

UNDER EMBARGO: WEDNESDAY, 28 JULY, 10.00AM AEST

BIGSOUND ANNOUNCES SIX AUSSIE ARTISTS TO SHARE IN \$90,000 LEVI'S® MUSIC PRIZE



One of Australasia's biggest annual music prizes, the Levi's® Music Prize in partnership with BIGSOUND, today awarded a total of \$90,000 to six of Australia's most exciting emerging musicians - ASHWARYA, Beddy Rays, Birdz, Jerome Farah, JK-47, and Sycco.

Joining the star-studded ranks of previous winners like G Flip, The Teskey Brothers, and Ecce Vandal, the \$15,000 cash prize and additional support package from The Indigo Project and Bolster comes at a time when artists need it most.

"Winning the Levi's Music Prize has always been a dream of mine," said Brisbane pop artist, Sycco, whose song *Dribble* debuted at #29 in triple j's Hottest 100 and took out Song of the Year in the 2021 Queensland Music Awards.



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“I remember seeing G Flip and Hatchie win over the last few years and manifesting in those moments! Hopefully we can tour overseas next year so the money will definitely assist with getting over there! This is so awesome, I cannot believe it!”

Selected from the BIGSOUND50, who were featured as the future of Australian music in BIGSOUND’s 2020 online pivot, Levi’s® Music Prize judge, **Casey O’Shaughnessy** said the quality of the artists and their achievements thus far is truly impressive.

“The past 18 months have been a particularly trying time for new artists to break through given the uncertain nature of touring throughout the pandemic. I’m a genuine fan of each of the winners and I look forward to watching them flourish over the years,” said O’Shaughnessy, who is the senior booking agent at Select Music, Australia’s largest independent agency.

Giving almost half a million dollars to artists and bands since partnering with BIGSOUND in 2017, Levi’s® Head of Marketing for Australia & New Zealand, **Trent Bos**, is proud and grateful to continue Levi’s® support of Australasian artists through the Levi’s® Music Prize.

“We believe that music is a force for good. But belief without real backing isn’t enough to help aspiring musicians fulfil their ambitions, and our dream and desire is that this contribution can help these incredibly talented artists do just that.”

Delivering the good news in the wake of last week’s devastating cancellation of September’s BIGSOUND conference and festival, QMusic CEO, **Kris Stewart** said how critical the ongoing support of initiatives like the Levi’s® Music Prize is to the survival of the music industry.

“Our musicians and the music industry at large continue to be one of the hardest hit sectors, having to prove their resilience time and time again in the face of cancellations and tougher restrictions than other industries.

“The Prize will go a long way to supporting these talented BIGSOUND artists to not only survive but thrive through COVID and beyond.”

Each winner receives \$15,000 cash to boost their music career, an online mental health workshop provided by The Indigo Project, plus a custom BLOCKS by Bolster digital marketing workshop, and an outfit from Levi’s®.

The Levi’s® Music Prize in partnership with BIGSOUND is administered by QMusic and presented by Levi’s® Australia and New Zealand, with support from Bolster and The Indigo Project.

-Ends-

[Artist Bios](#) / [Artist Press Images](#)



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About Levi's Music Prize

One of Australasia's largest annual music prizes, the Levi's® Music Prize in partnership with BIGSOUND supports emerging Australian and New Zealand acts to make the most of new opportunities that will propel them to the next stage of their careers. The Levi's® Music Prize in partnership with BIGSOUND has given almost \$500,000 to artists and bands since its inception in 2017, including G-Flip, The Teskey Brothers, Alex Lahey, Rolling Blackouts Coastal Fever and Ecce Vandal. In 2021, \$90,000 in cash is up for grabs with the Levi's® Music Prize in partnership with BIGSOUND awarding \$15,000 to six artists. Winners also receive a mental health workshop with The Indigo Project, a digital marketing workshop with Bolster as well as Levi's® clothing.

About BIGSOUND

Produced by QMusic, BIGSOUND is the southern hemisphere's largest new music export showcase and conference. Now in its 20th year, BIGSOUND is where the national and international music industry come together to discover talent, share ideas, conversations, networks and facilitate critical dialogue about the future of the music industry. Held every September, BIGSOUND showcases more than 100 acts across live music venues in Brisbane's Fortitude Valley, attracting more than 1700 national and international delegates and visitors.

About QMusic

QMusic is Queensland's music industry development association. The work of QMusic is critical to the success of Queensland's contemporary music economy. It is the only significant and established not-for-profit organisation in Queensland dedicated to delivering sector development and major music events including the Queensland Music Awards and BIGSOUND to stimulate and grow the state's music sector.

