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35th Illawarra Folk Festival gets green light

The annual Illawarra Folk Festival in 2020 will celebrate 35 years when it is staged at Bulli Showground next January.

The future of the State's largest folk festival had been in doubt due to concerns over recent changes to State Government festival regulations, however the Illawarra Folk Club which organises the annual four-day event has received assurances that the festival is not considered "high-risk" and therefore its licensing and approval requirements will remain unchanged from this year.

Artistic Director David De Santi said that was good news for the festival, with organisers now able to plan for an essentially unchanged format for the 2020 festival which will be held on January 16-20.

"We're very pleased that we can now get on with the task of organising our 35th festival – 20 at Jamberoo and the last 14 at Bulli Showground," Mr De Santi said. "And we're very proud of the fact that from very humble beginnings our festival has grown to now be recognised on the international folk music calendar, with strong interest each year from overseas acts who want to come here to perform."

Mr De Santi said artist applications would open early this month through the festival website, and he urged local acts to apply. "We always have a great mix of international, national and local artists, and that helps give the festival its special appeal," he said. "Since we started more than 3000 acts and 15,000 performers had been part of the festival, and we have always supported local acts by giving them the chance to perform."

"For our 35th festival we are looking to have around 150 acts presenting 320 concerts, sessions and workshops at next year's festival, and we are looking for a mix of folk, world music, roots, Celtic, bluegrass and gypsy music as well as the spoken word," he said. "Our featured instrument will be the violin, which is certainly the most played instrument at folk festivals!"

Regular festival features including the Folk School in the week leading up to the festival, the Thursday Charity Night, Green Music Trains from Sydney and environmental sustainability initiatives will all be part of the 35th Illawarra Folk Festival. The festival is run entirely by volunteers.

Artist applications are now live at: GENERAL

<https://marcatoapp.com/forms/illarwarraff/2020iffartistapplication>

YOUTH <https://marcatoapp.com/forms/illarwarraff/2020iff-youthact>

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