

EXPR ESSI ON S!

FESTIVAL
2026

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION PACK



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WELCOME TO THE 2026 EXPRESSIONS FESTIVAL

We're thrilled to have you join us for a celebration of youth arts where your voices take the spotlight.

Expressions Festival isn't just a festival; it's an opportunity for your stories, passions, and perspectives to shine. We believe in the power of youth voices to inspire, challenge, and create meaningful change. Through this Festival, we're proud to provide a space where art becomes the vehicle to amplify those voices.

Thank you for being part of this journey. It's your courage and commitment that will make this event truly unforgettable. Let's come together to celebrate the power of community, creation and self-expression.

SEE YOU AT THE FESTIVAL!





FESTIVAL OVERVIEW

The Expressions Festival is a bold and uplifting celebration of youth creativity, taking place on Wednesday 28th October 2026 at the West Gippsland Arts Centre.

This one-day event showcases the artistic voices of young people aged 12 to 25, with every work responding to our powerful 2026 theme:

Step into the Spotlight: What Happens when you try something new?

From the moment you arrive, you'll experience the venue transformed. The Arts Centre foyer will be alive with colour and energy - featuring striking visual artworks and live music by talented young performers. Step into the theatre and be swept away by a dynamic showcase of original plays, short films, music and so much more.

The Expressions Festival isn't just a festival; it's an opportunity for young voices to be heard, a celebration of self-expression, and a chance for the wider community to support the next generation of creatives.

We invite everyone to join us - bring your energy, your applause and your encouragement. Visit the visual arts display, share a kind word with an artist and most importantly, be part of a Festival that proves that arts have the power to connect, uplift and inspire.

Let's celebrate young people for exactly who they are and support them in trying something new!

FESTIVAL THEME

STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TRY SOMETHING NEW?

This year's Expressions Festival invites young artists to take centre stage, spotlighting their hidden talents. Often times there's an expectation to be perfect within the arts, we want to create a space where young people feel comfortable and confident to explore new skills and mediums.

We welcome submissions from all artistic disciplines - whether it's visual art, music, performance, literature, film, fashion, dance, or any other form of creative expression. Each work should respond to the theme and be accompanied by a short artist statement explaining the connection between the work and the idea of "stepping into the spotlight".

This theme encourages young people to step out of their comfort zone. Through this Festival, we aim not only to spotlight the incredible talent and imagination of young creatives but also to foster a culture of belonging, inclusivity, and joy. By trying something new, no matter how big or small, you help create a space where others feel safe and empowered to do the same.



**I HOPE THAT YOUNG PEOPLE
FEEL SAFE AND SUPPORTED
TO TRY SOMETHING NEW!**

**A CASUAL AND
IMMERSIVE VIBE**

**I HOPE WE HELP INSPIRE THE
NEXT GENERATION**

**MAKING THE ARTS
ACCESSIBLE**

YOUNG PRODUCER'S FESTIVAL GOALS

**I HOPE WE CREATE A SENSE
OF COMMUNITY**



**TO CELEBRATE YOUNG
REGIONAL ARTISTS AND
CREATIVES**



**TO CREATE AN EVENT THAT IS
FUN!**

WORKSHOPS

The Expressions Festival invites young people to take part in free creative workshops. These sessions are designed to connect you with industry professionals who can support you in establishing, developing, and refining creative skills, while also providing opportunities to collaborate with other young artists.

Whether you're looking to build your technical skills, explore new idea, or connect with like-minded creatives. These workshops are a valuable part of the festival experience, we encourage you to come along and get involved.

Workshop will be held on Saturday 1st, Sunday 2nd and Saturday 8th of August. Further information regarding workshop times, content and location is available on the next few pages.

Workshops have limited spots available and registration is essential for participation. Registration links are listed on the following workshop pages.

You can also visit: www.wgac.com.au



WORKSHOPS



2-DAY CERAMICS

In this two-day ceramic workshop, young artists will work with Michelle Cann to turn their personal passions and ideas into one-of-a-kind clay tiles: part sculpture, part self-portrait, part keepsake.

MUST ATTEND BOTH SESSIONS
SATURDAY 1ST AUGUST, 1PM - 4PM
SATURDAY 8TH AUGUST, 1PM - 3PM

LOCATION: WGAC, FOYER

More Info & Register:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/LHdniANUNp>

Recommended age: 12 to 16



MUSIC MAKING

Have fun jamming out and making music with local musician Steve Shultz. Discover new ways to create music and collaborate with others to create immersive sound sculptures while learning new rhythmic techniques on a variety of percussion instruments. No instruments or experience needed, just a willingness to have fun!