About Bolster

Bolster are an Australian entertainment and culture marketing specialists building world class campaigns and content for brands to connect with and grow their audiences. To help the winning artists with developing their online skills as COVID-related restrictions continue, they will receive a customised [BLOCKS by Bolstr](#) workshop from Australia's leading digital agency, Bolster. Blocks is a concise, yet comprehensive digital marketing workshop driven by real industry knowledge to level-up artists' social media and digital marketing knowledge whilst developing new skills in a fun and interactive online environment.

About The Indigo Project

The Indigo Project is a progressive psychology practice that runs courses, workshops and creates immersive experiences to guide clients on a transformational journey to get their shit together. The online course as part of the prize focuses on self-development, insight and personal growth. The winners will have the opportunity to work through over 250 hours of video content, 50 activities and guided meditations to help manage mind, emotion and relationships in times of uncertainty, challenge and change.



Artist Biographies

ASHWARYA (VIC)

In ASHWARYA's hands, pop just hits differently. Only a year into her career, and the 21-year-old Indian-born Melbourne native is already known as an innovator and a disruptor, someone for whom surprise is a native language. In ASHWARYA's music, every left turn is met with a trap-door; her sound traverses rap and pop, bhangra drumming and R&B trilling.

ASHWARYA's first three singles were three silver bullets aimed squarely at the status quo, which never missed their marks. Her debut "PSYCHO HOLE" was universally acclaimed, with critics lauding its spine-tingling, ultramodern fusion sound. triple j added the song to full rotation, while DSP support included a cover spot on Pop N Fresh, and additions to over 20 New Music Fridays. Since releasing "PSYCHO HOLE", ASHWARYA has also been profiled in fashion bibles PAPER, Oyster, The Face, ACCLAIM, and COMPLEX, among others.

2021 is also set to see the release of ASHWARYA's debut EP Nocturnal Hours, a glamorous and insightful look into the mind of a young pop auteur. The EP is ASHWARYA at her purest, and speaks to her ambition to not only become a fixture of the pop landscape, but to stay true to her distinct personality and sound throughout. If "PSYCHO HOLE" and "COMIN@ME" were enticing tastes of ASHWARYA's world, Nocturnal Hours is a decisive statement of intent and power. Modern pop has long been overdue for a shake-up like this, a paradigm shift that changes the game completely. ASHWARYA is here to lead the way.

Website: www.ashwaryamusic.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ashwaryamusic

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/ashwaryahhh>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ashwaryamusic?lang=en>

YouTube: https://youtube.com/channel/UC5RC7X4JJ5pAD6t3E-9q_Gw

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/artist/4meOmOfRlyy8gmJ9QVpGpk>

Beddy Rays (QLD)

The Beddy Rays have been making music together since they first met on a primary school oval back in the day, but the release of weekend anthem Sobercoaster in 2020 was when things really started shaking up for these fun-loving larrikins. The cracker of a tune amassed over 1.3 million streams on Spotify and echoed throughout Australia during triple j's Hottest 100, receiving a spot at number 57 and truly cementing the four-piece as one of Australia's most loveable groups. Their isolation anthem Better Weather backed it up with high rotation and rave reviews among triple j folk. And their success with latest track Wait A While proved that their past wins weren't just dumb luck.

These days it's almost impossible not to recognise a Beddy Rays track, as their music has become a carefully curated recipe involving all the right ingredients: powerful lyrics, strong hooks, mosh-worthy riffs and a lingering sense of comradery which remains prevalent in everything they create. Planning to release more tracks over the year and a sold out Australian tour, a growing loyal fanbase, tracks that leave you desperate for a summer festival and down-to-earth personalities - the boys are on their way to becoming the next big Australian export.

Website: <https://beddyrays.com>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/beddyrays

Instagram: www.instagram.com/beddyrays

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/beddyrays>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDTDcApX-FylzOrz6QjNwZA>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/artist/4qn6hSO1qLlaAW8jiyOw18>



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Birdz (VIC/NT)

As a proud Butchulla man raised in Katherine N.T., Birdz is renowned for his unique brand of hard-hitting Hip Hop embodying strong messages of hope and self-determination. BIRDZ debut album 'Train Of Thought (2017)' won the Australian Independent Record Label Associations – Best Independent Hip Hop Album, was shortlisted for the Australian Music Prize and Nominated for Music Victoria's Best Hip Hop Album. In 2019, Birdz released 'Place Of Dreams' which earned a nomination for the Corner Hotel Artist Of The Year award, a national tour with Seth Sentry, high rotation on triple j, and a publishing deal with Bad Apples/SonyATV that has since secured songwriting placements in film and TV. Last year, Birdz released 'Bagi-La-M Bargan feat. Fred Leone', which was voted as #30 on triple j's Hottest 100 and scored placement on Spotify's Front Left, A1, Fresh Finds: Hip Hop, Blak Australia, Deadly Beats and The Local List as well as Apple Music's Vibe, Alt Rap and New Fire playlists as well as lots of community stations airplay. 'Bagi-La-M Bargan' has now surpassed 1.4 million streams on Spotify alone. Birdz is currently in the studio with long time collaborator and friend, Trials (A.B.Original) working on his second full-length album due out late 2021.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MisterBirdZ

