

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF THEATRE PRODUCTION TECHNICIANS: GRADUATES TO CELEBRATE COMPLETION OF 2022 TECH CONNECT PROGRAM

On Friday 8 July, 11 students from across the G21 region will come together at Geelong Arts Centre to celebrate their successful completion of the Tech Connect 2022 program.

Tech Connect 2022 is a 10-week, intensive training program providing a Certificate III Live Production and Services course to 11 participants.

An Arts Centre Melbourne Registered Training Organisation training project, the program is designed to engage professional networks across urban-rural creative communities, promote employability and strengthen the technical capacity for production of live cultural performances in regional centres.

One of two regional hubs selected for the 2022 program, Geelong Arts Centre was nominated by the Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres (VAPAC).

The program provides training and employment for young people and addresses an immediate, ongoing need for skilled and qualified production staff to work in Australia's performing arts venues.

Graduates go on to be technical experts in their own theatres, as well as in local and touring productions across Australia and beyond.

Employing a unique training model, the program sees students engage in classroom-based study combined with structured mentoring, while working alongside the industry's top directors, designers, and performers.

Participants undertaking the Certificate III qualification will each complete 16 nationally accredited units of competency aligning with the role of Venue Technician which includes: Entertainment Industry Safety, Customer Service, Operate Flying Systems, Basic Lighting, Audio, and Vision Systems.

The program enables graduates to gain practical, hands-on experience while developing industry focused leadership skills, right here in Geelong.

Further training is planned to return to Geelong Arts Centre in 2024 when Tech Connect delivers its final year, supported by Creative Victoria. This will see Arts Centre Melbourne's Registered Training Organisation deliver training at the Certificate IV level.

The program will be available for all 2022 graduating participants wishing to continue their learning experience, as well as senior technicians from Geelong Arts Centre, surrounding venues and community theatre networks.

The Tech Connect training program has been supported by Creative Victoria, WorkSafe Victoria, Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres (VAPAC) Technical Managers Network Executive, and participating regional venues.

QUOTES ATTRIBUTABLE

“Back-of-house workers and theatre technicians are absolutely vital to our creative industries – I want to congratulate this new group of Tech Connect graduates for completing this program and bringing such an important skillset to the sector.”

“Thanks to everyone at Arts Centre Melbourne and Geelong Arts Centre involved in Tech Connect. Your efforts have primed this cohort to bring much-needed technical expertise to our region’s thriving arts sector.”

**Quotes attributable to Christine Couzens MP,
Member for Geelong**

“At Geelong Arts Centre, we are proud to be the home Where Creativity Meets, and that extends from providing a space for performers, writers, directors and technical crew to experience world-class facilities in which they can hone their craft.

Hosting Tech Connect 2022 has enabled us to upskill our existing staff, as well as create an opportunity for budding technicians right across the region to develop their skills without having to venture away from regional Victoria.”

**Quotes attributable to Joel McGuinness,
CEO & Creative Director, Geelong Arts Centre**

“Arts Centre Melbourne’s Tech Connect program is a ground-breaking initiative as it is the only one in Australia that operates in a working theatre space. We are thrilled to deliver this successful program in Geelong and help build a new generation of theatre technicians that will ensure the performing arts continues to thrive in the region.”

**Quote attributable to Leanne Lawrence,
Arts Centre Melbourne Interim CEO**

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