SATURDAY 1ST AUGUST, 12:30PM - 2PM

LOCATION: WGAC, FOUNTAIN ROOM

More Info & Register:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/4bVR35d3QP>

WORKSHOPS



TRY AN INSTRUMENT

Have a go at an instrument that you have never tried before! This is the perfect opportunity to have a go at a trumpet, flute, clarinet or trombone in a no pressure environment. Local musician Jill Lawrence will give private 10 minute crash courses on the instrument of your choice.

LIMITED TO 1 PARTICIPANT PER SESSION, MAX 5 SESSIONS AVAILABLE.

SATURDAY 1ST AUGUST, FROM 2PM

LOCATION: WGAC, LYREBIRD ROOM

More Info & Register:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/kAn2GmvDYi>



FILM MAKING

Join Gippsland based filmmakers Alana Auden and Edward Yates for a fun hands on filmmaking workshop as part of the Expressions Festival 2026. In the workshop you will undertake a crash course in no-budget filmmaking and have the opportunity to script, storyboard and film your own short film piece while working in a small group. Participants will need to bring a device with video capabilities to shoot their piece on the day. Creatives of all backgrounds welcome to come and collaborate!

SUNDAY 2ND AUGUST, 10AM - 3PM

LOCATION: WGAC, FOUNTAIN ROOM

More info & Register:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/9RdGQgCHgQ>

WORKSHOPS



ACTING

This workshop isn't just for the performers, it's for the storytellers, writers or those who just have an idea they want to workshop.

In this workshop you will try a little bit of everything, theatre games and improvisation techniques, script writing and storytelling. Whether you have been in the spotlight before or just wanting to try out an idea, come along and have fun!

SUNDAY 2ND AUGUST, 1PM - 5PM

LOCATION: WGAC, LYREBIRD ROOM

More info & Register:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/skrwRcxw6M>



DANCE

Are you ready to move and groove?

Come along and have a boogie! Join Michelle Theunissen-Scott in an afternoon of all things dance. You will get to try a variety of dance styles, for all skill levels. Express yourself and your creativity in a new way through dance.

SATURDAY 8TH AUGUST, 11:30AM - 3:30PM

LOCATION: WGAC, FOUNTAIN ROOM

More Info & Register:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/zda2jFJ0WV>

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The 2026 Festival theme is yours to interpret – we encourage you to follow your creativity wherever it leads. All forms of artistic expression are welcome, but submissions must adhere to the following guidelines to ensure a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all participants and audiences.

Age

Youth, Recommended 12-25 years old.

Submission Limits

Artists may submit up to four pieces total, with no more than one submission per category (e.g. one short film, one photograph, one pottery piece, one original song).

Each submission must comply with any stated time limits or size restrictions for the relevant category.

Submission Length

Any live performance (or total performances) are not to exceed 10 minutes. If your visual art piece is freestanding, larger than 80cm in any direction or heavier than 5kg, please note this in your application.

Content Guidelines

Coarse language is permitted in original works, however, you must provide an appropriate content warning for audiences.

Nudity, racism, homophobia, transphobia, and any other discriminatory or harmful content will not be accepted or tolerated under any circumstances.

Everyone has the right to feel safe, seen, and supported at the Expressions Festival.

If your submission includes content that may be considered sensitive or challenging, you will be required to discuss it with the Festival Producers before it is approved for performance or display.

HOW TO SUBMIT?

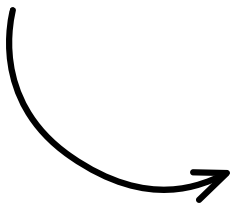
We're so excited that you're planning to be part of the 2026 Expressions Festival!

To help us shape the Festival program, we need a few early details from you about your submission(s). Don't worry – we don't need the finished product just yet. At this stage, we're simply gathering information to help with planning.

What we need to know:

- **The type of piece you intend to submit (e.g. short film, visual art, performance)**
- **The total number of pieces you plan to submit (maximum of four)**
- **Whether you're submitting solo or as part of a group**
- **Your contact information so we can stay in touch**

Scan the QR code or
follow the link below to
complete the form!



<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/NBD8kJaSw2>

IMPORTANT DATES

July 2026

Information Night
Intent to Submit Opens

Monday 20
Monday 20

Workshop Registrations Open

Wednesday 22

August 2026

Free Artist Workshops

Saturday 1, Sunday 2 and Saturday 8

September 2026

Intent to Submit Closes

Tuesday 29, 5pm

October 2026

Expressions Festival Rehearsals
Expressions Festival

Tuesday 27
Wednesday 28, 6pm



GET IN TOUCH WITH US!



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