Instagram: www.instagram.com/misterbirdz

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MisterBirdZ>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2UnzNVQcywX8aGVA1oy-Zw>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/artist/33eaeCB1rLpISBkZAd2xnG>

Jerome Farah (VIC)

The son of a Lebanese father and a Zimbabwean mother, Jerome Farah's personal journey of navigating culture and identity finds itself organically woven throughout his musical journey. His music celebrates his heritage while acknowledging the struggles that have proven to be touchstones of his young adulthood. From growing up in suburban Melbourne, influenced by a global palette of music cultures to now, making music that is defined by strong character and sense of self, Jerome's path has been one of unique lessons learned.

Working with the likes of Adrian Eagle, Baker Boy and Kian, Jerome has been part of Australia's young vanguard pushing new ideas and concepts forward in the realms of R&B and alternative hip-hop. His other credits include work with artists including Dallas Woods ('Hoodlum'), Adrian Eagle ('17 Again', 'A.O.K.', 'Caught Up'), Tobiahs ('Sculpted') and KG ('Superwoman').

Jerome's work with Kian as co-writer and co-producer on the latter's breakout single 'Waiting' quickly landed the producer and multi-instrumentalist on a national platform. The single - now 2x Platinum - earned an ARIA Award nomination in 2019 for Song of The Year, while winning two APRA Awards in 2020 for Most Performed Australian Work of the Year and Most Performed Alternative Work of the Year.

Website: www.jeromefarah.com/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/jeromefarahmusic

Instagram: www.instagram.com/jerome.farah

Twitter: https://twitter.com/jerome_farah?lang=en

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPiil9cnc24>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/artist/4a1J1CCs8vldNEI3MPsBPw>



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JK-47 (NSW)

If you're a Hip Hop fan in Australia, you should by now know the name JK-47. Whether you know him as the 2020 Triple J Unearthed Artist of the Year, or from his jaw-dropping Like A Version where he put a fantastic twist on 'Changes' by 2Pac, you would already know that the talented Indigenous artist is a force to be reckoned with. It's no surprise to see acts like Illy, ChillinIT, Nerve and many more showing him love. At the age of fourteen, JK-47 began writing rhymes & rapping. Over the years his name has become all too familiar, not just on home turf in the shire of Tweed, but also right across the Australian hip-hop landscape. His ability to put pen to pad & produce timeless lyrics, painting pictures with his music, is second to none. Having already scored a triple j feature album on his debut, nominations for Best New Act at the 2021 Rolling Stone Awards and Acclaim Magazine Rookie of the Year, and being booked for festivals like Yours& Owls, Fresh Produce and Adelaide Festival, you can't deny JK-47 is well on the right path for a bright future.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jaeK47/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/official_jk47/

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqjSILwpJ-jvZ4EiQL8bjPg>

Spotify:

https://open.spotify.com/artist/1MS6lYWuDWuqNbdDhzEHvF?si=EOPY_b8gREyyC3wWSa9STw&dl_branch=1

Sycco (QLD)

Sycco is 19 year old First Nations artist/writer/producer Sash McLeod, for whom 2020 was a breakout year, thanks to her colourful, psychedelic-pop sonics, crystal clear melodies and charismatic charm. With an accumulated 17 million+ streams and 500k+ monthly Spotify listeners, Sycco has established herself as one of Australia's most promising and popular new artists, beloved by fans, media and her contemporaries alike.

Sycco's latest single "Time's Up" (out now via Future Classic) is a sweeping break-up track and the the latest in a string of consistently impressive singles that have won her praise from Billboard, Cool Hunting, Paper, Lyrical Lemonade, NME, Ones to Watch, triple j and more.

Sycco debuted at #29 in triple j's Hottest 100 with Dribble, making her the highest ranked new local artist in this year's poll. Her first ever national tour, comprising 12 shows in three cities, sold out in less than 48 hours. "Dribble" won the QMusic Song of the Year and Sycco is nominated for the AIR Breakthrough Award.

"Sycco's First EP" is out 30 July via Future Classic.

Website:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/syccoworld

Instagram: www.instagram.com/syccoworld

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/syccoworld>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5-bnlsUWJPwFqeCrpfNZNg>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/artist/4meTRfbaVba24HXyBwbKJ0?si=EpcMT8qzSuu2VlcfA5GyQQ&nd=1>