couzens

“The 2025 Victorian First Peoples Art and Design Fair is going to celebrate First Peoples artists and designers from across the state – and it’s the first time we’ve had a showcase like it. We’re excited to see this important initiative make its debut at Melbourne Art Fair, and for it to grow in years to come.”